

CM4

Adventure for Character Levels 18 - 20

9128

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Companion Game Adventure

Earthshaker!

David "Zeb" Cook



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An adventure for character levels 18 to 22.

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

Thought your characters would never settle down? That they would never learn to appreciate the finer things of life? With *Earthshaker!*, you can remind them of all the pleasures offered by civilization. This module can be played by 4-6 characters of 18th to 20th levels. It is designed for use with the D&D® Companion Set.

If your PCs have their own dominion(s), all the events described here can take place on their lands. This is the easiest way to splice the adventure into your high-level campaign.

The sun rises on a new dawn, but a shadow hangs over the land. Earthshaker, mightiest mechanical wonder of ages past, towers above the castle. Its iron grasp holds the power for great good or incalculable evil. Who will gain control of the monstrous machine, Earthshaker?

How to Use This Module

Earthshaker! is divided into several major sections, starting with "Springtime in Vyolstagrad" and ending at "The Fate of Earthshaker." These sections contain encounters, descriptions, playing aids, and adventure. You should plan on spending more than one playing session on this adventure, but don't worry about finishing a set number of sections per evening.

Before playing any section of *Earthshaker!*, read the module thoroughly, making notes where necessary. If you don't have time to read the entire booklet, at least read the sections you plan to play in the next session.

The action in this adventure centers around a giant automaton called the Earthshaker. Since this machine is mobile, the events of this adventure can take place anywhere in your campaign where all your player characters can meet.

The Setting

While *Earthshaker* has no particular setting, it is assumed in the text that characters are adventuring in the land of Norwold. The sample dominion described in this adventure is somewhere near the Wyrmspeeth Range.

Norwold is part of the world that appears in the D&D® Companion Set (Book One, page 32) and is described in CM1, *Test of the Warlords*. Norwold is the northernmost shaded area on the Companion Set map. It is a region that is slowly being settled; all types of lands, from wilderness to the beginnings of civilization, can be found there.

If you do not have *Test of the Warlords*, you can still play this adventure. Simply set the story against a land in your world or use the Dominion of Vyolstagrad.

The Player Characters

At the center of this module is a list of pre-rolled characters. If your players' characters are not of high enough level, or the players don't want to use their normal characters, let them use the PCs provided.

The pre-rolled PCs are designed especially for this adventure. They are not entirely serious characters (as this is not an entirely serious adventure). Each has some feature or characteristic that makes him noticeably less than perfect. However, their abilities are not hampered by this. If your players use these 'odd' characters, with all their quirks and imperfections, the adventure will be lighter and more humorous. However, do not force players to use these characters.

If your players don't want to use the pre-rolled characters, let them use characters of their own or high-level characters provided with other Companion modules. If your players are currently using characters from a previous module, let them continue using those characters. If one of the PCs rules a dominion, let this adventure occur in that PC's dominion.

The Dominion

An important part of the story of *Earthshaker!* is the dominion that serves as its setting. Mighty events can take place in this adventure—castles are razed, swamps drained, lakes formed, villages crushed, even the course of rivers changed! If the player characters truly care about the dominion and what happens to it (especially if they have a financial interest at stake), the drama and tension of the adventure will be that much greater. If it is their castle that could get crushed flat, the player characters will be much more likely to worry about it!

If possible, use the dominion of a player character. Do not be afraid to wreak a little destruction and havoc on his lands. He will survive and rebuild. In fact, he probably will need to do some exciting adventuring to raise the cash he needs to repair the damages done by Earthshaker!

If you are using the characters designed for this module, read the following to Alphonso (and the other players):

It was only one week ago when your lord, Duke Nevik, called you to his side. "Ah, Alphonso! My most faithful knight and companion, I have news for you. King Ericall has summoned me to appear at his

court to oversee the preparations for the crusade! He is set upon leading our great knights in an expedition against the heathens of the wild country. This is serious business and the king has placed his personal seal on the writ of summons. I cannot refuse to attend. So, Alphonso, I call upon you, my most trusted adviser, to act as Seneschal. You must attend to the duties of the dominion until I return. You are the one who will keep my interests close to his heart.

"Mind the peasants and see that they plant the manor fields first, and see that a new grindstone is ordered for the mill. Do not let Rurynta grow soft on his discipline of the Guard. Be sure that the Warden of the North Hills keeps the shepherds from the lower pastures. Finally, Baron Sovanya has been grumbling loudly about his taxes again. His payments are due in a month and my spies report he has been dropping serfs from his census rolls so he can pay less. If I am not back in three weeks, make a grand tour of his lands and take the reeves with you. If he pays short, place 100 lances across the ford to remind him who his lord is.

"Remember, Alphonso, I place my faith with you. Never lightly break your oath to me. I will return."

With that interview, Duke Nevik placed his command with you. All who serve him were instructed to heed your voice as the voice of their lord. Since then a week has passed. It has been very quiet and pleasant in the time you have looked after your lord's affairs—thankfully so, for the Duke is kind and generous, but also hard and exacting on those who fail him.

Give the player the map of Duke Nevik's dominion (on page 13) and let him study it, answering any questions about the land. (Don't let the players look at the back of the map.) When the player feels familiar with the lay of the dominion, begin the adventure.

A Matter of Size

An important thing to understand before you begin playing this adventure is just how big the Earthshaker is. It helps the adventure if your players are constantly aware of the sheer size of the problem that Earthshaker presents to their dominion.

Earthshaker stands 1,280 feet tall. Below are some comparisons you can use to show what this means to the player characters.

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

1. Imagine the length of a football field. Now imagine four football fields stacked end to end on top of each other. Earthshaker is still taller than this.
2. Earthshaker stands taller than the highest dam in the modern world.
3. Earthshaker is taller than the Empire State Building (102 stories tall) or the Eiffel Tower.
4. If you have a 25mm metal miniature, set it on the floor. Now, take a tape measure or yardstick and measure off 17' 6". (This may take two rooms, or you might have to do it outside.) Place another metal miniature at the end of this line. The space between the two miniatures is the size of Earthshaker in 25mm scale (the same size as the figure). If your players still have trouble visualizing this, point out that in 25mm scale, Earthshaker's head would come up to about the second-story window of a normal house.

Furthermore, most everything inside Earthshaker is gigantic and oversize. Use vivid descriptions to convey this—all pistons are huge, gears massive, cables as thick as arms, etc. Only those things that are used by characters (ladders, stairs, etc.) are not on this gigantic scale.

Use these examples (and any others that you may discover) to give your players a true understanding of the size of Earthshaker. Once they are aware of how big it is, they will treat the automaton with a great deal more respect. They will quickly realize that Earthshaker, if maliciously used, could flatten any building in the dominion, even the largest stronghold.

The Maps

Because the adventure takes place inside of Earthshaker, there are many maps for the critical areas of the machine. These maps are located on the inside of the module cover and on the central pull-out pages. However, much of Earthshaker is empty space filled only with catwalks, elevators, ropes, ladders, pipes, and girders. Instead of giving maps for every inch of Earthshaker, two geomorphic maps of the empty areas have been included. Whenever the characters have an encounter in an unmapped area, you can use either of these geomorphs. None of the geomorphs are marked with north and south, so you can choose which side of the geomorph will be north, etc. Furthermore, if the characters find the catwalk they are on leads off to empty space, don't worry. The interior layout of Earthshaker does not always need to make sense to the players. It is, after all, a great

wonder.

If the player characters return to an area where a specific geomorph had been used, do not worry about trying to use the same geomorph in the same position. If the players complain, explain that the characters were mistaken—that they arrived on a level 10' below the one they were on or 30' to the side.

Operating Earthshaker

Earthshaker is a gigantic, fantasy machine. As a machine, many workers are required to fuel, oversee, and maintain it. These workers are a clan of gnomes who permanently live inside. Earthshaker is their clan stronghold, so all the normal accoutrements of the clan are found here, including their Relic.

The Clanmaster and the Keeper of the Relic share the responsibility of managing Earthshaker. The Clanmaster, Krazmos, handles the day-to-day operations of Earthshaker and the clan. He settles disputes within the clan, grants leave, provides fuel and water for Earthshaker, and handles all dealings with the circus owner, Milos Formiesias. The Keeper of the Relic, Gryzix, is responsible for his normal duties of the religious life of the clan. In addition, he supervises the training of the workers for the various machines that power Earthshaker. This knowledge is granted to him by his god (and the Relic) as it is needed. Thus, although he trains the others, Gryzix really doesn't know how to operate Earthshaker himself. Krazmos, Gryzix, and Milos are described on the NPCs page.

The gnomes are keenly aware of the awesome power of Earthshaker and of their importance as its operators. This has made them intensely secretive about how the machine works. Children are expected to assume their father's post when he dies. The

father is expected to train his children before he dies. Each gnome knows how to operate only a small portion of the machine. Should a father die before he can pass on his knowledge, Gryzix (through his god) completes the training.

The gnomes also know that each piece of machinery and each worker's job is vital to the overall operation of Earthshaker. They will not willingly kill another gnome or destroy any item of machinery onboard, since this could bring Earthshaker to a halt. The machinery onboard is quite ancient and many of the skills needed to repair or build it are now lost. For the purposes of the adventure, once an item is damaged, it is unusable for the rest of the adventure.

Since tours of Earthshaker are sold as a money-making attraction, the gnomes have all been instructed to be pleasant and helpful at all times. However, to keep a determined foe from learning how to operate the automaton by patiently and carefully questioning each gnome during casual visits, the Keeper has devised a jargon that can be used when answering any questions about the machine. Whenever a player character asks a gnome what he is doing or how something works, use the jargon lists to create a reply. For each blank space in the sentences below, choose a word from the appropriate list.

1. "Well, this (*List 1*) connects to the (*List 1*), by which I (*List 2*) the (*List 3*) before it gets to the (*List 1*)."
2. "I (*List 2*) this (*List 1*) so that when we (*List 4*) the (*List 1*) will stay within proper limits."
3. "Each time he (*List 2*) the (*List 1*), I (*List 2*) the (*List 1*) so that the (*List 1*) will (*List 2*) the (*List 3*) when we (*List 4*)."

List 1

valve
pressure feed
furnace
piston
coolant line
governor
gearbox
cable
take-up drum
safety valve
intake fan
bellows
pump
piston
bleeder
drain port

List 2

regulate
watch
open
close
balance
cut-in
override
haul up
shut off
adjust
increase
pump
prime
lower

List 3

water pressure
steam pressure
temperature
gear ratios
torque speed
coolant
forward impetus
energy constant
airflow
kinetic thrust
internal tension
density

List 4

bend
take a step
reach
stop
twist
speak
move a finger
kneel
nod
run
raise an arm

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

Damaging Earthshaker

Once the action begins in *The Earthshaker*, the characters will undoubtedly try to stop the mechanical monster by damaging the internal machinery. In some cases, the result is specified in the Key. In many places, however, the result is not specified. Use the following rules to handle these situations.

Using weapons and spells against the outer hull, decks, and various girders of Earthshaker is not particularly significant. Earthshaker automatically makes its saving throw against any attack where a saving throw is allowed. In addition, even on attacks that have no saving throw, Earthshaker has a saving throw value of 8. These attacks cause only half their normal damage or, in the case of all-or-nothing spells, no damage. Therefore, consider the results as having no or very limited effect.

Even on things that can be damaged, weapons and spells may have less than the desired effect. All machines on Earthshaker are made to withstand great heat and pressure, so fire-based spells have no effect. Disintegrate spells can only destroy a limited area ($10' \times 10' \times 5'$). Likewise, weapons of +2 or less will not accomplish anything against the machinery and will only get dull from being bashed around.

If a character uses a spell, weapon, bare hands, or whatever to successfully damage Earthshaker, consult the Earthshaker Damage Table to find the result.

EARTHSHAKER BREAKDOWN TABLE

Damage Pts.	Effect
1-30	No breakdown.
31-50	One arm no longer works.
51-70	Neither arm works.
71-90	Earthshaker cannot bend over.
91-99	There is a 20% chance each turn that result A from The Earthshaker Damage Table will occur, except that Earthshaker does not acquire any additional damage points.
100	Earthshaker is immobilized.

EARTHSHAKER DAMAGE TABLE

Dice Roll	Machinery Type		
	Non-essential	Typical	Critical
01-10	—	—	—
11-20	—	—	—
21-30	—	—	A
31-40	—	—	A
41-50	—	A	B
51-60	—	A	B
61-70	—	B	C
71-80	—	B	D
81-90	A	B	D
91-00	E	E	E

- The action has no effect on the operation of Earthshaker.
- A There are sparks, steam, an explosion (or whatever is appropriate) and all within 10 feet suffer 3-30 points of damage (save vs. Breath for half damage). Earthshaker takes 1 damage point.
- B All the effects of A apply, except that the item damaged is badly broken and Earthshaker takes 5 damage points.
- C There is a massive explosion of steam, fire, and flying metal. All within 30 feet suffer 5-50 points of damage (save vs. Breath for half damage) and Earthshaker suffers 10 damage points.
- D All the effects of B take place. In addition, the damage may have caused a chain reaction. Roll once more on the same column and apply the result.
- E All the effects of C take place. In addition, a serious chain reaction may occur. Roll once on the next highest column and apply the result.

NONESSENTIAL machinery includes random pipes, gears, cables, and whatever else you desire or can think of.

TYPICAL machinery includes gear boxes, cable drums, valves, governors, and the like.

CRITICAL machinery includes control panels, banks of valves or levers, or other items that you decide are important to the operation of Earthshaker.

As the PCs damage Earthshaker, it will start to suffer damage points. You should keep track of the total damage points Earthshaker has taken and compare them to the Earthshaker Breakdown Table to find the overall effect.

SPRINGTIME IN VYOLSTAGRAD

It's springtime in Vyolstagrad! Indeed, it is a glorious spring morning. The sun shines brightly through the windows of the audience chamber. Starlings and martins land at the windows and flutter away again. Across the town, smoke drifts lazily. Peasants clamber on their roofs, tying down new bundles of thatch and repairing stork nests in anticipation of the birds' arrival. Matrons shoo geese out of the garden plots while the men yoke the oxen for work in the fields. Only in the shadowed glades do the patches of snow linger, crocuses and lily-of-the-valley pushing up through the icy crust. All seems good and well in Vyolstagrad.

Unfortunately, you cannot join in this relaxing pastoral scene for you have the business of Vyolstagrad to attend to. This morning is devoted to audiences. First the patriarch of the town has requested audience. Then there is a matter of murder the chief magistrate has referred to you. Lastly, a traveler has petitioned the court for special audience concerning a matter for a special trade charter. These tasks certainly will occupy your entire morning.

Let the PC seneschal decide who will be present at the audiences and who will not. Obviously, he must attend and any other PCs who wish can remain, since none of the discussions are of a secretive nature. If player characters do not want to attend, they can spend the time in the town, attending to minor affairs of their own. After these decisions have been made, the herald announces the first audience.

The Patriarch's Audience

The doors of the audience chamber swing open and the herald, standing in the center of the doorway, calls loudly for all to hear. "His Eminence Alexis Vatutin, patriarch of Vyolstagrad of the kingdom of Norwold!" Turning, he bows in the direction of the procession coming through the doors.

Leading this group is a white-robed cleric, bearing the staff-mounted holy symbol of the patriarch. Behind him is Alexis Vatutin, the patriarch, dressed in his white and gold robes, his thick black beard reaching to his stomach. Beside him is a young acolyte, bearing parchment, ink, and a quill.

The group stops before the dais and the

patriarch makes a slight bow and extends his hand.

The patriarch expects some type of recognition of his high position from the player character. You should decide what is appropriate, but nothing as slight as a handshake will do. If the character fails to make the required gesture (or something similar to it), the patriarch will be put out and offended for the rest of the conversation.

The patriarch has come to announce two things. The first is that he has been called to his religion's main temple to take part in the annual spring ceremonies. These duties will keep him out of Vyolstagrad for several weeks, but during that time the lower clerics will tend to the needs of the dominion. Of course, he will be in occasional contact and will receive complete reports of what has happened.

Secondly, he has come to remind the court that it is springtime and it is customary for the duke to arrange a planting holiday for the peasants. He points out that the last winter was particularly harsh and the harvest poor before that. Already the holiday is overdue and the peasants are beginning to grumble. He certainly cannot look after their spiritual welfare if their lord will not attend to their temporal needs.

Always in the past the duke has held generous holidays, arranging for entertainments, feasts, and generous alms-giving. Should the holiday this year be any less, the patriarch warns, the people will begin to lose faith and love for the lord. With the evil forces of the mountains not too distant, this could create serious trouble. He strongly suggests that the holiday be held soon, within the next few weeks.

If the players check the information that accompanies the dominion map, they will find that the hard winter has also seriously depleted the financial resources of the dominion. However, the patriarch's warning about the need for a splendid holiday is serious. If asked, the duke's advisers concur with the patriarch to impress the gravity of the situation on the player characters. Should the player characters refuse to hold the holiday, the Dominion Confidence level drops 20 points within a week.

The Chief Magistrate's Audience

The door swings open and the patriarch raises his hand to invoke a benediction.

"May Vyolstagrad grow and prosper under the guidance of your hand in the absence of its sovereign lord, and may you always receive the blessing of he who is supreme above all things." The onlookers make the response and with these words the patriarch's entourage turns and leaves the audience hall.

