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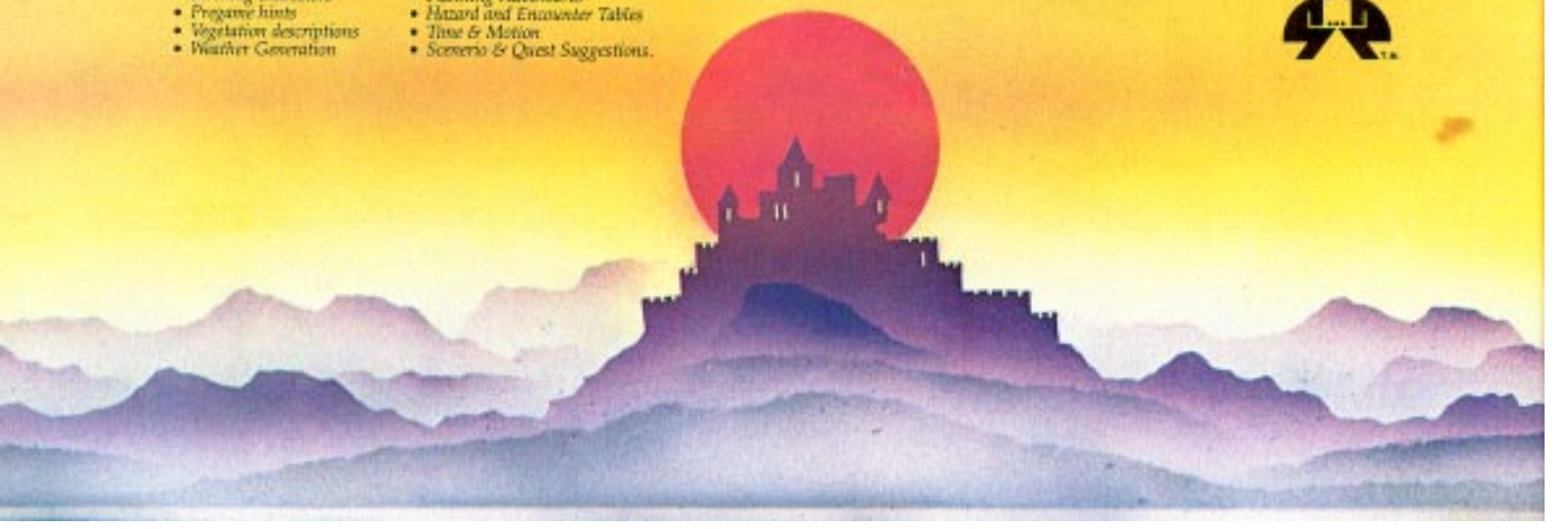
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Summer what?

Most of you who read this magazine are presently enjoying the part of the academic year that I always found the most fun — summer vacation. Whether you have a job for a while before going back to the books, or whether it really is a vacation, at least summer represents a change from what you do the other nine or ten months of the year.

But if there's something like summer vacation in the gaming magazine business, nobody's told us about it yet. And for the gaming industry in general, summer is anything *but* a vacation. This is the time of year when most of the major game conventions are held — and that means it's also the time of year when companies release lots of new products.

That brings me, in a roundabout way, to the point of this speech. By the time you read this, we will be finished with the production of Volume III of the BEST OF DRAGON® anthology. We're also working steadily, if not (yet) frantically, on finishing our DRAGONTALES™ II fiction anthology. Also in the preparation stage is a volume containing all of the *Wormy* episodes we've ever published. By my reckoning, only about three percent of the people reading DRAGON® magazine now were around when Tramp's story started in issue #9 — and I hope the other 97% of you are anxious to see how the story (and the strip itself) have developed over the years.

Summer vacation? Summer what? . . .

It's congratulation time again. Off and on, we've been using part of this space to announce module contest winners, and this time the person in the spotlight is Bob Waldbauer of Delavan, Wis., who won category A-7 with this issue's special inclusion, "Can Seapoint Be Saved?"

Finishing close behind Bob's entry in the judging were "Mystery of the Nameless Isle" by Colin Nordell of Ontario, Canada, and "The Lost Cathedral" by Daniel Biemer of Louisville, Ky., the second-place and third-place winners, respectively.

Our appreciation and congratulations go to all the prize winners, along with our thanks to everyone else who entered category A-7 and made the judging that much more difficult. Don't get the wrong idea — we like it when the judging is tough. That means at least most of the entries in a category were high-quality pieces of work, so we can be sure that the winner we print is going to be a winner with you, too.



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ven though I've tried and tried to resist the temptation, I can't help referring to this one as a devil of an issue — or, perhaps more properly put, an issue of devils. No, that's not entirely accurate, but more than 20 of the pages inside are devoted to descriptions of new devils and devil-types for the AD&D™ game, along with “facts” about what the environment is like on the various planes of the Nine Hells. It's not a place to spend your summer vacation — except, of course, in your imagination.

Leading off the devil section is a presentation of the manuscripts that E. Gary Gygax has composed over the last few years (since the release of the Monster Manual) on the hierarchy of The Nine Hells and some of the previously unrecorded devil-types that live there.

Next is part I of “The Nine Hells,” a massive treatise composed by contributing editor Ed Greenwood in an effort to flesh out what Gary had already done. Ed presents his educated speculations about what each of the separate planes is like, and descriptions of the individual devils that Gary mentions but doesn't detail. Because Ed's manuscript was so long, we had to break it into two parts; next month we'll present his musings on the lowest four planes, plus notes on how the effects of various magic spells are changed, or nullified, if those spells are cast anywhere within the Nine Hells.

Top billing in the table of contents this time — our middle-of-the-magazine special inclusion — goes to the winner in category A-7 of our Module Design Contest, “Can Seapoint Be Saved?” If the player characters in your campaign have never been challenged by an adventure on (and around) the high seas, just let 'em try to sail through “Seapoint.”

There's a lot more to being a good and effective gamemaster than knowing the rules. Lew Pulsipher's contribution inside goes “Beyond the rule book,” offering guidelines on procedures and style that any “campaign manager” — veteran or novice — should keep in mind.

Way back in issue #66, we printed a package of articles about the use of languages in role-playing games. As often happens, those articles prompted other articles on the same subject — so, inside are two new “Language lessons.” Both authors, Clyde Heaton and Katharine Kerr, make the same basic point: Any language, no matter how primitive, must be logical and consistent in order to be believable and playable.

Lastly, but far from least (or should that be leastly?), we present the debut of a new comic adventure strip: *Snarfquest*, drawn and written by Larry Elmore. Maybe ol' Snarf isn't exactly a typical hero — but then again, this isn't exactly a typical magazine. . . . — KM



PBM problems

Dear Editor:

The April issue of DRAGON Magazine contained an article entitled “The PBM Scene: Facts you can use when you choose what game to play.” Unfortunately, the information about UNIVERSE II contained in the article was not factual. To begin with, the address shown had not been accurate for two years. Since mail from that address is no longer even forwarded, anyone trying to contact us will assume we are no longer in business.

The article stated that UNIVERSE III was a “new version” of the game, implying that it is different than UNIVERSE II. This is not the case, as both are processed using the same computer program. Each game operates four quadrants of space which are adjacent to each other.

It is apparent that Mr. Gray had such limited experience with UNIVERSE II that he felt he had to “create” information to include. He evidently paid very little attention to the ship he was assigned, as he referred to the “supply of fuel” when, in fact, the ships need no fuel. In addition, he claimed to have built an “alien escape pod” when there is no such device that can be built.

UNIVERSE II is a game which requires that a player use intelligence and creativity in order to be successful. The range of activities is very diversified and allows a wide variety of roles. Some players choose to build fleets of ships (battlecruisers, freighters, shuttles, interceptors, etc.). They explore the hundreds of unique solar systems, deal with civilized alien races, discover new lifeforms, operate trading systems, raid other ships or colonies, etc. Others choose to be colonists on uncivilized worlds. They build fortifications, farm, mine, explore, operate a wide range of factories, trade with passing starships, etc.

Player interaction is frequent, with many player alliances and empires in existence. Wars are fought, ships destroyed, territory conquered. New players are generally started in quieter areas so they will have a chance to build up their strength before confronting starships with the capacity to destroy them.

I feel Mr. Gray has done my game a tremendous disservice by including gross inaccuracies in an article billed as “factual.” As your magazine has one of the best reputations in the industry, I am certain you will want to print this letter in the next issue to provide the correct “facts” for your readers.

Jon Clemens, President
Clemens and Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 4297
San Clemente CA 92672

Right you are, Mr. Clemens. We're more than happy to try to straighten out the problems that the article seems to have caused. Ordinarily, we don't print complete mailing addresses of writers in, or under the signature

of, a letter — but for obvious reasons we're making a couple of exceptions to that policy. (See the following letter as well.)

Unfortunately, Mr. Gray is not immediately available for us to obtain comments from him about Mr. Clemens' assertions. But this letter just came to our attention on the day before deadline for this issue, and rather than hold onto it and wait another month to correct the address error, we decided to use the letter now and contact Mr. Gray at a later date. Maybe he'll have something to say in explanation (or in defense) of what he wrote, and if so we'll be pleased to print his letter next time. — KM

Dear Editor:

Thank you (and Mr. Gray) for your recent coverage of the Play-By-Mail gaming industry. We would like to point out that in issue #72 of DRAGON magazine, page 31, the address of Schubel & Son was incorrectly listed. Our correct address is: Schubel & Son Inc., P.O. Box 214848, Sacramento CA 95821.

Duane Wilcoxson
Gamer Relations
Schubel & Son Inc.

This time, the mistake was a “simple” typographical error: Somehow, between the time Mike Gray wrote his article and when it got into print, the “2” got deleted from the post office box number. Even though Schubel & Son is probably famous enough for the Sacramento Post Office to find 'em anyway, it obviously helps to have the correct address on the envelope you're sending. Our sincere and profuse apologies to anyone who tried to contact either Clemens and Associates (see the preceding letter) or Schubel & Son by using the incorrect addresses we printed. — KM

Champions critic

Dear Editor:

I was very disappointed with the article concerning the superhero role-playing game “Champions” which you printed in issue #73 of your magazine.

First of all, the author's suggestion of rolling only for a few characters' hunted and DNPC's is absurd. What good is having the disadvantage if it only comes into play every third or fourth game? On that same note, who says a hunter that is “scheduled” to appear has to jump our hero and try to pound in his 14 defense skull! There are *other* ways of dealing with hunted, such as having them leave our hero a threatening message of some kind, perhaps a riddle leading the hero to the villain's hideout (a definite adventure in the making), or even a trap.

Secondly, the author makes a suggestion for “timing,” or how to get several heroes into the game. All I have to say on this is, if you don't know of any way to bring “Cosmic Dude,”

"Valley Brick," or "Wonder Twit" into an adventure, you might as well pack it up as a GM.

Lastly, the idea of paying power points for a particular financial bracket is an original one, but it severely limits the character's expression of individuality. With this concept a powerful character, who might need a lot of money to balance out his origin, may not be able to afford an "industry." That's too contradictory to me. After all, the entire Champions game system is set up to allow a player to be what he wants, not just what he can afford. I believe the Champions rules were left somewhat vague in spots on purpose to allow a player to use more of his own creativity in the game.

Mark Arsenault
Sacramento, Calif.

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Piercer praise

Dear Editor:

I was surprised when I opened DRAGON #72 and saw a cross section of the piercer. My first thought was that it must be part of your annual April foolery. But as I began reading I found a serious, informative article.

I have never thought of the piercer as a particularly exciting monster, but now I have more respect for it. I too have wondered how the piercer locates and feeds on prey.

Although I don't think the article was especially important, it did cover virtually all general points. Some specific information about lifespan, maximum time between feedings, and results of starvation would have been appreciated, though. For instance, do other animals or piercers ever inhabit dead piercer's shells?

I would like to see more short articles of this type and encourage anyone who is so inclined to make some speculations on the life cycles of various creatures.

Andy Stone
Mt. Horeb, Wis.

We hoped "The Ecology of the Piercer" would go over well; based on the reactions we've received, our hopes were realized. As Andy and the rest of you realize by now, the piercer article was just the first of what we expect will be a long series of "ecology" articles. If you're considering trying to write one to submit to us, there are two things you should know: First, our standards for this kind of article are pretty demanding — in some ways, even higher than for a "regular" article. Be real sure you know what you're talking about, and try not to leave any stones unturned. Second, we've already got a good-sized backlog of articles of this type. That means that even if you write about a monster no one else has covered yet, and even if it gets accepted, it might not be printed for a long time. If you're not discouraged by either or both of those facts, give it a try.

Obviously, no "ecology" article can be completely comprehensive; there will always be things people want to know that neither we nor the author thought about. And in many cases, such as the points Andy raises in his letter, the only way to answer a question is to take a slightly wild guess. The life span of a piercer, or how often it needs to eat, are facts that can't be deduced logically from what we know, or suppose to be true, about the nature of the creature. If the situation in your campaign demands answers to questions like

Andy's, then you're going to have to make a determination and stick to it. Sure, we could give you a number — but we admit we can't tell you why a piercer has a life span of (for instance) five years, instead of fifty or five hundred. In this respect, the AD&D world is a lot like the one we live in: Some questions can never be answered definitively because we just don't have, and never will have, enough facts to be positive we're right. — KM

Cavalier conformity

Dear Editor:

I was very pleased with the Attack Priority System in issue #71, and I was about to use it in my campaign when a very important question came up. What about the Cavalier and the weapons he is specialized in? The old way he would get 3/2, 2/1, 5/2, and 3/1 attacks with those weapons in melee rounds, but what happens now?

Robert Sprott
Fairborn, Ohio

I'm sure that a suitable answer to Robert's question exists — or, at the least, there ought to be a way to use the cavalier character class and the Attack Priority System in the same campaign. Unfortunately, that's not a topic that can be addressed in this very limited space. However, Robert's letter raises a point that I can afford to spend a paragraph on.

Not all of the articles we print are compatible with each other, and we don't try to make them so. We hope they are all compatible with the game rules they are derived from, and that's really all that we (or you) can reasonably expect. The article on the Attack Priority System was designed to be used with the standard AD&D™ rules. It is not necessarily compatible with supplementary information we've published in the magazine, such as the barbarian and thief-acrobat classes. And it would have been downright impossible to include allowances for the cavalier in the attack system. The article was accepted several months before it was printed — long before any of us here (and certainly the author of the article) had ever heard of the cavalier. In fact, the cavalier article didn't appear in print until the month after the Attack Priority System was featured.

I'll suggest, as I sometimes do in this space, that Robert's question sounds like the germ of a good article idea. If anyone out there wants to try to answer it, great. Our mailbox always has room for one more manuscript. — KM

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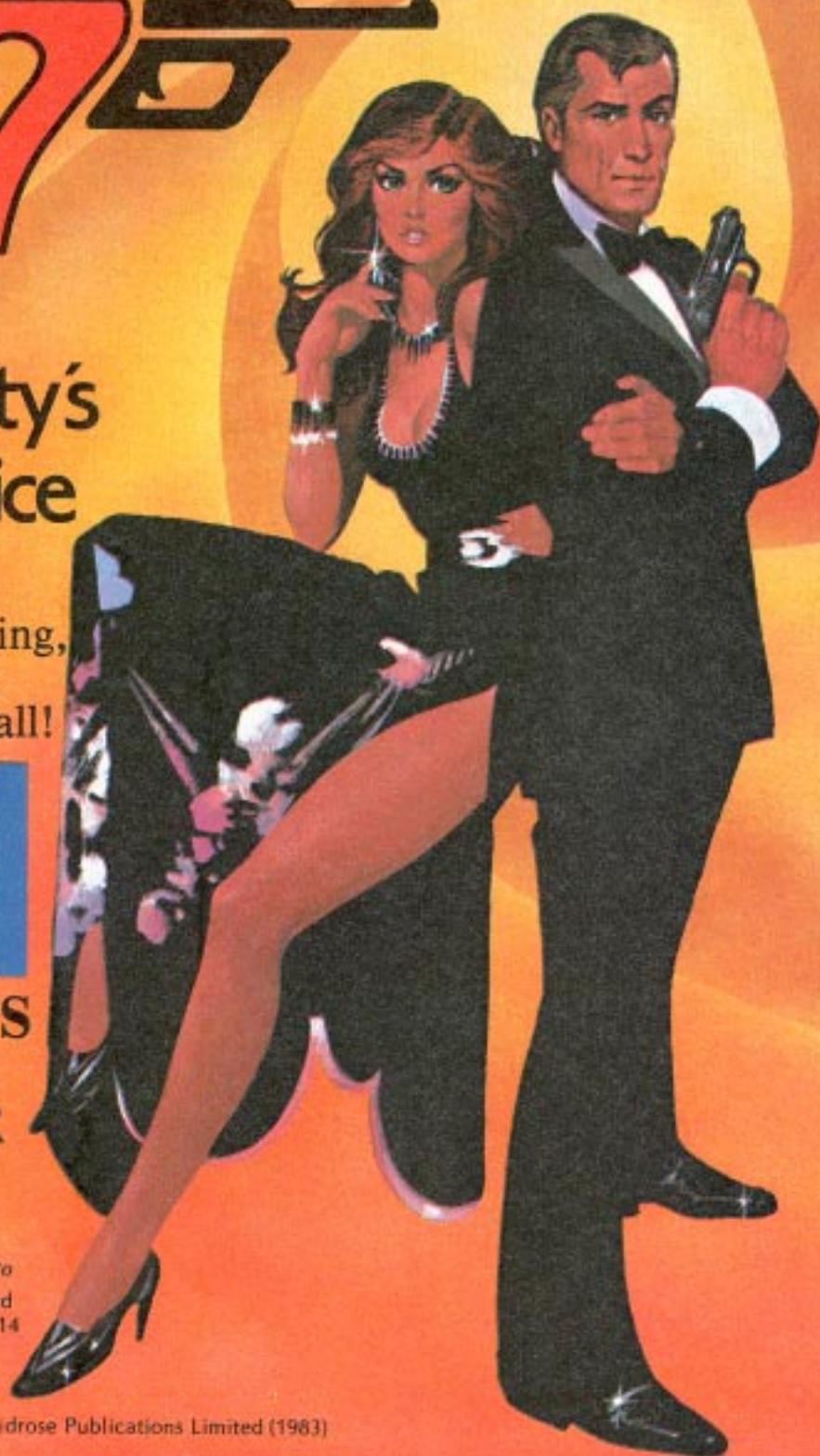
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The ecology of the mimic

by Ed Greenwood

From the *Journals* of Maerlun the Scholar:

The mimic is a curious (and dangerous) creature to most minds — but few know, or care to know, that there are actually several related species of mimic, divided into two groups: a larger, “killer” variety that is of lesser intelligence, attacking all nearby prey, and does not speak; and the more intelligent, eloquent species which will often bargain for food, has a curious (as yet unfathomed by me) language of its own, and often speaks orcish, the common tongue, dwarvish, or other tongues used in the vicinity of the individual creature’s hunting ground.

The mimic gains its name from its ability to alter not only its body shape but the color and texture of the outer surface as well. The color and texture changes are accomplished by the shifting of pigmented liquid between interior and exterior body cells, so that the creature resembles wood or stone in color and texture depending on whether this pigmented liquid is brought to the outer surface of the creature’s body or stored internally.

A mimic is naturally gray in hue, with a smooth, very hard outer skin that gives it the stone-like appearance. The pigmented liquid, brownish in color (often revealed to adventurers when a mimic is wounded in battle), is held within the body in large, muscular organs that serve as both bags and pumps. When these organs are squeezed by the contraction of

the cavity wall muscles, they squirt their contents rapidly (within 1 round) into the outer skin layer, filling many capillaries that lie just beneath the skin surface. These capillaries then stand out, brownish and wrinkled, in a pattern resembling wood grain.

Reversing the process, from the wood-grain appearance to the natural state, requires a sort of external contortion; a mimic appears to wriggle and twist all over as it empties its capillaries of the liquid. (The creature can, as we all know, alter the external configuration of its form at will, within the limits imposed by the actual volume of its form.) The mimic grows replacement layers of skin beneath the outer one, which is constantly being worn away by the ravages of movement, battle, and feeding.

The mimic is amorphous, and moves in the same way it attacks: by extending strong pseudopods, which exude a sticky “glue,” and pulling themselves along. A mimic can “unstuck” its own glue at any time, and it never sticks to itself.

Reputedly, this glue is sticky enough that only the strongest of adventurers has a good chance of breaking the mimic’s hold without killing the creature first. Some adventurers claim to have pulled themselves free from a mimic’s glue, but such tales are rare and often their veracity is doubtful: (To simulate the possibility of breaking free in game terms, held characters may be allowed to attempt an

“open doors” roll based on their strength. Repeated attempts to break free may be made, but no other action — attack or defense — is possible by the victim during the round of attempted escape.)

Mimics are interested only in personal safety and an endless quest for food. “Killer” mimics will attack any living creature, regardless of the number of adversaries or their powers. The more intelligent variety often prefers to bargain with an enemy initially — but the creatures have no moral standards as we know them: If an enemy is sufficiently weakened after a bargain has been struck, a mimic will “change its mind,” always seeking a meal first and foremost.

Mimics have very sensitive “eyespot” (patches of pigment that are sensitive to heat; light, and vibration) all over their skin. Bright sunlight overwhelms these sensory spots, effectively blinding the mimic; thus, the creatures are almost always found below ground or in other areas where the sun never reaches. Mimics of all sorts are immune to the deleterious effects of alcohol (but will absorb it if offered, to make use of the inherent nutrients and sugar), and are also unaffected by slime (including green slime), molds (including the brown and yellow varieties), and the corrosive secretions of creatures such as the black pudding, gray ooze, ochre jelly, stunjelly, and gelatinous cube.

It should be remembered that mimics can travel on walls and ceilings as easily as they can on floors. Those of the more intelligent sort are most adept at “hiding” by assuming the shape of a partition wall, overhanging arch, or rough rock wall if they feel threatened. One famous, if somewhat extreme, example: A mimic somehow came into one of the busiest market squares of Waterdeep and assumed the shape of a statue. It remained undetected for two winters, until the chronic disappearance of street derelicts in the square on every dark night prompted an investigation. A sewer beside this strangely unfamiliar (to the sculptor who had “done” the square) statue was discovered to be filled to a depth of more than 60 feet with human and animal bones. (Even after this fact was discovered, the “statue” ate two members of the City Watch who prodded it carelessly with their spears, not expecting to find anything.)

Although the details of the concoction are not known by this scribe, it is generally said that the skin of the mimic is useful in the making of a *polymorph (self)* potion. Also, further investigation is needed to determine the range of travel of an individual mimic over a lifetime, and the precise efficacy of the creature’s detection organs, which, based on casual observation, appear to “see” up to 90 feet in subterranean (not total) darkness, and up to 30 feet in the gloom of night, or in darkened areas above ground.

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New denizens of devildom

A partial preview of Monster Manual II

By E. Gary Gygax

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The Monster Manual details the names and ranks of many of the devils, but it is by no means complete. The following is a list of the Dukes of Hell, as well as some of their foremost henchmen. In general,

the dukes are about equivalent to a weaker Arch-Devil, although some are only a little stronger than a pit fiend, or are, in fact, actual pit fiends.

In this list, names printed in *italic type*

represent pit fiends, all having exceptional strength and power for their type. The notation (*f*) indicates a female devil. Typically, females have strength just superior to that of a pit fiend.

Name	In service of	Command or position	Name	In service of	Command or position
Abigor	Baalzebul	60 companies malebranche	Bathym	Belial	30 companies barbed devils
Adonides	Mephistopheles. .	Steward	<i>Bel</i>	Dispater	3 companies malebranche
Adramelech	Asmodeus	Chancellor	Bele	Mephistopheles. .	Justiciar
Agares	Geryon	31 companies bone devils	Bensozia (<i>f</i>)	Asmodeus	Consort
<i>Alastor</i>	Asmodeus	Executioner	<i>Bethage</i>	Moloch	9 companies malebranche
Alocer	Dispater	36 companies erinyes	Biffant	Dispater	Provost
Amducias	Tiamat	29 companies abishai	Bifrons	Mephistopheles. .	26 companies ice devils
Amon	Geryon	40 companies bone devils	Bileth	Moloch	Tribune
Arioch	Dispater	Avenger	Bitru	Dispater	70 companies erinyes
<i>Baalberith</i>	Asmodeus	Major Domo	Buer	Asmodeus.	15 companies pit fiends
Baalphegor (<i>f</i>)	Mephistopheles. .	Consort	Bune	Asmodeus	30 companies malebranche
<i>Baalzephon</i>	Dispater	Prime Minister	Caarcinolaas ..	Mammon	36 companies barbed devils
Bael	Mammon	66 companies barbed devils	Chamo	Belial	Legate
Bafts (<i>f</i>)	Baalzebul	Consort	Cozbi (<i>f</i>)	Geryon	Consort
Balan	Belial	40 companies bearded devils	<i>Fecor</i>	Geryon	8 companies malebranche
Barbas	Mephistopheles. .	Chamberlain	Focalor	Mammon	Seneschal
Barbatos	Baalzebul	Marshal	<i>Furcas</i>	Dispater	12 companies bearded devils

MAJOR INHABITANTS OF THE NINE HELLS DEVILS

Plane	Ruler	Abishai	Arch	Barbed	Bearded	Bone	Erinyes	Horned	Ice	Pit Fiend	Spined	Styx
1st	Tiamat	C	VVR	R	—	—	C	—	—	—	C	—
2nd	Dispater	C	VVR	U	R	—	C	VR	—	VR	C	—
3rd	Mammon	U	VVR	C	C	U	R	VR	—	VR	C	VR
4th	Belial	R	VVR	C	C	C	VR	R	—	VR	C	R
5th	Geryon	VR	VVR	R	U	U	—	U	—	VR	C	C
6th	Moloch ¹	—	VVR	—	VR	R	—	C	—	VR	U	U
7th	Baalzebul	—	VVR	—	—	VR	—	C	VR	VR	U	—
8th	Mephistopheles	—	VVR	—	—	—	—	VR	C	R	U	—
9th	Asmodeus	—	VVR	—	—	—	—	VR	R	C	U	—

¹ — Vassal of Baalzebul

(C = common; U = uncommon; R = rare; VR = Very rare; VVR = Very very rare.)

Table with 3 columns: Name, In service of, Command or position. Rows include Gaziel, Glwa, Goap, Gorson, Herobaal, Herodias, Hutijin, Lilis, Lilith, Machalas, Malphas, Martinet, Melchon, and Merodach.

Table with 3 columns: Name, In service of, Command or position. Rows include Morax, Naome, Neabaz, Nexroth, Phongor, Rimmon, Tartach, Titivilus, Zaebos, Zagum, Zapan, Zepar, and Zimimar.

Notes on individual descriptions

The new devils and devil-types in this article, through the description of Titivilus on page 14, are taken from the same original manuscripts, by E. Gary Gygax, that were used in the preparation of Monster Manual II. However, the assembly of that book

(to be released soon) and the preparation of this magazine article were independent efforts. The information presented here is likely to be very similar to what's in the new rule book, but it will not be identical. When a point is expressed differently in the two works, the book will take precedence over this article.

ABISHAI (Lesser devil)

Table with 6 columns: FREQUENCY, NO. APPEARING, ARMOR CLASS, MOVE, HIT DICE, % IN LAIR, TREASURE TYPE, NO. OF ATTACKS, DAMAGE/ATTACK, SPECIAL ATTACKS, SPECIAL DEFENSES, MAGIC RESISTANCE, INTELLIGENCE, ALIGNMENT, SIZE, PSIONIC ABILITY. Rows include Black, Blue, Green, Red, and White.

The race of abishai, the scaly devils, are common to the first plane of the Nine Hells. They are reptilian, and most serve Tiamat. On the lower infernal planes abishai are uncommon (2nd-4th) to rare (5th-6th). Abishai will always appear in greater numbers when encountered in

their lair (second range of numbers under "No. Appearing" above). If abishai are encountered in their lair, 10% of the time there will be 1-4 other devil-types present as well.

Although they do not value treasure, abishai occasionally (15%) have charge of

type Q treasure which they are taking to some greater devil. Attack damage shown is for the weapon type used by a particular sort of abishai, with strength bonus added in. Black abishai use halberds; white, flails; red, long daggers; green, guisarme-voulges; and blue, tridents.

In hand-to-hand combat, all abishai can grapple. The damage done is 1-4 (due to cuts from sharp scales, talons, etc.) plus strength bonus — red +1, green or white +2, blue +3, black +4. They are also able to strike with their tails for 1-2 points of damage. Abishai regenerate at the rate of 1 point per round, unless struck by silver, holy water, or holy magic weapons.

Abishai can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time, one per round: change self, command, produce flame, pyrotechnics, scare, summon (another abishai, 20% chance of success, once per day).

Description: Abishai are the epitome of devils, appearing as humanoids with small horns, snaky hair, fangs, pointed ears, slanting eyes, leathery wings, and barbed tail. They have scaled hides and reptilian feet.

MAJOR INHABITANTS OF THE NINE HELLS OTHER CREATURES. Table with 13 columns: Name, Alignment, AC, HP, THAC0, Attacks, Damage, Saving Throws, Special Abilities, Plane. Rows include various creatures like Asmodeus, Baalzebul, etc.

AMON (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -2
MOVE: 18"
HIT DICE: 126 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 60%
TREASURE TYPE: G, P
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 and 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12 or by
 weapon type +7
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*
SIZE: L (9' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 229
 Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Amon is a vassal of Geryon, mustering and commanding up to 40 companies of bone devils recruited from his fief. He is large and strong, typically attacking with a huge (+3) mace and a vicious bite as well. A winter wolf of the largest size serves him as a companion and guardian.

One at a time, at will, one per turn or melee round, Amon can use the following spell-like powers: *animate dead, charm monster, detect magic, detect invisible, dispel magic, fly, geas, know alignment, polymorph self, produce flame, read languages, read magic, suggestion, teleportation, wall of ice, and (fulfill another's limited) wish*. Amon causes *fear* in any individual he gazes at, unless the intended victim makes a saving throw vs. spell. Once per day Amon can use a *symbol of hopelessness*. He can summon 1-4 bone devils with a 60% chance of success. Amon is able to regenerate 1-12 points of damage per turn.

Description: Amon is wolf-headed but otherwise appears human. His torso is well-formed and muscled.

BAEL (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -3
MOVE: 12"
HIT DICE: 106 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 55%
TREASURE TYPE: G, P
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*
SIZE: L (8'+ tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 206
 Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Bael is one of the vassals of Mammon, commanding 66 companies of barbed

devils. In battle array Bael wears armor of bronze fashioned in the ancient style and uses a morning star (+2) with a long bronze handle which telescopes magically from 4' length to 8' length as Bael desires.

In addition to normal attacks, Bael can, at will, one per round, use the following spell-like powers: *animate dead, cause serious wounds, detect invisibility, detect magic, dispel magic, invisibility, know alignment, produce fire, pyrotechnics, read languages, read magic, shape change (twice per day), suggestion, teleportation, wind walk, (fulfill another's limited) wish*. Once per day Bael can employ a *symbol of stunning*. He radiates *fear* in a 10' radius when he so desires. He can summon 1-4 barbed devils with a 65% chance of success. Bael regenerates 1 point per round.

Description: Bael is a well-formed humanoid with gold-colored skin. His head is rather long and has small, forward-curling bull's horns. His features appear rather bovine, with large, round eyes, a long and broad nose, and protruding ears.

BEARDED (Lesser devil)

FREQUENCY: *Common*
NO. APPEARING: 1-2 or 4-10
ARMOR CLASS: 1
MOVE: 15"
HIT DICE: 6+6
% IN LAIR: 15%
TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 or 3
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type*
 or 1-8/1-2/1-2
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 45%
INTELLIGENCE: *Average — Very*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*
SIZE: L (6½' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
 Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

Bearded devils populate the Third Hell, the domain of Mammon, as well as planes below that. They are particularly cruel and violent, attacking at any excuse. This makes them unpopular and subject to frequent and harsh disciplinary measures, but it also makes them desirable as shock troops.

In most cases, bearded devils carry a saw-toothed glaive equipped with a treble-hook arranged at the base of the blade. The latter device curves backward and is used to entangle or snag opponents closing or fleeing (1-3 points damage, plus *held fast* unless a die roll equal to success of opening a door is made). Without weapons, bearded devils attack with their wire-like beards plus clawed hands. If both hand attacks succeed, beard damage is the maximum (8 points). Any creature struck for maximum beard damage

must save vs. poison or immediately develop a burning rash which reduces dexterity by 1 point per round for four rounds.

At will, one at a time, one per turn or per round as applicable, bearded devils can use the following spell-like powers: *affect normal fires, command, fear (by touch), produce flame, and summon* another bearded devil (with a 35% chance of success).

BELIAL (Arch-devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -4
MOVE: 9"/15"
HIT DICE: 154 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 75%
TREASURE TYPE: A, S, T, Y
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 80%
INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*
SIZE: L (10' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 279
 Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Great Belial rules the Fourth Hell. He is firmly in the camp of Baalzebul, hating Geryon nearly as much as does Moloch. In turn, Belial must guard against the machinations of Mammon, so he does not have complete freedom to act. From his basalt palace, Belial dictates the disposition of the abishai, barbed, bearded, bone, and spined devils populating the reeking fens and smoking plains of his realm. He utilizes a huge military fork (+4) in combat. This weapon causes the creature struck to save vs. spell or be affected as if smitten by a *symbol of pain*.

In addition, Belial can use the following spell-like powers, at will, one at a time, one per round: *animate dead, beguile, charm person, detect magic, dispel illusion, detect invisibility, dispel magic, geas, illusion, invisibility, know alignment, light, produce flame, pyrotechnics, raise dead, read languages, read magic, shape change, suggestion, teleportation, wall of fire, and (fulfill another's) wish*. Once per day Belial can use a *symbol of insanity*. He can likewise pronounce an *unholy word* once per day. Belial causes *fear* in any individual he stares at, saving throw vs. spell applicable. He can summon 1-4 black abishai (25%), 1-3 barbed devils (25%), or 1-4 bearded devils (50%) with an 85% chance of success.

Description: Belial is humanoid and typically diabolic in appearance. His hide is scaly and sooty black. His horns, tail, and wings are glossy black. His eyes are large and slanted, and they glow red.

BITRU (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 12"/18"

HIT DICE: 99 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 50%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*

SIZE: L (9' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 199

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Bitru serves Dispat and leads 70 companies of erinyes in warfare. These devils are raised from the vast estates held in fief. Bitru employs a huge (+3 two-handed) sword in combat.

These spell-like powers can be used by Bitru, one at a time, at will: *animate dead, charm person, detect invisibility, detect magic, dispel magic, illusion, know alignment, mirror image, produce fire, read languages, read magic, suggestion, teleportation, wall of smoke (same as wall of fog), and (fulfill another's limited) wish.* Once per day Bitru can employ a *symbol of pain*. He causes *fear*

by pointing at any creature within a 60' distance, saving throw vs. spell applicable. He can *summon* 1-3 erinyes with a 60% chance of success. Bitru regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Bitru is very muscular. His skin is shining crimson, and his horns, hooves, and wings are lustrous black. Bitru's visage is typically diabolical.

GLASYA (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 15"/30"

HIT DICE: 69 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: I, Q(×5), S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +4*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*

SIZE: L (9' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 206

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

As consort to Mammon, Glasya is one of the more powerful and influential of

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female devils. She does not normally engage in combat, but she has a short sword with a poisoned blade (equal to a dagger of venom).

Glasya can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time, at will: *animate dead*, *charm monster*, *charm person*, *dispel magic*, *illusion*, *know alignment*, *poison*, *polymorph self*, *produce flame*, *read languages*, *read magic*, *suggestion*, *teleportation*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day Glasya can employ a *finger of death*. She causes *fear* by speaking to an individual, saving throw vs. spell applicable. She can *summon* 1-2 malebranche (70% chance of success). She regenerates 2 points of damage every turn.

Description: Glasya is another typically diabolic devil, being well-built and good-looking save for her wings, forked tail, horns, and copper-colored skin.

HUTIJIN (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -4
MOVE: 9"/18"
HIT DICE: 111 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 30%
TREASURE TYPE: G
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +3*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%
INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*
SIZE: L (13½' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 275
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Hutijin commands two companies of pit fiends in service to Mephistopheles. These creatures are, in fact, the aristocracy of the Eighth Plane, just as Hutijin is one of the greatest of the dukes of the hells. He uses a *net of snaring* and a +3 trident in battle.

One at a time, at will, one per round, Hutijin can use the following spell-like powers: *animate dead*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *heal* (twice per day), *hold monster*, *invisibility*, *know alignment*, *polymorph self*, *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *read languages*, *read magic*, *shocking grasp*, *suggestion*, *teleportation*, *wall of fire*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Hutijin causes *fear* by voice tone in a 30' radius, with a saving throw vs. wands applicable. He can use a *symbol of persuasion* once per day. Hutijin can *summon* a pit fiend (75% chance of success).

Description: Hutijin resembles a pit fiend, although his head is larger and his wings are proportionately smaller than those of a pit fiend. His hide is a dark rust-red color.

MAMMON (Arch-devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -3
MOVE: 6"/12"
HIT DICE: 139 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 65%
TREASURE TYPE: H, R
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%
INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*
SIZE: L (12' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 259
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Mammon is the ruler of the Third Plane of the Nine Hells. He and Dispaten are supposedly allies and jointly support Mephistopheles, but neither ever has failed to obey Asmodeus. It is also doubtful that Mammon places real trust in the Lord of Dis.

Mammon's realm is a boundless series of rifts with slime streams along the bottoms. Hot ash falls from spurring volcanoes scattered over these badlands.

Mephistopheles' great iron citadel in the ice mountains of [the Eighth Plane of the Nine Hells] is a place of much plotting and intrigue. . . .

MEPHISTOPHELES (Arch-devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -6
MOVE: 15"/18"
HIT DICE: 188 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 70%
TREASURE TYPE: R, X, Z
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +9*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 85%
INTELLIGENCE: *Supra-genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*
SIZE: L (9' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 309
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

The Eighth Plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Mephistopheles. His main aim is to wrest the Seventh Plane from Baalzebul, and with the strength thus gained challenge Asmodeus for the overlordship of all the hells.

Mephistopheles' great iron citadel in the ice mountains of this frozen plane is a place of much plotting and intrigue. The outer marches of oozing slime and the steaming fringe beyond, from whence come Mephistopheles' malebranche and pit fiends, are said to be a constant source of worry to him.

Mammon rides a nightmare of largest size, with a pack of hell hounds at his heels, over this grim domain, seeking trophies of the hunt. His weapon is a fauchard-fork which inflicts normal damage (1-8 or 1-10) but acts otherwise as a sword of wounding.

At will, one at a time, one per round, Mammon is able to use the following spell-like powers: *animate dead*, *beguile*, *charm person*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *fools gold*, *geas*, *illusion*, *invisibility*, *know alignment*, *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics*, *raise dead*, *read languages*, *read magic*, *shape change*, *suggestion*, *teleportation*, *wall of fire*, and (fulfill another's) *wish*. Once per day Mammon is able to use a *symbol of hopelessness* and to pronounce an *unholy word*. He causes *fear* by means of his gaze, saving throw vs. spell applicable. Mammon can *summon* 1-4 green abishai (50%), 1-3 barbed devils (25%), or 1-3 bearded devils (25%) with an 80% chance of success.

Description: Mammon is a red-gold color, with scaled wings gleaming like rubies. His form is bloated and soft-looking, but Mammon is very strong. He is otherwise typically diabolic in appearance.

Mephistopheles has a great, three-tined fork (+3) which can, upon his command, deliver 3-12 points of cold, electrical, or fire damage, saving throw vs. spell applicable. Each function is usable three times per day. These function damage points are in addition to all other damage caused by the weapon.

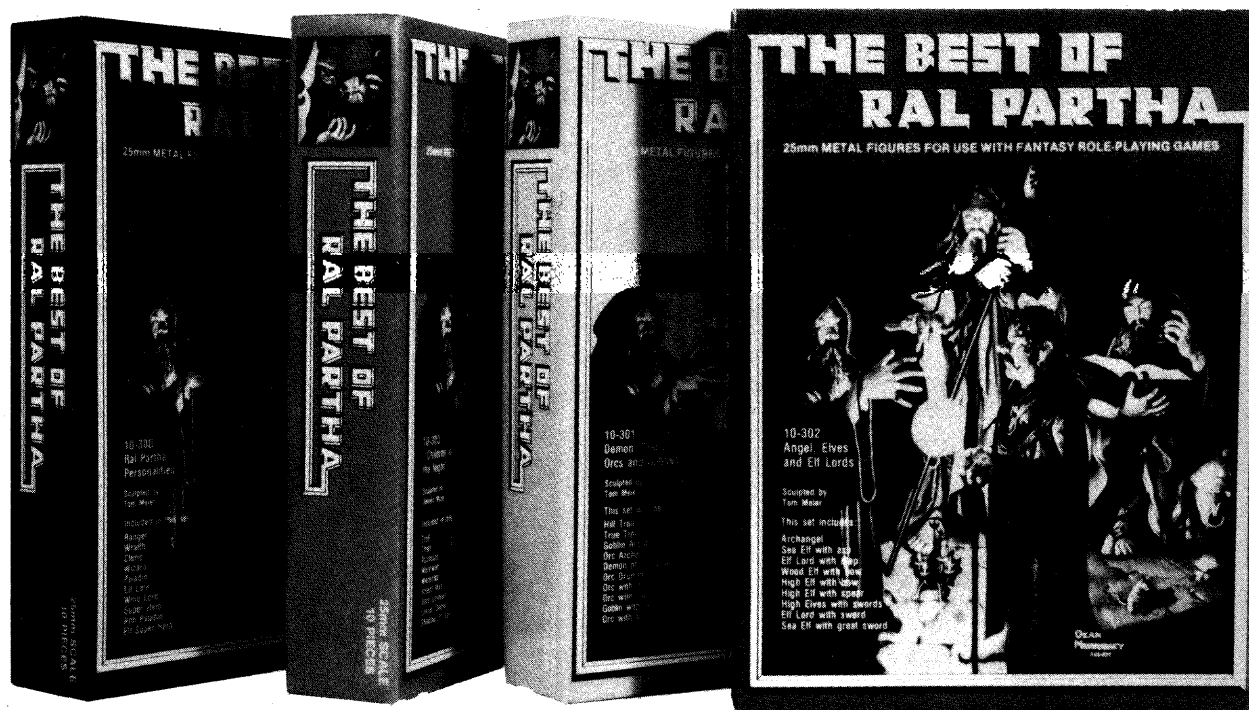
Mephistopheles can, at will, one at a time, one per round, use the following spell-like powers: *animate dead*, *beguile*, *charm person*, *cone of cold*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *dispel illusion*, *dispel magic*, *geas*, *ice storm*, *illusion*, *invisibility*, *know alignment*, *produce flame*, *polymorph self*, *raise dead*, *read languages*, *read magic*, *rulership* (once per day), *shape change* (once per day), *suggestion*, *teleportation*, *wall of ice*, and (fulfill another's) *wish*. He can pronounce an *unholy word* once per day. Mephistopheles causes *fear* by gaze (save vs. spell applicable) or in a 10' radius (save vs. wands). He can *summon* 1-3 ice devils with a 90% chance of success.

Description: Mephistopheles is a tall, blue-black humanoid with handsome, if diabolical, features. He is hugely muscled, as would be expected from his great strength. His wings are deep blue, as are his horns and talons. His eyes are pale blue with red irises and pupils.

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MOLOCH (Arch-devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 126 hit points

% IN LAIR: 95%

TREASURE TYPE: I, R, S, T, X

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 8-11/8-11/4-16

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*

SIZE: L (14½' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 226

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Moloch is a Grand Duke, Viceroy of Baalzebul, and the lord of the Sixth Plane of the hells. He is as strong as a hill giant, and he attacks by grabbing and crushing or piercing a victim with his huge hands and taloned fingers, followed by the bite of his shark-toothed maw.

Moloch carries, and at times may choose to employ, a six-tailed whip made of an unknown, pliable metal. This device delivers either 1, 2, or 4 points of damage per tail striking, depending on the number of charges he expends. The damage from this whip is electrical in

nature, and so is greatly feared by less powerful devils.

Once per turn or melee round, as applicable, Moloch can, at will, use the following spell-like powers: *affect normal fires, animate dead, beguile, burning hands* (16 points of damage), *detect invisibility, detect magic, fire charm, fly, geas, illusion, know alignment, polymorph self, produce fire, produce flame, pyrotechnics, raise dead, read languages, read magic, suggestion, teleport* (no error), *wall of fire*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day Moloch is able to create a *flame strike*, use a *symbol of stunning*, and pronounce an *unholy word*. When Moloch chooses, he may breathe upon an individual, or up to 9 persons within 30'. Those who fail a saving throw vs. breath weapon will be affected by *fear* such that they will drop their weapons and flee. Moloch can *summon* 1-3 horned devils (with an 80% chance of success).

Great enmity exists between Moloch and Geryon. If it were not for Baalzebul, there would be open warfare between the two, much to Moloch's detriment and Mephistopheles' delight.

Description: Moloch is a great, square-bodied creature with red-orange skin. He has short, thick arms and legs, and huge, square hands and feet. His feet and head are horned. His head is huge with slanting eyes and a gaping mouth.

can be pulled loose by the creature, and will burst into flame when they are pulled out. Up to 12 of these spikes can be loosed by these creatures when they are flying over an opponent, each inflicting damage as a dart if it hits, and causing flammable materials to burst into flame. In melee, from 1-4 spines will wound an opponent if the devil elects to hurl itself upon an antagonist. Hits are automatic on this sort of attack, but the devil can make no other attack in the same round.

The following spell-like powers can be used by spined devils, one at a time, one per round, at will: *affect normal fires, change self, command, produce flame, scare*, and *summon* (once per day) a barbed devil (5% chance of success).

TITIVILUS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 15"/30"

HIT DICE: 86 hit points

% IN LAIR: 35%

TREASURE TYPE: G, S, T

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +3*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%

INTELLIGENCE: *Supra-genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*

SIZE: M (5½' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 239

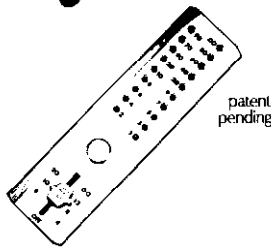
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Titivilus is infamous for his ability to twist words, to use words to confuse, to confuse those using words. Fittingly, he is the nuncio for Dispat. He is not large nor particularly strong, but he is most clever. It is said that Titivilus possesses a silver sword of *wounding*. In any event, he typically uses his other powers.

At will, one per round, as applicable, Titivilus can use the following spell-like powers: *animate dead, bestow curse, charm person or mammal, chaos, emotion, feblemind* (once per day), *forget, fumble, hypnotism, illusion, illusionary script, know alignment, message, misdirection, non-detection, polymorph self, protection from good, suggestion, teleport, tongues, ventriloquism*. Once per day Titivilus can use a *symbol of discord* or one of sleep (19 levels or hit dice or 99 hit points affected — save indicates only nodding and dozing with a 1 in 20 chance per round of awakening fully). He causes *fear* by touch only. He can *summon* 1-4 erinyes (50% chance of success). He regenerates 1 point of damage per round.

Description: Titivilus appears very similar to a satyr, but he is actually more human-looking, save for his bat-like wings. His complexion is pale, but his face slightly ruddy.

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SPINED (Least devil)

FREQUENCY: *Common*

NO. APPEARING: 2-5 or 4-20

ARMOR CLASS: 3

MOVE: 6"/18"

HIT DICE: 3+3

% IN LAIR: 10%

TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 and/or 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type and/or 1-4/1-4*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 25%

INTELLIGENCE: *Low-average*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful Evil*

SIZE: S (3' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

Spined devils are found on all the planes of the Nine Hells, although they are most common on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Spined devils are used as servants, couriers, and the like, for they are too small and weak for most other duties. They often herd lemures.

Attack is by weapon usually, since most spined devils carry a short military fork (4½' long). When airborne, they are also able to use their taloned feet to inflict considerable raking damage. The spiked projections on the body of a spined devil

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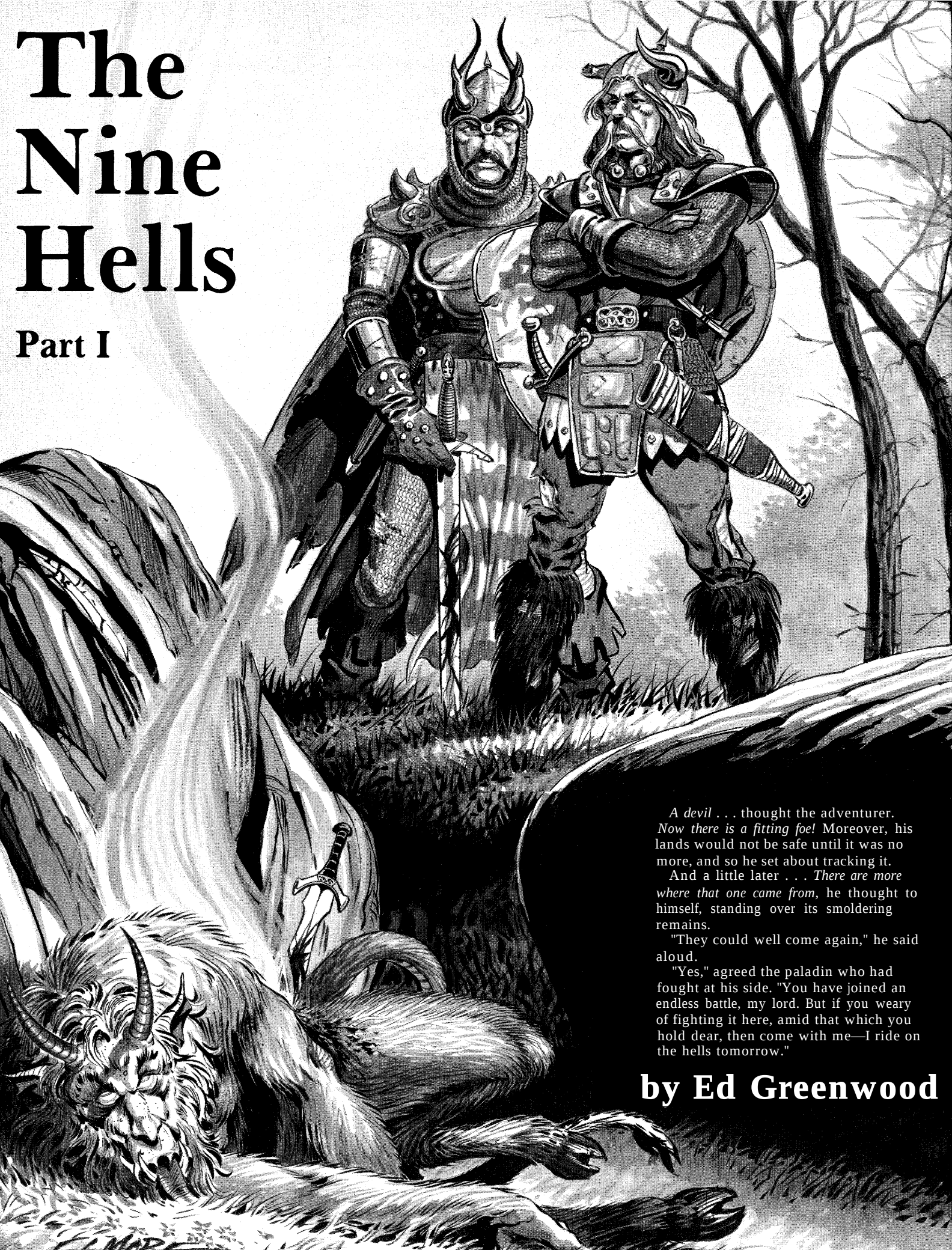
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The Nine Hells

Part I



A devil . . . thought the adventurer. Now there is a fitting foe! Moreover, his lands would not be safe until it was no more, and so he set about tracking it.

And a little later . . . There are more where that one came from, he thought to himself, standing over its smoldering remains.

"They could well come again," he said aloud.

"Yes," agreed the paladin who had fought at his side. "You have joined an endless battle, my lord. But if you weary of fighting it here, amid that which you hold dear, then come with me—I ride on the hells tomorrow."

by Ed Greenwood

Devils and demons have always been favorite monsters in AD&D™ play, particularly with upper- and mid-level characters. As a DM, I have been reluctant to include devils until I had done some work on the Nine Hells — for the simple reason that player characters, once they are introduced to devils and find out facts about them, are sure to want to carry the fight to the enemy's home ground. I am basically kind and fair (what DM isn't?), and it goes against the grain not to allow characters to enter the hells after they've gone to some trouble and expense to secure the means to do so. Not permitting them to make the trip, when they deserve to be given the try, condemns the characters to endlessly be on the defensive when fighting devils. Far more so than (for instance) the chaotic layers of the Abyss, the environment of the Nine Hells demands that the DM do considerable preparation before play moves to that environment. There are gaps and uncertainties in available official information about the Hells. Briefly, this article will touch on some of these and explain the reasoning I have adopted; other DMs may well make different decisions. The treatment of the Nine Hells offered here leaves ample room for a DM to make the hells more as he or she sees them, and/or to include specific features therein for a particular adventure.

The very name of the styx devil (see the FIEND FOLIO® Tome, pp. 25-26) implies that the river Styx exists in some form in the Nine Hells of the AD&D multiverse, and we know (from the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia) that the sahuagin deity, Sekolah, swims in the deepest part of the seas of the Nine Hells. Sekolah is a giant white shark that "hunts only the largest and fiercest of prey." The illustration in the DDG book suggests that a giant squid is part of such prey. Might Sekolah also hunt dragon turtles, or giant octopi? Or are there aquatic leviathans unique to the hells?

There are other details a DM must resolve, too: Gruumsh, Maglubiyet, Kurlumak and some human deities (Set, for example) named in the DDG book are placed in the Nine Hells. Gruumsh and Maglubiyet are locked in unending battle with the armies they command, and these armies had best be geographically placed in relation to hell's nine planes. In issue #64 of DRAGON® Magazine, Mr. Gyax moves the first three deities (to Gehenna, Gehenna, and Acheron respectively), but it is unclear whether this change applies officially to the AD&D rules, or just to the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ campaign setting. Certainly, from a design standpoint, these deities are best removed, for if the archdevils themselves (see the DDG book) are merely lesser gods, how do they exist amicably with Set, a greater god who conceivably has the power to (lawful evil, remember?) rule them.

If any deities are to be allowed in the

hells, the suggestion from here is that they be confined to the first (uppermost) plane, which can serve as a universal "doormat" area for visitors and non-devils, and a staging area both for any standing armies or defenders of the hells, and for foraging parties who are to leave the hells on various missions.

Most player-character invasions of the hells, too, would arrive on the first plane. It is, however, necessary for the DM at invasion time to know something of the other planes of hell, since from those planes will come the reactions to any such invasions. Here we depart from the official, and move into this writer's attempts to make the Nine Hells a playable environment.

Reality in the Realms

In the Realms (my campaign world), I have followed the idea of the shifts specified by Mr. Gyax in DRAGON #64, removing all non-devil deities from the Nine Hells except for Sekolah. In the campaign pantheon there exists a greater god of lawful evil alignment (Bane, by name) who is worshipped by humans. The problem of how to deal with such a deity vis-a-vis the archdevils has been avoided by separating the two (the deity and the devils) entirely. Bane does not attempt to hinder or control Asmodeus or the other devils because they serve his purposes acting on their own, freeing Bane to do his work elsewhere. By strictly avoiding the devils, Bane maintains an unwitting (?) but steadfast and quite powerful set of allies without fearing treachery from them, and without expending time and effort in the intrigues of training, organizing, or commanding infernal armies.

High-level clerics of Bane regard devils as a group of lawful evil beings who can be commanded into various services by the proper means, and who can be expected to act thus-and-so due to their lawful evil nature and the social organization of the hells, but who are self-interested and not willing servants of Bane or of the clerics. This is essentially no different from the way clerics of other deities regard the devils; the diabolical are never dealt with in safety and trust. To what extent Bane and the archdevils know of each other, or have contact, can remain vague — part of a DM's "design elbow room" — for now. (Bane is geographically separated from the Nine Hells, too — he is in Acheron.)

Using the rules

Various hints about the nature of the Nine Hells are found in the rules, such as the suggestion (by inference from the description of bone devils, and from the cold-related powers that Geryon and the bone devils possess) that Geryon's plane is a rather icy place. By gathering the information contained in the AD&D rule books, and embellishing these facts with

information from literature, one can cobble together a geographical picture of the Nine Hells.

A vast number of writers have offered their own religious or primarily fantastic conceptions of the infernal regions (those lands of the dead that are linked with evil spirits and, usually, punishment of the souls of the dead). The chief sources of geographically detailed descriptions of the hells are listed here, for DMs who want to develop their own versions: Dante's *Inferno*; Homer's *Odyssey*, book XI; Virgil's *Aeneid*, book VI; Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, book II canto 7; Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, book XVII; Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, book IV; Milton's *Paradise Lost*; Fenelon's *Telemaque*, book XVIII; and William Backford's fantasy romance *Vuthek*. Libraries are the best sources for the above books.

Also valuable are modern fantasy versions of the hells drawn from the original sources, such as *Inferno* by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle (a 1976 Pocket Books paperback, still in print). There are many other such examples in fantasy literature, and many comparable underworlds (those in Ursula LeGuin's *The Furthest Shore* and H.P. Lovecraft's *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kaddath* leap to mind) also to be found therein that will yield ideas of flora, fauna, and physical conditions to a DM creating his or her own version of the Nine Hells. What follows is my own (unofficial) conception.

Servants and vassals

Before plunging into a plane-by-plane description, a note regarding servant and vassal devils: These beings are useful in that they help to delay any direct intervention by archdevils in play, stretching out the fun and providing player characters with individual, significant foes of lesser power before bringing the "big guns" onstage. To characters (such as powerful clerics) in the Realms who are privy to such information, the role and descriptions of these servant devils is known to be as follows:

Some devils, even those of sufficient power to attain archdevil rank, see their safest position in the present infernal regime to be that of lieutenant to an archdevil. Their precise reasons for this attitude are known only to themselves, but it is thought that some prefer to maintain a low profile so that they can work "behind the scenes," and others prefer to act in the name of an archdevil, thereby disclaiming responsibility for their own actions.