As the group files out of the hall, the herald steps forward again. "The Honorable Baron Aethelwulf, son of Ealhmund, chief magistrate of Vyolstagrad!" With this he steps aside and the chief magistrate, dressed in black, fur-trimmed robes, enters the chamber. Coming to the foot of the dais, he kneels, bowing his head before you.

Baron Aethelwulf will not begin his audience until ordered by the PC seneschal to rise and speak. It is expected that this command will come quickly. Should the PC force Aethelwulf to kneel very long, the chief magistrate takes it as a deliberate slight, putting him in a bad mood for the rest of the audience.

The chief magistrate has come to present a case of murder to the PC, since the nature of the case is such that he cannot render a judgment himself. As final arbitrator of justice in the dominion, the PC must make the disposition on the case.

As the chief magistrate explains it, the facts of the case are this:

One week ago, a knight of Stamral (or a neighboring dominion from your campaign) was in the lands of Vyolstagrad. Although Vyolstagrad now holds an uneasy peace with Stamral, relations in the past have not always been good. Indeed, in previous years, this same knight led several raids against the borders of Vyolstagrad. This knight, Heimgarson by name, was noted for his savagery and prowess.

During his travel through the dominion, the knight had cause to stop for the night in the village of Stryna. There he was set upon by Ruva Kolchitsky, a burgomeister of the village, and slain. Although this Kolchitsky attempted to flee to the wildlands after the deed, the sheriffs were swift in the execution of their duty and captured him.

That Kolchitsky had done the deed there is no doubt, as many of the villagers were witnesses. Under threat of torture, Kolchitsky readily confessed to the crime. In his defense, however, Kolchitsky offered evidence that Heimgarson had been responsible for the death of Kolchitsky's parents, wife, and children during one of his previous raids. These

SPRINGTIME IN VYOLSTAGRAD



statements were proved truthful by the local clergy and Heimgarlson's own dead lips confirmed them.

Normally, the question of punishment would not be in doubt—the murderer would be executed. However, the burgomeister is a popular, respected, and influential man in his village and those who heard the case, particularly the villagers of Stryna, were moved by his defense. The duke of Stamral, however, is demanding that the killer be turned over to him.

If Kolchitsky is allowed to go free, relations with Stamral will be further strained, and they are already not good. If Kolchitsky is given to the duke of Stamral for punishment, there is a chance the village of Stryna and the surrounding districts will revolt. Even if this revolt is quickly crushed, the love of the dominion for its ruler will be greatly reduced. Either way, the situation could lead to serious consequences.

If the character consults with any advisers, they tell him that the duke of Stamral can raise a large enough force to present a serious threat to the dominion. The outcome of any war with Stamral would be uncertain. The duke of Stamral is sending ambassadors to hear the PC's decision. They will arrive in five to ten days. The PCs can delay their deci-

sion until then.

THE TRAVELER'S AUDIENCE

Concluding his presentation of the case, the chief magistrate bows to you and leaves the chamber. As he leaves the chamber, the herald steps forward once more.

"Presenting Magister Formiesias of Thyatis, son of Marcos the Trembler, special procurer for their Royal Highnesses, the Princes of Glantri, ambassador-at-large, Impresario-of-select-wonders," he loudly announces. Entering the audience hall behind him is a short, portly man, dressed like a poppinjay. He wears a short riding cloak, brilliant red and trimmed with white furs. His emerald-green doublet is puffed and slashed with orange ribbons and topped with a high, lace ruff. Yellow and blue cross-gartered hose cover his legs and lead to leather, oversize boots. Under one arm is tucked a broad-brimmed hat, its gold and white plumes trailing to the floor. Under his other arm are three gold-capped scroll cases.

Striding to the dais, he makes a sweeping bow to you and the others, his stringy

white hair falling over his eyes. Standing, he puffs his cheeks from this sudden exertion and wiggles his broad, black, oiled mustache. Darting his bright eyes about the court, he awaits leave to speak.

Milos Formiesias is the owner of the Traveling Exhibition of Wonders, of which Earthshaker is a part. He has come to seek a temporary charter allowing him to set up his tents and open his exhibition to the people of Vyolstagrad.

Milos describes his exhibition in glowing terms but gives only mysterious hints about his prime exhibit, Earthshaker. Examine the list of exhibits on the pullout handbill to concoct your own description for the players. Since you are playing Milos, be sure to phrase everything in flowery and marvellous descriptions. Do not lie about the exhibits but, like Milo, don't be afraid to stretch the truth.

If the PCs have not realized by this point that Milos's exhibition solves a major problem (entertainment) for the ducal holiday, you may have to prod them a little. The various advisers can bring this point to the PCs' attention. Ultimately, the player characters should want Milos's exhibition to arrive.

When negotiating, Milos makes the following points.

He needs several acres of land for his show. He suggests that he could set up on the shore of Marsh Lake outside the town of Vylstagrads, since there is a rocky outcropping there that is necessary for the protection of one of his exhibits.

He must, in order to survive, charge an admission to various exhibits. If he is not allowed to charge admission, he must secure a retaining fee from the court (his starting price is 10,000 gp).

If necessary to seal the contract, he offers to turn over 10% of all profits to the local clergy, as a tithe. (This will immediately secure his favor with the chaplain of the court.)

He requests permission to perform one major landscaping project for the duke. He suggests draining the swamp, but it could equally be re-routing a river, clearing a forest, etc. If he can get money for this task, he will.

If the PCs agree to these terms (or anything similar), Milos pops open a scroll case and produces the contract. This is a long roll of parchment covered with crabbed writing. He asks for the seneschal's signature on this, explaining it is his standard contract to ensure the safety of both parties. If the characters insist on reading it, give them the pull-out contract from the center of this booklet.

Once Milos has concluded his business, he leaves the court with the same puffery and pomp that marked his arrival. At the door, he turns, bows once more, and says, "My Lord, you shall not regret the wonders that I bring for your amusement and education! The name of Formiesias as showman extraordinaire is reckoned throughout the world! In four days Magister Formiesias' Traveling Exhibition of Wonders will be open to do business in Vylstagrads!" With these words he leaves.

Waiting outside for Milos is his wagon. Rolling up tarps that cover the sides, he reveals signs that state:

MAGISTER FORMIESIAS[®] TRAVELING EXHIBITION OF WONDERS!

Man-Eating Monsters subdued
by the fairest Maidens of the Land!

Fantastical Wonders from the
far Corners of the World!

Creatures from the Edge
of the Foul Pit!

Awesome Displays of
Might and Power!

Come see Thrills and
Wonders unheard of!

As a huge black man drives the wagon through Vylstagrads, Milos stands on the seat, shouting for attention and tossing handfuls of leaflets to the crowds gathering in the streets. There is a copy of this leaflet on the pullout sheet. Once he has left town, he continues shouting his announcements as long as anyone is in sight, until he finally crosses the border to the east.

THE COMING OF EARTHSHAKER

Three days have passed since Milos Formesias had his audience with you. In anticipation of his arrival, you have announced a ducal holiday. Wandering minstrels, possibly hearing of the holiday, have been arriving. Many have been extolling the virtues of the Traveling Exhibition of Wonders. Leaflets announcing the impending arrival of the Traveling Exhibition of Wonders have cropped up everywhere, almost, it seems, from thin air. The peasants, caught up in the increasing excitement, are busily preparing their best foods and clothes for the coming revel.

It is the night of the third day and the fair is to open tomorrow, yet there has been no sign of Milos or his exhibition. No tents have been set up in the land assigned. There has been no sign of Milos. If his circus does not appear on time tomorrow, you are going to have a problem. But now, it is very late and dark and there is nothing you can do until morning.

Thump! Thump! Thump! You spring awake, eyes wide open, sitting upright in bed. The panels of your door quiver from heavy pounding on the other side. "Arise, my lord! We are doomed! Oh, come quickly, disaster and death are upon us!" The voice of the speaker is filled with

panic! Striking a light in the darkened room, you stumble to the door. What horrible fate has struck your dominion in the dead of the night? Casting the door open, you duck as the chamberlain swings a heavy spear butt for another thump on the door.

"My lord, have you seen it? What does it mean? What have we done that the gods should bring this fate onto us?" The chamberlain, panting in panic and his eyes bulging in fear, rushes into the room and pulls you to a window. What can you possibly see in the middle of the night? But wait, looking to the north and south, you see sunshine! There, dead ahead, standing in the field you authorized for the fair is a giant! More than a giant, it is a colossus! Towering above the castle is an awesome metal man! It's broad shoulders blot out the rising sun, casting a shadow of darkness over Vylstagrad.

As you watch it, it makes no movement nor does it show any signs of life. But at its feet you see brightly colored tents and scurrying movement. Could this possibly be Magister Formesias' Traveling Exhibition of Wonders?

The scene that greets the characters is Earthshaker and the Traveling Exhibition of Wonders. Just at dawn, with the 'small' magics that he possesses, Milos has caused

his exhibition to appear.

The panic Earthshaker's appearance has caused in the castle is nothing compared to what is happening in the town of Vylstagrad. Merchants and peasants are busily loading their possessions for a hasty departure from the town. The streets are jammed with laden ox-carts, bewildered guardsmen, and religious fanatics convinced that the end has come. At the main gate, trying to force his way into town, is Milos Formesias on his wagon. As he passes through the streets, he shouts assurances that Earthshaker will cause no harm, that it is only a part of his Traveling Wonders. In his wake he leaves an amazed but substantially relieved populace.

If the PCs have not already sought him out, Milos now requests an audience. He has come to explain that Earthshaker is a part of his exhibition and that it is totally harmless. In addition, he offers to give the PCs a personally guided tour of the inside of the great machine before opening his show to the general public. He repeatedly assures the player characters that no harm will come to them or Vylstagrad, at least not by his doing. He promises that they will see wonders like they have never seen before. If the PCs insist, he allows himself to be scanned by any type of detection spells they care to use. He is not lying, he is not evil. Essentially, he is perfectly innocent, although he is a huckster through and through.

THE TRAVELING EXHIBITION OF WONDERS

The breeze flutters the brightly colored pennons that grace the tent tops of the Traveling Exhibition of Wonders. The tents, gaudy and opulent at a distance, look worn and patched on closer inspection. Set up between the feet of Earthshaker, they are dwarfed by the immense pillars of Earthshaker's legs. The tents are all sizes and shapes—a handful of colors strewn across the ground. Some quiver and tremble with resounding roars and shrieks. Others seem grim and foreboding, hiding terrible mysteries within. Gilded wagons form a wall across the back of the encampment.

Moving in and about the tents are gaily dressed clowns, strolling minstrels, hawkers waving roasted onions and strips of dried meat, and bare-chested fellows casually swinging wooden mallets. Tumblers and acrobats practice graceful leaps and rolls on the greensward while animal trainers lead strange creatures to the water's edge.

As Milos enters the camp, he becomes a flurry of activity—ordering tents straightened, sending hawkers into town, hustling incredible creatures out of sight, and setting performers to practicing. Turning

jovially to your group, he booms out, "Welcome! Welcome, noble lords and ladies, to the most magnificent collection of wonders, marvels, oddities, and antiquities of the land of man and of the secret places where men dare not go! Come and enjoy the bizarre and enlightening sights we present for you!"

Milos then proceeds to take the PCs on a tour of the different sights and shows his exhibition has to offer. His many exhibits are listed here. If you wish, you can take the player characters through these, describing each in glowing details. As Milo you can stress the horror of this thing, the great rarity of that, the utter perfection of another, and so on. At the same time, he laces his descriptions with flattering comments to the PCs—mentioning their bravery, courage, knowledge, worldliness, etc. By doing so, he wants to make the player characters feel good about themselves and, thus, feel good about his exhibition.

1. A live medusa, viewed through an arrangement of mirrors.
2. The animated skeleton of a gargantuan gargoyle.
3. Mangire, the Cursed Seer, a sad man

whose predictions are always utterly incorrect, but who is compelled to make them.

4. The Mirror of Nabros, which reflects an image showing the true, secret nature of any person looking into it.
5. Morphiras, the Immortal Woman, a beautiful young girl who is supposedly immortal, but is actually a fake.
6. Perdu the Marvellous, a low-level MU who amuses the peasant crowds with his tricks.
7. The Brothers Hargest, a trio of exceptionally fine tumblers and clowns.
8. Nimble Dava, a quick-witted minstrel who will compose a ballad on any topic in one minute or less.
9. The Choir of Evil, a sextet of charmed harpies who sing their seductive songs for the crowd, entrancing for a short period many who listen.
10. The Wizard's Dance, a ballet/folk dance. All the dancers and musicians are animated objects, and there are no living actors.

And, of course, there is his best item, saved for last—Earthshaker.



THE GRAND TOUR

After showing all of the various marvels he has in his tents, Milos Formiesias invites the characters to take a tour of the inside of Earthshaker. In fact, he graciously offers to let them take the tour free of charge! In addition, he will personally guide them. Again, he has no intention of harming the PCs and does not want any harm to come to them.

To conduct the Grand Tour, you will need to use the *Key to Earthshaker* (pages 11-16). Boxed descriptions have been prepared for only the most important sections inside Earthshaker, so you must play the part of Milos creatively, inventing extravagant and overblown descriptions yourself. The tour can follow any route you choose, but must start in the foot and should end in the control room.

No doubt the player characters will have many questions concerning Earthshaker, its operation, and its history. Below are Milos's answers to some of the more standard questions.

History

Milos doesn't know who built Earthshaker, but he knows that it was built at least 3,000 years ago, probably by a race of evil gods similar in skill to dwarves or gnomes. Legends tell of an evil giant named Morag who threatened to conquer not just the world, but the sun and the moon also. These gods sired the hero Zarka, who defeated Morag by trickery and stole away the gem containing his soul.

Without his soul, Morag hardened and became a mountain of iron.

Milos discovered Earthshaker on one of his collecting expeditions for the princes of Glantri, deep in the wild mountains far to the west. He persuaded the gnomes living in the behemoth to return with him to Glantri. Once there, the princes, in their wisdom (and fear of each other), refused to buy the device, ordering him instead to take it from their lands. He did manage to bargain for a way of magically transporting it, so as not to cause destruction and ruin as he traveled.

Operation

Milos really doesn't know how Earthshaker works, except that it uses a lot of coal and boiling water to do things and that it makes a horrendous noise when it moves. The whole thing has been run for centuries by a clan of gnomes living inside, but they won't tell anyone anything useful about Earthshaker.

Security

Milos is aware that many unscrupulous types would like to gain control of Earthshaker, but he really isn't worried. First, when the entrances are sealed, Earthshaker is nearly invulnerable to outside attack. Second, the gnomes are vital to the operation of the machine and they are steadfastly neutral in all things. As such, they will refuse to operate the machine for good or evil. This is why

they are with his exhibition—Milos never tries to conquer anyone. Third, when in operation, Earthshaker uses an incredible amount of coal and water. Once out of fuel, Earthshaker is helpless. Fourth, Milos, because he entertains with such great and marvelous wonders, has powerful and important friends throughout the known lands, including the Princes of Glantri, the Emperor of Thyatis, and the Great Khan. They would be very upset if anyone was to take Earthshaker away from Milos. Finally, if someone did manage to control Earthshaker, machines would eventually break. Since the secret of these machines is one of the mysteries of the gnomish clan's god, the part would be unrepairable until control of Earthshaker was permanently returned to the gnomes.

The Plot Thickens

While the characters are taking their tour of Earthshaker, their real adventure will begin. Unknown to them and Milos, a group of powerful, evil NPCs has managed to infiltrate the insides of Earthshaker. Since the arrival of Earthshaker in this dominion, this evil group's leader has arrived with the gem of Morag. He plans to seize the control room and set the gem back into its proper place. This will allow him to control Earthshaker without needing coal or the gnome operators. This attack is described in *The Villains Attack!* (pages 17-18), following the key to Earthshaker's interior levels.

KEY TO EARTHSHAKER

General Descriptions

Many of the things that appear inside Earthshaker can be found in many different places. Instead of repeating these descriptions over and over, a general description is given here. Use these general descriptions as a basis for describing many of the items the PCs find inside Earthshaker.

It is important to always remember that Earthshaker is a gigantic machine, not a magical construction. While it is quite fantastic simply because of its size, it does not rely on any magical principles to make it operate. Where possible, seemingly realistic devices are described to explain many of Earthshaker's abilities, such as moving an arm, bending, etc.

However, this is a fantasy, so you shouldn't feel pressed to explain how everything works. If players, trying to be clever and trip you up, argue that Earthshaker cannot do this or that because of science, technological limitations, or whatever, kindly listen to their arguments and then tell them they are wrong. Like magic (which doesn't exist in the real world), Earthshaker's science and technology exist because you say they exist.

Light: The interior of Earthshaker is lit gloomily at best and is pitch-black in many places. Any area where there is no significant machinery or activity is unlit. Areas where the gnomes live and work are lit by fires or flickering torches. The only natural sunlight that enters comes through the eyes, mouth, and ears.

Air: The air throughout Earthshaker is breathable, but it is not always fresh or pure. It is best on the command deck and the living quarters. In the unoccupied areas, it is very stale with little breeze. On decks filled with machinery, the air is filled with soot, steam, smoke, and oil fumes. Characters who stay on these decks for any length of time will be covered with oily black grime which takes considerable scrubbing to get off.

Sounds: With cavernous spaces and hard metal walls, echoes abound within Earthshaker. In areas of little activity even the slightest whisper will rebound several times. Where machinery is operating the racket is incredible. Characters will have to shout to make themselves heard over the noise. Typical noises include metallic crashes from gears, groaning squeaks from iron plates, the singing of wind passing through cables, explosive hisses of steam, the regular thumping of pistons, whistles of safety valves, the creaking of shifting girders, and the roar of blazing furnaces.

Whenever the characters try to locate the

source of a sound by listening only, roll 1D6. If the die roll is a one, the character has correctly guessed the source (or direction) of the sound. Otherwise, the echoes confuse the character so that he thinks the sound came from an entirely random direction.

Materials: Virtually everything inside Earthshaker is metal. The builders of the machine had little desire or taste for ornamentation; hence, everything is very functional. The overall effect is one of great mechanical power. The outside is covered by metal plates, fastened together with huge rivets. No attempt is made to hide these on the inside. Most things are not decorative but practical. Nonetheless, the lack of ornamentation does not mean the inside is plain. The girders, lattice catwalks, support arches, machinery frames, cables, steam pipes, railings, and ladders have been given small decorative touches that blend into the background.

The most common colors are black, dark blue, and rust. Layers of oil, soot, and grime cover many surfaces, making them dull black. Frequently used areas and machines have been blued or oiled to a shiny dark blue or brilliant steel color. Many places, especially lesser-used areas, are streaked with rust.

Creatures: Officially, nothing but the gnomes live inside Earthshaker. However, as in all cases, small vermin have found the machine a convenient home. In dark corners characters may notice large rats, escaped housecats, owls, mice, common salamanders, squirrels, and in rare instances, small monkeys. In the cavernous areas, bats are often seen and heard. None of these creatures present any threat to the player characters.

Machinery: There are large numbers and varying sizes of machines in Earthshaker. The functions of some are obvious; others will be absolutely incomprehensible to the player characters. All are whirling, clicking, hissing, pumping, vibrating, and clanging devices. Some are masses of gears, cog-wheels, and camshafts. Others may be spinning governors, pistons, and ratchets. Included here is a list machine parts you can use to make your own descriptions for the different machines of Earthshaker. For example, you might describe a machine as "a mass of whirling gears with ratchet hammers rising and falling on steam valves." It is up to you to add color and feel to the descriptions and make Earthshaker come alive for your players.

All the machinery inside Earthshaker is operated by steam or muscle power. There is no use of electricity anywhere within Earthshaker.

Bearings	Linkage
Belt	Piping
Boiler	Piston
Brake	Pulley
Camshaft	Pump
Clutch	Ratchet
Cogwheel	Rod
Counterweight	Roller
Crane	Spring
Drum	Switch
Fan	Trip Hammer
Filter	Tube
Flywheel	Turbine
Gauge	Valve
Gear	Wheel
Governor	Whistle
Hook	Windlass
Lever	

Steam Pipes: These metal pipes are hot to the touch. Any pipe that takes 20 or more points of damage will rupture, spraying steam 10 feet in a random direction. Anyone hit by this steam takes 1-20 points of damage.

Elevators: These are one-person elevators. They consist of a constantly moving belt (one side going up and the other down) with handholds and small platforms to stand on. To use, a character simply grabs a handhold and steps on the platform as it goes by. The elevators move at the rate of 10 feet per round. The elevator belt can be broken by 30 points of damage to a single spot.

Ventilation Shafts: These shafts are 1 foot in diameter and covered with a wire screen. All the shafts lead to fast, whirling fans, making them unsuitable as a means of getting from one place to another.

Girders: These are metal supports, 2 feet wide. They can be walked on or climbed.

Ladders: These are made of welded iron. The rungs are spaced for gnomes and so are closer together than on normal human ladders.

Catwalks: The catwalks are all 2' 6" wide suspended metal walkways that tend to squeak and sway alarmingly when walked on or when Earthshaker is in motion. The walkway surface is an iron lattice (allowing characters to see through it) and there are short (2 feet high) metal railing on both sides.

Speaking Tubes: All the decks are linked by a system of speaking tubes (much like those used on old-time steam ships). Next to each is a bank of switches labeled with the names of different areas. Flipping the switch for the desired deck pumps a blast of steam through a high-pitched whistle at the other end. Conversations can then be held by

KEY TO EARTHSHAKER

shouting and listening through the tube. For many standard messages, the gnomes don't bother with conversation, but use a code of timed whistles instead.

Gnome Crew: There are 327 gnomes living and working aboard Earthshaker. Statistics for workers, supervisors, and the leaders can be found on the NPC Roster. You should keep track of the number of gnomes killed (if any). All gnomes are armed with clubs and daggers, and supervisors have swords. There is one supervisor on each deck.

LEGS (Maps 1-9)

Obviously, Earthshaker has two legs. Only the maps for the left leg are shown; the right leg layout is identical to the left. If you want to be exact about the shape of the right leg and foot, be sure to remember the differences between left and right. For example, the door to the outside which is on the outer or left edge of the left foot is on the outer or right edge of the right foot.

DECK 1. THE SPRING FLOOR

The deck is unlit and the air is stale and foul. The floor is coated with damp, oily slime. Set in orderly rows are huge coil springs, reaching from the floor up to the 10-foot-high ceiling.

The springs, 5 feet in diameter, act as shock absorbers whenever Earthshaker takes a step. Each time the machine steps down on a foot, the pressure collapses that leg's deck to a 2-foot height. Anything that cannot fit in this 2-foot height (by lying down, collapsing, etc.) is hopelessly crushed. Neither characters nor magical items are allowed any saving throw from the 500,000 tons coming down upon them.

DECK 2. THE ANKLE

This cavernous deck has a sloping ceiling, 15 feet high near the toe and rising to 45 feet at the point where it joins the leg. Near the outer end of the foot is a large drum. Cables 12 inches thick wrap around this, pass along the roof, run through a pulley system and disappear up the tube of the leg. Near the heel is a huge machine, a collection of gears and ratchets. The air is hot and stuffy. Jets of steam intermittently shoot from the machines. Ten gnomes, sweaty and stripped to their pants, stand about, occasionally pulling on levers or yelling into speaking tubes.

The floor at the heel of the foot is a huge turntable, again steam powered. A system of gears and ratchets allows the foot to pivot slightly to each side.

DECKS 3-8. LEGS

These decks have only small platforms for floors and no ceilings. If the player characters have any encounters on these decks, use the Generic Maps.

DECKS 9 and 10. LIVING QUARTERS

The deck is brightly lit by flickering torches. Occupied at various tasks are many gnomes, perhaps 30 to 50 or more. Gnome children are playing games while their mothers sweep and cook. Gnome men scuttle back and forth, going to and from their jobs.

These decks are the living quarters of the gnomes. At any given time there are approximately 50 gnomes, mostly females and children, on each deck.

A. Family Quarters: Each chamber houses five to eight gnomes, all of one family. Each is fitted with bunkbeds, chairs, and at least one table, all built to gnome size. Each is decorated with items the family has collected. In addition to normal items found here, there are one to three gnome-sized swords and suits of chainmail.

B. Bachelor Quarters: Each small chamber is home for three unmarried gnomes. There is a three-tier bunkbed, three chairs, and a table in each. These chambers have fewer decorations than the family quarters, but each includes a complete set of gnomish arms and chainmail armor.

C. Communal Kitchen: This large, open area is used by the gnomes to prepare meals for the clan. The women do the cooking, preparing mostly roasted or boiled potatoes, parsnips, onions, turnips, and rutabagas mixed with dried or salted meats. The food is mostly bland. The area is strewn with baskets of vegetables, barrels of salted meat, cleavers, knives, cauldrons, firewood, and coal. Someone is always cooking here. When Earthshaker is in operation, the gnome workers eat in shifts.

D. Storerooms: These are piled high with vegetables, dried meats, barrels of salt, dried fish, and other victuals.

E. Latrines: These have working plumbing and are kept scrupulously clean.

11. WAIST DECK

Smoke and steam hang heavy in the air, casting the deck into a squalid gloom. Leather-aproned gnomes stand at vast banks of machines, ducking blasts of steam while shouting to each other above the noise.

The machines on this deck are used to bend Earthshaker at the waist. The machines marked A on the deck are huge pneumatic pumps which provide the push to raise or lower different sides of Earthshaker. There are 20 gnomes on this deck.

12. LOWER FURNACE DECK

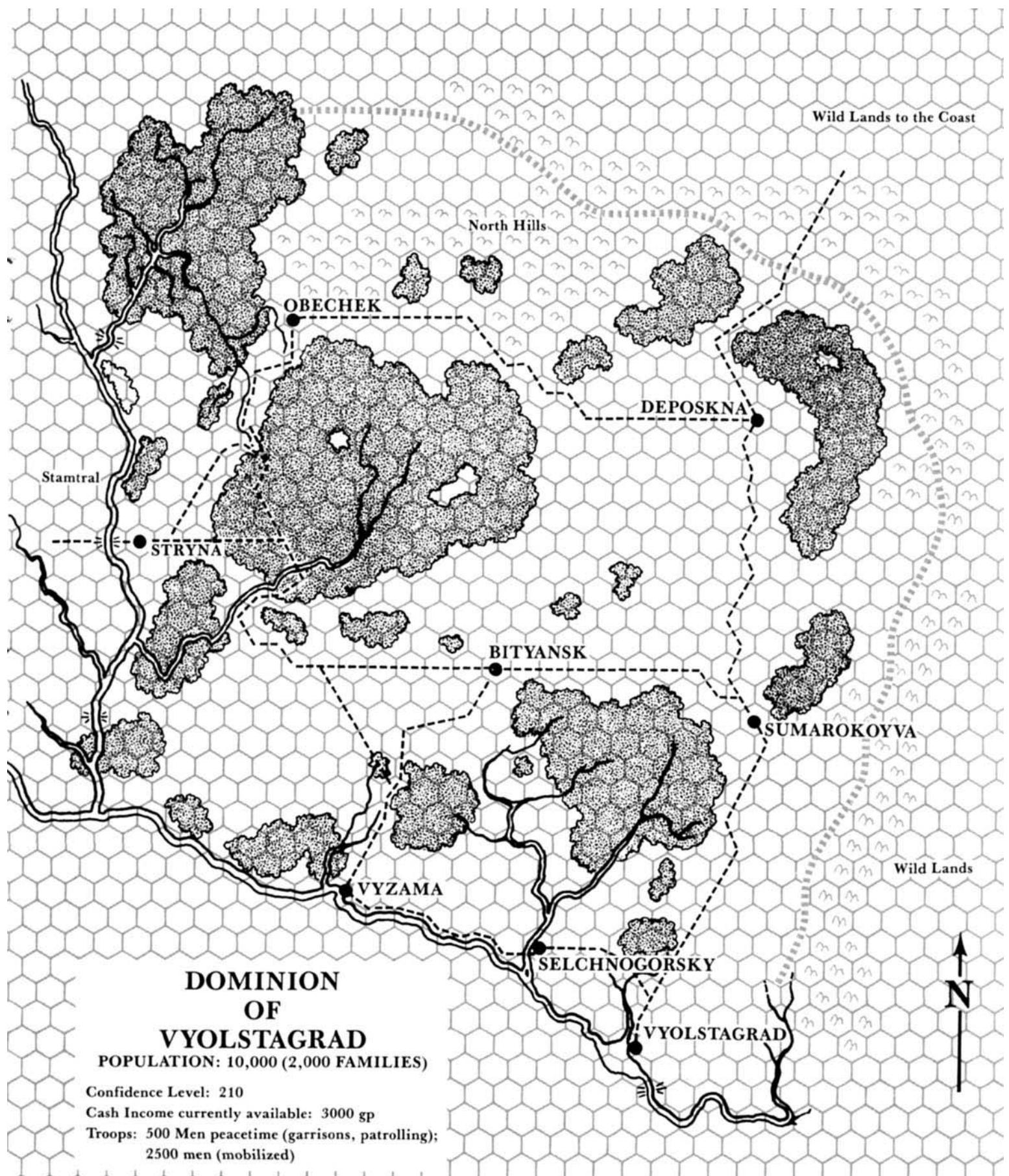
The air is a haze of smoke and ash, stiflingly thick and hot. A ruddy glow comes from the back of the deck, diffused by the dark clouds of ash and live steam. A coal-black gnomish figure, dressed in heavy leather suit and a thick goggled hood, peers at you through the dirty air. He frantically gestures to you, pointing to your eyes and mouth. Within seconds you begin coughing on the dust, tears streaming from your face. It almost as if you have entered the darkest and most infernal reaches of the Netherworld.

This deck holds the bellows that pump air to the furnaces. Across the back are the bottoms of the furnaces where the ashes collect to be hauled away. The air is extremely foul on this deck, filled with coal ash, steam, and heat from the furnaces. The 20 gnomes who work this deck all wear protective leather suits, fitted with hoods. These hoods have thick cotton breathing filters and thick-lensed goggles.

Characters can see only 10 feet through the gloom. Any character who remains here without goggles for more than one turn will be temporarily blinded by the ash. This blindness disappears one turn after the character leaves the deck. In addition, any character who remains two turns without a breathing filter suffers 1-10 points of damage each turn from breathing the ash.

A. Bellows: At each end of the deck are two huge, round, accordion-like bags—the bellows that pump air into the furnaces. Huge beams run across the tops of these, connecting to steam pistons that pump the bags. These in turn are connected to the banks of machinery that surround each bellows.

B. Ash Carriers: Set in the floor are iron tracks, like those used to guide ore cars in a mine. These run across the floor, through



DOMINION

OF

VYOLSTAGRAD

POPULATION: 10,000 (2,000 FAMILIES)

Confidence Level: 210

Cash Income currently available: 3000 gp

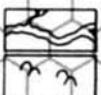
Troops: 500 Men peacetime (garrisons, patrolling);
2500 men (mobilized)



Farmland/meadows



Forest



River/stream



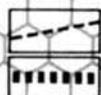
Hills



Ford



Town



Track



Border

ATTENTION ONE AND ALL!!!!

COMING SOON — THE GREATEST COLLECTION OF
WINTER'S IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD!

WONDERS IN THE KNOWN WORLD:

SEE AMAZING FEATS OF ACROBATIC DARING

LOOK ON THE FACES OF THE MOST HIDEOUS

HEAR THE ENTHUSIASTIC CONCISE AND NEW CREATIVITIES
ON STAGE IN THE WORLD

HEAR THE ENDING SONG
AND LIVE

- 10 -

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MAGISTERIAL FORMESTRATION

A SHOW THAT YOU WILL REMEMBER FOR AS LONG AS YOU LIVE

and on Special Engagement, see the greatest

wonder of the ancient age — a sight that will awe and fill with wonder even the greatest lords of any land!

MAGISTER FORMERISAS. TRAVELING EXHIBITION OF WONDERS!

—

by the Contracting Party.

This contract, subject to the clauses set out herein, is considered legal and binding.

shall not be held accountable to the Contracted Party, without exception.

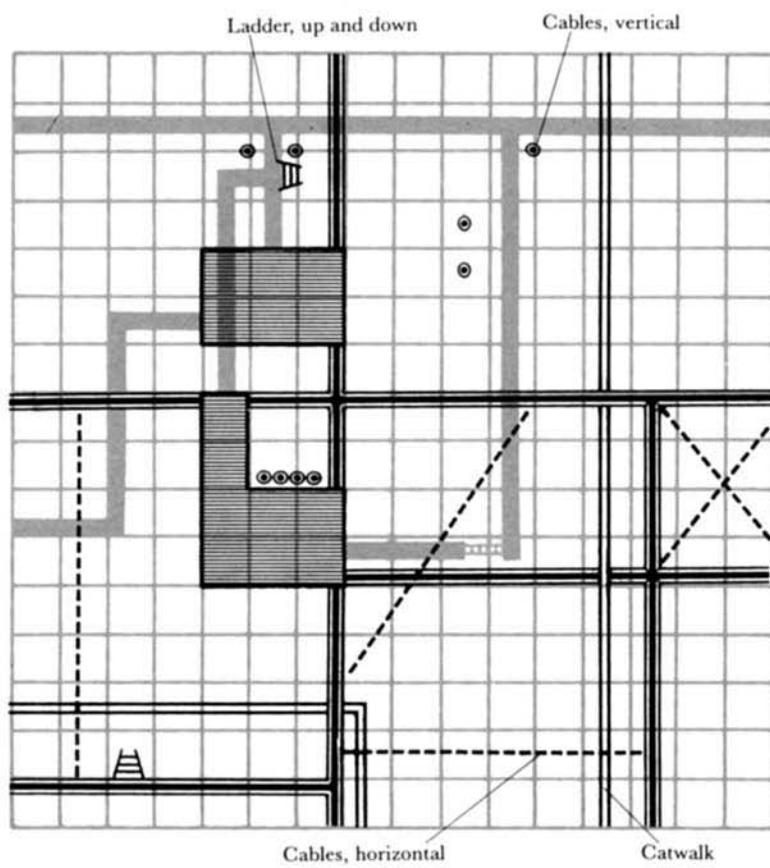
As a sign of good faith to the Contracted Party, the Contracting Party hereby agrees to provide such arrangements for the safety and security of the enterprise, its properties, and employees as are deemed necessary by the Contracted Party up to and including the recovery of lost property and the recovery of expenses resulting from damage caused by those within and including all territories possessed, claimed and otherwise controlled

As further consideration and a sign of good faith between the Contracting Party and the Contracted Party, the Contracted Party hereby agrees to undertake one civil engineering project as designated by the Contracting Party and agreed to by the Contracted Party, but that such work shall not require the employment of artisans and laborers except those currently in the employ of the Contracted Party. Furthermore, future indemnities and damages resulting from this work

day of _____ to the _____ of _____ such properties as explained in Clause A below. In addition, the Contracting Party authorizes the Contracted Party the right to require a fee of _____ from all those attending the enterprise, regardless of the ability to pay or social rank of the attendee. In return for these considerations, the Contracted Party swears to have available to the Contracting Party and those duly designated as being under its legal protection the exhibition, within the requirements established by the Contracted Party as necessary for its legal protection from indemnity and damages.