A DM should bear in mind that there is certainly some degree of silent cooperation between these servant devils, who wish to avoid being openly set against each other (i.e., in combat) or against any archdevil. This cooperation must be obvious to the archdevils, who seem to tolerate it (Baalzebul the least), and some believe that Asmodeus quietly aids and

encourages it, for it adds stability to the present status quo — in which he is on top. Fear and/or mindfulness of general strategy (ahead of short-term tactics) prevent most open rivalries between devils from escalating further than exchanges of nasty words and cruel pranks. A player character should *not* be able to play one devil against another like a Machiavelli might manipulate his courtiers; bear in mind that most devils are of reasonably high intelligence.



1. AVERNUS

The uppermost plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Tiamat, the Chromatic Dragon, and serves as a home to all lesser unique devils. These are devils with individual names and characteristics, and powers of greater magnitude than those of a pit fiend (for all such unique devils of lesser power are soon destroyed by their enemies and the cruelty of their fellows), which are not otherwise placed in the hells as ruling archdevils or their direct servants.

There are approximately fifty of these lesser unique devils; embittered, frustrated beings who torment the lemures and spined devils of this plane and viciously attack all intruders. Chief among them is Nergal, who like all of his outcast fellows plots and schemes constantly to win a higher rank, but through hopes of reward always eagerly and enthusiastically obeys commands issued by the archdevils. Most such commands concern the defense of the hells against all intruders, for the dukes of hell have no wish to deal with intruders on their own ground — the plane or planes they rule — when such disorderly business can be conducted elsewhere. The uppermost plane of the hells thus serves as a marshalling area and training ground for infernal armies, and is (preferably to the

devils) the place in which intruders are dealt with.

It is a plane of darkness, consisting of rocky crags and hillocks, a desolate wasteland of stunted, poisonous vegetation and bare rock. Many concealed pits lined with filth-smeared stakes and the like have been prepared for intruders. Avernus has no roads or buildings, but many caves and warrens have been dug out of the rocks; most are devils' homes, as unwary travelers seeking shelter will soon learn.

At irregular intervals the darkness is lit by fireballs (as in the spell, varying in size and damage from 2d6 to 7d6) that form spontaneously from the vapors of the air, bursting at any height above the ground. If one should notice a glowing, swirling effect in the air, one soon discovers that a fireball will burst in that location one round later. The precise cause of these fiery discharges is unknown, but it is natural and not under the control of any devil or other creature. A *gust of wind* spell will push a forming fireball away, but a *dispel magic* will not stop it from forming, or negate its effects. (*Editor's note: DMs using Avernus in play should take note of the alterations in magic spell effects that are prevalent there and on the other planes of the Nine Hells. That information will be part of the second installment of this article.*)

Any non-devil lawful evil creatures not native to the hells (such as the occasional beholder), if they are to be found in the infernal regions at all, will be found on Avernus unless specifically located elsewhere by order of an archdevil. One noteworthy example of such creatures are the nycadaemons (see the FIEND FOLIO Tome). These have the power to move freely about the Nine Hells, but they are disliked and distrusted by the archdevils and may well be met with physical opposition if they appear uninvited on a plane other than Avernus. (DMs should bear in

mind that a nycadaemon might aid a party of adventurers traveling in the hells, to further its own ends.)

Avernus is nominally ruled by Tiamat, the Chromatic Dragon. The mother of all evil dragonkind holds Avernus through the support of Asmodeus, but her actual authority extends only as far as her physical reach. Most of the inhabitants of the plane avoid her, not wishing to serve as her meals.

The Chromatic Dragon spends most (90%) of her time sprawled in her lair, the great caverns known as Azharul, "The Dragonspawn Pits." Here she is attended by her bodyguards, five huge adult male dragons — one white, one black, one green, one blue, and one red (for details, refer to the Monster Manual). She is constantly guarded by these consorts, and when not plotting, feeding, enjoying cruel sport or facing danger, Tiamat will be found mating with one of them within a protective ring formed by the other four. She bears litters of 1-4 dragonets (or "mewlings": very young dragons born conscious and in control of their feeble powers) after an average gestation period of 6 days. Tiamat occasionally (7% chance at any given time) travels via the Astral Plane or Ethereal Plane, perhaps to give birth to a litter on the Prime Material Plane (or Planes, if the multiverse of your campaign includes "parallel worlds") — sometimes grudgingly, at the behest of Asmodeus, but more often to further some plan of her own.

The scant remainder of her time is spent roaming Avernus; very rarely, she journeys to the palace of Asmodeus. Those of Tiamat's offspring that are born and remain on Avernus occupy themselves with hunting down and bringing back food for Tiamat and her consorts while the Chromatic Dragon is in her lair. These offspring/underlings are of all sizes, types, and ages of evil dragonkind, and all are aggressive, cruel, and in good health. Injured, weak, or disobedient specimens are soon eaten by Tiamat, or by others at her direction; she also dines on slain dragons, including slain consorts who have displeased her, and all newborn spawn who are multi-headed or otherwise chromatic in nature. The few of her spawn that survive to achieve "huge adult" status serve as replacements for her consorts.

Note that Tiamat will have full amounts of treasure (as shown in the Monster Manual entry) only while in her lair. She may seize small amounts of treasure when on the Prime Material Plane, but only quantities which she can transport herself, since her bodyguards are unable to accompany her when she leaves Avernus. They guard her hoard in Azharul diligently in her absence, for she will notice if even a single bauble is gone!

The treasure prized most highly by Tiamat is magic — specifically, magic-user spells of 1st to 5th level which are

new to her. With these she can increase her personal power, and consequently she is always seeking more powerful offensive and defensive spells which she can study, experiment with, and modify for her own use. Note that Tiamat needs time and trial to modify a written magic-user spell from the standard form to her own (verbal component only) form of casting.

While on the Prime Material Plane, she will reveal herself in the open only if she believes a fair chance exists to gain such spells in so doing. Otherwise, her visits to the Prime Material tend to be secretive affairs, for she feels uneasy without her bodyguards. In the past, it is said, many men (and some of other races) worshipped Tiamat, and her visits were triumphs of worship, adulation, pampering, and the bestowal or riches and magical information to the extent of human experimentation and mastery upon the Chromatic Dragon — but if this was indeed so, it is no longer the case. Nowadays, evil dragons will still acknowledge their allegiance to her, but this is a “worship” born of fear and respect rather than love or loyalty.

Although Tiamat will battle (attempting to kill and eat) individual devils without hesitation, she will never knowingly attack an archdevil or a lieutenant to an archdevil. She rules her spawn by force and fear, but her will is enforced on Avernus by 40 companies of abishai under the command of *Malphas*, 29 similar companies led by *Amduscias*, and 3 companies of erinyes under the command of the pit fiend Goap. (Names printed in *italic* type indicate devils who are individually described in the text that follows.) These forces are always busy, for Avernus is constantly dealing with intruders and the machinations of the “rabble of devilkin” — former consorts fallen from favor, and other unique devils too weak or too mistrusted to gain or hold a position in the hierarchy of the hells. These beings are constantly attempting to gather enough support to win (at least) a position in the service of Tiamat, perhaps by supplanting one of the incumbent vassal devils, and are always moving to avoid the armies searching for them. Among these outcast devils are names such as Rumjal, *Caim*, *Bist*, *Cahor*, *Dagon*, *Azazel*, *Armaros*, *Kochbiel*, *Nisroch*, and *Nergal*.

Tales are told of a mysterious archdevil, Astaroth, said to be mightier in power than any devil save Asmodeus himself (see Alexander von Thorn’s article, “The Politics of Hell,” printed in DRAGON #28 and reprinted in the BEST OF DRAGON™ Vol. II anthology), who dwells elsewhere than the Nine Hells, apart from the present regime, working alone to advance his secret ends. This devil represents the greatest threat to Asmodeus; with Astaroth’s support, Mephistopheles, Baalzebul, or even a lesser archdevil such as Geryon could

conceivably wrest control of the Nine Hells from the Great Devil himself. But even the existence of Astaroth is uncertain; he is definitely not an avowed force in the hells at this time.

AMDUSCIAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: See below

HIT DICE: 92 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 20%

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: See below

DAMAGE/ATTACK: See below

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better
weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: See below

PSIONIC ABILITY: 216

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Amduscias is a duke in the service of Tiamat, ruler of Avernus, and leads 29 companies of abishai. He is a being of long memory and cunning strategies. He can *shape change* at will into a dirty yellow unicorn with eyes of flame and a purple horn, a hawk-headed man (he usually wears dark red or black robes when in this form), or his favored form: a wolf with a prehensile, constricting serpent’s tail. He does not need, and does not wear, armor in any of his forms.

When in unicorn form, Amduscias attacks with his horn (acts as a *sword of wounding*, for 2-9 damage), or his hooves (2 per round, for 2-10 damage each). His maximum movement rate in this form is 18”; he can “bolt” from a standing start, and some say that when horses spook or gallop uncontrollably, it is because Amduscias has affected them.

In human-like form Amduscias has average dexterity, and two or three attacks (fists for 1-2 each and beak for 1-8, or weapon and beak). Amduscias is ambidextrous and can wield two weapons if they are small (e.g., daggers or darts). This devil has above average strength when in human-like form, and a long, curved beak somewhat like a hummingbird’s in appearance. This beak is, however, terrifically strong and sharp. His move in this form is 12”.

Amduscias prefers to fight in wolf form; his movement rate is 18”, and he attacks with two raking foreclaws and his jaws, or his hind claws and tail. If in a position to do so, he can use all six of these attacks in a round, against as many targets. The claws do 3-12 damage each, the jaws 1-20, and the tail 1-10 constriction damage per round plus additional damage if Amduscias uses it to immerse a held victim in water, batter a victim

against a rock, etc. The tail will loosen its grip if it is severed, or if it is dealt 17 points of damage in any single round or 26 points of damage over a succession of rounds.

Amduscias can change forms in one round (during which he can do nothing else except speak), and is restricted to the forms described. He can use the spell-like powers listed below, one at a time, once per round. Note that (as with other devils) verbal, somatic, and material components — as spell-casters on the Prime Material Plane know them — are not necessary. Amduscias’ spell-like powers are: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flume*, *fire shield* (either version), *detect invisibility*, *detect lie*, *read magic*, *locate object*, *dispel magic*, *telekinesis* (5,000 g.p. maximum weight), *find familiar* (for another being; the familiar will be an imp), and *faerie fire*. Amduscias can cause *fear* (save vs. spell to avoid) in anyone within 3” he points at (but only one target per round). Once per day he can use a *symbol of stunning*.

Amduscias is sometimes called the “Reconciliator of Foes,” because he is a skillful actor and negotiator, and Tiamat often employs him to mediate in disputes between devils or her kin. While in any of his forms, Amduscias can speak and understand perfectly any language (cf. *tongues* spell). When encountered, Amduscias will only have treasure with him if he is in his human-like form; if so, it may be of any type. Amduscias regenerates 2 hit points per round. He can *summon* (with a 70% chance of success) 1-3 abishai at will.

MALPHAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 12”/30” (*in crow form*)

HIT DICE: 90 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 20%

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +5*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better
weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: See below

PSIONIC ABILITY: 220

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Malphas is a duke in the service of Tiamat, ruler of Avernus. He leads 40 companies of abishai, and, like his fellow duke Amduscias and the pit fiend Goap, is likely to be found traveling about Avernus enforcing Tiamat’s will. None of Tiamat’s dukes have permanent encampments or fortresses, but instead they maintain a commonly held system of

guarded, "safe" caves where their forces can rest or gather.

Malphas appears as a powerful, dark-complexioned man dressed in black velvet studded with gems (of considerable value; his robes have 333 gems of all sorts, 100 g.p. base value each, if recovered complete), or as a large, black, crow-like bird.

Malphas shuns armor, and fights with all weapons (and his spell-like powers) when in human form. His voice is deep and compelling, and with his powers of *tongues* and *ESP* (usable at will), he is adept at deceiving others, particularly non-devils. He may carry treasure of any type if encountered in human form.

Once per round, at will, Malphas can use one of his spell-like powers: *tongues* or *ESP* (as noted above), *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *fortress* (this creates a structure similar to *Daern's Instant Fortress* — see the DMG — in all respects, save that its door will open and close for anyone, and it will disappear in 16 turns or when Malphas wills), *detect invisibility*, *read magic*, *dispel magic*, *flame arrow* (Malphas can also apply this to blades wielded by himself or others; these become *flame tongue* swords — fiery damage, but no "to hit" bonuses — for 3 rounds), and *remove* (or *bestow*) *curse*. Once per day Malphas can use a *symbol of pain*, and he can cause *fear* (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid) by touch (one target per round). He can *summon* 1-2 abishai, with a 55% chance of success, at will. Malphas regenerates 2 hit points per round.

NERGAL (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -2
MOVE: 18"/10"
HIT DICE: 106 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: Nil
TREASURE TYPE: Nil
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better
weapon to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%
INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
SIZE: L (9' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 211
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Nergal is the most powerful of the "rabble of devilkin" banished to Avernus by the archdevils. Usually enveloped in magical *darkness*, Nergal appears as a lion-headed, winged toad. His mottled pinkish-grey, warty skin is covered with sores which ooze a clear, colorless ichor. This liquid is deadly poisonous to humans and demi-humans, who must save vs. poison to avoid this effect if contacted. If the save is successful, the ichor

does 1-6 points of corrosive damage and confers immunity to its effects upon the victim for 10-40 turns. Nergal is sometimes called "The Bringer of Pestilence and Fever" because of this property.

Nergal is warlike, quick to attack those who defy him or bully injured or weaker creatures. His bite does 3-12 points of damage, and possibly confers a disease; refer to the DMG for type and effects. Victims who are bitten must save vs. poison at +3 to avoid disease.

Nergal can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *continual light*, *tongues*, *read magic*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *dispel magic*, and *darkness* 15' radius. He can cause *fear* (save vs. spell to avoid) by touch, if he so wills. Nergal regenerates 2 hit points per round. (Note that he cannot use a *symbol*, nor can he *summon* other devils to his aid.)

Nergal likes to present himself to human intruders as a fellow man horribly transformed by diabolic magic, and may "help" the intruders for a time, usually to learn of their powers, magic, treasure, and purposes, before luring them into a trap. Often he uses the powers and magic he obtains in this way to torment his victims; sometimes he hoards information and treasure he obtains to use it for bargaining purposes. Always, he builds and looks to the future, planning a forcible entry into the ranks of the dukes or archdevils. He has no fixed abode or lair, but often conceals caches of treasure or magic he has seized in caverns and grottos scattered all about Avernus.

BIST (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -2
MOVE: 14"
HIT DICE: 90 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: Nil
TREASURE TYPE: Nil
NO. OF ATTACKS: 3
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-5/2-5/2-12
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%
INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
SIZE: L (9' long)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 213
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Bist, a devil akin to the hellcats (see the FIEND FOLIO Tome: *Hellcat*), is totally selfish and a master of duplicity. For these reasons, she is mistrusted by all archdevils and is confined to Avernus. Bist cannot leave the hells without being summoned (unlike hellcats), for she has been compelled to change her name, and thus can no longer be summoned by mages on other planes. She shares many

of the hellcats' other capabilities, however.

Invisible in the presence of light (except for her eyes, which appear as irises of orange flame floating in midair), Bist appears in darkness as a faintly luminescent, wraith-like, and unusually large hellcat. Her eyes retain their flame-like appearance when she is so revealed.

Bist is immune to all mind-controlling spells (*charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, etc.). She can only be hit by weapons of +2 "to hit" or better, and all magical weapons lose their damage bonuses when striking her. Bist communicates by *telepathy* in a 14" range, although she can speak (in a hissing, rasping voice) the common tongue, Mabrahoring (the High Tongue of the hells), and the lawful evil alignment tongue.

Bist can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *affect normal fires*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *dispel magic*, *magic missile* (3 missiles per spell), and *shield*.

Once per day Bist can employ *gaze reflection*, and once per day she can *blink*. In addition, she can generate *fear* at will in a 5'-radius sphere about herself. Bist regenerates 1 hit point per round.

CAIM (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -1
MOVE: 8"/16"
HIT DICE: 93 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: Nil
TREASURE TYPE: Nil
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-12
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better
weapon to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%
INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
SIZE: S (5' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 213
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Caim is an outcast devil, bound to Avernus. He is a gossip and a sneak, and is particularly disliked in the hells. A skilled orator, he can always make his own actions or opinions seem reasonable — and he often seeks to dupe intruders, partly because he considers the flesh of elves and men delicious.

Caim appears as a large, upright, darkly handsome bird — a thrush — with a long, sharp beak and a belt about the hips. In pouches on this belt Caim carries items he deems necessary, manipulating them by means of his *unseen servant* spell-like power.

Caim can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce*

affect normal fires, unseen servant, light, detect magic, detect invisibility, dispel magic, hold person, and tongues.

Once per day Caim can *reverse gravity*; thrice per day he can cast *repulsion*. Caim can generate *fear* in a 5'-radius sphere about himself, at will. He regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.



2. DIS

The second plane of the Nine Hells is largely flat, with here and there a bare hill or tor rising smoothly up out of the plains. Its sky is a thick, smoky-hued green without clouds, occasionally lit up by high lightning flickers and faint thunder. The black and cold waters of stagnant rivers and streams are stretched threadlike across the plain, radiating outward from the moat surrounding the city of Dis, which is the seat of the arch-devil Dispater.

The city of Dis, built of unrusting iron, stands on an island in the center of a lake where the rivers meet. The waters are poisoned and give off odiferous vapors, sometimes visible as smoky wisps or plumes. Over the plains sweep ceaseless, fierce winds, tumbling many lemures helplessly through the air to strike repeatedly against the ground or each other. There is at least a 10% chance each round that a land-based traveler trying to stand or move against the wind will be swept off his or her feet (20% chance if mounted or standing high on an exposed position).

Aerial travelers will find the wind unpredictable and savage, so that unless they have spent years learning to maneuver in constantly changing winds, they suffer a Flight Class penalty of -1, and an aerial movement penalty of -3". (Those of Flight Class E retain the ability to fly, but lose a total of 6' move distance per round. Movement penalties in all

cases should end when a creature is reduced to a maximum 2" move.)

Erinyes, being native to the plane, can navigate with comparative ease in the gale (suffering no penalties), and some of these devil-types are always aloft, buffeting lemures for sport and watching for intruders. Erinyes earn increased power on the plane of Dis through the favor of Dispater, who rewards them for unswerving loyalty (he often arranges tests or traps for his servants) and for missions diligently and well accomplished. When an erinyes encounters intruders in Dis, it will usually fly near to observe clearly their numbers and appearance, and then head straight for Dis to inform the pit fiend Baalzephon, Dispater himself, one of Dispater's other commanders, or one of the "Iron Guard" (Dispater's bodyguard of malebranche).

Almost certainly the erinyes will encounter others of its kind while on this journey, and these it usually informs in passing of the intruders and their location, so that said intruders will likely suffer attacks from odd bands of erinyes before any organized force is sent out from the Iron City. If a group of erinyes encounters intruders, all but one — the messenger to Dis — will immediately attack. They may not seek to slay the intruders outright, for Dispater, like all archdevils, is always alert for beings or items that can help maintain or improve his own position, and no erinyes deliberately courts his wrath by destroying something Dispater might have liked to have.

The Iron City itself is a dismal place of eyrie-riddled towers, zombies, garbage-choked streets alive with rot grubs (and a black pudding here and there), and iron-barred cells full of chains and torture implements. Abishai, imps, and spined devils, plus occasional barbed devils, hellcats, and rakshasa, throng the dark, reeking streets.

The island on which the city is built rises sharply in elevation toward the center, and on this rocky knob is the "infernally grand" palace of Dispater, many towered and terrible. It is fashioned of stone (unlike the rest of the city) and furnished with iron, carved bone, and stone. Its terraced approaches are adorned with trees fashioned of iron. The palace is off limits to those without a reason for being there. Erinyes can be seen frequently flitting in and out of the palace's high, arched windows (presumably to give or receive information). There are many caverns beneath the palace, known as "the pits of Dis," where prisoners live in unmanacled savagery, fighting for the edible garbage that falls into their lightless realm down shafts from the palace above.

Far from the central city, the plains of Dis rise into rolling hills, haunted by "wild" erinyes who seldom or never go into the city, and by many hellcats. Pilars of stone are said to move about in the

rolling hills of Dis, but nothing definite is known of these.

Hellcats serve various of the lesser devils, and can be found on all of the planes of the Nine Hells (except the ninth, for Asmodeus does not employ them and seldom tolerates the servants of others in his domain) from time to time, in accordance with their masters' wishes. Most of the devils regard hellcats as sneaking spies and useful errand-runners, but untrustworthy due to their mutable loyalty, and of little consequence. Hellcats charged with guarding or the performance of other protective tasks will serve with zealous diligence, hoping to gain favor with their masters.

Between the city and the hills lie the vast estates held in fief by Dispater's vassals. The duke Bitru is the strongest of these vassals; he can muster 70 companies of erinyes. *Merodach* (described below), commanding 21 companies of barbed devils, and the pit fiend *Furcas*, with 12 companies of bearded devils, also boast sizable holdings. Mephits, achaierai, and rakshasas wander these holdings, and stench kows and spined devils are the working backbone of them. Rakshasas sometimes achieve positions of responsibility in a duke's household or retinue, but are always watched closely, for they are too self-willed and ambitious to be trusted servants.

In the city of Dis itself — and almost always within Dispater's palace — can be found *Lilis*, Dispater's consort; his prime minister, the pit fiend Baalzephon, who orders and administers Dispater's vassals and armies; and *Biffant*, the provost, who runs and commands the staff of the palace itself. Titivilus, Dispater's nuncio, can be found here, as can the pit fiend Bel, who commands the "Iron Guard" (3 companies of malebranche), and *Arioch*, Dispater's avenger, who punishes all those who have wronged or hindered the will and plans of Dispater.

LILIS (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14"/26"

HIT DICE: 66 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 85%

TREASURE TYPE: Q (×4), S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +3*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

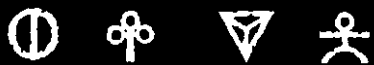
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (5' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 211

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Lilis, consort of Dispater, is one of the older and weaker female devils, but her



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careful diplomacy and strategies and her attention to events in the hells and elsewhere (her network of spies is said to be second only to that of Asmodeus) has kept her own position in the infernal regions as secure as that of any of the nobility of the hells. Lilis and Biffant (q.v.), Disputer's provost, are as trusting and as close as two devils ever become — but both are (thus far) unswervingly loyal to Disputer, making his control of Dis the envy of other archdevils.

Once per round, at will, Lilis can employ one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics, produce flume, animate dead, charm person, dispel magic, know alignment, detect lie, tongues, read magic, dimension door, repulsion, invisibility, (fulfill another's limited) wish*. Once per day Lilis can cause insanity by touch. She can cause fear by pointing at a victim (one victim per round; saving throw vs. spell applicable). She can *summon* 1-3 erinyes (70% chance of success), and can regenerate 1 point of damage every turn.

Description: Lilis has orange-red skin, copper-colored hair and green eyes; she looks like a short, plump, well-preserved human female of middle age, except for the hue of her skin, her tiny orange-red horns, long red nails, forked tail, wings, and delicate cloven black hooves.

ARIOCH (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: 14"/20"

HIT DICE: 123 hit points

% IN LAIR: 65%

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6 (bite), by
weapon type +6

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (9' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 226

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Arioch serves Disputer in the office of "avenger," meting out punishment upon all on Dis who defy or otherwise displease his master. He also wards off the intrusions of devils of all ranks from other planes, and accompanies his master as bodyguard in all situations of possible peril (such as visits to the court of Asmodeus or other planes). In combat, Arioch employs a huge, 20-foot-long, double-ended +1 halberd (having a blade at either end, and wielded by grasping in the middle of the shaft) of adamantite.

Arioch can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time, once per round: *produce flume, blink, dispel magic, detect*

invisibility, remove (or bestow) curse, and magic missile (6 missiles per spell). Once per day Arioch can use a *symbol of death*. He radiates fear at will in a 6" radius (saving throw vs. spell to avoid). Arioch regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Arioch's flat, reptilian head (rather like a stubby crocodile's) is ringed with a leonine mane. His skin is dark wine-red, deepening to purple on the head and shoulders, and on his great bat-like wings. Arioch has a forked tail, great cloven hooves, and heavily muscled arms.

BIFFANT (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14"

HIT DICE: 84 hit points

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: Q (x8), S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +3*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 219

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Biffant serves Disputer as provost, running the affairs of that archdevil's palace. Consequently, he is almost always to be found in the Iron City, usually in the palace itself, where he is never without a staff/guard of two "messenger" erinyes and six servant spined devils. Typically he carries an ornate iron rod (equal in damage potential to a morning star), but will seize whatever is at hand in a battle. Biffant prefers to let others fight for him, however, and will try to *summon* or otherwise call for aid if attacked. He is not particularly brave or forceful, but is crafty and plans far, far into the future. Biffant and Lilis (q.v.) are said to be very friendly; closer in mutual understanding and cooperation, some say, than Lilis and Disputer himself.

Once per round Biffant can use any one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics, produce flume, wall of fire, read magic, detect invisibility, detect magic, detect lie, know alignment, locate object, animate dead*, and (fulfill another's limited) wish. Once per day he can employ a *symbol of hopelessness*, or one of *pain*. Biffant radiates fear in a 3" radius at will. He is able to *summon* 1-6 spined devils (70% chance of success) or 1-2 erinyes (30% chance of success) when necessary. Biffant regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Biffant appears as a portly, blood-red skinned humanoid devil, wingless but with a small, tufted

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tail and two inward-pointing, hook-curved horns that sprout from his head above either temple. His eyes are of a single hue, deep blue-green, and he is always smiling.

MERODACH (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 14"/12"

HIT DICE: 92 hit points

% IN LAIR: 50%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: *See below*

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See below*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 196

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Merodach is a duke in the service of Dispater, and leads 21 companies of barbed devils into battle on his master's behalf. Merodach has the body of a wolf, large, feathered wings, and a prehensile, serpentine tail. Atop Merodach's head are two huge, spreading longhorns, and these he can turn slightly to strike an opponent. A clumsy flyer (Flight Class D), he prefers to run on all fours, but in battle often rears up to wield a weapon with his front claws. He has no special or magical weapons, but favors polearms of all sorts. In a fight his jaws do 1-10 damage, his claws 1-4 and 1-4 (or one attack with a weapon, damage as per weapon type +5), and his horns 2-12 each. Merodach's tail does no damage in combat, but is used to trip, blind, and disarm opponents, or to carry weapons for Merodach's use later.

At will Merodach can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *detect invisibility*, *know alignment*, *telekinesis* (5000 g.p. weight limit), *read magic*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*.

Once per day, Merodach can employ a *symbol of pain*. He is able to cause *fear* by touch (save vs. spell to avoid). He can *summon* 1-2 barbed devils with a 50% chance of success. Merodach regenerates 2 hit points per round.

ALOCER (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 90 hit points

% IN LAIR: 50%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *Bite 2-8, by weapon type +4*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (7' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 196

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Alocer is a duke in the service of Dispater, and leads 36 companies of erinyes into battle. Warlike in attitude, Alocer wears plate mail and fights with broadsword, axe, mace, and dagger, wielding one at a time and biting at the same time with his great jaws. He will seize and employ other weapons (incurring no non-proficiency penalties) available when in battle, and often rides a nightmare about his estates or to war.

Alocer has a humanoid body with red-gold flesh and a fearsome leonine head. The fiery flash of his eyes can be seen for some distance; if one meets their gaze, the victim must save vs. spells or be *blinded* for 2-12 days (devils are immune to this power). A *cure blindness* or *dispel magic* spell will restore sight to a victim.

Once per round, Alocer can employ one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *fly* (enabling him to act as an erinyes in terms of flight class and move), *dispel magic*, *dancing lights*, and *read magic*. Alocer can cause *fear* by touch (save vs. spell at -3 to avoid). Once per day he can use a *symbol of stunning* or one of *discord*. Alocer can *summon* 1-2 erinyes with a 65% chance of success. He regenerates 2 hit points per round.



3. MINAUROS

The third plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Mammon, the clutching "Lord of Avarice," and nothing of value exists for long on this plane before being destroyed or taken inside the walls of his many-pillared fortress. This nameless abode is built of black stone brought from another plane (possibly the Prime Material), and stands crazily upon great pillars that sink constantly, slowly, into the bottomless ooze of the marsh.

The outlands of Minauros form one great dismal marsh of stinking, rotting earth, covered with carrion and some inches of water. It is a place of eternal rain; dirty water mixed with hail falls ceaselessly, at a steady pace, from the murky, fog-shrouded air. The bodies of a great many creatures lie here; indeed, it is said elsewhere in the hells that Mammon's house is built upon them.

Disease (DMG, pp. 13-15) is rampant here; the base chance of a creature not native to the hells contracting a disease here is 13% per trip (including the modifiers for polluted water, etc. — but note that this base chance is doubled if a creature imbibes any of the water on the ground of Minauros, deliberately or inadvertently). Bones and the like are always handy for use as weapons — but their "handiness" also obstructs movement, causing constant stumbling and occasional falls for those who travel overland. A fall may do serious damage if the victim strikes an upthrust bone, or is knocked unconscious, perchance to drown.