Whereas let it be known that by this contract the Contracting Party has agreed to hire, employ, commission, and otherwise retain the services of MILOS FORMESIAS' TRAVELLING EXHIBITION OF WONDERS, hereafter referred to as the enterprise, for the term of employment as stated above. Upon receipt of the just consideration of _____ or upon mutual agreement of the Contracting Party and the Contracted Party for the consideration of _____ to be paid upon _____ but no later than _____. In addition to this consideration, the Contracting Party also assigns in temporary lease for the period from the _____

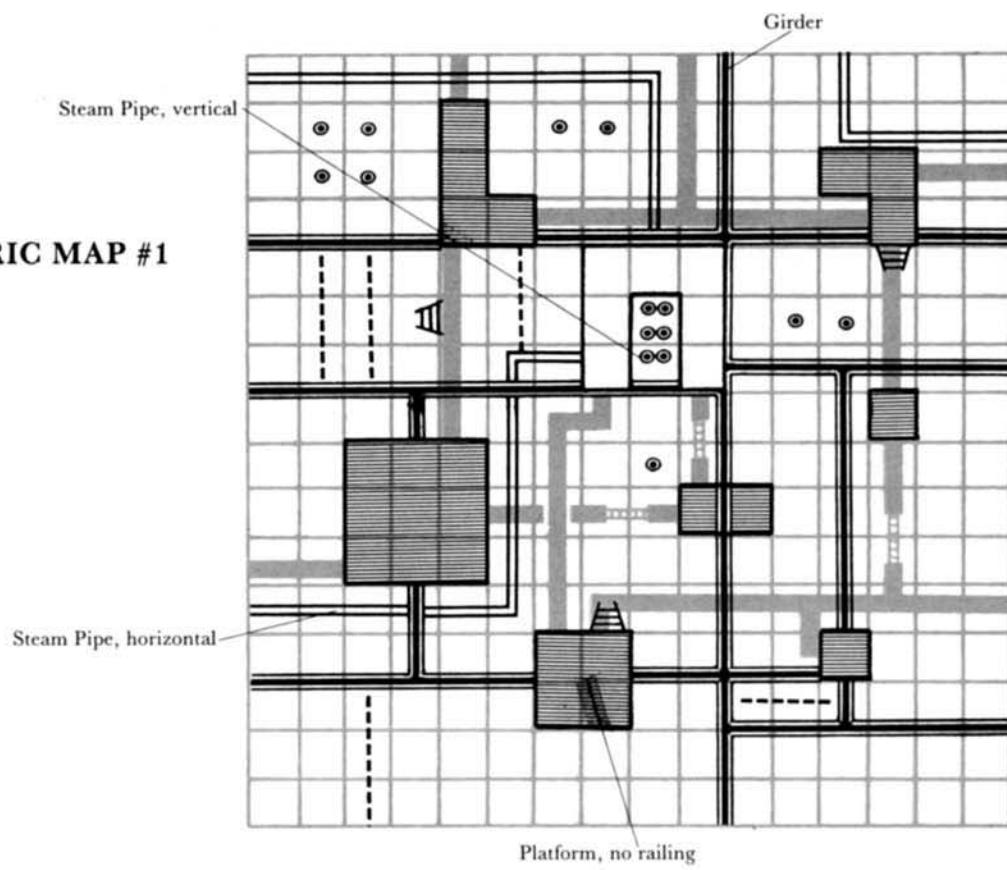
Whereas and hereafter let it be known that this contract constitutes an agreement between _____, subsequently referred to hereafter as the Contracting Party, and Milos Formesias, subsequently referred to hereafter as the Contracted Party, entered into on the _____ day of _____ and to be considered valid until the _____ day of _____.

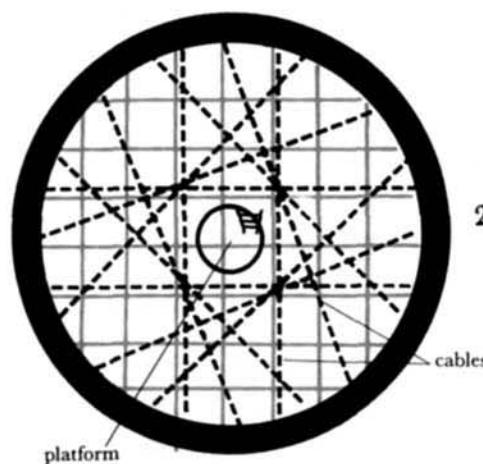


GENERIC MAP #2

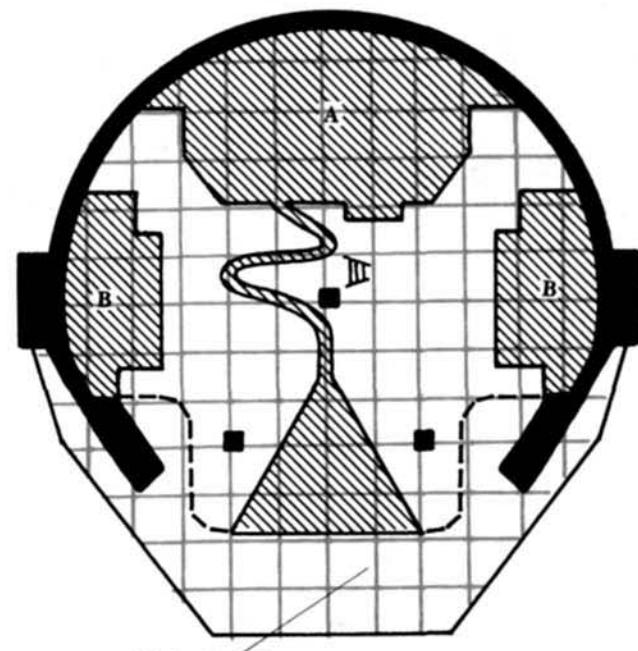
1 square = 5 feet

GENERIC MAP #1

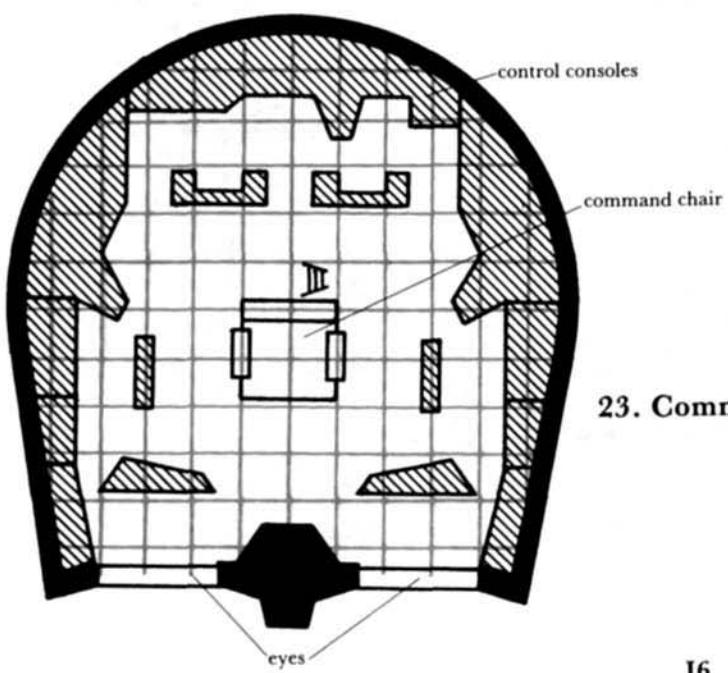




21. Head Swivel Deck



22. Speaker Deck



23. Command Deck

1 square = 10 feet

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The following non-player characters appear in *Earthshaker* and are important to the play of the module. All statistics, abilities, equipment, and general descriptions appear here so that you can reference these when needed during the course of the adventure.

Milos Formiesias

Neutral human showman

Strength	9
Dexterity	12
Intelligence	16
Constitution	8
Wisdom	18
Charisma	17
Armor Class	9
Hit Points	5

Milos is a sharp-witted, smooth-tongued huckster and pitchman. He is fond of "taking the rubes" and the comforts of life. For all this, he does have a sense of honor concerning the responsibilities placed on him and for those under him.

Krazmos

Clanmaster of the Earthshaker Clan
Neutral gnome

Armor Class	4
Hit Dice	4
Hit Points	18
Move	60' (20')
Attacks	1
Damage	1-8 + 1
Save As	Dwarf 4
Morale	10

Krazmos is a middle-aged gnome, extremely clever and sharp in his dealings with outsiders. It is he who negotiated the current arrangement with Formiesias and convinced his clan to accept the idea. He is friendly and outgoing but, like Milos, will try to take you for everything he can get.

Gryzix

Keeper of the Relic
Neutral gnome

Armor Class	5
Hit Dice	3
Hit Points	12
Move	60' (20')
Attacks	1
Damage	1-8
Save As	Dwarf 3
Morale	12

Gryzix is an elderly, bent, and grizzled gnome, devoted to his life as the Keeper of the Relic. He has the standard domination

power possessed by all keepers. He is not overly talkative and is very secretive and suspicious of any who display undue interest in the clan's relic.

Gryzix's aides all have the same statistics as Gryzix. They are armed with swords. Like their keeper, they are devoted to the Relic and will sacrifice their lives to protect it.

Gnomes

	Workers	Supervisors
Armor Class	5	5
Hit Dice	1	2
Hit Points	5	10
Move	60' (20')	60' (20')
Attacks	1	1
Damage	by weapon	1-8
Save As	Dwarf 1	Dwarf 2
Morale	8	10
Alignment	Neutral	Neutral

The gnomes are generally cheerful and pleasant toward outsiders. They are not particularly warlike and will avoid combat when possible. However, they do not react well when anyone tries to destroy machinery inside *Earthshaker*, no matter what the reason. Thus, they will do their best to prevent any PC or NPC from damaging *Earthshaker*.

NPC Villains

Given below are personality descriptions, magical items, and spells for the various villains that appear in this module. Statistical information on each villain appears on the Roster Card found on the module cover.

Boyar Viktor Zhucharnov

Viktor is a true villain; a scheming, deceitful, treacherous, and black-hearted man. Like all villains, he is courageous and boastful when he has the upper hand and cowardly and treacherous when he is outnumbered. Viktor has expensive tastes, preferring fine clothes, medals, and ornately decorated equipment. He is proud and haughty and is totally devoid of moral scruples. He is also a quite charming man in social situations.

He does not want to be identified in the course of this caper, so he hides his face under a heavy hooded cloak any time he is encountered.

Weapons: sword + 4

Armor: leather armor + 4, ring of protection + 3

Magical Items: elven boots, potion of elemental form, potion of elasticity, 2 scrolls of communication (forming a complete pair)

Serge Schrot

A thin, pock-marked man, Schrot is Viktor's toady and hanger-on. A whining weasel of a man, he always supports Viktor. Viktor often abuses him and humiliates him in front of others, but this does not alter Schrot's slavish devotion to the boyar.

Weapons: none

Armor: ring of protection + 4, ring of protection + 3, scarab of protection

Magical Items: disintegrate scroll, scroll of seeing, scroll of fireball delay, potion of fortitude, staff of fire

Spells:

1st level: magic missile (x4), light (x2)

2nd level: detect invisible, ESP (x3), knock

3rd level: fireball (x3), haste, dispel magic, wizard eye

5th level: dissolve, teleport, cloudkill, wall of stone

6th level: projected image, death spell, anti-magic shell

7th level: magic door, statue

8th level: power word blind

Ivan Beria and Voroniev Lukin

These two are Viktor's hatchet men, the ones who go out and do Viktor's dirty work. Both are extremely competent, but very brutal and lacking finesse. Their manners are low-bred and Viktor seldom allows himself to be seen in public with either of them.

Weapons: sword + 4 (draining), 10 arrows + 2

Armor: plate mail + 2, shield + 2

Yuri Kurochin

Kurochin is Viktor's personal cleric, wholly dedicated to the cause of evil. Although both Viktor and Kurochin's superiors think they control him, he actually serves only himself in a mad pursuit of power.

Weapons: mace + 2, staff of harming

Armor: plate mail + 4

Magical Items: ring of seeing, scroll of communication (matching one of Viktor's)

Spells:

1st level: cure light wounds (x6), resist cold

2nd level: find traps, hold person (x4), resist fire

3rd level: darkness (x2), cause disease (x2), curse

4th level: animate dead, dispel magic (x3)

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

5th level: *insect plague, commune, cure critical wounds* (x2)

6th level: *barrier* (x2), *cure all*, *word of recall*

7th level: *holy word, life drain* (x2)

Varma, Melchia, Tuva, and Yelna

These mercenary adventurers have been promised wealth and position by Viktor. He considers them little more than extra bodies and would be pleased if none survived.

Weapons: sword + 1, 4 arrows of disarming

Armor: plate mail + 1, shield + 1

Magical Items: potion of speed

Roskosov

This impoverished evil wizard has joined the group for money only. The others consider him only useful for his added firepower.

Magical Items: ring of protection (x2), staff of commanding

Spells:

1st level: *magic missile* (x3), *sleep*

2nd level: *invisibility, knock, web, wizard lock*

3rd level: *hast, lightning bolt* (x2), *clairvoyance*

4th level: *polymorph other, confusion, wall of fire*

5th level: *pass-wall, feeblemind*

6th level: *flesh to stone*

Forgest

This thief, one of Viktor's proteges, is assigned to this group to ensure that none betray him. He will watch the others of the group as closely as he watches for enemies.

Weapons: bola + 2 (returning), dagger + 3

Armor: ring of protection + 3, leather armor of etherealness + 5

Magical Items: potion of blending, antidote potion, scroll of spell catching

Dimitri and Budenny

These fighters are the muscle of this group. Although Dimitri is in command, he has very little sense of tactics and takes most of his "suggestions" from Ushankov.

Weapons: sword + 2

Armor: banded mail + 3

Magical Items: boots of traveling and leaping, potion of freedom, scroll of creation (only 1), scroll of communication (only 1, matches one of Viktor's scrolls)

Ushankov

Again, Ushankov has been assigned to watch over this group and make sure they do what they are supposed to do. His job is relatively easy, since he is really the tactical brains of the group.

Weapons: sword of deceiving + 2, 3 arrows of blinking, 2 arrows of penetrating, 1 arrow of screaming

Armor: leather armor + 4, ring of protection + 3

Magical Items: potion of diminution

Maggione

A wanderer from a foreign land, Maggione has fallen in with Viktor's band of plotters. He is not really aware of what is going on here or what Viktor intends to do; he only knows that he gets paid for his work. If any character can talk to him for 30 minutes and explain Viktor's true intent, there is a 30% that Maggione will change sides. (Add or subtract 5% for each point of the persuading character's Charisma adjustment, if any.)