The fortress of Mammon is the only building of any sort on Minauros; in the marshes, Mammon allows stone to be used only in "cells." These are great shallow pits (two or three feet deep in water) in which one or more great stones lie. Fastened to the stones at one end, and dangling away from them, are great chains and manacles of iron or brass. The vigilant barbed devils will capture any intruders and bring them hence, where they sit or stand chained in the cold, fetid water until they die, are taken away for interrogation or torture, or escape. Sometimes when Mammon or his lieutenants are occupied elsewhere, the barbed devils will let a prisoner "escape" and then hunt it for cruel sport. What they cannot capture they kill, or else call on *Focalor*, the pit fiend Zimimar, or Mammon himself to deal with.

Typically, barbed devils perch atop the stone of a cell, burning the heads and exposed portions of the prisoners below. Prisoners soon learn (if they survive that long) to sit tight against the rock so that they can use it for protection and support, to elevate themselves out of the water by sitting on a pile of bones, and to keep their heads above water even when sleep comes. Barbed devils can control the

intensity and size of their *produce flame* ability with great accuracy. The ground water of Minauros will douse such a flame, but the resultant scalding steam can also do considerable damage to the unprotected. (Barbed devils are not harmed by the steam.)

Toward the center of the plane, Minauros rises into a vast tortured volcanic badlands of ash-hills and slime-filled rifts. The palace of Mammon sits in a marshy bowl at the heart of these volcanic lands, where many rifts meet. It is here where Mammon's seneschal, *Focalor*, stands guard over *Glasya* (Mammon's consort), Mammon's palace, and Mammon's affairs when his master is out hunting across the badlands. The pit fiend *Zimimar* commands the "palace guard" of 6 companies of bone devils, and will either be found at the palace or hurrying elsewhere to protect Mammon or enforce his will.

The vassal dukes of Mammon rule stretches of volcanic ridges and ash-choked, lifeless woods far from the central palace, between the uplands and the marshes where prisoners lie in dolor. Chief among these vassal dukes is *Bael*, who can gather 66 companies of barbed devils (and actively plots to supplant *Focalor*, and ultimately Mammon himself). The duke *Caarcrinolaas* commands 36 companies of barbed devils, and although he is aware of *Bael's* ambitions, neither supports nor betrays them. The duke *Melchon*, who can muster only 18 companies of erinyes, chooses to be eagerly and actively loyal to Mammon — which has earned him the deep suspicion of the seneschal *Focalor*.

FOCALOR (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 12"/16"

HIT DICE: 121 hit points

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: F, I, Q (×3)

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6, or by

weapon type +4

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 223

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Focalor is seneschal (an agent, or bailiff) to Mammon, and wields much of the real power in Minauros, for his master is somewhat neglectful of security and diplomacy. The thin, often silent *Focalor* is careful in word and deed, and a master strategist. He is respectful, too, and takes no risks with the safety of *Glasya* (Mammon's consort) and that of the palace

itself. Most of the other archdevils (and the outcast *Nergal*; see *Avernus* section) believe that Mammon would be easy prey were it not for the strength of his few dukes, and for the wise care of *Focalor*. *Focalor's* loyalty seems unshakeable; most of the archdevils have in the past tested it, and they continue to do so.

Focalor can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *invisibility*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *tongues*, *dispel magic*, *gust of wind*, *water breathing*, *teleport*, *know alignment*, *passwall*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*.

Twice per day *Focalor* can *blink*, once per day he can *cause blindness* by touch, and four times a day he can *remove* (or *bestow*) *curse*. He can use a *symbol of stunning* once per day, and he can *summon* 1-2 barbed devils (40% chance) or 1-4 erinyes (65% chance) at will. *Focalor* causes *fear* by his breath, a cone of foul-smelling vapor 1" in range, spreading from a mouth-sized base to a 3'-wide spray. He can direct this at any target(s) in the area of effect, one exhalation per round (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid). *Focalor* regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: *Focalor* appears human — a thin, bearded, and middle-aged statesman or sage with power and heavy concerns — until he unfurls his feathered wings from his flowing robes or reveals his brown cloven hooves. *Focalor* wears an iron gauntlet on his right hand, as his badge of office, and with this gauntlet he can strike for 1-6 damage. He is normally armed with a staff, but will seize any weapons in battle. His skin is a pale pink-green, and if his armpits and flanks are revealed, tiny scales will be seen.

When summoned to the Prime Material Plane, *Focalor* will seize any chance to swim (for this he enjoys), and revels in the use of two powers of his that are ineffective in the hells: *fish command* (as in the *trident of fish command*, DMG p. 155; all fish save at +1), and *call storms* (usable only when at sea), basically a combination of *call lightning* and *control winds*. The *call storms* ability, when

employed, evokes lightning discharges from any clouds present, bringing also rain and strong winds in the direction and intensity *Focalor* wills, the whole effect lasting 4 turns. If no clouds are present, this power attracts them (which may take several hours, or a day or more). When they arrive, *Focalor* (if still present) can use the *call storms* ability again, as described above, to bring the storm out of the "summoned" clouds.

CAARCRINOLAAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 14"/12"

HIT DICE: 104 hit points

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (7½' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 203

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Caarcrinolaas is a duke in the service of Mammon, and leads 36 companies of barbed devils into combat at his master's behest. In battle he wields a +3 scythe that does 5-11 (2-8 +3) damage vs. targets of any size, and wears armor with a high-spined collar to protect his head (for he wears no helm). He is indifferent to the ambitions of others, preferring to follow orders and wait for any opportunity to better himself to come along. Let others risk their necks in intrigues; *Caarcrinolaas* will sit and watch patiently.

He can use the following spell-like powers at will, once per round and one at a time: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *dispel magic*, *animate dead*, *teleport*, *invisibility*, *fire shield* (either version), and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*.

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Once per day Caarcinolaas can cast a *death spell*, and twice per day he can petrify one creature by touch (as in *flesh to stone*; normal saving throw allowed). Once per day he can use a *symbol of pain*, and he causes *fear* by touch if he so wills. He can *summon* 1-3 barbed devils with a 65% chance of success. He regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Caarcinolaas is a gray/brown-furred, dog-headed humanoid with scarlet bat-like wings, upright scarlet horns protruding from a bony brow-ridge above each temple, black hooves, and a scarlet, forked tail. In the center of his brow is a third horn. Taller than the two up-curved flanking horns, it protrudes straight up, and can be employed (3-6 thrusting damage) against any targets directly above Caarcinolaas (a rare circumstance). He has strong, bony, scarred hands of human appearance, and glittering yellow eyes.

MELCHON (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 13"

HIT DICE: 101 hit points

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE ATTACK: *By weapon type +5*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 189

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Melchon is a duke in the service of Mammon, on whose behalf he leads 18 companies of erinyes in battle. A devil most jealous of his stronger fellows, Melchon is something of a malcontent in Minauros, and would welcome any setback to Bael or Focalor — but he masks his true feelings.

Melchon can employ any one of the following spell-like powers in a round, one at a time: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *envenom* (which turns water — of any sort except holy water — to a caustic, viscous venom used by erinyes and Melchon himself upon their weapons), *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *dispel magic*, *teleport*, and *suggestion*.

Twice per day Melchon can cast a *delayed blast fireball* of 6d6 damage, and once per day he can use a *symbol of hopelessness*. Melchon causes fear in all creatures within 1" of any living being he strikes, including the target struck; all must save vs. spell (the target at -2) to avoid). Melchon can *summon* 1-3 erinyes (70% chance) whenever desired. He regenerates 2 hit points of damage every round.

Description: Melchon is a fiery red-skinned, humanoid devil with upturned, bull-like horns; black, curling brows and beard; black hooves; and large, crimson wings. In battle he strikes with his weapons — usually a trident or a great two-handed war axe (12' long, damage 3-12 vs. S/M, 3-18 vs. L).

His weaponry may vary, but Melchon's weapons are never magical, and they are always envenomed (see *Monster Manual*, *Erinyes*, for effects of the venom). Melchon also makes use of his long, agile forked tail, which ends in a sharp sting. This sting does 2-8 points of stabbing damage, and Melchon usually envenoms it prior to any expected combat. Melchon is immune to the effects of his, and other devils', caustic venom. Melchon's venom does not dry out in the hells (although usage does wear it off of a weapon), but it is harmless outside the infernal regions unless it is continually within 1" of a devil (an erinyes, or Melchon himself).



4. PHLEGETHOS

The fourth plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Belial. It is a tortured realm of volcanoes, gouting fires, hills of ash, and pits of smoking dung. The ground is always uncomfortably hot — most intruders are constantly on the move — and well patrolled by groups of barbed devils. Ground tremors are common, and a sudden, violent eruption or the opening of a fissure in the earth is not unusual. The sky is a dark, starless void, but the landscape is weirdly lit by leaping flames all about. There are rivers of liquid fire, and at least two large lakes (all the bodies of liquid are interconnected), and there the flames blaze brightest.

This "water" is home to several wandering salamanders that were brought here long ago, to be bound in servitude to Belial. This didn't work out — salamanders take orders from no creature when it does not suit them — and most of

the salamanders were immediately slain by Belial's servants and vassals. But a few escaped, yet bound to this plane by Belial's magic, and survive by avoiding large groups of devils and snatching lone creatures who venture too near to one of the rivers of fire.

These salamanders grow fewer as, one by one, they are found and slain — but the devils are busy, and the salamanders can leave the rivers without any harm and venture elsewhere on Phlegethos, so they have lots of places to hide. Their favorite hiding spots are long, worm-like volcanic "tubes" in rock, and they are fond of burrowing into a hill of ash until it collapses overhead to conceal the burrower.

This plane is perhaps the most visited of the Nine Hells except for Avernus, since outsiders who work magic often come to the fabled "firefalls" of Phlegethos, where the rivers of fire tumble from volcanic ridges down into clefts. The fire in such a spot is mentioned by many alchemists and mages skilled in the creation of magic items. The best *flame tongue* swords (DMG, p. 165) are made in such places; one account of the making of a *helm of brilliance* mentions one such site, and the barbed devils themselves seem attracted to such falls of flame, leaping and playing about the firefalls and employing their *produce flame* powers as if excited.

Belial rules from the huge, hollowed-out shell of a dead volcano. His stronghold is known as Abriymoch, "The Mount of Leaping Flames." The arch-devil is attended by his consort Naome, his legate Chamo, and a few malebranche (notable among them the great scarred specimen known as "Night Fang") under the command of the pit fiend Zapan.

Abriymoch consists of several tiers of chambers, opening into the central shaft like balconies, and connected to each other by stairs, shafts, and a great spiral path that winds about the central gulf or shaft of the dead volcano. Some chambers stretch through the sloping walls of the volcano and have windows or doors opening out onto the volcano's outside flanks. The lips of the volcanic crater are crowned by Abriymoch's basalt towers. A few erinyes under the command of the pit fiend Zaebo, Belial's lieutenant, serve as messengers within Abriymoch and between it and vassal dukes or outlying patrols. These erinyes are often bullied and are quite miserable, and as usual have their eyes always on bettering their own positions in the hells. Chamo suspects that the erinyes have served as the spies of Asmodeus, Baalzebul, and perhaps other archdevils in the past, but he has not yet been able to prove anything.

Abriymoch is staffed by spined and bearded devils, and has a kennel of hell hounds that can be used by Zapan's forces to help defend and guard the palace.

The vast, smoking plains surrounding the volcanic heart of Phlegethos are the

domain of Belial's vassals: *Balan*, who commands 40 companies of bearded devils; *Bathym*, who can muster 30 companies of barbed devils; and *Gaziel*, who leads 11 companies of bone devils. These vassals are usually dealt with and commanded by Zaebo, speaking for his master Belial, who, assisted by Chamo, is usually occupied with matters of diplomacy and intrigue within the Nine Hells.

Phlegethos is the most chaotic physical environment in the Nine Hells, affording intruders the most opportunities for concealment — but it is also one of the most active planes, being constantly traveled by its inhabitants. The archdevils of other planes often test underlings by sending them here, charged with accomplishing a task and remaining undetected by the patrols that roam Phlegethos, while their progress is observed by spies — of whom there are many among the barbed devils.

As with Minauros, the outlands of Phlegethos are wetter and lower than the interior, and these "reeking fens" are populated by bearded devils, a few styx devils and abishai, hell hounds, lemures, and the mephits who flit about constantly everywhere on Phlegethos, serving as "eyes" for any and all who reward them.

NAOME (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -2
MOVE: 16"/26"
HIT DICE: 69 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 85%
TREASURE TYPE: P, S, T
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +5*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
SIZE: M (6' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 219
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Naome is consort to Belial, the ruler of Phlegethos. She spends much of her time in Abriymoch, but is highly regarded in the hells for her settling of disputes when others have failed, and her shrewd bargaining ability. In battle she uses her spells and a long scimitar; although she rarely engages in combat, it is said she enjoys a good fight.

Naome can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round, at will: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *charm person*, *dispel magic*, *know alignment*, *detect invisible*, *read magic*, *telekinesis*, (2,000 g.p. weight limit), *suggestion*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's *limited*) *wish*. Once per day Naome can cast a *feeblemind* (normal saving throw applies) on one creature. Her gaze can, if she so wills, cause *fear* (save vs. spell to

avoid). She can *summon* 1-4 barbed devils (65% chance of success), and regenerates 2 points of damage every turn.

Description: Naome is a short, burly, middle-aged female devil, with long brown hair and cold, pale blue-green eyes. She has a tinkling laugh and a surprisingly light, easy sense of humor. Quick-witted and glib-tongued, she rarely makes enemies (although she bears no love for Glasya, the consort of Mammon, or Lilith, the consort of Moloch), and is most friendly with Baftis, the consort of Baalzebul. When clad in flowing robes (she prefers green or claret-colored silken garments), only her tiny horns, gray hooves, and crimson forked tail betray her diabolic nature. Her face, shoulders, and hands have a pale, human-like complexion, but the rest of her body is deep crimson in color. Her hands have long red nails.

CHAMO (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -1
MOVE: 14"/16"
HIT DICE: 131 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 85%
TREASURE TYPE: C, P, S
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE ATTACK: *By weapon type +4*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
SIZE: M (6' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 222
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Chamo serves Belial as legate, and plans one day to supplant his master. He fears Naome more than Belial, for Chamo and she too often think alike to suit him. Polite but abrupt, Chamo always appears calm and fearless. He is said to know every hiding place in Phlegethos, and possesses an iron-shod staff capped with the linked (by rings of beaten brass) skulls of sixteen paladins defeated by him over the years. This staff is +1, parts or negates all *web* spells, *wizard lock* spells, *hold* spells, and other locks or bindings at a touch, and it can *detect good*; the skulls upon its top glow with a pearly white radiance when a creature of good alignment is within 9".

Chamo can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *wall of smoke* (equals *wall of fog*), *fireball* (4d6), *charm person*, *dispel magic*, *read magic*, *tongues*, *detect invisibility*, *invisibility*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's *limited*) *wish*.

Twice per day Chamo can *reverse gravity* (for as long as desired, or until his concentration is broken by events or

attack), and once per day he can *petrify* (*flesh to stone* of permanent duration) one creature, by touch. He causes *fear* by his stare (save vs. spell to avoid), and can employ a *symbol of stunning* once per day. Chamo can *summon* 1-6 bearded devils (45% chance of success) at will.

Description: Chamo appears as a white-haired, middle-aged man with big brown eyes. He has upward-pointing horns, black hooves, a forked tail, and black bat-like wings. His skin is scarlet, darkening to blue on his long-nailed hands. He usually wears loose robes of black with a high stand-up collar.

BALAN (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -3
MOVE: 12"
HIT DICE: 112 *hit points*
% IN LAIR: 55%
TREASURE TYPE: C, P
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
SIZE: M (9' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 219
Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Balan is a duke in the service of Belial, and leads 40 companies of bearded devils into combat. Like his soldiers, he is cruel and aggressive, given to wild, lustful rages and violent sport. Little liked even among his fellows on Phlegethos, Balan is at the most respected, and at the least tolerated. He will never back down from a fight, although he is shrewd enough not to be drawn into conflict with superior foes, given any choice in the matter. In battle he fights with his spined limbs and a weapon, favoring large axes, blades, or halberds (but he has no special or magical arms). Balan is belligerent, roaring, and loves a rough-and-tumble fight with opponents he considers weaker than himself.

Along his forearms from his elbows to the backs of his hands run rows of spines six to eight inches in length. These spines pierce and rake for 2-4 points of damage per arm per attack, and a struck opponent must save vs. poison or immediately develop a burning rash which reduces dexterity by 1 point per round for six rounds after the attack. Subsequent poison attacks on the same target will not hasten the loss of dexterity points, and a 6-point loss is the most that can be suffered. Recovery of lost dexterity points begins, at the rate of 2 points per round, on the round after the victim reaches the maximum penalty of -6. Any poison strikes suffered by a victim during the

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recovery period will drive the victim back toward the maximum dexterity loss of 6 points, counteracting points gained back up to that time and delaying further recovery.

Once per round, Balan can use one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *detect invisibility*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility*, *teleport*, *wall of fire*, *push*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Balan causes *fear* with his roar (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid) in all creatures within 2". Once per day he can use a *symbol of pain*. He can also *summon* 1-4 bearded devils with a 50% chance of success. Balan regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Balan appears as a giant, yellow-skinned man with fierce black brows and a beard which grows in tufts (somewhat resembling the lower barbels of a catfish). He has gray hooves and a body which darkens to scarlet about his legs and his forked tail. He typically wears a leather weapon belt and girdle, but shuns armor. He has red, flaming eyes visible at some distance, and a hoarse voice. He is quite a wit (despite a coarse sense of humor), although few converse long enough on friendly terms with him to discover this. He wears a badge upon his belt depicting his own head next to a bull's head (signifying his brutal, aggressive nature) and a ram's head (denoting the lusty side of his nature). Balan is polite and respectful to Naome, his master's consort, but other she-devils will rarely tolerate his presence.

BATHYM (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 14"

HIT DICE: 102 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: C, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8 or by
weapon type +5

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 221

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Bathym is a duke in the service of Belial, and leads 30 companies of barbed devils. He is sometimes called "The Black Duke," after his custom of wearing jet black armor (with full helm) and a black cloak. In battle Bathym wields a black +3 mace which dispels *light*, *continual light*, and *faerie fire* radiances upon contact with the affected area, and causes *dancing lights* to fade away. Bathym is also armed with a long-bladed, envenomed knife

(treat as a *dagger of venom*), and his spell-like abilities. He rides a nightmare into battle. If summoned or bargained with, he will reveal (for a high price) knowledge of the magical lore of gemstones, herbal lore, and low-level magic-user spells (material components, casting, and general principles).

Once per round, Bathym can, at will, use one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *read magic*, *tongues*, *detect invisibility*, *wall of fire*, *blink*, *teleport*, *ESP*, *confusion*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can cast *feeblemind*, and thrice per day he can use a 4-dice *delayed blast fireball*. Once per day Bathym can use a *symbol of sleep* (19 levels or hit dice or 99 hit points affected; saving throw indicates only nodding and dozing with a 1 in 20 chance per round of awakening fully, and automatic arousal if attacked). He causes *fear* by pointing at a target (one creature only per round, effective only within 5" range; save vs. spell to avoid). At will Bathym can *summon* 1-3 barbed devils (60% chance of success). Bathym regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Description: Bathym dresses in black, and has black-hued eyes, black hooves, and black nails. His skin, horns and tail are a dead, fishbelly-white color. Bathym's forked tail is short and curled like a pig's; he is most sensitive about it and keeps it concealed. When angry, Bathym hisses like a snake when he speaks.

GAZIEL (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 16"

HIT DICE: 116 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: P, S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12, or by weapon
type +5

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 196

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Gaziel is a duke in the service of Belial, and leads 11 companies of bone devils into battle when called upon by his master. He does nothing he does not have to do, and appears to spend much of his time brooding. In battle, Gaziel is cold and mechanical — a perfect general, never missing or forgetting any aspect of a skirmish or possible tactic. On rare occasions he appears to take some personal interest in such a fight, whereupon he becomes most savage. He fights by

spitting acid up to 2" with his forked tongue (3-12 corrosive damage, will eat through metal, hide or cloth), and with whatever weapons are at hand.

Once per round Gaziel can use any one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *hold person*, *hold monster*, *read magic*, *know alignment*, *detect invisibility*, *burning hands* (doing 14 hit points of damage), *fly*, *teleport*, *dispel magic*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can *slay living* (one creature, by touch), and twice per day he can *paralyze* a victim within 4" by pointing at the character or creature (save vs. paralyzation to avoid). Once per day he can use a *symbol of hopelessness*. Gaziel radiates *fear* in a 2" radius at will. He can *summon* 1-3 bone devils with a 60% chance of success. Gaziel regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Description: Gaziel has a white, skull-like head with hollow eye sockets and small, curling pink horns, so that from a distance he resembles a bone devil. He has a brown to blood-red hued humanoid body, a red forked tail, and black hooves. His tongue is long, slim, purple-red, and forked. His wrists and knees have bulbous, bony joints, and his elbows have hooked spurs (1-6 gash damage).

5. STYGIA

The fifth plane of the Nine Hells derives its name from the Styx, the mighty river of black, opaque water that falls from the endless encircling mountains and swells into a vast salt swamp that fills much of the plane. Stygia is ruled by Geryon from his huge castle, Tantlin, which lies at the center of the plane, the swamp curving about it for slightly less than half the run of its high stone walls. Stygia is a chilly place, lit by lightning flashes and "cold fires" (weird white flames that are freezing cold and do 2-12 points of damage per round of contact) that burn on rocky peaks for some time after a lightning strike. It is not known precisely what these flames feed on — they appear to blaze on bare rock — and they leave no trace on rock or ice. Much of Stygia's landscape is high, tumbled rock and ice. Avalanches and electrical storms are common, and "shooting stars" of ice sometimes hurtle across the sky from the peaks, smoking, to plunge into the swamp far below.

The swamp itself is constantly disturbed by splashes and wails, for it is the abode of the styx devils, who torment lemures constantly unless summoned by Geryon to undertake a mission. Sometimes a bone devil or horned devil will enter the swamp to join in the fun, or to chase a few styx devils, but on such occasions all of the styx devils present will eventually unite to drive them out.

Beneath the swamp lies a cold and lightless ocean, home to giant octopi and



squids, whales, and many smaller, blind fish. There are no sharks or killer whales, however, for in the utter depths Sekolah, a great white shark, cruises. She long ago devoured all potential rivals, and now swims supreme, ignored by the devils, as the ruler of her deep realm. If there ever was an aquatic race of any sort at the bottom of this black river — sahuagin, diabolic, or otherwise — there is none now. The sahuagin of the Prime Material Plane worship Sekolah (see the DDG book) but she appears totally disinterested in all matters except where her next meal is coming from. Much of the upper reaches of the ocean are always frozen (if they were not, much of the vegetation that makes up the swamp would have sunk to the ocean floor long ago), and Sekolah very rarely comes to the surface. When she does, lemures, hell hounds, and devils alike usually make a hasty exit from the surrounding area.

Geryon seldom leaves his great castle. He delights in physically battling lesser devils and captured intruders within the walls of Tantlin, sometimes chasing them for long periods of time throughout the halls of the castle and the gravel-strewn mines nearby, where Tantlin's blocks were and still are quarried, eternally, by captives, spined and barbed devils, and the like. Geryon delights in luring powerful creatures from other planes (that is, from outside the hells) to Stygia with carefully contrived tales of magic, lore, or other treasure, so that they can be the victims for one of his cruel hunts. Any survivors of these unsporting events go to the quarries. (Geryon, by the way, is immune to the strength-sapping power of the bone devils' tail poison.)

One of the most powerful members of

Geryon's retinue is *Herodias*, whose title is magistrate. Herodias is responsible for the security of the realm and the training and ordering of Geryon's legions of bone devils, and for assuming command of the defenses of Tantlin whenever Geryon is hunting.

Geryon's bailiff, *Gorson*, concentrates on external matters. It is Gorson who observes the day-to-day activities and internal politics of the other planes of the Nine Hells, and who (unless Geryon steps in to do this directly) orders and coordinates the styx devils in their individual missions about the planes.

Geryon is perhaps the most satisfied or contented of the archdevils, and the least interested in the endless political struggle among the devils for more power, although he never misses a chance to act to the detriment of his foe Moloch, ruler of the sixth plane, or his other neighbor, Belial. Herodias and Gorson safeguard his interests (under the watchful eye of *Cozbi*, Geryon's consort), gaining much actual power while always acting in Geryon's name, and allowing Geryon to continue his "hunts" by, if not increasing his force and influence, at least preventing their erosion.

Newcomers to Stygia will find that it is cold (why the swamp and the river Styx do not freeze is a mystery to one accustomed to conditions on the Prime Material Plane), with little shelter outside Tantlin, and there is nothing to eat unless one has a taste for the flesh of devils, lemures or hell hounds. (It is not certain if such flesh is edible by humans. Some mad adventurers in the Realms have boasted of eating the flesh of devils, but the truth of their claims is unknown. If their words are true, it is impossible to

say if such food is poisonous to some, carries any diseases or parasites, or if it in fact has caused their mental conditions.) Tantlin, however, is said to be richly provisioned and furnished, crammed with the bric-a-brac of centuries of plundering the wealth of other planes. (Before he gained the rulership of his own plane, Geryon was wont to undertake extended pillaging expeditions through the Prime Material Plane whenever summoned there by a foolish mortal — and he always sought out the most dangerous, and richest, foes.)

Geryon's vassals are outwardly loyal, and are often called upon to protect their master's interests. They include Amon, who commands 40 companies of bone devils; *Agares*, who commands 31 companies of bone devils; *Machalas*, who leads 11 companies of barbed devils; and the pit fiend *Fecor*, who leads 8 companies of malebranche.

The fiefs of these dukes lie between Tantlin itself and the rockiest heights of the endless, frozen mountains, consisting of rising land and many long, twisting rocky canyons and hanging valleys. There are a few remote volcanic rifts in the mountains, commonly known as "steam trenches," where the malebranche dwell unless ordered elsewhere.

COZBI (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14"/24"

HIT DICE: 67 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: C, E

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +4*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (7' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 229

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Cozbi is consort to Geryon, ruler of the fifth plane of the Nine Hells, and is perhaps the quietest and least forceful of the diabolic princesses — but she is no easy mark. Cozbi watches her master's interests carefully at all times, for she knows well the hatred that both Moloch and Belial hold for Geryon, and she is aware of Geryon's relative weakness among the archdevils. She mistrusts both Herodias and Gorson, and is said by some to be friendly with the outcast devil *Nergal* (see *Avernus* section). In battle, Cozbi throws poisoned knives (*Insinuating Type D*; DMG, p. 20), and fights with a +1 spear.

Cozbi can employ the following spell-like powers, using them one at a time and one per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce*

flame, animate dead, detect invisibility, charm monster, charm person, suggestion, dispel magic, know alignment, invisibility, polymorph self, read magic, ice storm, teleport, and (fulfill another's limited) wish. Four times per day she can cast a 4-dice lightning bolt, and once per day she can employ a finger of death. She causes fear by speaking to an individual (save vs. spell to avoid). She can summon (40% chance) 1-2 styx devils or, if she chooses, 1-4 bone devils (70% chance of success). Cozbi regenerates 2 points of damage every turn.

Description: Cozbi appears as a beautiful, unnaturally tall woman with chalk-white skin and long (thigh-length) pale green hair. Her eyes are fiery green and her long nails are black. She wears belted robes and jewelry when in Tantlin, but when fighting or otherwise active strips her garments away, whereupon her diabolic nature is revealed. Her hooves are tiny and delicate, easily concealed by boots, and Cozbi customarily wraps her forked tail about her waist, or hangs it over one arm. Her skin is shaded pink to red on her belly, and red from the hips down, but her arms and upper torso are chalk-white. Her hair usually hides two tiny horns that form a crescent upon the crown of her head, and her canine teeth are slim, vampire-like fangs (1-2 points of biting damage, but in a serious fight Cozbi will rarely let an opponent get close enough to allow her to employ this bite).

GORSON (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: Unique (very rare)
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -2
MOVE: 14"
HIT DICE: 126 hit points
% IN LAIR: 55%
TREASURE TYPE: A, G, P
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type +7
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: Genius
ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil
SIZE: M (6' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 231
Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Gorson is Geryon's bailiff, and in this capacity is up to his neck in the intrigues and activities of the hierarchy of the hells. A quiet, careful devil who says nothing he does not intend to, and plans ever for the future, Gorson is acutely aware of Geryon's relative weakness in comparison to the other archdevils. As a result, he always acts to strengthen the standing of "The Great Beast," but in such a way as to make Gorson himself appear useful, reasonable, and noncommittal to diabolic observers — future masters or allies — outside of Stygia. He will be quick to deal with intruders to Stygia, but will seek to keep any items seized or any knowledge gained about intruders from others as much as possible.

Gorson can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time, and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, ice storm, animate dead, dispel magic, detect invisibility, polymorph self, invisibility read magic, friends, hold person, teleport, and (fulfill another's limited) wish.* Gorson causes fear by pointing at a target (one creature per round) within 6" range, and can use a symbol of stunning once per day. He can summon 1 styx devil (25% chance), 1-3 bone devils (60% chance), or 1-2 barbed devils (65% chance). Gorson regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Gorson appears as a yellow-skinned, hawk-nosed man with black-hued eyes, small horns, a tufted lion-like tail, and black hooves. He wears saffron robes and bears a scimitar. His voice is soft and cultured; his advice and arguments always appear sound, sensible, and convincing. In battle, Gorson appears to let out all of his pent-up feelings and go berserk, exulting in the rough-and-tumble. This is the origin of a saying in the hells, referring to someone hurrying, that the individual looks like "Gorson unleashed."

HERODIAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: Unique (very rare)
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -2
MOVE: 18"
HIT DICE: 129 hit points
% IN LAIR: 60%
TREASURE TYPE: A, S, G, P
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12/3-12, or by weapon type +7
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
INTELLIGENCE: Genius
ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil
SIZE: L (8' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 236
Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Herodias serves Geryon as magistrate, and is a devil of great pride and ambition. He fully expects to one day be master of the Nine Hells, and favors any change in the present regime as a step in his inexorable rise to the top.

Herodias can employ the following powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, ice storm, wall of ice, animate dead, dimension door, dispel magic, detect magic, detect invisibility, polymorph self, read magic, suggestion, charm person, hold monster, hold person, teleport, and (fulfill another's limited) wish.* Herodias causes fear by touch (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid). Once per day he can disintegrate one creature or item of up to twice his own size, and twice per day he can cast *feeblemind*. Once per day he can employ a symbol of hopelessness. He can summon 1-4 bone devils with a 60% chance of success. Herodias is able to regenerate 2 hit points per round.

Description: Large and portly, Herodias has a humanoid body of scarlet hue, and massive, muscled arms. He has a small forked tail and small, bat-like (useless) wings. His face is round and sinister and startlingly human in appearance, and his horns are tall, curving inward and then out again like a goat's. His hooves are black.

AGARES (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: Unique (very rare)
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -1
MOVE: 15"
HIT DICE: 119 hit points
% IN LAIR: 60%
TREASURE TYPE: G, P
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type +6
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%
INTELLIGENCE: Exceptional
ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil



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SIZE: L (8' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 232

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Agares, vassal to Geryon, is a duke who commands 31 companies of bone devils. He and Amon, Geryon's most powerful duke, bear no great love one for another, and several times Herodias has had to head off open warfare between the two. Agares customarily fights with a +1 iron-shod staff, but will use any weapons at hand in a fight.

Agares can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and one per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, know alignment, dispel magic, animate dead, ice storm, detect invisibility, slow, cause earthquake, hold person, hold monster, tongues, wall of ice, teleport, and (fulfill another's limited) wish.* Agares radiates fear in a 1" radius, at will (save vs. spell to avoid). Once per day he can use a *symbol of pain*. He can *summon* 1-4 bone devils with a 65% chance of success, and regenerates 1 point of damage every 3 rounds.

Description: Agares appears as an old man, and has a brittle, quavering voice. He often bears a hawk at his wrist; these birds he captures or bargains for on the Prime Material Plane when summoned thence, and he enjoys training them as messengers or companions. He has gray-scaled, clawed reptilian feet, and

a ruddy facial complexion that deepens to a scarlet body skin hue (usually concealed by robes). Agares has a stumpy, gray reptilian tail, and a humanoid body with curved, irregular-looking ribs that make his ribcage look knotted and deformed. Tufts of gray beard are matched by small, stubby gray horns. Agares has watery red eyes and red hooked nails.

MACHALAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 16"/21"

HIT DICE: 122 hit points

% IN LAIR: 60%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8, or by
weapon type +6

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 201

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Machalas is a duke commanding 11 companies of barbed devils at the direction of his master Geryon. The least of

Geryon's dukes in both personal power and influence, Machalas encourages the feuding between his fellow dukes Amon and Agares, while taking the side of neither, and hopes to appear Geryon's most steadfast and reliable vassal so as to gain the favor of "The Wild Beast."

Once per round, Machalas can employ one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, ice storm, push, blink, jump, know alignment, detect invisibility, read magic ESP, dispel magic, animate dead, wall of ice, teleport, and (fulfill another's limited) wish.* Once per day he can *cause insanity* (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid; see DMG for types) by touch, and once per day he can use a *symbol of stunning*. He radiates fear in a 1" radius at will. He can (70% chance of success) *summon* 1-3 barbed devils. He regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Description: Machalas appears as a tall, thin humanoid with black, scaly skin, a black forked tail, black cloven hooves, large black batlike wings, and large jaws (2-8 damage from bite in combat). A nimble flyer, he usually wields a +2 axe or a normal spear in combat. His horned head is a startling fiery red, and his eyes are slanted and entirely white, so that they appear to have no pupils or irises unless examined very closely. His face appears ugly and batlike (the jaws most prominent), and his voice is a soft, menacing, hissing tone.



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HYDRAGEN

NO. APPEARING: 1-4

ARMOR CLASS: 3

MOVE: 12

HIT DICE: 14d6

% IN LAIR: 40%

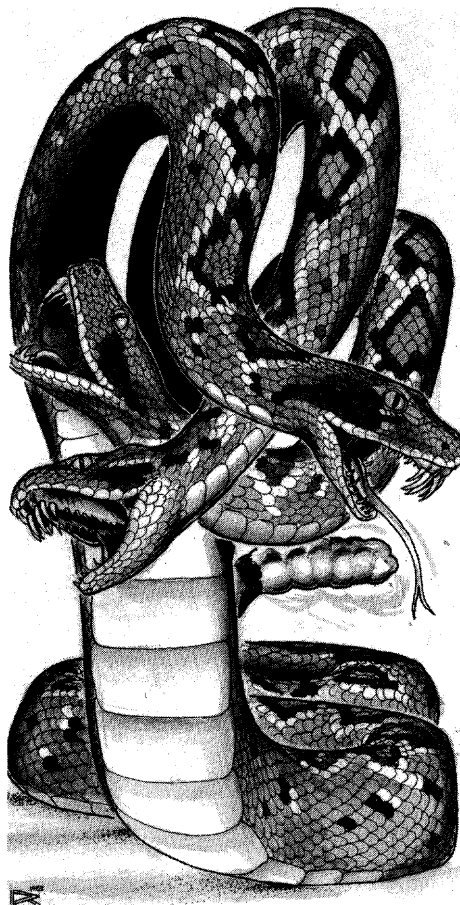
ATTACKS: 5-30 (×2-7) per bite, or
by special

ORIGINAL STOCK: *Diamond-backed
rattlesnake*

MUTATIONS: *Taller, multiple body
parts, gas generation, pyrokinesis,
illusion immunity*

The Hydragen is a huge, mutated descendant of the diamond-backed rattlesnake. It is found in many places in the deserts of southwest North America (the old United States and Mexico). Hydragens range from 15 to 20 meters in length in adulthood and appear to be large, multiple-headed serpents; 2-7 heads are present and each is well equipped with razor-sharp fangs and teeth. The six major fangs, in the upper jaws along the front, contain an intensity 15 paralytic poison effective only against mammalian creatures (including humans, of course). Because of their speed, these monsters rarely go hungry, although relatively intelligent beings give them a wide berth. They are not especially intelligent themselves, but Hydragens readily pursue any prey and use their cunning to drive victims into dead-ends (box canyons and the like) to prevent escape.

If the creature is in grave danger or confronted by many opponents, a special power of the Hydragen can be brought into play. The creature can generate large amounts of highly explosive gases in its stomach, and once every 12 combat rounds it can belch out clouds of this gas



from all of its heads, directed at as many different targets (within range) as it has heads.

Each head then uses the Hydragen's pyrokinesis ability to ignite the gas clouds, at ranges between 10 and 30 meters as desired, creating an explosion with a 5-meter radius of effect. The flames and concussion from the blast will do 10d6 damage to all within the blast

area, and beings of man-size or smaller out to 10 meters from the blast center stand a 75% chance of being knocked down and suffering 1d6 damage.

A Hydragen may generate this gas only three times a day. If this fails to stop an opponent after the third use, the Hydragen will retreat. Those beings caught in the blast areas may take half damage (5d6) if they are immune to either fire or sonics, or no damage if immune to both. Note that even if the victim is immune to these effects, the 75% chance of being knocked down for 1d6 damage still applies.

Hydragens prefer living in isolated locations like deserts and barren, rough terrain. The brilliant patterns of yellow, red, and black across the Hydragen's back stand out clearly in any terrain or environment, though this is not yet a major problem for it, since its speed and tenacity make up for its lack of camouflage.

A Hydragen nest is a shallow depression in sandy soil about 5 meters across and 2 meters deep. There is a 20% chance of 1-6 eggs being buried one meter below ground. Each egg is one-half meter long, ovoid in shape, and dull yellow in color. It is very possible that more than one adult Hydragen inhabits the nest or the area nearby. There is also a good chance (65%) that 1-6 treasures and 1-2 artifacts will be in or near the nest, previously appropriated from some unfortunate adventurers who ventured too close.

Each head of a Hydragen has its own brain, and the heads work together with exacting coordination. Among other advantages, this accounts for the creature's immunity to illusions and illusionary attacks or forces. The lifespan of a monster of this sort is estimated to be over 200 years.

RAYDIUM

NO. APPEARING: 2-5

ARMOR CLASS: 6

MOVE: 18 (flying only)

HIT DICE: 6 (Alpha), 10 (Beta),
14 (Gamma)

% IN LAIR: Nil

ATTACKS: 2-12 (Alpha), 4-24 (Beta),
6-36 (Gamma)

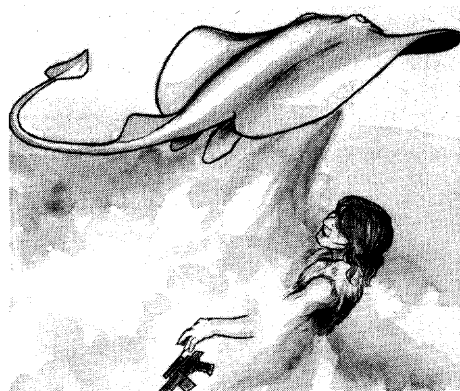
ORIGINAL STOCK: *Manta ray*

MUTATIONS: *Wings, telekinesis, gas
generation, heightened radar sense*

Raydiums are large, mutated manta rays that still strongly resemble their ancestral species. At present there are three known types, to wit:

Alpha Raydiums are dull black in color

with silver and blue highlights, and have a wingspan of about 2 meters. They are commonly found over the shorelines of the east coast of North America, though a



few have been seen further inland.

Beta Raydiums are about 4 meters across and are a dark grey dorsally and a light blue-grey ventrally. Beta Raydiums are found in more southerly climates than the Alphas.

Gamma Raydiums, spanning 6 meters from wingtip to wingtip, are a pale blue and are known to live only around a few islands in southeast North America.

All Raydiums spend their lives airborne. Young are born in mid-air; they cling to the parent until their wings dry (only a few minutes), and then they can fly as well. For food, Alpha Raydiums eat small aerial creatures up to 1/10 meter in size; Betas can eat creatures up to 3/10 meter in size, and Gammas can eat creatures up to 1 meter across in one bite.

A very powerful innate radar sense gives all Raydiums a +4 bonus to hit with a bite attack, and any "to hit" score of 20 or better means the prey has been swallowed whole, if it was of the appropriate size. Raydiums can maneuver easily in darkness or light; they have no eyes, but the "radar" sense has a maximum range of 500 meters to the front of the creature. Typically, Raydiums fly at altitudes of 300 to 800 meters.

All Raydiums have special abilities they use to catch prey on the ground, should they happen to notice it. When a flock of Raydiums notices creatures of edible size on or near the ground, one of the flock detaches from the group and swoops down in a silent glide (+2 on surprise) at double normal speed (36) and releases a gas cloud 30 meters long, 10 meters wide, and 5 meters deep over the targets. The gas has a poison intensity equal to the number of hit dice of the Raydium releasing it; the gas affects all mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and avians, causing them to be rendered unconscious for a number of minutes equal to 20 minus the victim's constitution. The gas cloud can only be generated once a day by any Raydium.

The gas dissipates in one minute, and then the other Raydiums swoop down, use telekinesis to pick up the smaller creatures (treat as a mental attack), and fly off with them for a snack in the

clouds. Alphas can lift up to one kilogram, Betas up to 10 kilograms, and Gammas up to 50 kilograms with their telekinetic powers. The telekinesis lasts only 5 melee rounds, so eating must be done quickly.

Some Beta Raydiums (1 in 6) and Gamma Raydiums (3 in 6) are able to generate other types of gases besides the unconsciousness gas. Each individual so endowed will produce only one additional sort of gas. Roll d6 and refer to the following list to see which gas the Raydium will use:

- 1 = poison gas (kill)
- 2 = blindness-producing gas
- 3 = paralysis gas
- 4 = tear gas (-2 on all attacks)
- 5 = radioactive gas
- 6 = no effect except to obscure vision to 1' distance.

All of these gases, except the killing poison and radioactive gases, take effect only if a "D" result is obtained on the Poison Attack Matrix. Poison and radioactive gases can cause damage, as listed on the Poison Attack Matrix, if they do not kill the victim.

Fortunately, Raydiums are too stupid to use their telekinetic powers to pick up rocks and bomb victims with debris. Raydiums are locally known as "skydivers" or "dusters" (after "crop dusters," ancient aircraft that sprayed insecticides on crops and fields).

CYCLOPTRON

NO. APPEARING: 2-12

ARMOR CLASS: 5

MOVE: 8

HIT DICE: 16d6

% IN LAIR: 25%

ATTACKS: 6-36 or special

ORIGINAL STOCK: Human

MUTATIONS: Taller, improved infra-vision, radiated eye (special), transmutational touch

In the mountainous regions of western North America may be found the great caverns of the folk known as the Cycloptrons. These are human-descended beings who stand an average of 6 meters in height at adulthood. Their hair is a bushy black, glossy in appearance, and their skins are a dull silver-grey. Cycloptrons are humanoid in shape, thickly built and powerfully muscled.

The enormous weight they carry is well supported by their skeletal systems, because of the addition of a light metallic alloy to the composition of their bones. So much of their physiology requires metallic elements that Cycloptrons frequently make their own wells and reservoirs underground and fill them with specially developed metallic salts. Their food is also heavily spiced with metallic salts and materials.

Cycloptrons have only a single eye,

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with a red-gold iris. Though they have limited depth perception (and are -4 to hit with thrown missiles), the larger eyeball better enables them to see in the infrared spectrum up to one kilometer

distance. Daylight causes them no discomfort. Three times a day, a Cycloptron may launch a ray of energy from its eye against an opponent or opponents, with the same ranges and scores "to hit" as a Fusion Rifle. Every time this ray strikes an opponent, it will cause the loss of 1 point of physical strength and 1 point of constitution (plus all attendant bonuses and hit points) for 1-6 days. After this time the lost points will be regained; but note that if a victim is hit two or more times, the duration of the strength and constitution losses are cumulative. (Two hits = 2 points loss from each ability, for 2-12 days.) Should either the victim's physical strength or constitution score be reduced to zero, he or she is slain. Otherwise, the victim can survive the encounter, and recuperation can eventually take place.

Cycloptrons are able, by simply touching something that is predominantly metal, to draw the metallic elements out of the object and effectively disintegrate it. A Cycloptron can destroy 1 cubic meter of metal in this fashion every round — and this power cannot be "turned off." Clever merchants from other races will trade old machinery parts to these beings (for use by them as food) in exchange for their services.

As a result of this metal-disintegrating characteristic, Cycloptrons cannot use robots or the like, and their technological level is quite low. Cycloptrons energetically avoid contact with duralloy and radioactive elements; the former acts as an intensity 15 poison if touched by one of the creatures (doing 3d6 damage), and the latter is greatly feared by all Cycloptrons for religious reasons.

CYBER-NETTER

NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: 1
 MOVE: 18
 HIT DICE: 20d6 (100 hit points)
 % IN LAIR: Nil
 ATTACKS: See below
 TYPE: Robot
 POWER SOURCES: Nuclear plant
 SENSORS: Standard, infrared, ultraviolet at 2 kilometers
 CONTROL: Only by a specific permanent cybernetic installation

Adventurers in the Great Lakes region of North America have reported a new, apparently post-holocaust robot type that is occasionally found as far as 200 kilometers from Lake Superior's shorelines. Observers believe that it is being manufactured by one or more unknown PCI's for unknown reasons.

The "Cyber-Netter," as the locals call it, is a flattened sphere 6 meters in diameter and 3 meters tall. Eight legs project out from the sides of the body at regular intervals, lifting the body some 8 meters off the ground. Its armament is lighter than for other types of robots or warbots, but effective nonetheless. The mechanism has two batteries of Mark VII blaster rifles (3 "guns" each) that each do 20d6 damage out to 500 meters, 15d6 out to 1,000 meters, 10d6 out to 1,500 meters, and 5d6 out to the maximum range of 2,000 meters. It also has a grenade launcher that can fire 50 rounds of stun grenades out to 100 meters.

Peculiar to the Cyber-Netter is a special sort of weapon (of non-lethal design) called a "webber." A single barrel, projecting from the front of the Cyber-Netter, is capable of ejecting long strands of sticky material onto a target or targets, like water from a fire hose. Everything within a 60-degree arc to the front of the Cyber-Netter, out to a maximum range of 20 meters, has an 80% chance of being



caught in the sticky masses of material when the webber is used.

Victims caught in the mess may attempt to pull free; their base chance of succeeding is equal to their physical strength doubled and expressed as a percentage. Only one attempt may be made to pull free; failure means that the victim is trapped for the time being.

The webs are not flammable in the least, and the strands harden in five minutes to the consistency of a steel-mesh net. The Cyber-Netter may then recover the captives at its leisure, lifting them out with a tractor/presser beam on the underside of the body (able to move 500 kg at 20 meters) after cutting away the strands with the atomic torches mounted on the ends of the two front legs. When not in use, the torches retract into the mechanical foot-pad at the end of the legs.

Captives are deposited inside the Cyber-Netter through doors on the underside of the body by the tractor/presser beam equipment, and then carried away. No one knows where they are taken or what happens to them after that. The machine emits coded radio signals from time to time, but they are not decipherable, and no receiving station is known.



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NITRODJINN

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 2

MOVE: 6

HIT DICE: 17

% IN LAIR: 100%

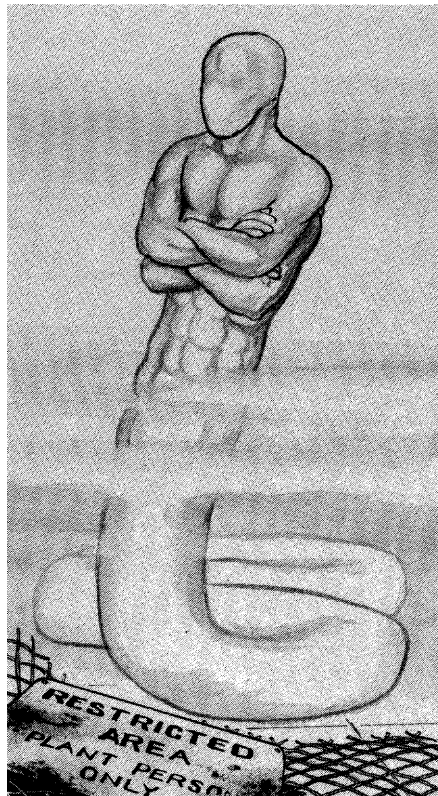
ATTACKS: See below

ORIGINAL STOCK: Unknown

MUTATIONS: *Absorption, illusion generation, life leech, weather manipulation*

The nocturnal creature of desolate areas known as the Nitrodjinn is a rare and strange being. Each creature is invariably associated with an atomic energy source such as a reactor or large battery, from which it appears to draw its "life force." Each being manipulates the local weather conditions to produce a thick fog for a 100-meter radius around the atomic power source.

Unless opponents can see in the ultraviolet spectrum, the Nitrodjinn is completely invisible to the casual observer while within the fog. In ultraviolet light or when seen without the surrounding fog, this being appears to have a vaguely humanoid torso with four arms and a featureless head. The lower half of the body is a long serpentine form stretching along the ground all the way back to the power source. The Nitrodjinn may move a maximum of 150 meters from the atomic



source, and no more: if forced beyond this point, it will die immediately.

Nitrodjinn may use their life leech ability within a 30-meter radius of the

creature's head. They may also use illusion generation, making shapes of men and monsters appear and disappear in the fog, misleading adventurers until they stumble into a hidden trap or pitfall.

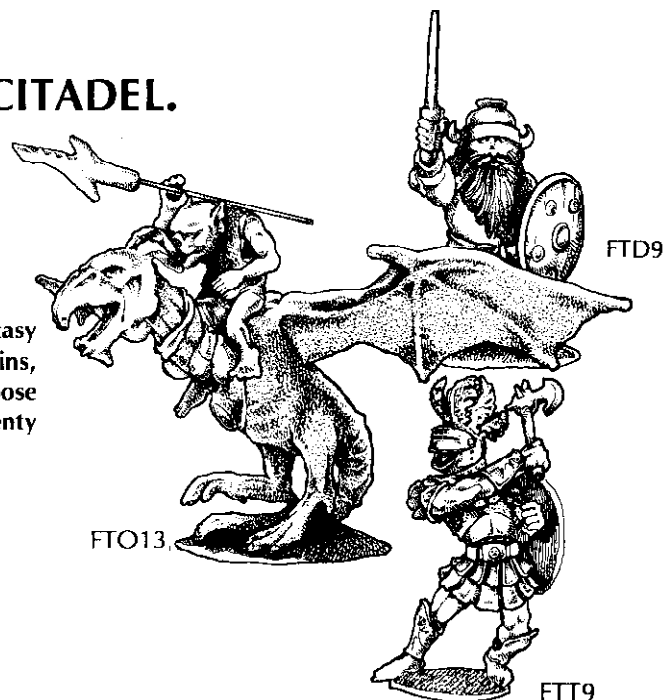
Nitrodjinn have a mental strength of 18. They may also attack physically, four attacks per round, and each strike from a hand will drain one point of dexterity from the opponent for 2-12 hours. If an opponent has his or her dexterity reduced to zero in this manner (multiple hits are cumulative), death occurs. The absorption abilities of the Nitrodjinn apply to any form of cold or gaseous attacks, and the creatures are immune to all poisons.

Nitrodjinn fog reduces normal visibility to one meter, makes infravision useless, but does not affect ultravision. Any strong light source within the fog will create a "white-out" effect, and makes all opponents without ultravision take a -4 to hit penalty from the partial blindness resulting from it. Nitrodjinn seem to be very highly intelligent and know how to best utilize their powers for defensive and offensive purposes.

The Nitrodjinn's torso is roughly man-sized, and the snake-like lower body is about 1/4 meter in diameter. As these beings are partially composed of energy, they are only semi-material and hence have such a low armor class. If the power source of a Nitrodjinn is destroyed, the creature will be destroyed as well.

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Beyond the rule book

Procedure and style tips for good GMing

by Lew Pulsipher

Most fantasy role-playing game rules don't give much guidance to the prospective gamesmaster (GM) about the procedural matters of GMing. I don't mean mechanics, but matters such as the GM's attitude toward rule changes and player behavior. Moreover, most rules give the novice GM precious little guidance about

establishing a coherent world and a consistent GMing style.

One could write a book about these topics, but a limited set of guidelines is more practical and will be as much as most GMs need. Consequently, here are offered twenty guidelines for being a good GM, divided into ten about GMing

procedures and ten about creating a campaign and a gamesmastering style.

Another experienced GM would offer somewhat different guidelines, of course, but these suggestions should help any inexperienced GM save time and learn some useful lessons the easy way, rather than through unhappy experiences.

GM PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

1: *Don't let players push you around.*

GMs must look out for the effects of "Mortimer's Law" (as quoted by Jon Pickens and modified by myself): "It is often the goal of many players in a campaign to destroy it by the accumulation of unearned advantages for their characters." This is more often the case with inexperienced and younger players than with more experienced and mature role-players. Many players lack self-restraint; only the GM can restrain them, and while they may not out-and-out cheat, they won't be too careful about how they follow the rules.

Those not inclined to cheat will search for justifications in the rules, in fantasy literature, or (worst) in articles printed in game magazines, to support their "demands" for all kinds of odd advantages, rule changes, special character classes, and so on — the "unearned advantages" mentioned above. You, as GM, must be prepared to resist these arguments, or any suggested arrangements such as "You go easy on my character in your campaign and I'll go easy on yours in mine."

No magazine article — including this one — should ever change your mind merely because it's the printed word. A logical argument, or an explanation of a heretofore unclear rule, might change your mind, but it doesn't matter whether this is printed in a magazine or pointed out by a player. Justification can be found for almost anything in the vast body of heroic fantasy literature, so it should not influence your judgement except in the broadest matters. And most games include ambiguous statements and downright bad rules. Remember that you're the ultimate authority, relying sensibly on the rules and on logic.

2: *Be consistent.*

Your rulings (and your rules) in your world are like the laws of physics in the real world. If they change frequently or unpredictably, the inhabitants of the world are lost in confusion. However much you encourage role-play, it is still a game; and the essence of any game (or, for that matter, of life) is to make decisions based on available information, and then predictions about the outcomes of those decisions. If the "natural laws" of the world change frequently, how can one make rational decisions? Or, to put it another way, if the GM changes the rules in mid-session, nobody in his right mind will want to play with him — unless the rule changes and exceptions always favor the players.

My favorite example of this transgression is the GM who normally gives his players plenty of time to think about plans or to make decisions during a battle. But when the going is really tough, when those decisions are most important, he switches to "real time," forcing players to decide immediately or suffer by doing nothing at all. Or, if one day a lightning bolt extends and bounces in some manner, but the next day it acts differently, how can the players rationally decide whether to use the spell? Wouldn't you be exasperated if this sort of thing happened to you? This guideline leads directly to number three, which is . . .

3: *Tell players how you've changed the rules before you start the game.*

Virtually every GM changes some rules of whatever game he runs. In some cases, he may change so much that it will be difficult to summarize the differences. Nonetheless, nothing annoys a player so much as to find out, after he's tried something (spell, trick, whatever), that in *this* world it doesn't work. For example, if

you play the AD&D game and you rule (for some reason) that hit points of damage from a fireball are divided among the victims, rather than inflicted in total on each one, you'd better tell this to the player-character magic-users before the game begins.

4: *Don't stonewall.*

Some writers recommend that the GM should never alter a ruling during the game (except in matters of demonstrable and accidental error — e.g., misremembering the damage a monster inflicts). The reason given is that this prevents all argument and keeps the game going. But I disagree. Granted, the GM cannot often allow himself to be persuaded to change his mind during a game, or he'll find himself unsure of anything, and the players will disagree every chance they get. But if the GM stonewalls, refusing to change *anything*, he may find himself permanently antagonizing players, if not losing them altogether.

No GM is infallible, nor has any GM devised a rule or determined a percentage for every possible situation. Sometimes a player may make a very reasonable suggestion, or think of some aspect of the problem which escaped the GM. If you are so unsure of yourself that you must hide behind dogmatism, perhaps you should give up GMing until you have more playing experience.

5: *Prepare before game time.*

A few minutes of preparation before the game can make the playing activity run much more smoothly. The more pre-game preparation, the less aggravation and delay during the game. Some GMs write down every possible detail of every place of adventure they construct. Others jot down just a few notes, expecting to find (or make) the time to generate the

additional details and such with dice rolls during the adventure.

I don't recommend the ultra-thorough method, for it results in much time wasted on detail which is not used; on the other hand, if you leave too much to the last minute, you ruin the flow of the adventure, and you may give away information to the players. Take the classic example of the wandering/randomly appearing monster. A GM who doesn't determine the type, purpose, hit points, etc., of wandering monsters before the game starts is going to waste his players' time. The information should be written on an index card; if the adventurers avoid a significant encounter this time, you can use the card again in another session.

Some GMs like to roll to determine the contents of a treasure after the adventurers have defeated the guardians of the treasure. Not only does this waste time, it has a tendency to result in treasures much more valuable than the guardians deserved to be guarding. It's hard for a GM to decide fairly whether he should re-roll a treasure when he already knows how difficult it was to obtain the treasure.

6: *Maintain some semblance of order.*

If one or more players are over-eager, boisterous, or just plain unruly, don't let him or them take over the game. Don't allow one person to destroy the fun of the other players. Don't be afraid to kill a fool's character if his actions call for it.

Some players try to take advantage of confusion. It's much easier to be a GM if a certain amount of organization and self-control is evident in, or forced upon, the players' actions. For example, if you let players move their fingers around whenever they want, you'll find that they've always moved themselves away from danger (when they can see that you're about to say or do something) — they're always somewhere else. (This sort of "fudging" occurs even more often if you don't use figures.)

The solution to this particular problem is to not let anyone move until it's time for everyone to move. (Free-for-all moving can cause hard feelings between players as well, when the less grabby people find that their characters have been moved, or that their protective line of fighters has suddenly disappeared.) You are under no obligation to tolerate a player whose actions seriously annoy others, especially yourself. Let the player know what you disapprove of and why. Incurable offenders will probably quit on their own before you have to ask them not to play any longer.