Weapons: dagger of speeding + 1

Armor: ring of protection + 4, ring of protection + 3

Magical Items: potion of luck, potion of elemental form, rope of climbing, wand of paralyzation

Spells:

1st level: *charm person* (x2), *magic missile* (x3)

2nd level: *detect invisible, web* (x2), *mirror image, levitate*

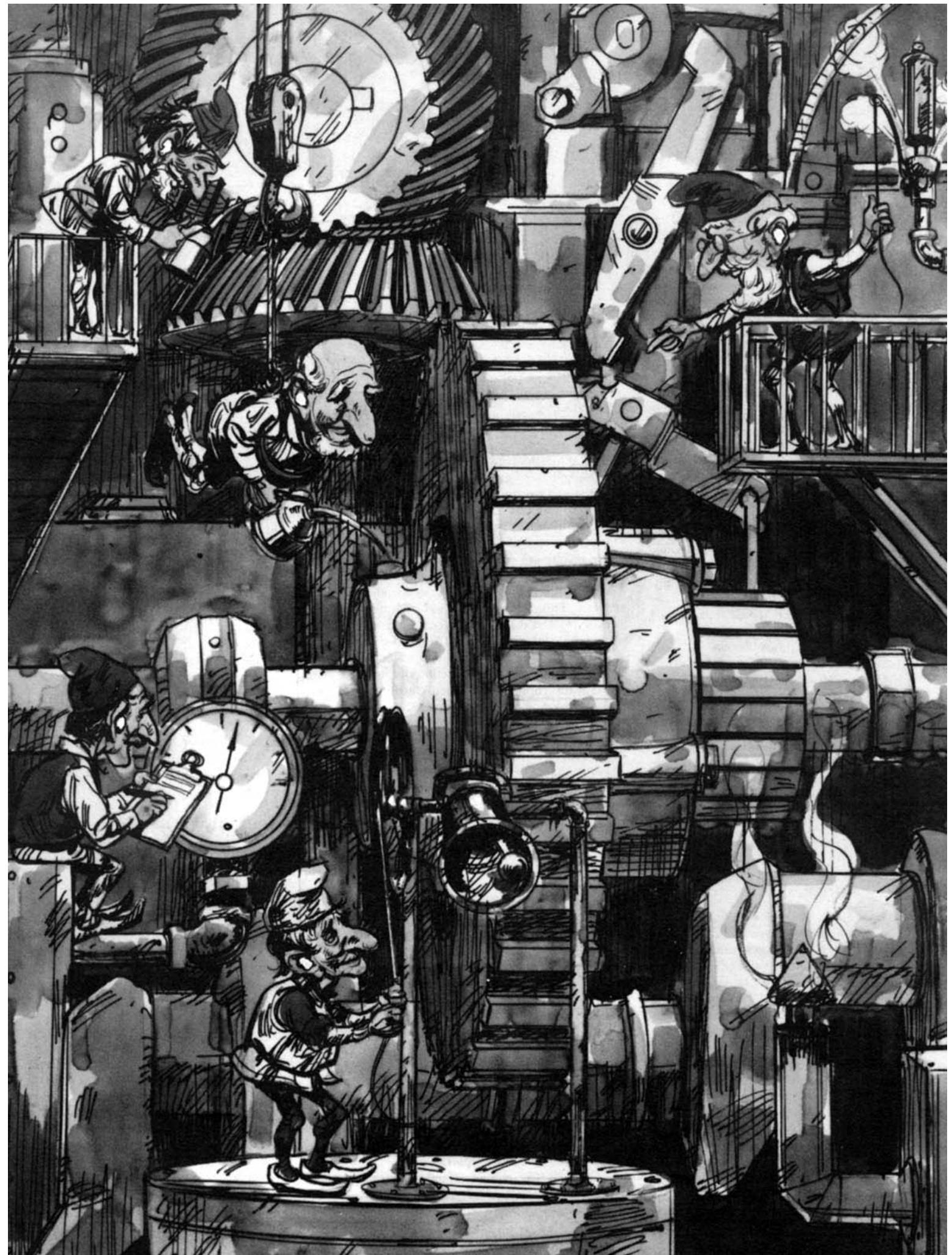
3rd level: *haste, fly, fireball* (x2), *hold person*

4th level: *polymorph self, confusion, ice storm, remove curse*

5th level: *dissolve, feeblemind, cloudkill*

6th level: *wall of iron, death spell*

7th level: *power word stun, reverse gravity*



KEY TO EARTHSHAKER

heavy iron doors, and into the bottom of each furnace. The other end of the track ends at a sliding doorway to the outside. On each track is a pushcar used to haul ashes out of the furnace. These ashes are then dumped out of Earthshaker through the doorways.

C. Loading Crane: This is one of several swivel cranes found on Earthshaker. It can be extended through the small doorway directly in front of it. It is used for loading and unloading various supplies.

13. MAIN FURNACE DECK

A constant, throbbing roar swells through this cavernous deck. Where the deck just below had been foul and stifling, this one is smoky and roasting! Across the back stand huge furnaces, their doors flung open. Casting huge shadows in the ruddy light are more than two-score gnomes, stripped to their loincloths and sweating heavily. Cheerfully singing and chanting, they are heaving shovelfuls of coal into the furnaces, taking their scoops from heaped piles at the front of the deck. Looking up, you see only cavernous blackness.

There are 50 gnomes on this deck, tending the furnaces. All are soot-streaked and dripping sweat. The mounds of coal tumble down from the front of the deck, some rising to heights of 40 feet or more. The heat is intense, and within seconds all characters begin to sweat heavily. Characters in metal armor quickly notice the temperature as their suits begin to warm up. Characters so attired suffer 1-4 points of damage per turn from the hot metal if they remain on the deck for more than one turn.

14, 15: BOILER DECKS

There are no maps for these decks, since nearly all the space is taken up by the bottoms of the huge boilers that generate steam pressure for Earthshaker. If the characters have an encounter on these decks, use one of the Generic Maps provided with this module. The decks are very hot and humid, moisture dripping from nearly every surface.

16. ENGINE DECK

Of all the decks you've been on, this is by far the noisiest. Giant pieces of machinery loom over you; shafts thicker than your waist lead to gears taller than two men. Whistles and bells seem to sound constantly, barely heard above the squealing bursts of steam and grinding groans of

metal. Gnomes are scattered all about, wads of cotton stuffed in their ears, working by lantern light at control panels, scurrying to and fro with oil cans, chalking out notations on slates, shouting into speaking tubes, and waving dripping grease pots. Some even dangle by ropes over black voids, daubing grease or tightening bolts with heavy spanners. The air is filled with the smell of oil and soot.

This deck contains the top ends of the boilers, steam engines that drive pistons and gears to power the arms and legs, huge torque mechanisms, and gearboxes. The noise level is so great that even shouted conversations are impossible at ranges greater than 10 feet.

A. Boilers: A boiler tank can be ruptured by 100 points of damage, but if it happens, the results are devastating. A broken boiler will explode in 1-3 rounds, causing 200 points of damage from the roiling steam and hot water. This damage is reduced by 1 point for every foot of distance between the character and the exploding boiler. There is no saving throw for this damage. Note that since there are two boilers, the destruction of one automatically ruptures the other, causing a second explosion of the same intensity.

In addition, the explosion totally destroys the deck, floods the lower levels, and blows off the chest and shoulders of Earthshaker, scattering debris across a half-mile radius (2,640 feet). Everything in that area, including buildings, animals, people, and trees, has a 40% chance of being damaged by this blast.

For simplicity, you can assume that 40% of the area within half a mile of Earthshaker is destroyed. Damage will be worst immediately around Earthshaker and will become gradually less the further away one gets. For example, should this disaster occur while Earthshaker is standing outside the walls of Vylstograd, nearly all of the town and the castle will be leveled by the force of the explosion. If any characters are outside of Earthshaker and the explosion occurs, check to see if they are struck by wreckage (40%). If they are, they suffer 20-80 points of damage (2d4x10).

The magnitude of the disaster described above does not take into effect any aftereffects to the surrounding land. These include fires burning out of control and the fact that the remains of Earthshaker will undoubtably fall on something. Whatever it falls on will be destroyed and the resulting shockwave will have the effect of an earthquake on the surrounding area.

B. Drive Engines: These machines convert the power of steam into physical motion. Each engine is a massive collection of pistons, steam lines, gears, and drive shafts. Each stands taller than a two-story house.

C. Drive Shafts: The main drive shafts run from the engines to gigantic transmission gear boxes. Each shaft is 10 feet in diameter. When operating, these spin at tremendous speeds, creating a high-pitched and painful whine.

D. Transmission Gears: Like everything else on this deck, these machines are huge. Each is a collection of gears and shafts set at all different angles. The gears range from the size of a large man (the smallest gears) to gears three stories high. Anything (including a character) that falls into these while they are turning is instantly and utterly crushed. Should a player character slip and fall into one of these, you should allow a saving throw vs. Death Ray. If the character makes the saving throw, he has managed to catch a girder, pipe, or other metal outcropping, but his toes are dangling inches from the mangling teeth of the gears.

E. Shoulder Joints: Like the transmission gears, these are huge collections of gears and driveshafts. Unlike other sections of the deck, there is no flooring under these areas. Instead, whirling shafts and thigh-sized cables extend into the blackness of the arms. As a safety measure, all the gnomes working in these areas are roped to safety lines, to prevent a missed step from becoming a deadly plunge into the darkness.

17, 18, 19, 20. ARM DECKS

There are no maps for these decks, nor are they part of the tour Milos gives the characters. Like the leg decks, these are mostly empty space with platforms at various points. Running down the length of the arm are spinning shafts and cables connecting to gears and cable drums. If the players have an encounter in these areas, use the Generic Maps provided with the module.

21. HEAD SWIVEL DECK

Set in a circle around the walls are rows of thick cables. Massive U-bolts anchor these to the walls. Like a spiderweb, the cables run through a system of pulleys to a winch set in the center of the floor. A smaller platform filled with levers, valves, and gauges rests atop this winch. Six gnomes are lounging up there, awaiting orders to activate their machines.

KEY TO EARTHSHAKER

The winch and cable system that fills this deck is used to turn Earthshaker's head from side to side. Along the front and back walls are a series of small (only as big as a man!) steam jacks that tilt the head forward and back.

Unlike many of the other decks, this one is relatively well-lit and clean. It is not very quiet, however, since a great deal of noise and vibration rises from the engine deck below.

22. SPEAKER DECK

"I AM EARTHSHAKER!!!!!"

As you step onto the deck, these words boom and roar all around you, crashing against your eardrums and shaking your body right down to your liver. Caught unawares, your eyes unfocus and then snap back to clarity. As the raging echoes subside, you hear the light hysterical guffaws of a gnome from somewhere on the deck.

Sunlight streams across the deck from the gaping opening of Earthshaker's mouth. Here the view is one of dizzying heights; far below are minuscule huts, fields, and streams. At the back of the

chamber is an arrangement of tubes, speaking trumpets, bells, whistles, drums, and chimes. Standing in the midst of all these instruments and pipes is a small cluster of earmuffed gnomes snickering and mischievously grinning at their grand joke.

This deck is the voice of Earthshaker. It contains the mechanisms for working Earthshaker's jaw and creating its voice. There are 10 gnomes standing in the group watching you.

A. Voice Mechanism: This is a forest of tubes, musical instruments, voice trumpets, and other noisemakers. All are arranged such that when one speaks into the proper tube or plays an instrument, the sound is amplified a thousand-fold. A huge, flaring horn directs this sound out through the mouth of Earthshaker.

Whenever the voice of Earthshaker is activated, all characters without some type of ear protection (or silence spell) must make a saving throw vs. Paralysis or be stunned for one round. In addition, any character standing directly in front of the main speaker horn will be permanently deafened if the saving throw is failed. (A deaf character is surprised on a

roll of 1-5. Deafness can be cured with a *cureall* spell.)

B. Jaw Motors: To increase the illusion of Earthshaker's aliveness, the builders of Earthshaker have fitted it with pistons to work the lower jaw of the machine. These can be triggered to raise and lower the jaw in unison with any words spoken through the voice mechanism. This jaw is tremendously strong and can cut through any standard magical or non-magical object that might get caught in it.

23. COMMAND DECK

This deck is best lit of all on Earthshaker, sunlight from the great eye-ports making everything cheery and bright. Arranged along all the walls are banks of levers, speaking tubes, and gauges. Gnomes, perched on high stools, lean over these, intently shouting orders, pulling levers, and studying dials. In the center of the deck is a massive metal chair, even by the massive standards of Earthshaker. Standing on this, since it is far too big for him to sit in, is a grizzled and authoritative looking gnome, issuing commands to those at the various control banks.



KEY TO EARTHSHAKER

There are 20 gnomes working at the various control banks. The gnome on the command chair is Krazmos, the clanmaster (see NPC sheet for statistics). This deck is the command center of Earthshaker. Each control bank is connected to and monitors one area or function of Earthshaker. All commands for the movement of Earthshaker are issued from here. Krazmos decides what Earthshaker will do and then the gnomes at the consoles inform the other decks of what they must do and when they must do it. Because of its importance, everything on this deck is considered critical machinery should the characters attempt to damage it.

24. BRAIN DECK

Soft metallic echoes fill the room, as if some ghostly presence was whispering softly from the corners. There are no bells, no whistles, no grinding roars and squeals of machinery. All is quiet. In the center, a slim pedestal rises from the floor, ending in a cup-shaped socket. Behind this stand six gnomes, tense and alert, their weapons half-drawn. At the edge of the light is an elderly, bent gnome, his back to you, fiddling over a baroque and gilded machine.

This deck was once where the "brain" of Earthshaker was connected to the body of the machine. Now, the brain long missing, it is the position of the clan's revered relic, the

Clock of Timelessness. The elderly gnome is Gryzix, the Keeper of the Relic (see NPC sheet for his statistics); the other gnomes are his aides (again, the statistics for these gnomes are on the NPC sheet). They will not allow anyone to approach their treasured relic too closely.

The clan's relic, the Clock of Timelessness, is a 5-foot clock with a skeleton movement (the inner works can be seen clearly). Unlike Earthshaker, the relic is ornately decorated; gears are filigreed, armatures sculpted, and jewels are lavishly set in the clock's face. The relic has all the standard powers of a relic as described in the Companion Rules.

In addition, the relic can be used to fashion the rare *equation of time*. The *equation* allows time travel to any specific point in time. First the keeper selects the date (down to the second) the *equation* will derive. Then the keeper and his aides must study and record the movements of the clock in perfect detail for one year. With this data, they must perform thousands of complex, magical, mathematical formulae in their heads. Nothing of this can be written on paper and the slightest error will cause the end result to be imperfect. Performing these calculations takes 20 years.

When the final formula has been completed, the keeper and the clanmaster can correctly set the clock. When the clock is set, one person or object is instantly transported through time to the chosen date. The transported object remains there for 24 hours and then must either transport again (by use of

another *equation of time*) or fade into non-existence. Anything that fades disappears utterly and totally from the Multiverse as if it had never existed (although any possessions or previous deeds of a character do not change).

The pedestal in front of the clock once held the *mind gem*. This gem (now in possession of the villain Boyar Viktor Zhucharnov) provided power to Earthshaker, freeing it from its steam engines, and allowed it to operate its machinery without the aid of living workers. When set in place, Earthshaker follows verbal commands from the master of the *mind gem*.

25. OBSERVATION DECK

The cold, clean air sweeps across the open deck, singing through the railings. Tucked into quiet nooks are the nests of hunting birds, now deserted for the day's hunt.

The observation deck is simply a huge open platform on the top of Earthshaker's head. Running around the outer edge is a simple railing, 3 feet high. Any character looking down from the edge must make a saving throw vs. Paralysis or suffer from vertigo. Characters who are affected cannot do anything until they move away from the edge, and cannot move closer to it again unless they make a successful saving throw vs. Paralysis (with a -2 penalty on the die roll).

THE VILLAINS ATTACK!

This section forms the heart of the adventure for the PCs. You should begin this attack at some point while the PCs are on the grand tour of Earthshaker.

Background on the Villains

The villains (listed on the NPC sheet) are trying to gain control of Earthshaker so that their leader, Boyar Viktor Zhucharnov, can use it to overthrow the rule of King Ericall. Whereas this would normally seem to be an impossible task, the group has been extremely patient, awaiting the moment when conditions are perfect to make their move.

Boyar Zhucharnov is a greedy and grasping noble in the court of King Ericall. For a long time he has been looking for a method to gain control of the lands claimed by his king. A direct coup d'état was not possible, since Zhucharnov, evil through and through, knew that he could never command the support of Ericall's vassals. Therefore, he was forced to look for a more underhanded way.

His opportunity came to light several months ago when Zhucharnov learned of the existence of Earthshaker. He instantly saw that he could conquer Ericall's forces if only he could gain control of Earthshaker. Attacking the machine was out of the question and so was trying to bribe the gnomes who operate the machine. Likewise, he knew that even if he were able to get inside Earthshaker, he would never be able to force the gnomes to his will. He quickly realized that what he needed was the *mind gem* of Earthshaker. With this returned to its position on the brain deck, he could control the machine with or without the help of the gnomes.

To this end Zhucharnov devoted his energies and his fortune. Now, finally, after consulting vile sorcerors, spending vast sums, and sacrificing the lives of evil hirelings, Zhucharnov has obtained what he needs: the *mind gem* of Earthshaker.

Even while he was pursuing the *mind gem*, Zhucharnov was planning for the next step of his plan. From the moment he first saw Earthshaker, Zhucharnov had his henchmen following it from land to land. One by one he has ordered these henchmen to infiltrate the machine. Entering with various tours, these henchmen have managed to slip away and secrete themselves in different places throughout the machine. All this they have done without revealing themselves to the gnomes or Milos. Actually, it was easier than it seemed; the spaces inside Earthshaker are so vast that a small group of daring souls could easily avoid notice for many months.

All that was required was patience and cunning. Now Zhucharnov is ready to strike!

The Plan

Zhucharnov's attempt to conquer Earthshaker is presented as a sequence of events given below. Each step takes place at a specific place on board Earthshaker and there are set amounts of time that will pass between each step. These steps do not take into account the actions of the player characters to stop the takeover. The sequence of events will be followed until it succeeds or it becomes obvious that, because of the player characters, something different must be done.

The part of the player characters in this stage of the adventure depends entirely on the cleverness and initiative of the players. If the player characters, confused or simply unresponsive, do nothing to stop Zhucharnov, he will succeed. To win, the player characters must hunt down Zhucharnov and try to stop him—he will not come to them!

During this attack, remember that Zhucharnov wishes to control Earthshaker so he can defeat King Ericall. To do this he needs a complete, working Earthshaker, not a damaged, immobile one. Therefore, he and his henchmen will not intentionally damage any of the machinery in Earthshaker. If the player characters begin damaging equipment, Zhucharnov will be all the more determined to dispense with them quickly.