7: *Be humorous, or open to humor.*

Typically, players think of many things their characters might do or say which would be humorous but quite unhealthy. Much of the amusement of the game is derived from these "might-have-beens." (In some groups, players actually

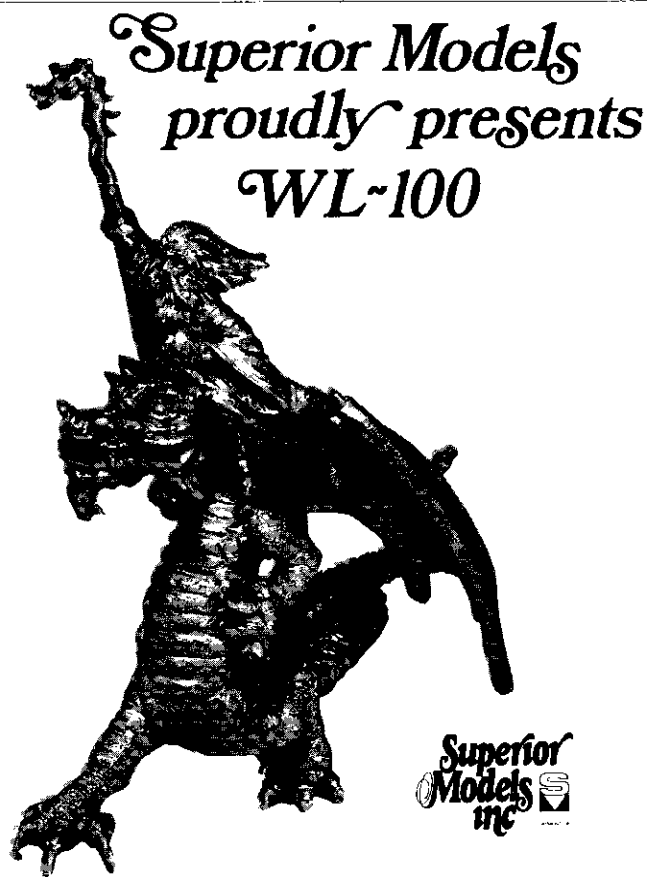
intend their characters to do such things, forgetting about safety, but most of us value our characters' lives more highly than that.) Unfortunately, some GMs like to occasionally, if not consistently, take such jokes seriously and make the character do whatever the player said. Typically this amuses the GM, but not the players. It is a cheap trick, if nothing else, but also stifles the humor in the group to the detriment of fun, which is what the game is all about. Normally the GM should ask the player if he really wants to do or say something, when he seems to be joking; if he means it, he'll make it clear enough.

I can't imagine playing a six-hour FRP session without some laughter. Humor

comes partly from the players, but also from the GM. You don't even need to try to arrange deliberately humorous encounters — in fact, slapstick destroys the suspension of disbelief which is vital to fantasy gaming. But you can throw out wisecracks on the side, play the straight man to the players (or to their characters), and ham it up when you act out a non-player character role.

8: *Don't favor one player over another.*

Players, as a class, are pretty smart — maybe as smart as you are. If you continually favor one player's characters, the others are going to recognize this, and many of them may resent it. This depends



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on the extent of the favoritism, of course. Try to be impartial and fair, as much as you can.

There may come a time when the dice just aren't cooperating, when the players have been wary, intelligent, and skillful, yet the dice decree death. In this case you may feel that, for the good of the campaign, the character(s) should live. If so, try to devise some alternative which, though undesirable in itself, will be less final than death.

For example, if a character with 8 hit points left is pushed into a pit, and you roll 12 points of damage, you might reduce the hit-point damage to 7 points, but also say that a leg is broken. Only do this sort of thing if you really feel the character *deserves* a second chance. Or, if a character is trapped (*through no fault of his own*) in a dead-end corridor and ten trolls "just happen" to approach, the character might "just happen" to notice a secret door through which he can escape—a secret door that you just decided to put there. It is imperative that the players do not realize you're doing this when you do it, or they may begin to take foolish chances because they think you'll bail them out.

Never favor the monsters. There is too much temptation, once you allow this, to constantly adjust numbers of monsters to give the players a hard battle, regardless of how well they play. Just accept that

occasionally your set-up isn't going to give the players as much trouble as you anticipated.

9: Don't pursue a vendetta against any particular player or players.

Just as you shouldn't favor one player over another, you shouldn't carry on a vendetta against a player (or group), regardless of how his brilliant stratagems may foul up your scenarios. To rule against someone's idea or scheme is part of the rules of the game, but trying to kill off his character is not.

If you've made a mistake, perhaps in allowing the character to obtain an over-powerful magic item, you only compound your error by trying to kill the character or steal the item. This sort of retribution is not fair, nor is it likely to endear you to the victim; from his point of view, you will be a cheat.

There's a fine line between vendettas which arise from situations among characters in the game (say, the non-player character former owner of an item is trying to retrieve it) and those arising from the outside (the GM's desire to "get so-and-so"). The first is part of the campaign, but the second is not part of a *good* campaign.

10: Don't give away information.

Some GMs know more about their players' characters than the players do, but most of us don't have that kind of memory. You should require the players to make a list of ability numbers and major magic items for you to consult during the game. Then you needn't attract attention to a character by asking (for example) what his dexterity is, and the players can't spring magic items on you — "Oh, I forgot to mention that . . ." or "Oh, I just happen to wear an amulet which negates that attack. . . ." The simple principle to bear in mind is: Don't give a player more information than his character would have.

During an encounter, don't tell a player more than his character would be able to sense. For example, a character won't be able to tell a normal wolf from a werewolf by sight, or if he sees a serpentine form in the shadows he won't know if it's a dragon, a wyvern, a giant snake, or some other related creature.

Some GMs take the idea of hoarding information to an extreme, and prefer to roll all the dice during the game. But players feel a greater sense of participation when they roll their own dice, and for that reason I virtually never roll for the players. In some cases, such as hiding in cover, I have the players roll the dice so that I can see the result but they can't. Also, I have players make a few rolls of d20 and d100 before the game starts, and I write down those results to use as saving throws or whatever in cases where the character shouldn't know that something unusual may be happening to him.

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GM STYLE GUIDELINES

1: Your style is not for everyone.

There are many ways to play, and not every player will enjoy your way no matter how hard you try. You can't satisfy everyone, but you should be able to gather a group of players you *can* satisfy. Sometimes you may run a game for players who prefer two different styles. In such circumstances the game is likely to end unhappily, not through your fault.

In other words, sometimes the chemistry (or lack thereof) among players will ruin the session, because they're looking for different forms of recreation. For example, players who get their kicks from backstabbing and player-vs.-player competition will not get along with players who enjoy cooperative or even regimented adventures. How could one GM possibly satisfy both groups at once? Or, players who like to have the GM tell them a story, in effect, with their characters as participants, will not get along well with those who treat the game as improvisational theater (the "true role-players"). If you satisfy one group, members of the other group will feel that you're doing a poor job. A really skilled GM can alter his style to accommodate different tastes, but only if he runs the different groups in separate adventures. Most GMs prefer one style of play, and they look for players who like that style.

2: Let the players gain abilities at the slowest rate which maintains their interest in the game.

Let's assume that you want to play fantasy role-playing games for as long as you can enjoy the activity; in order to do so, you must restrain the impulse to get to what appears to be the "exciting part" as soon as possible. For example, the AD&D™ game at any level is exciting, when the adventure is played and run properly, but there comes a time, when player characters reach fairly high (double-figure) levels of experience, when the game becomes boring to all but the wildest power-hungry fanatics, or it becomes a lottery. The longer you can put off this situation, the more enjoyment you'll derive from the game.

As GM, you have the power to force players to advance slowly. In the long run they'll thank you for doing it, and they'll get more out of the game. If you're going at a properly slow rate there will be complaints, but no one will quit. What is slow for one group may be fast for another. I've heard of groups in which the player characters reached double-figure levels in a year — almost certainly too fast by any standard — and of others in which 100 adventures netted only seven magic items, and correspondingly small amounts of experience. A "rate of gain" that is too fast can disillusion players as surely as one that is too slow.

3: Don't pass the buck.

Your campaign is your responsibility, no one else's. What happens in it depends ultimately on you. You cannot explain away this responsibility by abdicating your decision-making in favor of a commercial module, or in favor of a dice table (especially one you've prepared yourself). The classic example of buck-passing is the GM who rolls dice to determine a treasure guarded by 10 orcs. The result is, say, a *vorpall blade* or a *wand of fireballs*, and the GM flatly says, "I rolled it, so it's there." In such a case, a competent GM would exercise his judgement, take responsibility, and re-roll the treasure, because such a powerful item does not belong in the hands of 10 orcs.

If the GM is using a dice table he derived himself, the admonition against buck-passing applies doubly. You won't convince anyone if you say that "the dice rule all" or "the dice are Fate." If you made up that table, whatever is in it is your responsibility; if it gives an unbelievable result, or one which would destroy play balance, you had better change that result before you use the table.

Finally, commercial modules are written by people like yourself, though perhaps with more experience. They are devised with certain assumptions in mind which might not apply to your campaign. If something in the module clashes with your ideas of how the game

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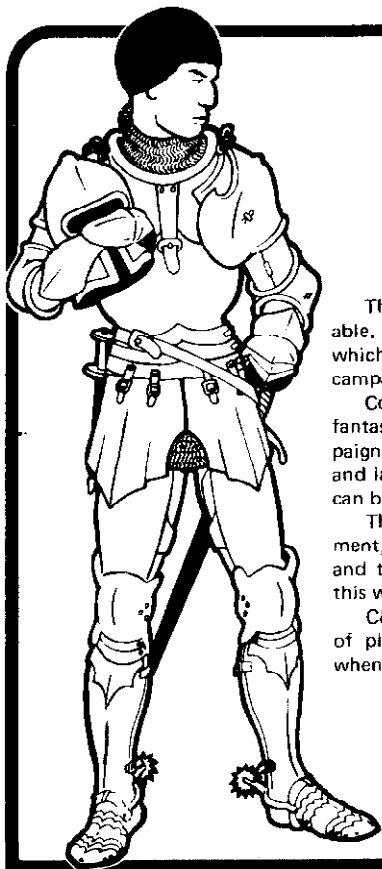
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should be played, or with some assumptions underlying your campaign, you must change the module. If you pass the buck, you may make your players angry and ruin your campaign at the same time.

4: *What's good for player characters is good for the monsters.*

You might call this the Golden Rule of Fantasy Role-Playing Games. The game, whichever one you play, is already biased in favor of the player characters (and should be, or it wouldn't be much of a game because the good guys would be slaughtered 90% of the time). If you allow players to do something that a non-player should, by all logic, be able to do, but which you do not allow, you are going too far. Moreover, you're abandoning your most useful argument against those players who want as many advantages as possible — that if they are able to do such-and-such, their human enemies (at least) will be able to do the same.

For example, players may argue that humanoid-type creatures should be virtually unable to move when in a magic web, even if they are quite strong. But if you point out that the same thing could happen to the player characters, the players might be less insistent. Or, if you allow player characters to learn alignment languages other than their own, non-player characters should be able to do the same. The players are going to use

any magic item they have, so why should a non-player human leave his magic item in a treasure chest? This works both ways: Non-player characters should not be able to use magic which player characters of a similar class cannot obtain.

This is not to say that you should change the rules. For example, in the AD&D game only humans and some associated types, such as elves, can use most magic items and many magic spells. The idea, I think, is that it's the magic which enables humans to dominate their physically far more powerful rivals. If you change the rules of your game so that everyone from orcs to giants can use magic items, you'll be changing the "balance of power" — changing the entire game, really. This is not a proper application of the Golden Rule.

5: *Err on the side of stinginess.*

If you're unsure whether to allow player characters to obtain a powerful magic item or large treasure, always choose not to do it. If you're too stingy you can always give more later, but it's extremely hard to call back something which is already in the characters' hands. For beginning GMs, this guideline might be restated as: "Give only half as much treasure as you think is fair." Nothing ruins a game more quickly than escalation and inflation of levels, wealth, and magical power.

If players are accustomed to treasures worth 500 gold pieces, a 5,000 g.p. treasure is fabulous; to those accustomed to 5,000 g.p. treasures, 5,000 is merely normal — you need to give 50,000 to reach the "fabulous" category. I have even heard of games in which 100,000 g.p. was a normal treasure. In any case, the players become accustomed to the "normal" treasure, regardless of the numbers. Why not, therefore, make your normal treasure value a small number, and keep abilities and wealth under control? Your players will be thrilled just as often by the occasional big treasure, but "big" will mean one thing to your group, another to the "inflation gang."

6: *Don't try to stop the irresistible force or overthrow the immovable object.*

In most games there are certain spells, magic items, or creatures which are supposed to be the ultimate. In the AD&D game, for instance, things that fall into this category are the gods, protection from magic scrolls, perhaps the anti-magic protection of a paladin's holy sword, the undead-turning ability of clerics, the inability of MUs to use swords, and the inscrutability of magical tomes. The cohesion of the game depends on the inviolability of such ultimates. A GM should resist the temptation to add something to the game in order to get around the restrictions, because once he starts to do there's no end in sight. In a way, it's like starting an arms race.

For example, don't allow any magic-users, whether player or non-player character, to research a spell which will work through an anti-magic spell or shell. Don't let someone devise a spell to determine the nature of magical tomes. Don't let characters kill gods! For that matter, don't let characters become as powerful as the gods, and don't let humans escape the basic fact of their nature: their mortality. Don't devise amulets which enable undead to resist turning by clerics. Don't, please don't, let magic-users use swords, however magical and special they may be. These kinds of things unbalance the game at worst, and at best they offend one's sense that the adventure is "real."

7: *Don't allow anachronisms.*

Fantasy role-playing is only a simulation (of sorts), not reality. Consequently, the players can try to take advantage of their knowledge of the real world — knowledge their characters would not have. Typically, a player might cause his character to invent some extremely useful device known in our world but not in the campaign world, and from that he makes a huge amount of gold; or perhaps, in other cases, his inventions give him great power (rather like the paratime traveller who invents gunpowder, as in H. Beam Piper's *Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen*). Such seemingly foolproof schemes can ruin a campaign, and in any case are contrary to the spirit of the game. What can the GM do to stop it?

Of course, the easy method is simply to disallow any action which depends solely on the players' knowledge of the real world. Alternatively, if someone comes up with a scheme which may ruin your campaign, ask yourself why no non-player character has ever done this. Perhaps some powerful lord is against this kind of thing, or perhaps the culture or dominant religion in the area prohibits activities which aid this kind of scheme. For example, maybe a character can "invent" gunpowder, but could the dominant church in this world be opposed to it, just as the Catholic Church outlawed gunpowder weapons in the late Middle Ages?

Or, as another alternative, ask yourself what non-player characters are going to do when they see the player character making money (or gaining power) hand over fist. Will they try to set up a similar scheme in competition? Will they try to destroy his scheme, or destroy him? In either case, the non-players won't necessarily resort directly to force. There are subtle ways to influence events, through rulers, bribes, other kinds of pressure on employees, and so on.

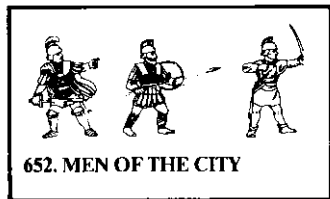
8: *Never let the players feel that their characters are invulnerable.*

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instills a healthy caution in most players (though not in the few who don't think of their characters as people). When players become so powerful that they cannot be harmed, they are initially on a big ego trip but after a while they become bored. That fighter with +5 armor and shield and 18 dexterity can laugh at orcs and ogres. Sure, you can throw tougher monsters against him, but you should also rule that a roll of 20 against him is always a hit. It's even easier to make sure the fighter doesn't obtain that much protection in the first place.

A game which is too predictable can cause boredom as well. Throw the players out of routine with, for example, a highly intelligent giant spider, the infamous mummy that doesn't burn, or a strange, non-evil undead. But don't overdo it. If too much is unpredictable, the game degenerates into a lottery.

9: Avoid arbitrary keying.

Some GMs habitually put draconian, dogmatic, or arbitrary directions in to their dungeon or wilderness keys. For example, the key might say "there is no way to avoid this trap" or "nothing can stop the statue except [some odd spell]" or "anyone who touches the object is permanently dead, no saving throw, wishes notwithstanding." Typically, such categorical statements are the mark of poor design. The GM is not competent to

provide for the unexpected; therefore, he legislates against it.

There should always be some chance of getting away, of surviving, of using a spell or item in a way no one has thought of before. Your job as GM is to recognize that this possibility exists and arrange the place of adventure accordingly.

10: Don't expect players to perceive a problem the way you do.

GMs must expect the unexpected. If you get locked into a particular plot for an adventure scenario, and the players decide to try something other than the obvious — or what seems obvious to you — either your scenario may be ruined or you must drastically interfere. The latter is quite reprehensible, except in those groups where players prefer to let the GM control their overall course of action. The former can be avoided by setting up the adventure with attention to flexibility.

An example: A strong party, looking for a reputedly very evil and powerful creature, came upon a castle atop a 5,000-foot peak, with a single narrow access road. The GM expected the party to blast the guards with fireballs and barge in — but the party wanted no part of a canalized assault over a mile of open, narrow road. So they looked for a back entrance, sneaked past an encamped orc army using an invisibility spell, and met the chief bad guy and his group of bodyguards

almost immediately, while the party was still at full strength.

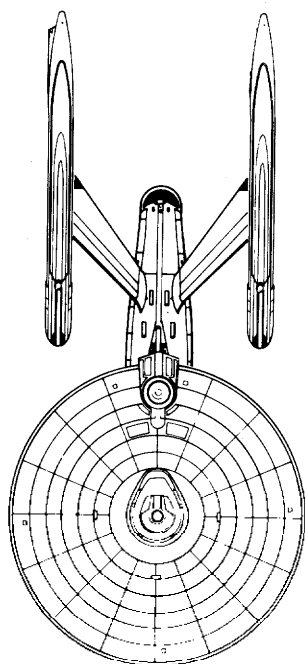
Obviously, this threw off the GM's expectations (though he had provided the back-door entrance), but he didn't try to change the players' minds, nor did he fudge his die rolls so that the party would be detected before they reached the entrance. His set-up was flexible enough that even though the party killed the boss, the underlings and the orc army kept things interesting for several days. The party perceived the problem differently than the person who designed it, but because the GM was not dogmatic or inflexible, the adventure remained enjoyable for all.

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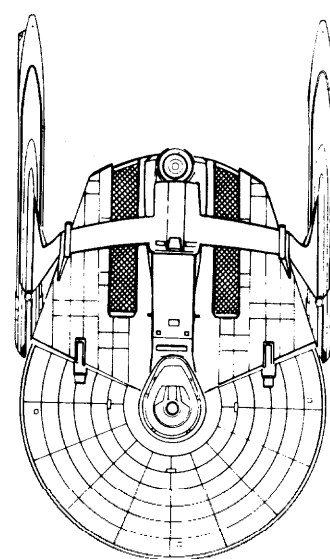
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After all eligible ballots have been counted, six will be picked in a random drawing, and the voters who filled out those ballots will receive free one-year subscriptions to DRAGON Magazine. (Winners who are subscribers at the time of the drawing will receive extensions on their current subscriptions.)

Only new products released during 1982 are considered eligible for the 1983 Strategists Club Awards. This does not include second (or subsequent) printings, or re-releases of products which were first made available in 1981 or earlier.

The seven categories in which Strategists Club Awards will be given are listed and described below, along with short definitions (when necessary) of what sorts of products qualify for those categories. Write the name (and the manufacturer, if you know it) of the product(s) you wish to vote for in the space(s) provided — and note that it is not necessary to vote for a product in every category.

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Mail your ballot to **Strategists Club Awards, c/o Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147**. Do not include a ballot in the same envelope with any other correspondence. Ballots must be postmarked no later than **Aug. 1, 1983**, in order to be eligible for the tabulation and in order for the voter to be eligible for the drawing for free subscriptions to DRAGON Magazine.

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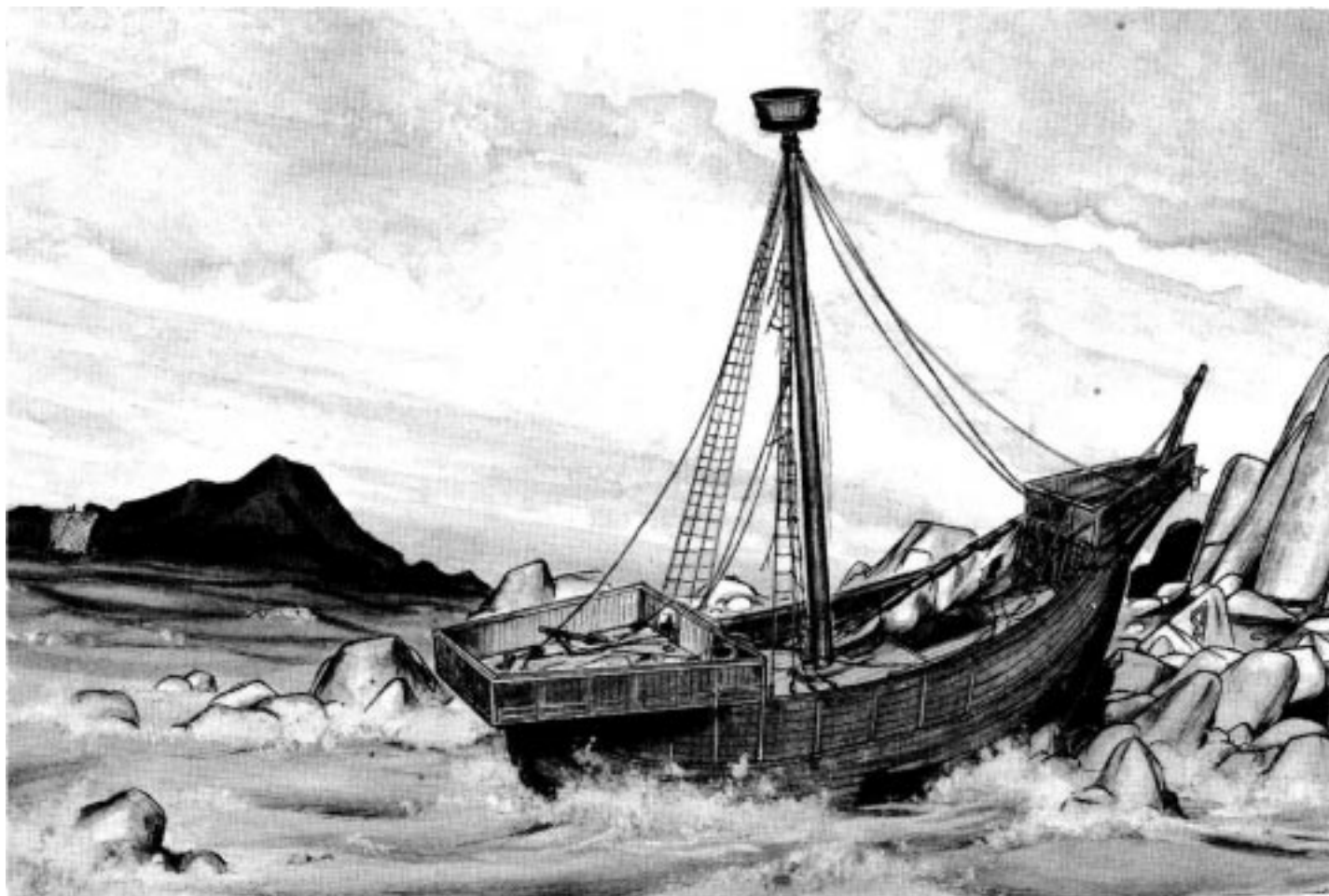
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Can Seapoint Be Saved?

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Designed by
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Module Design Contest

For as long as anyone in the town can remember, nothing has come easily to the residents of Seapoint. The little harbor town sprang up on the south side of a short peninsula when the idea of transporting goods by sea began to catch on, and the shipbuilders of the land acquired the ability to construct large seagoing vessels to carry raw materials and merchandise up the coast.

Before the sea trade was developed, all commerce between the northern and southern lands of the country took place over a time-consuming and hazardous overland route. Caravans were forced to hug the coastline in order to avoid traveling through the mountains — and in some places along the way, the rough terrain extended almost to the seashore. Then the shipbuilders began to refine their skills, and merchants began to discover that it took less time and involved

less danger to ship goods by sea to Seapoint from Riverneck, a harbor town about 600 miles due south of Seapoint.

It took years for the economy and efficiency of seagoing commerce to become evident to most of the major mercantile concerns along the coast — years during which the people of Seapoint scratched out a living, practically on a day-to-day basis. The town survived, but only recently had it really begun to prosper.

Then, just as Seapoint seemed to be coming into its own, ships started to disappear during the journey northward. Sporadically and infrequently — but quite often enough — entire cargos and crews were seemingly lost to the depths. On rarer occasions, merchant ships that were reported lost turned up days after their scheduled arrival in Seapoint — battered, empty, and washed up on the rocky shore to the southeast of the harbor.

Those hulls, gutted of practically anything portable and valuable, offered the only clue to what was going on. They were empty of cargo, so robbery was a motive. The crews had apparently either been kidnapped, or killed and thrown overboard, because no evidence of life remained on any of the wrecks.

Obviously, a sinister force was operating in the waters between Riverneck and Seapoint. But of what sort? Were the thieves “simply” pirates, engaging in an occasional raid? If that were so, then the sea would still be no more dangerous to travel than the overland route; certainly, land caravans had been ambushed and decimated before. Putting up with criminals was an occupational hazard in the business of commerce, and the threat of an occasional pirate raid would not be enough to scare most merchants.

But these raids have become more than

occasional; lately, an average of two ships per month have been waylaid en route from Riverneck to Seapoint. And each raid is terrifyingly thorough — at the least, stripping a ship of any items of measurable worth, and at the most, causing the victimized ship to literally disappear from the surface of the sea.

Many of the smaller merchant concerns, and even some of the larger ones, have become apprehensive about “playing the odds” any further. Word has reached Seapoint, from conversations overheard in Riverneck, that several commercial interests have made a pact to insure their continued survival: If these pirate raids (if that is what they are) continue much longer, they’ll sell their ships and re-open an overland trade route to serve the lands to the north.

Practically every merchant who owns more than a single ship has been victimized so far; the raiders apparently bear no personal grudges. The loss of materials is especially serious to small businesses that

can’t afford to have a cargo-laden ship disappear. Even though the larger businesses may be able to stand this sort of a loss, some of them are starting to have problems persuading sailors to sign on with a merchant ship heading north. Strangely, no ship has been lost on the return trip south from Seapoint to Riverneck, presumably because ships heading south carry relatively light loads, and many of them are virtually cargoless.

All of these conditions add up to one thing for Seapoint: trouble. If even a few of the merchants decide to give up sea trade, the town’s economy will go under. Only days ago, the Seapoint town council promised a reward of 5,000 gold pieces to any individual or group of adventurers who can successfully investigate the cause of these raids and put an end to the piracy that threatens the continued existence of Seapoint. There have been no takers yet — but today is the day your party has arrived in town, and that reward money looks pretty good. . . .

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

“Can Seapoint Be Saved?” is an adventure designed for use with the AD&D™ rule system. To be able to answer that question, a party of adventurers should consist of 4-8 player characters, each of 4th-7th level. The group may also include henchmen and hirelings. To have the best chance for success, the party should include as many different character classes as possible, with emphasis on fighter-types.

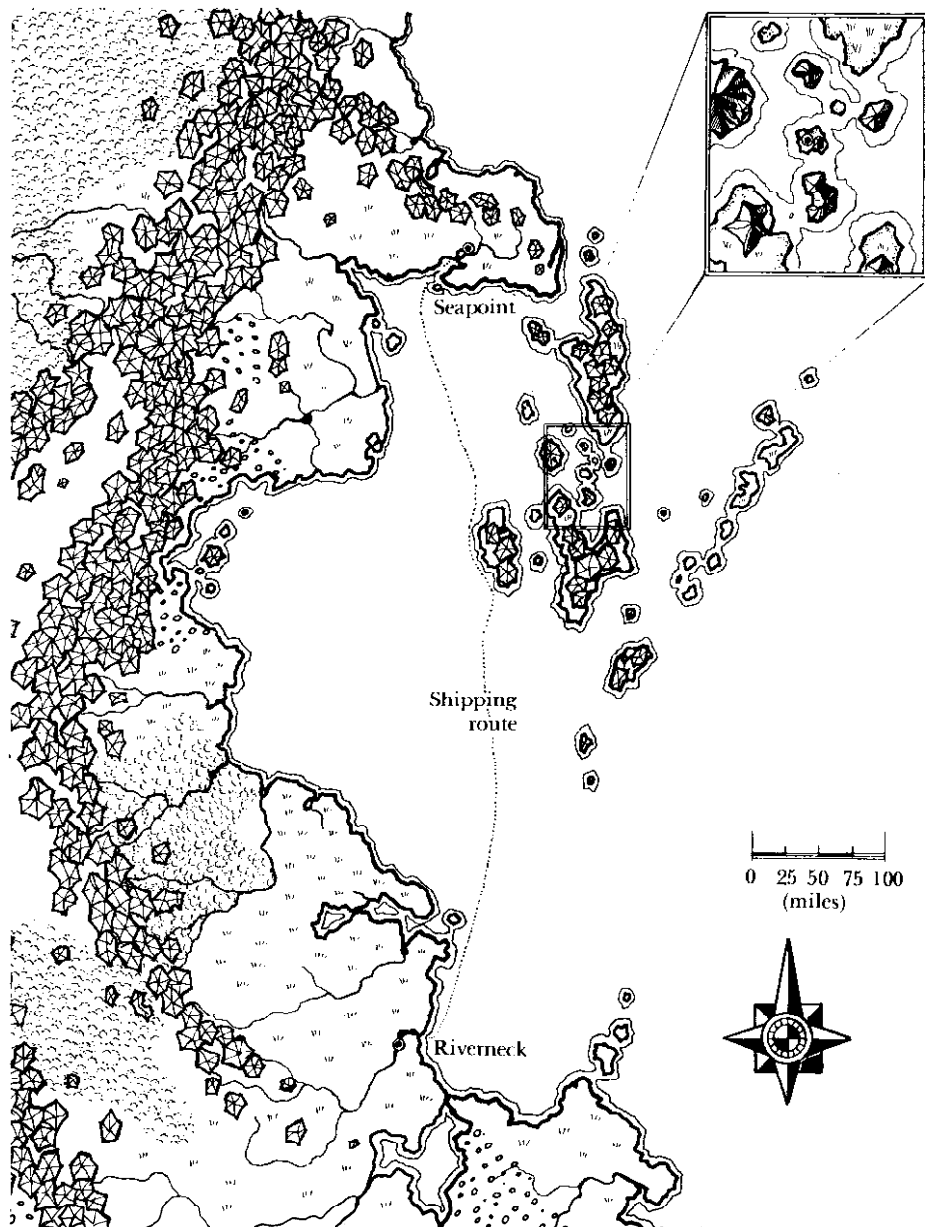
This adventure can be played as part of a campaign, or as a stand-alone activity independent of a campaign world. Whether it can be easily incorporated into a campaign depends on how the DM’s world is structured, both geographically and politically. In most cases, it should be relatively simple to modify part of the world map to fit the geographical map portrayed here (or vice versa).

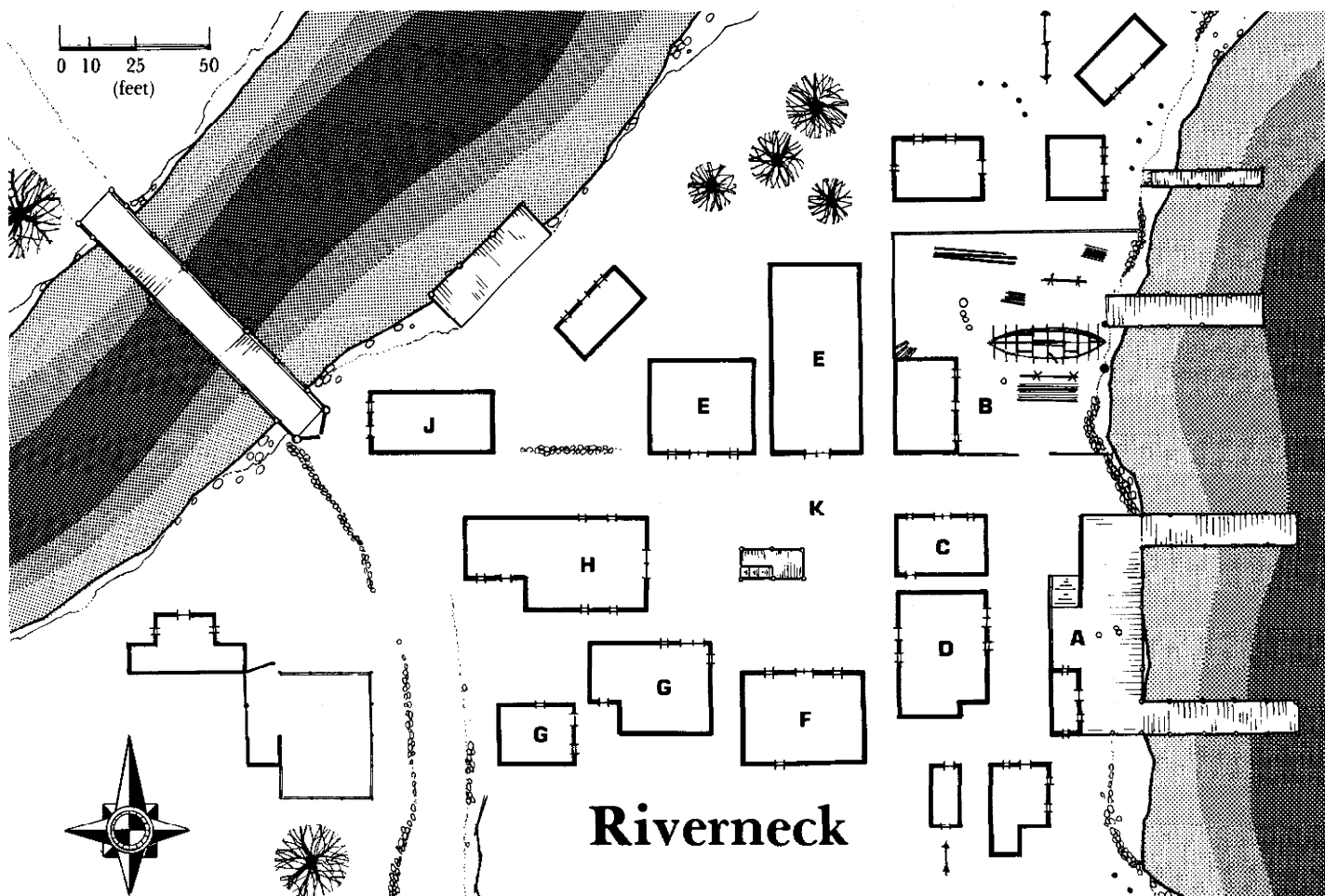
The way to begin this adventure is to cause the player-character party to arrive in Seapoint. Most of the preceding section of text is information that player characters *could* know before arriving in the immediate vicinity, but it’s up to the DM to decide how much of this detail to give to players beforehand.

The party’s arrival could be by land or sea, depending on circumstances. Ocean-going travel is not that dangerous yet; the chance that the party’s ship will be raided on its way to Seapoint is virtually nil — especially if the ship the party is sailing on doesn’t look like an ordinary merchant ship.

The presence of a hardy band of adventurers in a town the size of Seapoint is unlikely to go unnoticed for long. Within just a few hours after their arrival, the characters will find out about the reward (if they didn’t know about it already), and will encounter a man named Evald Ferrier. He is a rich merchant who has some very personal reasons for wanting the pirates stopped: three of his ships are among those that set out from Riverneck and were never heard from again.

Ferrier has one valuable piece of information above and beyond the facts that characters might find out from other sources. The captain of a merchant ship owned by a competing businessman sailed into Seapoint several days ago and contacted Ferrier to tell him that he saw a ship resembling one of his lost vessels unloading cargo at the docks in Riverneck. Ferrier assumes this information to be true, and is seeking the services of a group of adventurers who would be willing to travel to Riverneck and investigate further. If the party agrees to undertake this mission, Ferrier will supply them with a ship and crew for the journey south, against their promise that they will do their best to find out whether the ship actually is Ferrier’s, and if so, who’s in command of it now. (Ferrier is also willing to sweeten the pot with a larger reward, especially if the adventurers see





Riverneck

the town's offer of 5,000 gold pieces as too pal try.)

Although the plight of Seapoint is the crux of the adventure, most of the land-based activity of the adventuring party will take place in Riverneck (assuming they take Evald Ferrier up on his offer). For this reason, a sketchy description of Riverneck and a map of that town are provided in the adventure, but the town of Seapoint is not detailed in the same way. If adventurers end up spending a lot of time in Seapoint, the DM will have to "design" a town for them to move around in. Since both Riverneck and Seapoint are relatively small harbor towns, they would be quite similar in terms of physical layout and the buildings and businesses located in them.

THE TOWN OF RIVERNECK

After the party strikes its deal with Evald Ferrier in Seapoint, they have roughly a week-long journey ahead of them on the open sea as they trace the trade route southward to Riverneck. At the DM's discretion, the ship bearing the party may have random encounters along the way, but for the sake of the overall adventure, none of these encounters should be overly dangerous or distracting to the party's mission.

The bustling little harbor community of Riverneck is a vital link in the chain of commerce in this part of the world. Besides being the location from which

merchant ships set out on their journey along the trade route north to Seapoint, the town is also the endpoint of a couple of major overland trade routes (not shown on the geographical map) leading from the south and the west. Ships arrive in port on the average of one or two per day — some of them coming from Seapoint, most arriving at Riverneck from points further south. And, ships laden with cargo leave the harbor with the same regularity — but at this point in time, most of the ships that leave Riverneck are headed south rather than north.

The map at the top of this page depicts the major buildings and other features of the business district of Riverneck (keyed with letter-codes) as well as several other miscellaneous structures that serve as residences for some of the townspeople. Physical details concerning the major features (the presence of people, interior furnishings, etc.) should be generated by the DM if the adventurers' activities make this necessary.

The first things the adventurers will see when their ship pulls into the harbor are the receiving dock (A) and the shipbuilding yard (B). The dock can accommodate up to four relatively large merchant ships, but seldom holds more than two vessels at once. (See the following section of text for a general description of a typical large merchant ship.)

The shipbuilding yard is a fenced-in area serviced by its own pier. A partially

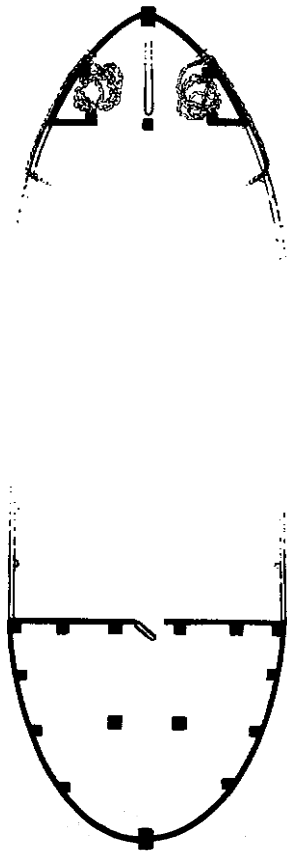
constructed hull (far from being completed) is the dominant feature of the yard; around it are stacks and piles of wooden planks and beams, metal fittings, and other necessary materials. The residence for the operator of the yard and his apprentices is a simple enclosure in the southwest corner of the yard itself.

After their ship is docked, adventurers may want to head for the nearest tavern (C) to find out what the people of Riverneck may have to add to the facts they already know. Building (D), just across a narrow walkway adjacent to the tavern, is the shop of the town's cooper (barrel maker), which is regularly kept busy manufacturing new containers to hold cargo to be shipped out.

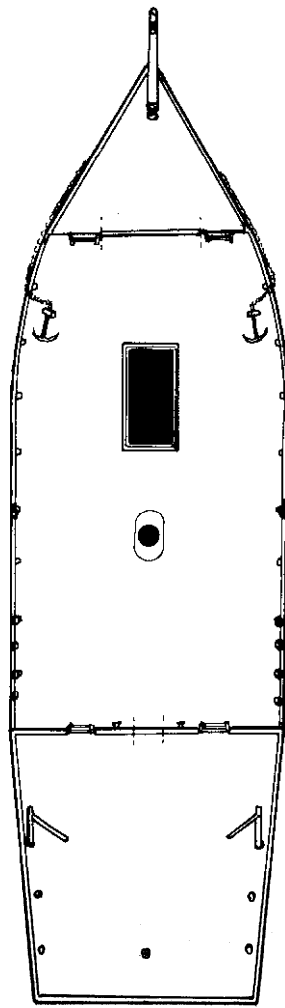
The two buildings marked (E) are the property of the local Merchants' Guild. The westernmost structure is a "flop house" for transients, either members of a ship's crew or workmen who came to town in an overland caravan. The other building is a warehouse for goods received by merchants from ships or caravans and destined for re-shipment.

Another nucleus of activity in the town is the Riverneck Inn (F). Visitors can rent rooms by the night, and meals are sold in a large common room that is also a social center. This place is frequented by ship's captains and officers, prominent merchants passing through town, and other influential and knowledgeable types.

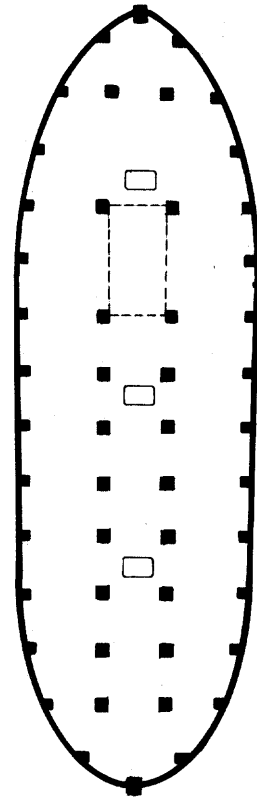
Virtually any specific manufactured



Cabin interiors

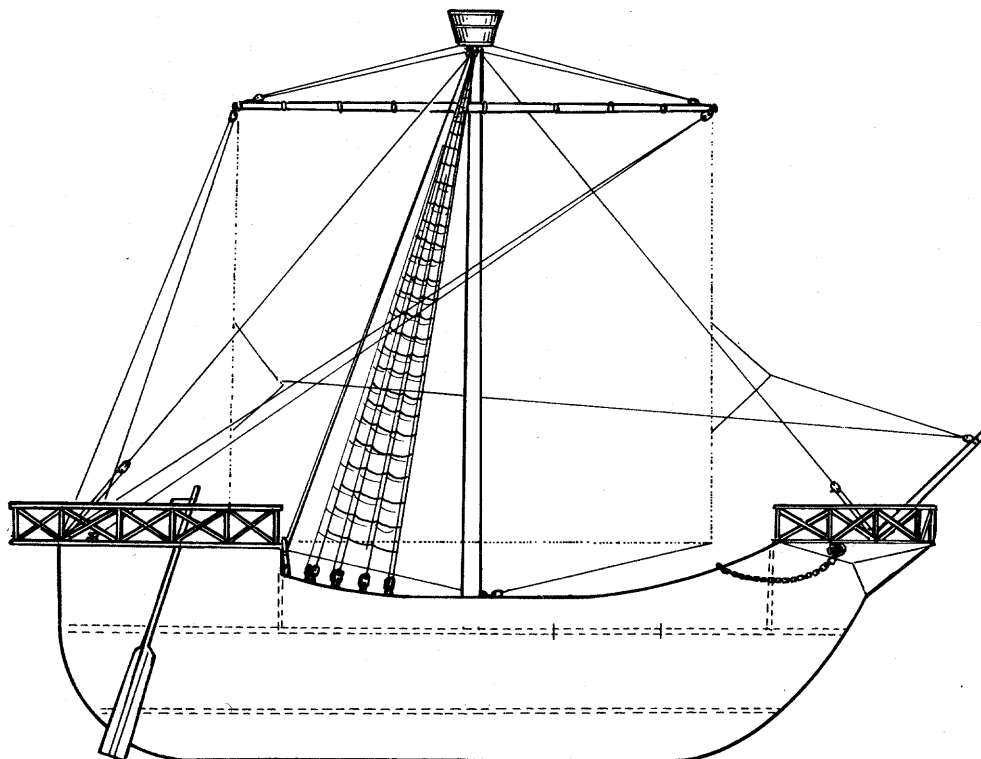


Main deck

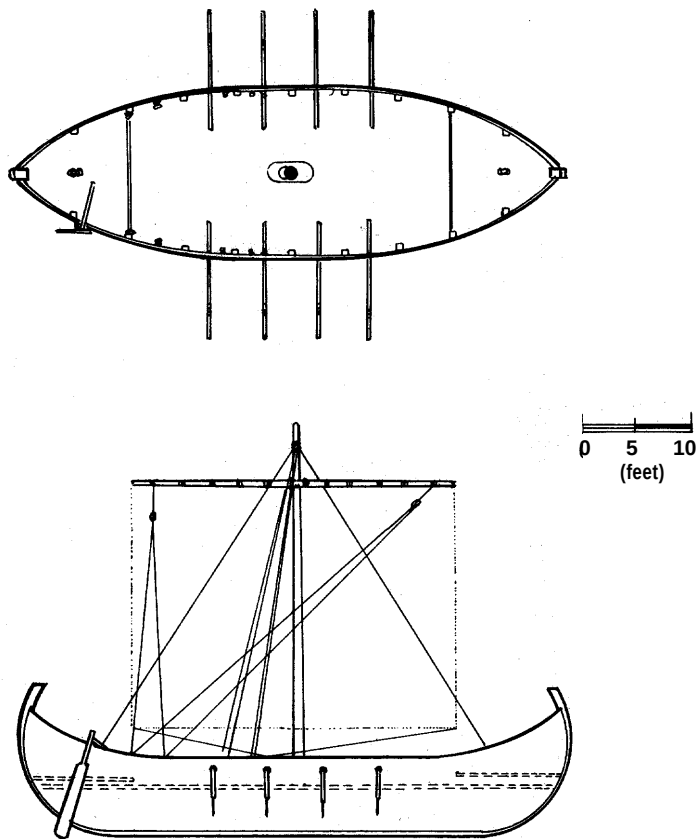


Cargo hold

Large merchant ship



0 5 10
(feet)



Small merchant ship

item of a nautical nature can be found in the ship's store (G). Items for sale range from sextants to barrels of grog to caulking pitch. The proprietor of the shop lives in the small building near the main structure. This shop is operated more or less in cooperation with the rope and sail maker's shop (H); the ship's store doesn't sell rope or rigging materials or sails, and the rope and sail maker sticks to his specialties without trying to compete for the customers of the ship's store.

The most remote of the main features is the constable's office (J). The building contains a jail with a pair of iron-barred cells, but they are empty more often than not. The constable is a figurehead with relatively little actual power in the community; law enforcement in Riverneck consists primarily of citizens controlling one another, in a sort of crude "honor system": If you don't try to steal someone's property or slip a knife between his ribs, chances are he (or his hired help, or the survivors of his family) won't try anything against you, either.

Most of the main structures in the business district of Riverneck are built around the perimeter of the traders'

square (K), an open-air marketplace with a raised platform (used as an auction block, speaker's stand, etc.) in the center. One day a week, the square is filled with merchants and traders peddling their wares. On "market day," virtually any item imaginable (within reason, of course) can be bought from one of the vendors. Often, the captain of a ship will try to time his arrival in Riverneck, or delay his ship's departure, to be on hand for market day.

As luck would have it, the next market day in Riverneck is scheduled for the day after the ship carrying the adventurers arrives in port — a golden opportunity for everyone to replenish supplies before the next stage of the mission.

THE SHIPS

Depicted above and on the facing page are the two types of sailing ships that play a major part in this adventure. The large merchant ship shown at left is what Evald Ferrier's missing ship, *The Sea Hawk*, looks like. (This ship is also the type of vessel that the characters will use to travel from Seapoint to Riverneck before they encounter *The Sea Hawk* and

her new "owners.") The small merchant ship shown on this page is the vessel that the pirate band uses on its raids.

When the adventurers arrive in Riverneck, they probably won't be fortunate enough to find *The Sea Hawk* sitting at the dock waiting for them. However, they will be able to find out from townspeople that a ship matching the description of *The Sea Hawk* (sailing under a different name, of course) was last seen in port almost a month ago.

Since a great many merchant ships visit Riverneck on a monthly schedule, those who keep track of such things (the dock manager or one of his helpers) will tell the adventurers that they might expect to see it return soon. And sure enough, two days (at most) after the party arrives in town, the ship they're seeking will pull into Riverneck.

For purposes of movement, hull values, and so forth, treat *The Sea Hawk* as a large merchant ship as per AD&D rules, except that it has no oars and thus no movement rate for that means of travel.

The aft cabin is the captain's quarters, being occupied at the present time by the third-ranking member of the pirate gang, Gareth Juster, a 4th level fighter (AC 6, HP 34, Str 16, Int 12, Wis 9, Dex 17, Con 15, Cha 9, alignment lawful evil). He carries a +1 dagger and a long sword, and wears a +1 *ring of protection*. Rolled up and stored inside the drawer of a small table inside the captain's cabin is a map of the island chain (refer to the map on page 46) with the site of the pirate headquarters clearly marked with an "X" and a hand-drawn line that describes the route the pirates take when entering and leaving their base.

The other occupants of the ship when it docks are two "name" pirates (described below) and five "nameless" deck hands. All "nameless" pirates (whether located on the ship or waiting back at the pirate headquarters) are 1st-level fighters (AC 10, HP 7) who carry daggers on their persons and who also have access to (and can use) short swords that are stored below decks where the crew sleeps.

The other two "name" pirates are: Aldo Huckster, 2nd level fighter (AC 9, HP 21), armed with dagger and long sword.

Kappern Celeste, 2nd level fighter (AC 8, HP 16), armed with short sword and dagger.

The forward section of the ship has a small cabin used as storage for the anchor chains, extra ropes and lines, and other non-merchandise materials. The cargo hold, accessible through an open hatch in the front of the main deck, is where the crew's supplies, as well as goods intended for sale in Riverneck, are stored.

The pirates are posing as merchants with wares for sale, just like any other ship that comes to Riverneck. They operate "in the open," like any other merchant-ship crew; that is, they will not

be secretive about the merchandise on their ship, and they will gladly accept all the help any dock-workers want to give them unloading their cargo. However, they won't take kindly to anyone who tries to invade the privacy of the captain's cabin. The crew sleeps on the ship while it is docked; the "merchant sailors" will go into town for recreation and relaxation, just like any other visitors to Riverneck, but in such a case at least one of the "nameless" pirates will be ordered to stay behind and make sure no one boards the ship while the rest of the crew is away. The pirates will not be looking to take on new crew members, and it's virtually impossible for even one person — let alone an entire party of characters — to stow away aboard *The Sea Hawk* and not be discovered. (Clearly, the only way for the adventurers to deal with the pirates at this juncture is to take the ship by force — but without damaging the ship itself.)

The small merchant ship will probably not come into play until the adventurers commandeer *The Sea Hawk* and sail it back to the pirate base. Treat the small ship as equivalent to a small merchant ship in the AD&D rules, except that the movement rates for "normal oar" and "maximum oar" are doubled.

THE PIRATES

Just as most of the merchants and residents of Seapoint have suspected, a band of pirates is behind the evil operations in these waters. But it isn't that simple: Operating in league with the pirates, and acting as their leader in most ways, is a 9th level magic-user. And the creature — primarily responsible for the group's recent successes is neither pirate nor magic-user — it's a dragon turtle, which cooperates voluntarily with the magic-user and the pirate band, and has this cooperation enhanced by applications of a *charm monster* spell.

The small, unassuming ship that the pirates travel in (see the preceding page) is not likely to arouse the suspicion of a merchant-ship captain who encounters the vessel; eight men in a small boat are not much of a threat. But lurking nearby, underwater, is the dragon turtle — and this changes the odds considerably.

The dragon turtle (while under the influence of the *charm* spell) secretly accompanies the small ship when it leaves the pirates' headquarters and moves into the shipping lane, hoping to encounter a northbound ship loaded with goods. When the small ship moves close enough to a merchant ship to determine that it's worth taking, the pirate leader orders his oarsmen to give a signal to the dragon turtle (they slap their oars on the surface of the water), and the monster roars into action.

Still underwater, the dragon turtle rushes the merchant ship. It surfaces beside the vessel and belches out a cloud of scalding steam that kills or wounds

anyone who isn't below decks. After this blast, it is a relatively simple matter for the pirates to board the merchant ship, making short work of any resistance that might remain.

As a reward for its assistance, the dragon turtle gets to devour all the crew members it can eat. The monster also receives a portion of the monetary treasure taken from each wrecked merchant ship. The relationship between the pirate band and the dragon turtle is mutually beneficial: The creature gets lots of free meals and a goodly amount of treasure (and a way to transport those goods back to its lair), and the pirates get all the salable merchandise they can carry off the ships that the monster destroys.

The dragon turtle has 12 hit dice, 48 hit points, and a 30-foot diameter shell. It is relatively weak (as dragon turtles go) but quite intelligent — smart enough to realize when it has a good thing going. The monster is only *charmed* by the magic-user when the pirates are about to embark on another raiding expedition, because it is at this time when the creature must be strictly controlled to be sure it does exactly what it's supposed to do. The rest of the time, even when it's not under the influence of the spell, the dragon turtle is content to remain in its lair on the island where the pirates have established their headquarters. It savors its collection of treasure, satisfies its hunger with occasional meals provided by the pirates, and waits patiently until the next time it is called upon.

The pirates' strategy is a key to their intentions. They don't want to completely discourage merchant-ship traffic in this area, or obviously they'd be out of business. So, they only set out on raids once every couple of weeks or so. They strip a victimized ship of its cargo (or as much of it as they can pile into their smaller ship), then scuttle the empty or near-empty ship and head back to their headquarters. (The wrecked hulls that infrequently wash up on the rocks near Seapoint are evidently ships that the pirates *thought* had been damaged enough so that they would sink — but they retained enough buoyancy to ride the current until beaching themselves.)

The pirates "own" one large merchant ship, *The Sea Hawk* (see the previous section of text). This vessel was captured intact on one of their early raids, and serves as a way for them to transport stolen goods to Riverneck, where the merchandise is sold for fair market value by pirates posing as merchant sailors. (It is quite possible that the pirates have stolen and sold the same goods more than once, since some of what they unload at Riverneck eventually finds its way onto a merchant ship headed north.) By just selling one ship's worth of goods at one time, and by doing it within the law, the pirates avoid attracting attention to themselves.

PIRATE HEADQUARTERS

The pirate band's base of operations is located on the eastern shore of one of the small islands in the chain that extends southward from the peninsula. The island in question is in the center of the enlarged inset on the geographical map, and the approximate position of the pirate headquarters is indicated by a dot with a circle around it. All of the chambers in the headquarters are natural caves and caverns hollowed out of the inside of the island. Except where otherwise noted, all the chambers are well illuminated in strategic spots by the use of *continual light* spells. All of the chambers have ceilings at least 20 feet high. The doors shown on the map are all of wood and are normally locked.

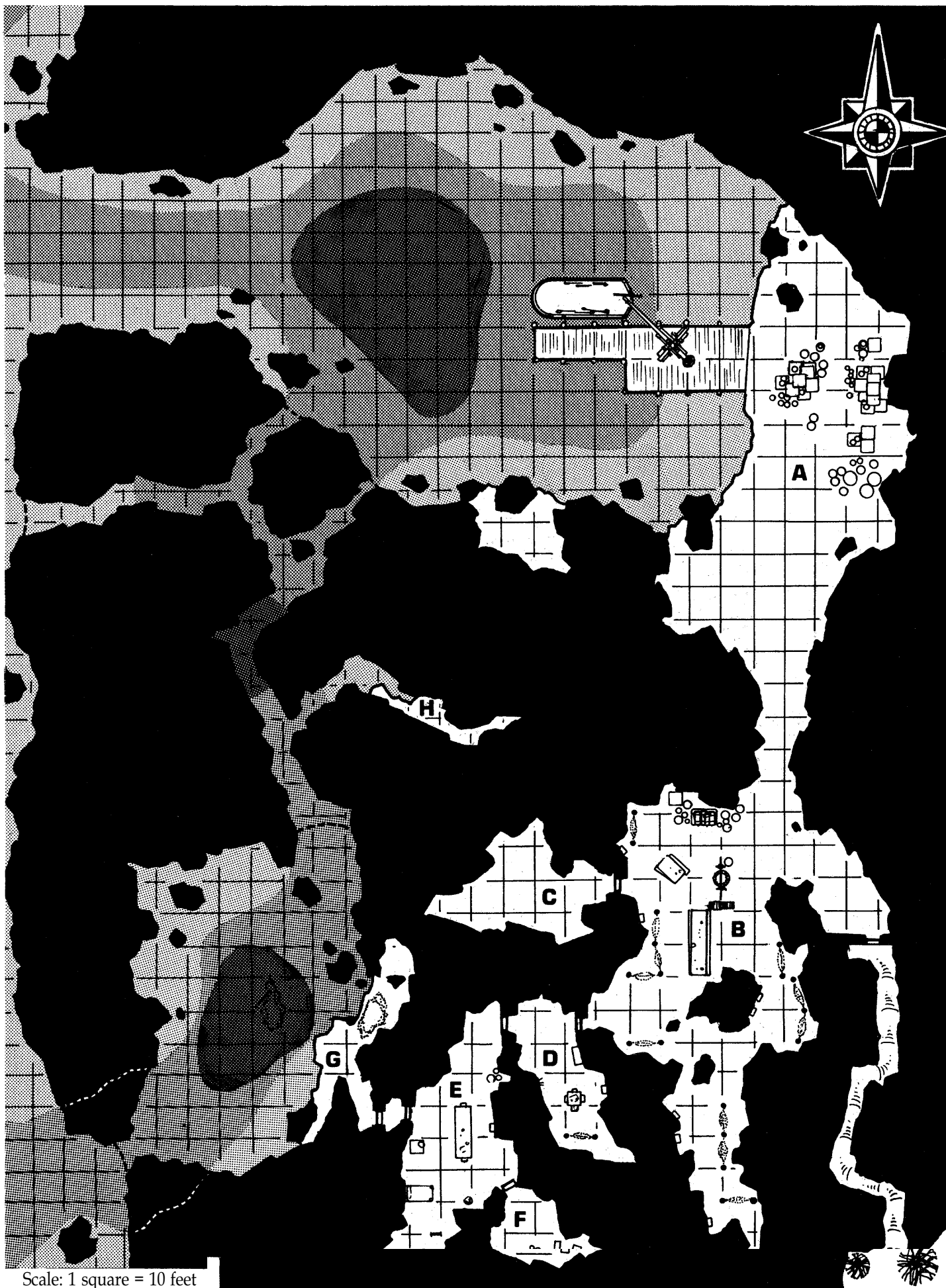
When the party of adventurers arrives at the island base, the site will be occupied by five "name" pirates (detailed below), four other "nameless" pirates (low-level types, statistically identical to the miscellaneous hands on the ship), and the magic-user who is the brains behind the operation.