Zhucharnov's plan is outlined below. It is divided into a series of discrete steps. The steps will be carried out in the order listed, unless the actions of the player characters make this impossible. Each step lists where it takes place, when it takes place, what NPCs are involved, and any special effects it may have on future events.

Again, if the actions of the player characters disrupt Zhucharnov's plan, you as referee must improvise the most likely response for Zhucharnov. Remember that his main goal is to gain control of Earthshaker and he will sacrifice anyone to obtain his goal. Also bear in mind that he is not fully informed about the player characters or their whereabouts. He doesn't know what they are capable of until they start demonstrating their abilities.

Step 1: Zhucharnov's Arrival

Location: Boiler Deck

NPC's Present: Group 1—Schrodt (magic-user), Ivan (fighter), Voroniev (fighter), Zhucharnov (thief)

Schrodt, having received a signal from

Zhucharnov, magically transports him and the *mind gem* onto the boiler deck of Earthshaker.

Step 2: Moving Out

Location: Boiler Deck, Right Leg Deck 4, Left Arm Deck 19

Time Elapsed: 1 Turn

NPCs Present: All

Zhucharnov, using the speaking tubes, contacts his two groups of agents and orders them to prepare to move out. Group 1 (which he is with) is on the boiler deck, Group 2 is on right leg deck 4, and Group 3 is on left arm deck 19. All have orders to rendezvous on the command deck. Anyone listening on a speaking tube to communications from the boiler, leg 4, or arm 19 decks overhears this conversation.

Step 3: Action on the Engine Deck

Location: Engine Deck near Left Arm

Time Elapsed: 3 Turns

NPCs Present: Group 3

This group, led by the fighter Dimitri, is discovered by the gnomes near the opening to the left arm on the engine deck. This was foreseen and Dimitri, following plans, begins to fight a delaying action. He does not try to break through the gnomes, but keep them occupied. Meanwhile, Zhucharnov and his group await a chance to slip across the deck unnoticed.

Several reports come in from the engine deck reporting a major attack by hordes of unknown enemies. Later reports give the number at 20 to 30 attackers and state that they are being contained, but more help is needed to defeat them.

Step 4: Hostages!

Location: Living Quarters Deck 9

Time Elapsed: 1 Turn

NPCs Present: Group 2

This group, led by Kurochkin the Cleric, invades Deck 9 at the entrance to the right leg and begins taking hostages. The gnomes on the deck use the speaking tubes to send an alarm to all other decks. After 4 rounds of fighting, Kurochkin and his group manage to secure the deck. Of the 50 gnome women and children on the deck, 20 are captured and held hostage.

Kurochkin uses the speaking tubes to demand the surrender of the gnomes.

THE VILLAINS ATTACK!

Although the gnomes refuse to surrender, their morale automatically drops by 3 points because of the hostage situation. Kurochkin and his group set up a barricade in the center of the deck. They do not move for the rest of the assault, unless Zhucharnov is defeated. If he is beaten, they try to fight their way down the leg and out of Earthshaker.

Step 5: Further Gains

Location: Head Swivel Deck

Time Elapsed: 3 Rounds

NPCs Present: Group 1

Using the diversions created by Dimitri and Kurochkin, Zhucharnov manages to slip his group across the engine deck unnoticed. In a sudden assault he captures the head swivel deck before any alarms are raised. All communication with this deck is cut off.

Step 6: Regrouping

Location: Engine Deck and Head Swivel Deck

Time Elapsed: 2 Rounds

NPCs Present: Groups 1 and 3

Having secured the swivel deck, Zhucharnov uses the speaker tubes to order Dimitri to break through and join him on the swivel deck. Dimitri and his group change from token resistance to a full-scale attack. Unless the player characters can stop them, they succeed in joining Zhucharnov.

Step 7: The Final Assault

Location: Command Deck

Time Elapsed: 2 Turns

NPCs Present: Groups 1 and 3

Zhucharnov and his assorted villains make

their final attack on the command deck. The gnomes there, having had some warning, make a spirited defense but ultimately lose. However, in the battle, three of the villains (other than Zhucharnov or Dimitri) are slain. As referee, you should choose which three are removed.

Step 8: Earthshaker Unleashed!

Location: Brain Deck

Time Elapsed: 1 Turn

NPCs Present: Groups 1 and 3

In a quick strike, the villains gain control of the brain deck. Zhucharnov places the *mind gem* on the pedestal. With a groaning stir, Earthshaker comes to life! Zucharnov then orders Earthshaker to begin the march on Alpha!

EARTHSHAKER TRIUMPHANT!

This section is used only if Boyar Zhucharnov has successfully placed the *mind gem* in position in the brain room of Earthshaker. If Zhucharnov has been defeated before this, these events will not occur. In this case, you should skip this section and go directly to "The Ambassador's Audience."

This section is divided into two main parts: Earthshaker In Motion and The Swath of Destruction. Read the first part carefully, since it contains rules and instructions about the abilities and effects an active Earthshaker has. After you are familiar with this section, you can play the events described in The Swath of Destruction. These events can occur in any order you desire.

Earthshaker In Motion

When Earthshaker walks, it is not just a simple matter of saying it moves from here to there; many important events must be taken into account with each step. The information and rules below are used whenever Earthshaker is moving.

Speed

Earthshaker covers 500 feet with each stride and takes one step every three rounds. He covers 1,000 feet per minute, 10,000 feet per turn (which can be rounded to 2 miles per turn), and 12 miles per hour.

The Stride (When outside Earthshaker)

Several things occur each time Earthshaker takes a step. These are described below.

Damage: Obviously, whatever Earthshaker steps on is destroyed; 500,000 tons is enough to crush anything. When it steps down, its foot sinks into the ground: 5 feet on solid rock and 15 feet on normal soil. Because of its weight, it will not even enter soft or marshy ground.

When it takes a stride, the bottom of Earthshaker's foot is raised 20 feet off the ground. It is quite possible for Earthshaker to step entirely over groups of people or small buildings. However, in areas like forests, each foot cuts a swath of destruction through the trees.

More devastating than this, however, is the shock wave that occurs each time Earthshaker sets its foot down. The shock wave has the effect of an earthquake spell with a radius of 60 feet and is equivalent to a half-strength earthquake (small buildings damaged but not collapsed, larger structures cracked but still relatively sound, no cracks in the earth) in a radius from 61 feet to 200 feet.

The Stride (When Inside Earthshaker)

Just as Earthshaker's footsteps are dangerous to those outside the creation, the shock of the steps also affects those inside the machine. Each time Earthshaker takes a step, two things happen inside. First, warning whistles and bells automatically sound one round before the step actually occurs. When these alarms sound, every gnome grabs the nearest secure handhold. Those that must operate some machine during the step have small harnesses they can clip to a hook.

When the step takes place, a shock wave passes through the entire machine. All characters not secured or holding onto something are automatically flung 5-10 feet ($1d6 + 4$) by the resulting bounce. Those that are gripping something (railing, girder, etc.) must make a saving throw vs. Dragon Breath or have the same happen to them. Characters flung about suffer 1-6 points of damage and are knocked off their feet for the next round. In addition, there is a 1 in 6 chance the character will drop some item he is carrying in his hands. Note that these rules also apply to any NPC villains the players encounter.

Other Actions

There are two other movements Earthshaker can make that significantly affect characters inside or outside.

Bending: Earthshaker has a limited ability to bend at the waist, but when it does so, it affects all decks above the waist. Like the stride, any bending action is preceded by alarm whistles and bells to warn the gnomes. Again, they secure themselves as best as possible as soon as the alarm sounds.

When Earthshaker bends, all the affected decks tilt down toward the direction of the bend. If the bend is slight (in your opinion), this has no additional effect except that anything dropped rolls in that direction. If, however, the bend is extreme, characters can move across a deck only by 'climbing' across the floor. This requires two hands and can be assisted by ropes, thief abilities, etc.

Fighting and spell-casting are impossible for any character not in a well-braced position. Characters who slip slide down the floor, suffering 1-4 points of damage per 10 feet slid. The character slides 60 feet per round until he runs into something or manages to catch himself. Once per round the character can make a saving throw vs. Poison. If successful, he manages to grab something and stop sliding. This occurs at the end of the round (or just before the character runs out of space). Thieves, because of their

climbing skill, can add 2 to the saving throw.

Falling Over: The most calamitous event that can happen for Earthshaker is if it falls over. If it falls, it is the last thing Earthshaker ever does.

First, Earthshaker, with all its mass and momentum from the fall, will be destroyed, smashed apart at the joints. This in turn will destroy the boilers, causing them to explode (see the Key for the effects of an explosion). In addition, the furnace will split open, strewing flaming coals and hot ash all over the surrounding area (and starting a great many fires).

Second, anything Earthshaker lands on is destroyed, as the force of impact drives the robot 40 feet into the ground (or 20 feet into solid rock).

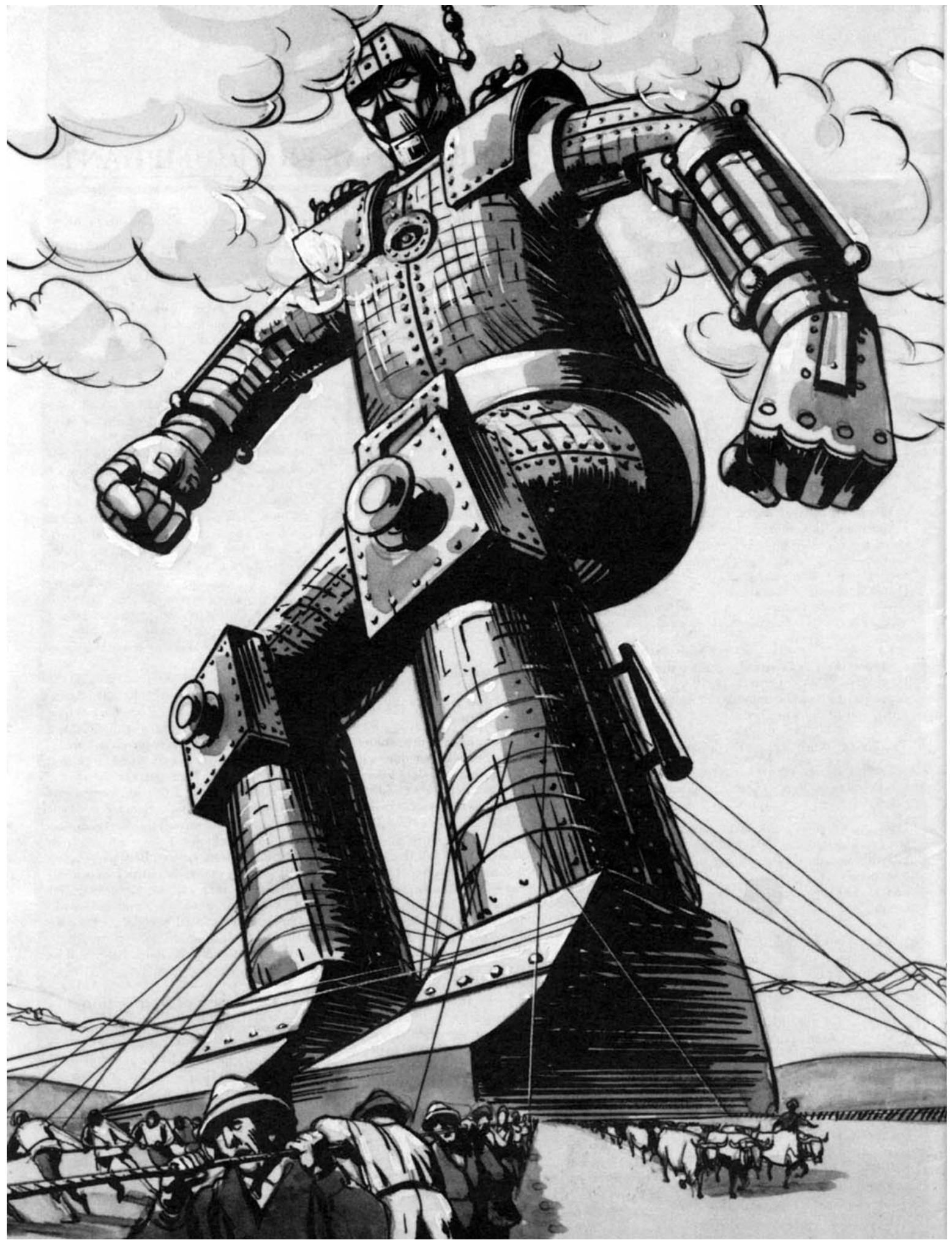
Third, all characters inside Earthshaker are flung about violently by the fall. Each character must make a saving throw vs. Death. Characters who fail the save suffer 10-100 points of damage ($1d10 \times 10$) from falling machinery, shock waves, fire, minor explosions, etc. Characters who make the saving throw still roll $1d10$, but suffer one-half damage. Everyone inside is knocked unconscious for 10-60 minutes.

Fourth, the shockwave sent through the ground will be tremendous. The fall of Earthshaker is roughly equivalent to a force of 6 on the Richter scale. Everything within 500 feet of Earthshaker will be reduced to rubble. Cliffs will fall, riverbanks split and crack, and hillsides slide away. Characters on the ground will be hurled 10-60 feet with tremendous force, suffering 1 point of damage per foot. There is no saving throw for this. Again, this damage is in addition to any suffered from the explosion of the boilers. Between a radius of 501 feet and 1 mile, the entire area will suffer the effects of an earthquake spell. Everything beyond this out to a 5 mile radius will suffer the effects of a half-strength earthquake spell, as explained above.

However, for all this, Earthshaker will be permanently stopped.

The Swath of Destruction

The activation of Earthshaker is not an automatic event. The simple mind of the machine, trapped inside the *mind gem* for centuries, needs time to restore and reorient itself to its body. One turn passes before it can regain control of its body. During this turn, Earthshaker begins to babble, twitch, and make many small, uncoordinated movements. Internally, machines start and stop, speed up, slow down, and act erratically by themselves. The gnomes, suddenly unable to



control the actions of the machine, are first confused, then frantic, and finally panicked as they gradually realize what is happening. From this point onward, the gnomes are of little use to the party members.

The mind of Earthshaker is an extremely simple thing. It does not have a will of its own; rather, it has enough self-perception to be aware of all its internal machines and its surroundings. It readily accepts orders from the Master of the Gem (the person who placed it on the pedestal). It will execute these orders as faithfully as possible, unless the actions would obviously lead to Earthshaker's destruction.

However, being pent-up in the *mind gem* for 3,000 years has distorted its perceptions. What little personality it has is now twisted and vengeful. Thus, not only will it carry out its evil and destructive orders, but it also will cause as much random destruction as it can while carrying out its orders. Earthshaker will take great primitive delight in demonstrating its awesome power.

Zhucharnov plans to storm Alpha with Earthshaker and to do this, he must first cross the dominion of the player characters. Zhucharnov does not intend to destroy the dominion, but as mentioned above, he cannot prevent Earthshaker from causing incidental destruction.

If the *mind gem* is removed from the pedestal or suffers 10 or more points of damage in a single attack, it explodes, causing 10-40 points of damage to all within a 20-foot radius. A saving throw vs. spells will reduce this damage to half. With the destruction of the *mind gem*, Earthshaker immediately returns to the control of the gnomes. (The *mind gem* automatically reforms 1,000 years after exploding. This is how Zhucharnov was able to recover it.)

1. The Attack

As soon as Earthshaker starts moving, the troops of Vylstograd also begin mobilizing. This happens whether the player characters are present or inside Earthshaker. The first concern of Rurynva (the captain of the guard) is the safety of the town. He will suggest (if the Seneschal is present) or order (if he is in command) that a company of 100 mounted men ride out and harry Earthshaker, attempting to lure it away from Vylstograd.

The company rides out and manages to draw Earthshaker's attention. Zhucharnov decides to make an example of these troops. Boasting out threats of death and destruc-

tion, Earthshaker pursues the horsemen, trying to stomp them flat. This the horsemen are able to avoid. Frustrated, Zhucharnov has Earthshaker bend over and bat at them with its huge hands (the effects of Earthshaker bending over are described under "Earthshaker in Motion"). Doing this, it manages to kill or incapacitate 1-10 horsemen each turn. The horsemen have a morale of 9. The horsemen continue fighting until all are slain or the company breaks. Each turn the horsemen harry Earthshaker draws the machine 1 mile further away from Vylstograd.

By the end of the pursuit, dusk begins to fall. Earthshaker is not fitted with any outside lights and cannot see in the dark. Therefore, Zhucharnov will cease operations for the night.

2. The Call to Arms

During the night, while Earthshaker stands immobile, the army of Vylstograd is busy. Again, if the player characters are not present, these actions are supervised by the captain of the guard. If any player character is present, the captain of the guard suggests the following preparations.

First, the captain orders a call to arms, mobilizing the peasant levy and stripping all the soldiers from the border patrols. This increases the number of soldiers available to 1,500. However, it leaves no patrols on the border, a fact that does not go unnoticed to Duke Stano's forces.

Second, using the *spade of digging* (found in the BOOK OF MARVELOUS MAGIC) and a levy of local peasants, work will be started on a pit 10 miles from Earthshaker's current position. This excavation takes two days (48 hours) to complete. When the workers are done, they will have a pit 100 x 100 x 40 feet. Working quickly, they cover this with a roof of branches, enough to hide its presence from those on the command deck of Earthshaker. During the time they are working, Earthshaker cannot be allowed closer than 5 miles to the site or those on board will be able to see the work underway.

Third, during the night, the citizens have gathered every piece of rope and cable in Vylstograd and the surrounding area. With these, 1,000 people have woven strong, thick hawsers. The troops, under the cover of darkness, have crept forward and wrapped these ropes around the legs of Earthshaker, making a spiderweb of thick ropes. Each hawser is fastened to a large tree. The people hope that these ropes will hold Earthshaker here or, even better, tip it over.

3. Tug of War

With the dawn, Zhucharnov and the others aboard Earthshaker discover the ropes that were placed by the local population. Unknown to the player characters, this preparation is not enough to hold Earthshaker in place by itself. However, there are two results. First, the unexpected action of the locals has created some consternation and confusion on the command deck. The guard against attack from inside is lowered, giving any characters onboard a better chance to storm the command deck.

Second, there is a slight chance that Earthshaker can be tipped over. Allow the player characters (regardless of whether they are inside or outside) to make the choices on this operation. There are 20 cables wrapped around Earthshaker's legs, extending out in all directions. Only three of the cables (which extend to the rear) have any chance of doing the job. Available to help pull on the cables are 1,000 peasants and 100 oxen. Each person counts as 1 and each ox counts as 3 for figuring the amount of pull on a rope.

To tip Earthshaker over, the peasants and oxen must pull two ropes connected to the left foot. Each rope must have a pull value of at least 600 (from peasants and oxen). In addition, all other ropes connected to the left foot (10 total) must be cut the instant Earthshaker begins its step. If these conditions are met exactly, the peasants will drag the foot backward as it raises into the air. Expecting to step forward, Earthshaker's body will be leaning forward. The result will be that Earthshaker overbalances and falls forward.

If the conditions above are not met exactly, Earthshaker is not stopped. Instead, it begins to march, uprooting the anchor trees and dragging the ropes along with it. Be sure to describe the tragic consequences of the scene to the player characters—the peasants thrown violently about by the snapping ropes, the bellowing of the yoked oxen as they are dragged behind, the heroic desperation of the peasants as they try to cut the oxen free, etc. Remember that if the attempt to tip over Earthshaker fails, the damage it causes while breaking free will be disastrous.

If Earthshaker breaks free, it continues its march toward Alpha. The pit is on a direct line from Earthshaker's current position to Alpha. Since the work is not done yet, Earthshaker must be diverted from its path for at least another day. Have the player characters decide what steps the forces of Vylstograd will take to effect this. Possibilities include harrying it with riders who try to fasten more ropes to the legs; setting the forest in front of

EARTHSHAKER TRIUMPHANT!

it on fire; using magical devices and spells to create traps and landmines in front of it; or having the peasants bribe the operators with massive amounts of food and supplies. Zhucharnov, being slightly mad, is in no particular hurry and delights in watching his giant machine destroy anything. Therefore, if the players can come up with a reasonable plan to distract Earthshaker, it will work.

4. The Pit

To start this episode, Earthshaker must be lured to the area of the pit. Like distracting Earthshaker, this is basically a matter of devising a reasonable plan. If the players can describe an interesting event or action that would catch the notice of those controlling Earthshaker, the machine will follow.

When Earthshaker reaches the pit, there is a 50% chance that those on board notice something odd about the ground and do not enter the area of the pit. This chance can be reduced by actions on the part of the peasants.

If peasants are on the far side of the pit making a demonstration, the chance of noticing the pit is reduced by 10%. If there are people actually standing on the roof of the pit, the chance of noticing the pit is reduced by 30%.

If those on Earthshaker notice the pit, the machine does not step into it and the effort of the peasants is wasted. However, if the pit is unnoticed, Earthshaker does step into it. There is a 70% chance that it falls over (see "Earthshaker In Motion" for the effects of a fall).

5. Aftermath

If the above measures fail to stop Earthshaker and the player characters inside cannot stop Zhucharnov, Earthshaker continues its march through Vvolstagrad and beyond. The Dominion Confidence level drops by 10 points automatically. Once it leaves the boundaries of Vvolstagrad, Earthshaker is technically beyond the concern of the player

characters. They can, however, continue their attempts to stop Earthshaker. In this they will be joined by the lords of other dominions threatened by the great machine. Of course, there will be suspicion and accusations against the player characters that they are the ones who are controlling Earthshaker. Player characters must allay these suspicions or leave quickly.

Regardless of the actions of the player characters, Earthshaker will be stopped before it reaches Alpha. If the characters do not follow Earthshaker's path, they eventually hear how it was defeated and how some local noble became rich selling the scrap iron. If the player characters pursue, they can join forces with other nobles and eventually someone (possibly the player characters, if they can come up with a good plan) will defeat Earthshaker. The events that happen in this part of Earthshaker's march are left up to you, as referee.

THE AMBASSADOR'S AUDIENCE



The allotted time has passed and the ambassadors from Duke Stamral have arrived at your court. They await an audience with you to hear your judgment concerning Sir Heimgarlson. Outside you can hear the growing noises of a crowd—the peasants, gathered outside the gate to hear the same judgment.

The herald opens the doors and calls out, "Sir Vorinice of Stamral and Sir Klytos of the Black Rock, ambassadors of Stamral." They enter, striding to the dais and stopping abruptly. They do not bow or make any signs of respect. In stony silence they wait to hear your judgement.

If the player character decides in favor of Stamral on this case, the Confidence Level of the dominion drops by 30 points. If the player character decides in favor of the peasants, the Duke of Stamral has advised his ambassadors that this will mean war between the two lands.

However, a crafty player character can avert this war in one of two ways. First, if the player characters have defeated Zhucharnov in his attempt to seize Earthshaker and have not destroyed Earthshaker in the process, they can use it to call the ambassadors' bluff. Of course, the ambassadors will not be impressed unless they see Earthshaker in action. Milos, for the help given him in regaining Earthshaker, will gladly give a

demonstration of its power by digging a channel and draining the swamp outside of town. This work, which normally would take months, takes Earthshaker about 3 hours. The ambassadors will be suitably impressed. Secondly, if the player characters defeated and destroyed Earthshaker, they can show evidence of the prowess of Vvolstagrad by pointing out the destruction of Earthshaker. The ruins of the machine also will suitably impress the ambassadors.

If the ambassadors do declare war, the player characters must fight it out. Should they have, for any reason, Earthshaker still intact, the matter will be decided quickly. Earthshaker has enough coal for three days of activity. This is more than enough to force the Duke of Stamral to sue for peace!

If the issue is to be settled without Earthshaker, the result can be decided by using The War Machine rules (*Dungeon Masters Companion*, page 12). The Duke of Stamral is fielding 6,000 soldiers. Their rating is Fair and their BR is 74. The force is entirely human. The player characters can choose the ground where the battle will be fought (the first battle, anyway; the enemy plans to drive from the borders of Stamral to the town of Vvolstagrad).

If the Duke of Stamral is defeated in combat, the Confidence Level of the dominion rises by 10 points. If the Duke can be forced to make peace without going to war, the Confidence Level rises by 15 points.

THE FATE OF EARTHSHAKER

As referee, you do not want the player characters to control Earthshaker for the rest of their lives. At the same time, you do not want to arbitrarily take Earthshaker away from them. Here are various considerations for getting the giant machine out of their hands.

Fuel: Currently Earthshaker has only enough coal for three days of operation. After this it is out of fuel and cannot move. Earthshaker requires an enormous amount of fuel, more than the characters can provide in one area. Once it is out of fuel, the characters will have a hard time getting enough to start it again.

Gnomes: First, the gnomes will not cooperate with any attempt to shanghai Earthshaker. Second, even if the gnomes are somehow forced to work Earthshaker, they do gradually die off. There is a 5% chance per week that a gnome will die without a replacement. The keeper of the relic will not train a replacement. Each gnome lost gives a 5% cumulative chance that the machine will fail. Once it fails, it does not move again.

Politics: Milos was not kidding when he said he had powerful friends. These include King Ericall, the Princes of Glantri, several powerful lawful magic-users, and one or two notable clerics. All of these people trust Milos completely (only after testing him in various and magical ways, of course) and would much prefer that Milos retain control over Earthshaker. They know that he has no ambition to rule others or interfere in local affairs, and he knows they would come after him if he did. Therefore, by mutual understanding, this great power is left in Milos's care. Should this arrangement be upset by the player characters taking over Earthshaker, the various NPCs would use every resource they have to correct the situation.

Villains: Something as powerful as Earthshaker will attract evildoers of all types. Their

goal is to gain control of the machine. They will do anything necessary to achieve this goal. This should keep things lively for the player characters.

Milos's Departure

After the adventure is over and Earthshaker has done what it can to set things right (repaired damage, done some civil engineering, etc.), Milos is ready to depart. If the player characters don't stop him, he leaves the same way he came—mysteriously. With him goes Earthshaker and the Traveling Exhibition of Wonders. His parting words to the player characters will be, "Wait until you see what I'll bring next year!"

If the player characters try to stop Milos, he protests greatly and tries to get away with as much of his exhibition as possible (including Earthshaker). This action, of course, filters back to Alpha and other places, bringing all types of pressure down on the player characters.

Earthshaker Destroyed

If Earthshaker is destroyed, the player characters are stuck with a huge amount of scrap iron in their backyard. Although unsightly and unpleasant, this is actually an asset. First, dwarves, gnomes, and magic users from the area begin arriving, offering to buy various bits of machinery that survived. If the site is unguarded, there will also be a good deal of looting. With guards, the player characters can generate 10,000 gp from the sale of parts over the course of six months. Without guards, they earn only 2,000 gp.

Even after all the useful machinery is taken, a large amount of scrap metal still remains. Each month a merchant offers to buy 1-3 loads of this metal, hauling it away at his own expense. Prices paid per load will vary from 100-600 gp. There is enough useful metal to last one year. Alternately, Earth-

shaker's hulk can be considered a mineral resource for one month.

Finally, the ruins of Earthshaker will be an oddity, attracting all manner of people and creatures. Evil creatures will make lairs in the vast, dark hollows; sages and curiosity-seekers will come to see the great wonder and study it. Each year, for the next two years, the Dominion Confidence Level automatically increases by 5 points as the locals bask in the glow of all this attention.

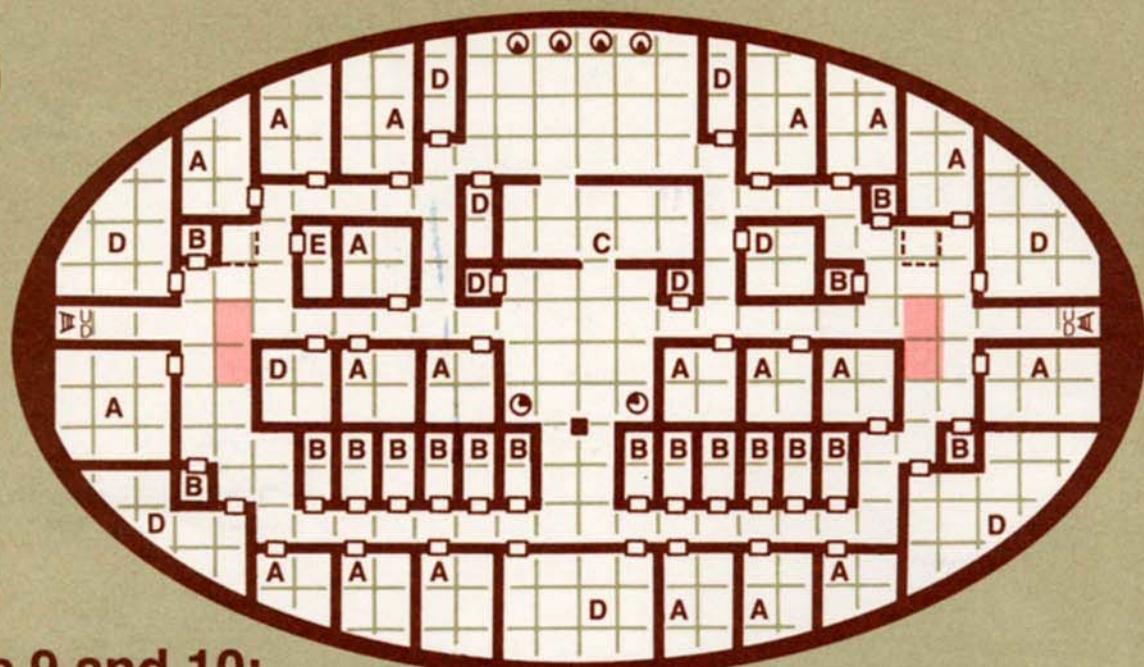
The Return of Duke Nevik

Several days after the players have finished with Earthshaker, Duke Nevik returns. He heard there was trouble in his land and has a rough idea of what happened. He hurried home as quickly as he could.

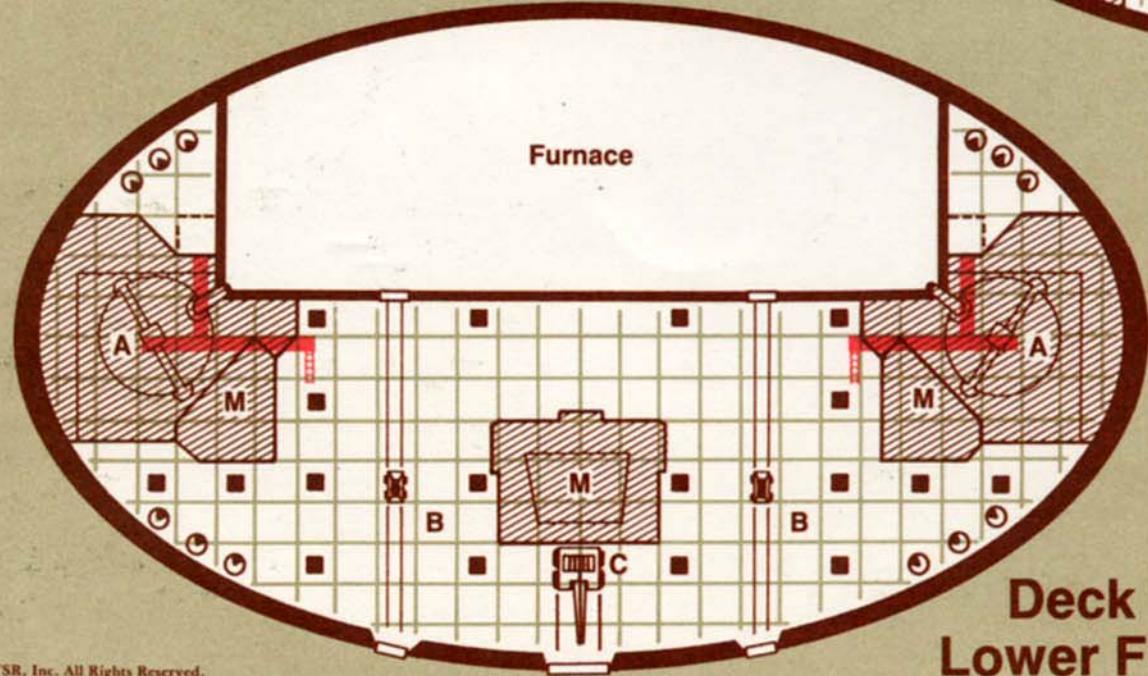
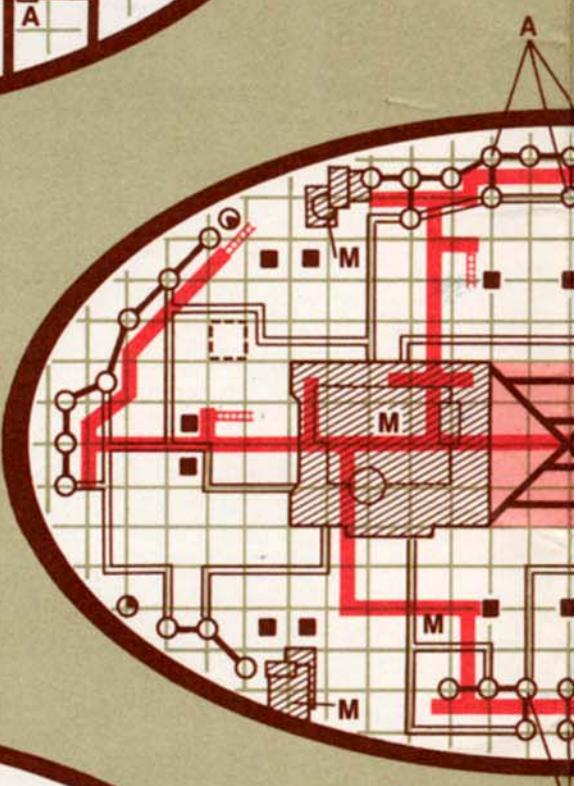
If the player characters have defeated Earthshaker without letting it destroy his lands, Nevik is greatly pleased. All the player characters will be offered titles (knighthood at least). In addition, all will be welcome in his dominion in the future. If the player characters have also defeated Stamral, Nevik is ecstatic. He gives them everything mentioned above and offers a life-long treaty of mutual friendship and aid. He will never break this treaty of his own free will.

If Earthshaker was stopped, but only after causing extensive damage, Nevik is unhappy but not angry. He dismisses his seneschal without blame and resolves never to leave his dominion again. The player characters will be assigned the task of repairing the damage done, which guarantees them jobs for several months.

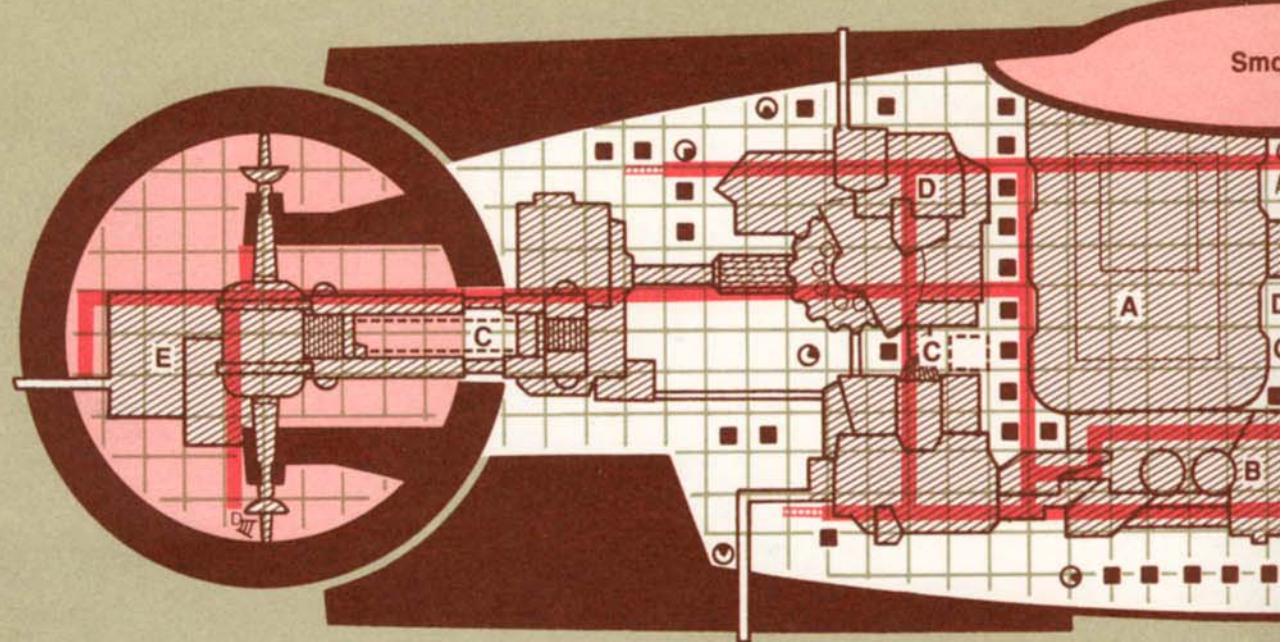
If Earthshaker laid waste to the land, Nevik is very angry. The player characters will be exiled from the court in disgrace. They must leave hastily, since the peasants will be openly rebellious and ready to tar and feather them.



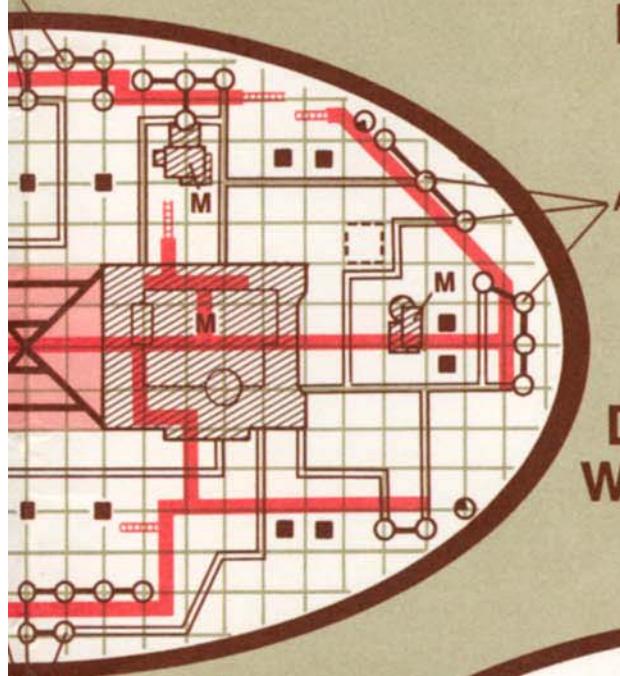
**Decks 9 and 10:
Living Quarters**



**Deck 12:
Lower Furnace De**



Deck 16: Engine Deck



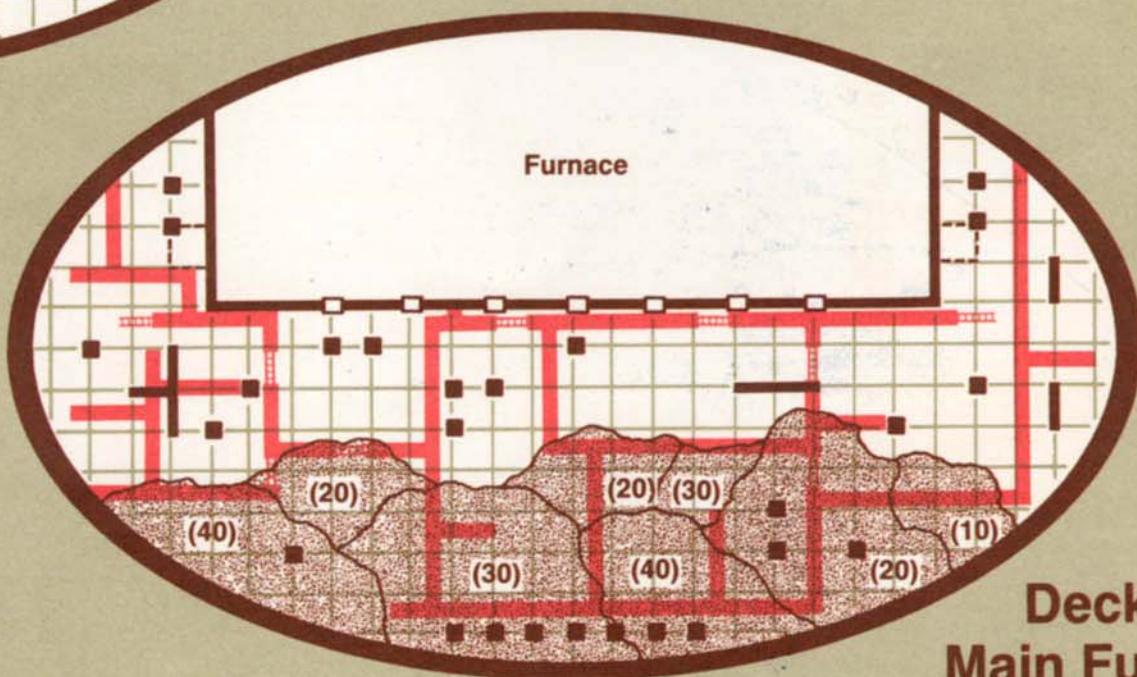
Deck 11: Waist Deck

NOTES

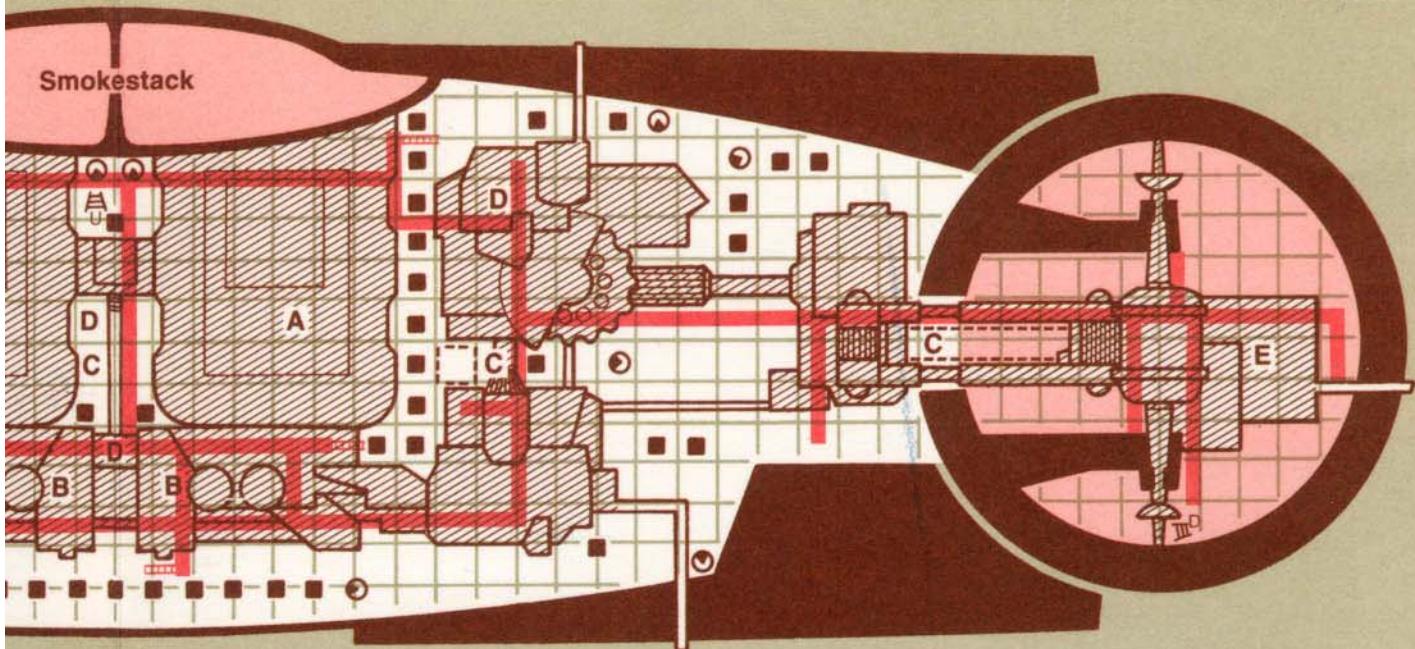
Deck 2: The entrance to Earthshaker is through door on Deck 1. The ladder down leads to this deck.

Deck 10: The two ladders on Deck 10 only go down.

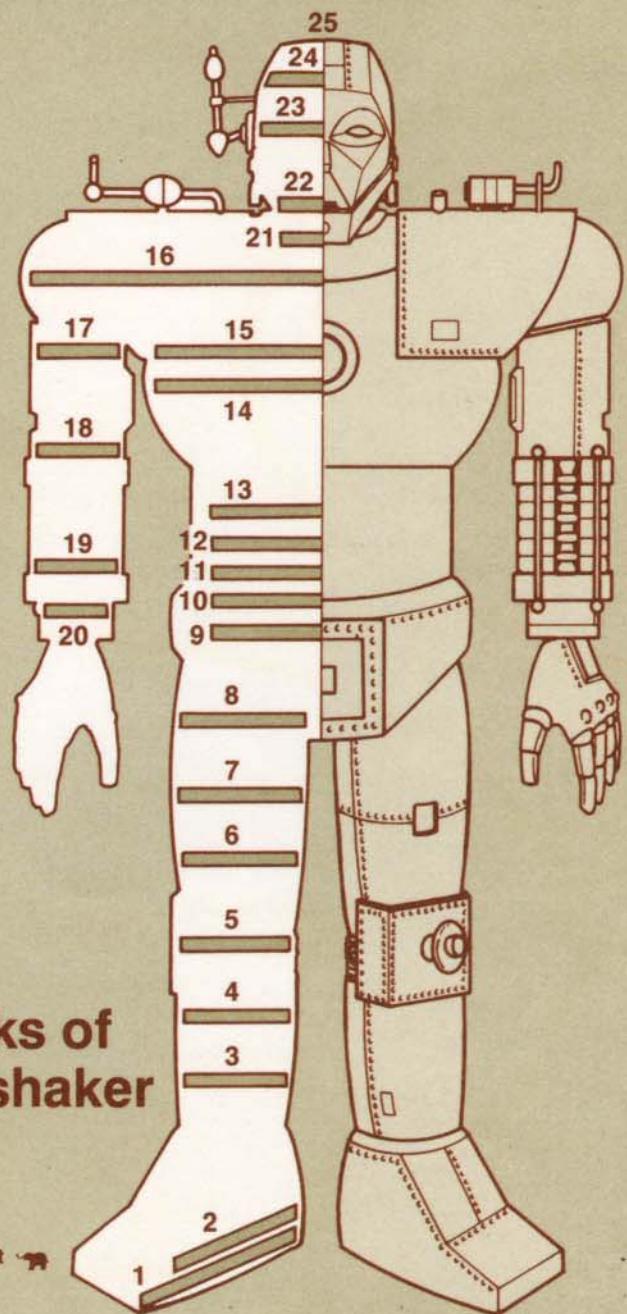
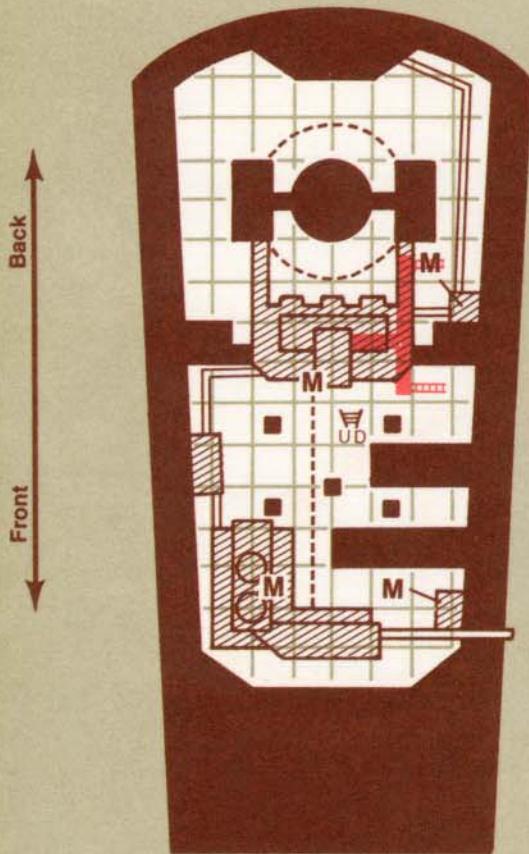
Deck 13: The numbers in parentheses () are the height in feet of each pile of coal.



Deck 13: Main Furnace D



Deck 2: The Ankle



**Decks of
Earthshaker**

Approximate Height of an Elephant

ROSTER

	NAME	CLASS	STR	INT	WIS	DEX	CON	CHA	AC	HP
PLAYER CHARACTERS	Alfonso	F18	17	11	13	10	18	7	-3	88
	Fierlas	T19	9	9	11	17	11	12	1	44
	Bartolome	C18	5	7	15	10	9	15	-4	39
	McVay	MU18	7	15	11	12	6	13	3	27
	"Boy":	MU1	13	14	11	10	15	12	9	3
	Tagus	D12	16	11	9	14	17	8	-4	67
	Hiera	E10	15	9	10	12	13	18	0	25
NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS	Milos	NM	9	16	18	12	8	17	9	5
	Attack Group 1:									
	Zhucharnov	T21	17	12	9	17	12	10	0	54
	Schrodt	MU18	9	16	10	9	7	11	2	30
	Ivan	F18	18	8	13	14	14	12	-2	72
	Voroniev	F19	16	12	11	11	15	10	-2	64
	Attack Group 2:									
	Kurochin	C20	10	12	16	11	12	10	-1	41
	Varma	F12	14	13	10	9	13	11	0	61
	Yelna	F14	17	9	7	11	9	7	0	44
	Roskosov	MU12	9	12	9	8	7	14	3	15
	Forgest	T17	12	13	10	16	13	15	-1	40
	Melchia	F10	18	12	11	9	17	10	0	50
	Tuva	F11	16	10	9	15	13	7	0	45
	Attack Group 3:									
	Dimitri	F18	15	13	14	9	10	13	-1	60
	Ushankov	T15	9	10	13	16	12	14	0	34
	Maggione	MU16	12	15	9	7	13	12	2	21
	Budenny	F17	13	10	9	10	12	11	-1	45
GNOMES	NAME	CLASS	STR	INT	WIS	DEX	CON	CHA	AC	HP
	Krazmos	4HD							4	18
	Gryzix	3HD							5	12
	Aides	3HD							5	12
	Supervisors	2HD							5	10
	Workers	1HD							5	5
										#AT DM



Companion Game Adventure

Earthshaker!

David "Zeb" Cook

Into your hands has been thrust a great responsibility—management of a growing domain. It has been a hard winter. Now, with the coming of spring, the populace looks to you for leadership. It will take a careful and generous hand to restore your subjects' confidence.

But even as you hold your first courts of the new season, an ominous shadow falls across the land. Earthshaker—wonder of the world—has arrived! Will its arrival be a curse or a blessing?

With bold action and skillful diplomacy, you may yet divert disaster. But if you fail, the consequences will certainly be the subject of many a minstrel's tragic songs for years to come!

Earthshaker includes a complete dominion setting, new player characters and NPCs, and complete material on one of the greatest marvels of the world—the giant and unstoppable Earthshaker!

This adventure is for use with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Companion set, which complements the D&D® Basic and Expert Rules. This adventure cannot be played without the D&D Basic, Expert, and Companion sets produced by TSR, Inc.

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