The magic-user is Adoniram Latoner (AC 4, HP 28, Str 9, Int 17, Wis 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Cha 16, alignment lawful evil). He is proficient with the dagger and the quarter staff, and possesses two of each weapon. One dagger — a +2 weapon — is on his person, and the other (non-magical) is kept under the pillow of the bed in his quarters (area E on the headquarters map). In a pocket of his robe, he carries a key that will unlock any door in the complex. He wears *bracers of defense* (AC 4) and always sports a *rod of beguiling* in a leather "holster" hanging from his belt. He knows the following spells: *reduce*, *shield*, *sleep* (×2), *invisibility*, *web*, *continual light*, *hold person*, *tongues*, *water breathing*, *charm monster*, *wall of fire*, and *teleport*.

Latoner uses the *rod of beguiling* as a safeguard against a mutiny by the pirates he is leading, and only rarely has he actually had to wield it to end an argument or quell a possible uprising. He does not use the rod on the dragon turtle, preferring to not waste any of its charges on the creature since his *charm monster* spell can accomplish the same effect and can be replenished.

The pirates all know about the rod, and they realize that Latoner can easily put a stop to any conflict by using it, but they don't realize the rod has a limited number of charges — and Latoner doesn't know that the rod only has three charges remaining at this time.

The magic-user seldom is found anywhere but in his chambers, and the pirates have never known him to leave the headquarters complex. Unless he finds out in advance that adventurers have invaded the base, Latoner will be encountered in his living quarters (Area E). This chamber contains a bed, a desk, a chest of drawers, and other miscellaneous



Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

furniture. Latoner's book of 4th and 5th level spells (with only three pages filled at the moment) is lying on his desk. His other spell book is in one of the drawers of the chest. Aside from his weapons and the items he is wearing, Latoner keeps nothing of value in this chamber.

The cavern to the southeast of Latoner's quarters (Area F) is where the magic-user keeps his share of the monetary treasure and other items of high value appropriated by the pirates. Tucked away in the most secluded spot inside this unlighted chamber are three wooden chests without locks. They contain gold pieces, silver pieces, and copper pieces in roughly equal proportions (400-600 coins in each chest). The only other items of noteworthy value in the chamber are a pair of gold urns, worth about 350 g.p. each, and a ship's bell formed entirely out of silver, worth 450 g.p.

If Latoner is aware of the party's presence within the complex, he will not confront them directly but will rely on the pirates to do the dirty work. He will gather up his spell books and weapons and lock himself inside the treasure chamber. At the first sign of a disturbance in his living quarters, he will *teleport* himself, his books, and his weapons into his "escape hatch" hideaway (Area H).

If the magic-user is surprised inside his living quarters, he will attempt to defend himself with any means available (the *rod of beguiling*, a weapon, or spell use) until he can grab his book of 4th-5th level spells. When he has that book in his possession, he will *teleport* as described above. Except in a truly life-or-death situation, Latoner will not use his *teleport* spell to escape unless he is carrying the book, since he must have the book to re-learn the *teleport* spell and get himself out of the hiding place the same way he got into it. (For purposes of moderating the *teleport* attempt, treat Area H as "very familiar" to Latoner.)

The captain of the pirate band is a 6th level fighter named Morgan Krell (AC 6, HP 49, Str 17, Int 15, Wis 12, Dex 14, Con 16, Cha 16, alignment lawful evil). He is proficient with the long sword, dagger, and spear. He carries a +1 long sword and a non-magical dagger, and wears *bracers of defense* (AC 6). His living quarters are in Area D, immediately to the east of the magic-user's chambers. The cavern is as sparsely furnished as Latoner's quarters, containing only a hammock hung from posts, a wooden chest on the east wall, and a table with four chairs around it roughly in the center of the chamber. The chest is locked. Krell has the key to this chest in his pocket, and he also holds a key (identical to Latoner's) that will open all of the doors in the headquarters. Inside the chest are a leather bag containing 60 gold pieces, various personal items and articles of clothing, and a book in which Krell is writing (in the common tongue) a log of the pirates' activities.

If he is surprised, the captain will be in his quarters entering a passage in the logbook, with his spear within easy reach leaning against the hammock. If he is alerted to the presence of the adventurers in Latoner's chambers, Krell will leave his chamber through the eastern door and round up all the pirates from the general barracks area to the east (Area B). If he hears a disturbance in Area B, Krell will flee westward into the magic-user's chamber and alert Latoner. In such a case, it is possible that Latoner will take Krell along with him when he retreats into the treasure chamber and prepares his *teleport* spell. (Krell would be able to *teleport* with him, since the captain's weight does not put Latoner over the limit imposed by the spell description.)

All but one of the remaining residents of the complex will be in Area B when the adventurers arrive at the island. The exception is a lone sentry (one of the "nameless" pirates) who is pulling guard duty at the dock (Area A). The five "name" pirates found in Area B, all humans of lawful evil alignment, are:

Jans Harper, 3rd level fighter (AC 9, HP 25); armed with long sword and dagger, also proficient with spear and club.

Larkin Fletcher, 3rd level fighter (AC 7, HP 23); armed with long sword and dagger, also proficient with spear.

Klass Goffe, 2nd level fighter (AC 8, HP 19); armed with long sword and dagger.

Dongal Maskill, 2nd level fighter (AC 10, HP 14); armed with short sword and dagger.

Gorlon Dundore, 2nd level fighter (AC 10, HP 15); armed with short sword and dagger.

All four of the "nameless" pirates in the complex are armed with daggers. In addition, the pirate on sentry duty has a short sword at his side, and each of the other three pirates can also use a short sword if one is available.

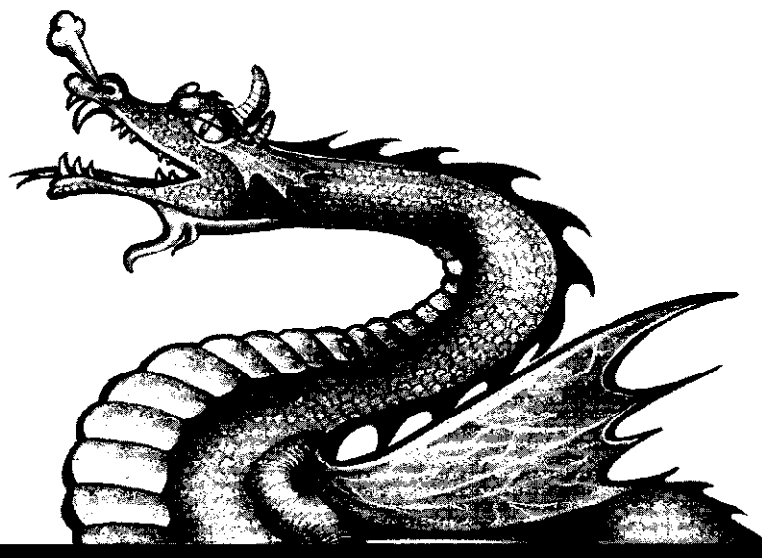
The barracks area doubles as a dining room and sleeping chamber. It contains several hammocks hung from posts and an equal number of small, unlocked chests that contain clothing and personal items. Crates and barrels of foodstuffs are stacked along the northern wall of the chamber; nearby are a fire pit, a large square table for preparing food, other kitchen-type furnishings and equipment, and a long, low table on which meals are served. Scattered about the room are several "community property" weapons, predominantly daggers and short swords, which can be snatched up at a moment's notice by anyone who finds himself in need of one.

Unless intruders use some form of magic that makes them undetectable, it will be virtually impossible to invade the barracks and surprise everyone in it. If the party advances into this room from Area A and a conflict ensues, the pirates will

try to get past the party and escape into Area A (since they don't have keys to get through any of the doors leading out of the barracks). If the party enters the complex from the southern end (through Area G) and Krell is alerted to the intrusion, the captain will move into Area B, locking the door behind him, and will then unlock the door leading to Area C (a dark, empty chamber) and the door in the lower right-hand corner of the map. This latter door blocks off an ascending tunnel that leads out of the subterranean complex. The pirates will not use this door, but will try to make it look as though they have. When his men are organized (which will take two rounds), Krell will lead them into Area A, and they will all try to escape by using the barge tied to the pier. The pirates' small merchant ship is anchored just outside the opening to this waterway. As long as the number of pirates who escape is sufficient to get the small ship under way (at least two men to work the sails, four to man the oars), they will be able to leave the complex.

The sentry in Area A will certainly be alerted if characters attempt a direct assault on the complex through the wide waterway leading east. If this occurs, the guard will sound an alarm; two rounds later, the dock area will fill up with angry pirates from Area B. Unless the party has obviously superior power, the pirates will make a determined defensive stand at this location. Crates, barrels, and boxes of stolen merchandise are stacked in many places around the open warehouse area, offering substantial cover and lots of hiding places for the defenders. If the pirates are getting the worst of the fight, or it looks like they won't be able to hold off the adventurers' assault, they will retreat back into Area B and entrench themselves. As a last resort only, they will try to open or break down the door leading to the tunnel and head outside.

Area G is "no man's land" for everyone except Latoner, the magic-user. This is the lair of the dragon turtle. On a narrow patch of land adjoining the small but deep lagoon there is a disorderly pile of coins with a few gems and bits of jewelry thrown in (just for "color"). This is the treasure that Latoner has given to the dragon turtle as part of their bargain; it is roughly equivalent to the value of the monetary treasure in Area F. The monster itself lurks in the depths of the lagoon, generally surfacing only on a signal from Latoner. At the bottom of the lagoon is another pile of treasure, composed of all the valuables that the dragon turtle acquired before getting involved with the pirates. In all probability, this treasure pile will not be discovered by the party (unless they somehow manage to kill or disable the dragon turtle). If it becomes necessary to know the contents of the underwater treasure pile, the DM should generate it according to the Monster Manual specifications.



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Language lessons: I

Even Orcish is logical

Make the system fit the speakers

by Clyde Heaton

Players of fantasy role-playing games are spectators and critics of a complex, varied art form. This medium covers a range of experience equal to that of music and poetry, which soars from simple rhyme and melody to the rarefied heights of symphony and epic opera. So, too, does game design range from simple to complex.

The simplest form is that of the free-standing dungeon, where the players enter the demesne of a mad wizard, who has supposedly created the dungeon for his own amusement. The characters come from nowhere. There is never a reference to the wider world outside the maze of tunnels, no reason for the strange menagerie of monsters and men found in the rambling warren, and the players find no hints of anything more.

Eventually, usually under the goading of players' inquiring minds and free imaginations, the referee either loses interest in an increasingly complex hobby or gets lost himself in what has become an art form: the design of a fantasy world. If the players don't ask questions about the world, the designer's own mind will ask them — and there are always answers to be had:

"You said a wizard built this place because he was mad. What made him insane?"

"The madness was a curse from the gods."

"What did he do to get the gods down on him?"

"Uh . . . he helped overthrow a king that had the support of the local religion."

"What kingdom is this? Can we go there?"

And so it goes, until you find yourself as the creator of your very own world, dropping hints of great treasures and glory to be won.

Imagine a scenario wherein the players find an inscription on a tomb wall in an unknown language. They copy it down and go looking for someone to translate it for them. A magician can make sense out of some of it, enough to figure out what

language it is. Since a player character has been told in a dream that this inscription may mean life or death to a member of the party, off the party goes in search of a needed sage, having many adventures on the way.

In most cases, the life-or-death inscription is never described except as a set of probabilities on dice, or it is given in a sort of doubletalk, as "razzamatazz da goobleloop," which the players instantly recognize as a simple symbol for a real phrase, with no meaning of its own. Too much of this sort of thing, and the game becomes dry.

The masters of literature have often found solutions to the puzzle by actually designing a language. J. R. R. Tolkien's Elvish is famous, spiced with a bit of Dwarvish; Frank Herbert's *Dune* series is full of fragments of language, from the battle language of the Atréides to bits of Fremen and Tleilaxu tongues. Each of these fragments strikes a note of realism because it reflects a real vocabulary and syntax, however incomplete it is. These languages are not simple substitutions of nonsense words in English grammar, like a ten-year-old's "secret language" he shares with his friends; they represent real thought about the characters speaking the lines, and real rules about how languages work. It's not hard to learn: This article will show you how, and we'll design a language for orcs along the way.

Languages have logic

Every language has its internal logic, although folk wisdom holds otherwise. Some people are fond of saying that English (or whatever language they are being forced to study) is illogical, unpredictable, and ridiculous. Deep down, they know this is not true, for they learned the basic logic of their native tongue as they learned to talk, without any formal lessons. They can hear a sentence made up entirely of unknown words, but if these words conform to the patterns of English they will instantly recognize certain facts.

The commonly quoted example of this is the meaningless phrase, "The gostak

distims the doshes." Without knowing exactly what one is, you automatically know that a *gostak* is a being or an object capable of performing some kind of action. This *gostak distims*; that is, performs an unknown action (defined as an action by the internal logic of the language), and it *distims doshes* (whatever they are), the object of the action of "distimming." The only time this internal logic is upset is when two languages come into conflict by being used at the same time and place, and therefore are often combined. Eventually the two tongues will become the same language, having its own slightly different logic within a slightly different framework.

Before a language can be designed, you have to decide a few things about the people or creatures who will speak it. First, what kind of vocal apparatus do these creatures have to work with? Obviously, a creature with no teeth, only a horny bill, will not use the same sounds that a beast with fangs will, and neither will use the phonemes of human language.

Second, what kind of culture and world view do these people live in and with? In his science-fiction novel *The Languages of Pao*, Jack Vance suggests that languages shape cultures. In his fictional example, he uses language changes to shape changes in a society. This may be so, but if a language grows up within a culture, the reverse will probably be more often true. The sound and grammar of a language will almost certainly reflect the cultural environment in which it is used.

For example, it may be no coincidence that ancient Rome, an aggressive, expansionist society, spoke Latin by putting the verb first. The position of the word denoting and describing action shows clearly the importance the Romans placed on action. The English-speaking world puts the subject of a sentence, a noun, in the leadoff position in the simplest sentences. This may reflect, as it seems to do, an acquisitive, possession-oriented culture. To design a language for part of an AD&D™ world, you don't need a complete

analysis; knowing the general alignment and cultural habits of the society will cover the situation.

The third fundamental decision involves the question of use. What do these people *do* with this language? Is it spoken primarily by courtiers (such as High German) or by peasants and merchants (such as Low German)? To you, as the game-world designer, this decision is important because it will limit the kind of vocabulary you will develop. The Atreides' battle language in *Dune* didn't need words for flowers or birds, for philosophy or religion, but it had a driving need for military intelligence and combat terms. In the same manner, you will design only the part of a greater language that you require, adding the rest only if you find some part of it useful.

Common Orcish

The language we are going to develop is Common Orcish, so named because it is common to all the orc tribes in a given area. Common Orcish is a well-developed military language, having evolved to meet the needs of intertribal cooperation. Generally, the only reason tribes will work together is for warlike purposes, such as civil war or a major raid into civilized territory. The orcs of Stony Ledge don't want to discuss the fine points of metal work with the Black Dog orcs, but they do need to know how, why, and

when they are all going to launch a joint charge against the kobolds. Hence, the language is full of concepts relating to warfare and military construction.

Orcs are always shown with protruding fangs, a physical feature which definitely limits the sounds they can make. Many subtle sounds that require a completely closed mouth to produce will be unknown to orcs, because their fangs literally get in the way. Their harsh, savage nature will further lead orcs to use mostly harsh, guttural sounds. Therefore, the only consonant sounds in the language are D, G, J, K, N, R, T, and Z. The vowel sounds are A (as in *at*), E (as in *egg*), and O (as in *off*).

(Remember, the process of gaming language design is arbitrary. You are the designer and authority. It is only necessary that the component parts not be inconsistent. If, by chance, a slight inconsistency does creep in, blame it on inter-language contamination, which happens in all but completely closed societies.)

If we were designing a tongue for a less hostile race, such as elves, we might discard this series of consonants completely in favor of softer sounds such as F, H, TH, L and S.

Setting up syllables

Once the basic sounds of the language are chosen, set up a table to help pick syllables, using a matrix something like the

one given here, or a similar design of your own creation:

1st Consonant	Vowel	2nd Consonant
(null)	a	(null)
d	e	d
	o	g
g		j
k		k
n		n
r		r
t		t
Z		Z

Now, by picking "one from column A, one from column B, and one from column C," Chinese restaurant style, you can build dozens of suitably harsh syllables (243, to be precise), each one similar in form and sound to the others, such as *dug*, *jeg*, *zor*, *ot*, and *tet*.

These syllables may be used as complete words, by themselves, or may be put together into longer words. In doing this, take into account the intelligence of the speakers. In most cases, only races of relatively high intelligence would use a lot of polysyllabic words. I doubt seriously if orcs would use more than two syllables to a word, especially in their common, intertribal language. Even so, the consonants and vowels from the above list can be combined into more than 40,000 two-syllable words. Common Orcish need not be a limited tongue.

When building a vocabulary, if you

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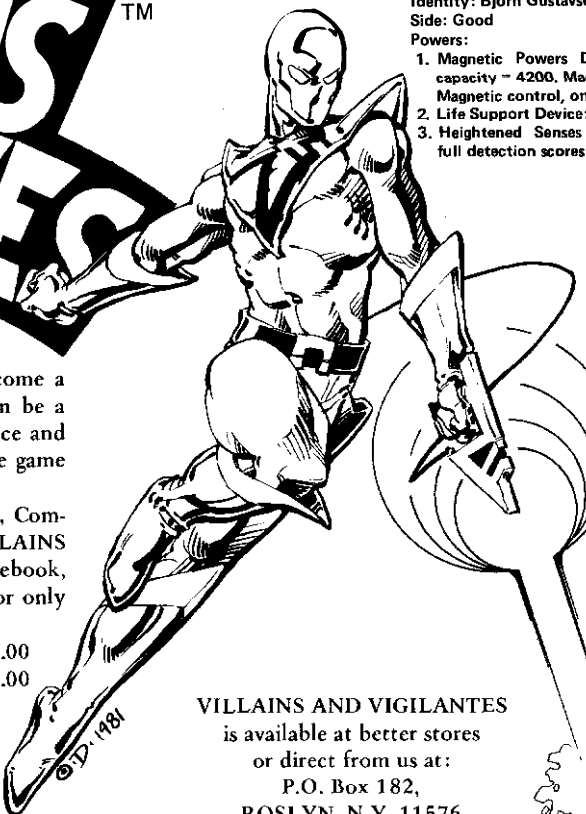
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choose you may have similarities between some words, to show a common root; for example, in Old Dwarvish (described in DRAGON™ issue #66) the verb *ak* (to cut) was reflected in the nouns *bak* (cutter) and *zak* (axe). Such relationships and roots are very easy to develop when designing a language, since one word will suggest another, such as with *sleep*, *bed* and *blanket*.

However, root-word organization would not be very prevalent in Common Orcish. Orcs are not very creative, are lawful, and may have evolved from a pack-running, hunting carnivore. I stipulate that their words may have developed originally from hunting calls and are therefore arbitrary in nature, at least in the common language. New words are either borrowed from other languages or imposed by a leader strong enough to have his way. Once used by enough orcs, a word gains the weight of custom and is accepted by the lawful-minded populace.

Another thing to consider is whether certain parts of speech have a different word form, making them immediately recognizable for what they are. This may be done by reserving certain syllables for special uses, or by the use of suffixes and prefixes. In Common Orcish, we will record a tendency for verbs to be of one three-letter syllable, and for connectors such as *and*, *or*, *but*, *from*, etc., to be of one two-letter syllable. Plurals will be denoted by adding the suffix *-a* to a word, and a female version of a noun will be given an *-o* suffix. All other words, whether nouns or adverbs and adjectives, will be of similar structure, probably of two syllables.

In any language, there must be a way to denote possession and tense. In High Elvish (see the article on that topic elsewhere in this section), a relatively more sophisticated language, possession and tense are both shown by using an entirely different word to denote the difference between my possession and yours, as well as a difference between an object of today and the same object tomorrow. In Old Dwarvish, the same requirement is met by a short modifying syllable preceding the word. In Orcish, we will use a simple modifier in the same manner as an adverb.

From syllables to sentences

Next, we must determine simple sentence structure, taking into account the culture and attributes of the race and culture using the language. When Old Dwarvish was designed, I considered the reputation dwarves have of being materialists, always seeking to amass treasures of gold and finely worked materials. Apparently, physical objects are of most importance to them, and this must be reflected in their language, with the subject and object of a sentence taking the prominent position.

In the case of High Elvish, I tried to

imagine what would be of paramount importance to a nearly immortal people. I decided that my personal view of elves was that of a race of artists, more concerned with appearance and attitude than with actual objects and actions. Hence, the mood of a statement takes grammatical precedence over the subject, verb, and object. Orcs are not as highly developed as either dwarves or elves, however, so we will use the simple egocentric grammar of subject, verb and object, in that order. Words modifying another word will follow it.

For example, the English sentence *The chief of the orcs attacked the big fort by the wide river* would be organized in Common Orcish as *Chief orcs/attack past/fort big by river wide*.

The simple concept is Chief attack fort. The subject, *chief*, is modified by *orcs*; the verb, *attack*, is put into past tense by an adverb; and the object, *fort*, is modified by the adjective *big* and the prepositional phrase *by river wide*.

We now have the bare skeletal structure of a language. If all you need for gaming purposes are a few fragments of speech or tomb inscriptions, you really don't need to develop a full vocabulary; just follow these rules of construction and the language (or what there is of it) will sound and look consistent.

However, if you want to develop a vocabulary for orcs, let's continue. First, decide what concepts are required by the speakers of the tongue. As we decided earlier, Common Orcish is basically a military language to allow cooperation between tribes in time of war. The orcs will need to talk about combat (both individual and group), bivouac situations, sieges, construction, and possibly hunting. Incorporating these concepts will dictate the vocabulary of the language.

Start by making a list of the names of every object, person, direction, etc., that an orc may have to talk about when in any of these situations, and assign an Orcish word to each, according to word structure as decided earlier; go back to the three-column syllable table. Remember, nouns are usually of two syllables.

As you begin this list, keep it in alphabetical order. I find that 3"×5" index cards are the easiest method; by keeping files for both English and the language I'm working on, I avoid any repetition.

When the noun list is as complete as you want it to be, look it over and add any adjectives that an orc might need to apply to any of these. For instance, *river* might require *wide* and *fast*; *sword* might need the modifier *sharp*. In the case of Common Orcish, the adjectives have the same syllabic form as nouns.

Now, decide what verbs an orc would need, such as *cut* to go with *sword* and *swim* with *river*. These verbs are usually of one three-letter syllable, in the case of Orcish. File these verbs in order with the

nouns and adjectives, then select adverbs to modify the verbs, such as *hard* to modify *cut*. Adverbs have the same form as nouns and adjectives.

Now, we need one more type of word to give the language the flexibility it needs: connectors, such as conjunctions (*and*, *or*, *if*, etc.) and prepositions (*from*, *for*, and *to*). These we have already decided will be of one syllable of two letters only, so assign Orcish translations to these words and file them.

Using this process, I worked out the following English-to-Orcish vocabulary list:

And (conj.)	ak
Animal (n.)	ragdar
Armor (n.)	gandan
Army/warband (n.)	joktar
At (prep.)	ag
Attack (v.)	dak
Attack (n.)	dakzok
Axe (n.)	ekdod
Bed (n.)	derdar
Big/great (adj.)	jajgak
Blanket (n.)	derdak
Break (v.)	dod
Brick (n.)	kettak
Bright (adj.)	gatad
Burn (v.)	det
But (conj.)	ek
Carry (v.)	dog
Charge (v.)	kot
Chest (n.)	zekar
City/town (n.)	ejtag
Climb (v.)	teg
Cloak (n.)	durad
Close/shut (v.)	gen
Cold (adj.)	etar
Come (v.)	zen
Coming (n.)	zenak
Company (n.)	roktor
Cut (v.)	gek
Dagger/knife (n.)	jortak
Danger (n.)	nartag
Dark (adj.)	gerdak
Day (n.)	zandag
Deer (n.)	rorad
Defend (v.)	gag
Die (n.)	ot
Dig (v.)	gar
Dog (n.)	gojak
Down (adj./adv.)	zegor
Drink (v.)	az
Drink (n.)	azlar
Dwarf (n.)	kez
East (n.)	gokzek
Eat (v.)	gad
Elf (n.)	rekar
Enemy (n.)	rargad
Far (adj./adv.)	gotrak
Fast (adj./adv.)	tortan
Fight (v.)	dek
Fire (n.)	detad
Flank (n.)	togtad
Food (n.)	gadduj
For (prep.)	oj
Formation (n.)	kejar
Front (n.)	regton
Future (adv.)	gakdar
Gate (n.)	netdag

Get/fetch (v.)doj
 Go (v.)zor
 Going (n.)zorak
 Guard (v.)dej
 Guard (n.)dejad
 Hammer (n.)gettok
 Hard (adj./adv.)gegor
 He (n.)darag
 Helmet (n.)ozrad
 Horse (n.)gozak
 Hot (adj.)dendad
 How (adv./conj.)or
 Hunt (v.)jar
 Hunt (n.)jarag
 Human (n.)rannor
 Hunter (n.)jardak
 I, me (n.)dagad
 If (conj.)eg
 In (prep.)aj
 Is/am/to be (v.)tot
 Kill (v.)dez
 Lead (v.)jed
 Leader/officer (n.)jeddar
 Left (n.)rakan
 Like/as (prep.)ad
 Listen/hear (v.)dun
 Loose (adj.)(konad)
 Make/build/erect (v.)tek
 Many (adj.)zejdad
 March (v.)dok
 Move (v.)tor
 Near (adj.)gotrag
 Night (n.)zakdag
 No/negative (adv.)zozgat
 North (n.)todreg
 Obey (v.)jeg
 Of/from (prep.)og
 Open (v.)nez
 Or (conj.)ok
 Orc (n.)darak
 Order (v.)jen
 Order (n.)jendad
 Parry (v.)gaj
 Past (adv.)dotad
 Rear (n.)rontak
 Retreat (v.)noj
 Ride (v.)rej
 Right (n.)tokan
 Run (v.)raz
 Saddle (n.)orgad
 Safe/safety (adj./n.)noztan
 scout (v.)gon
 Scout (n.)gontad
 Sergeant (n.)jegdan
 Shield (n.)gandal
 Shoot (v.)jez
 Shut/close (v.)rot
 Sleep (v.)der
 Slow (adv.)tontag
 Soft (adj.)gezan
 South (n.)takren
 Squad (n.)jok
 Stand (v.)nak
 Steal (v.)dez
 Stone (n.)kordad
 Stop/halt (v.)gej
 Sword (n.)dotak
 Take (v.)don
 Thief (n.)deztej
 Threaten (v.)na r
 Thrust (v.)zok
 Tight (adj.)kozad

To (prep.)od
 Treasure/wealth (n.)doztat
 Tree (n.)tadnen
 Up (adv./prep.)tegat
 Wall (n.)kokad
 Water (n.)dozar
 West (n.)gogker
 What (n./adj.)ar
 When (adv./conj.)an
 Where (adv./conj.)er
 Who/whom (n.)on
 Why (adv./conj.)en
 Wine (n.)tagrat
 With (prep.)ed
 Wood (n.)dortod
 Yes/affirmative (adv.)tojat
 You (n.)dakar

The parts of speech abbreviated after each English entry are expressed generally in terms of how the Orcish language uses these words and concepts. For simplicity (because that's the way orcs would instinctively do it), there is no distinction drawn between nouns and pronouns. Although a given word may be characterized either as an adjective or an adverb because of its principal usage in English, it can be both parts of speech in the Orcish sentence structure, where the same words are used to modify both nouns and verbs.

Words can be easily added to this list as they are required by the game situation. Words on the list can influence the creation of other related words (as with the Orcish words for "hunt" and "hunter"). But don't overdo this; as mentioned earlier, Common Orcish wouldn't be terribly sophisticated in this respect. Reserve the "related word" privilege for concepts and objects that are near and dear to orkish mentality, such as *az/aztar*, *dej/dejad*, *jar/jardak*, and *gon/gontad*, to name a few from the list above. As long as you follow the language's construction and grammatical rules — and avoid outright duplication of words by keeping organized lists — the language can be dealt with and used by players. It can become a major factor in the events of your campaign; for instance, being able to recognize Common Orcish from previous contacts with the language may provide an important clue to player characters in a perilous situation.

Translation, direct and indirect

To translate an English sentence into Common Orcish vocabulary and grammar, reorganize the sentence in English first. The sentence *The officer ordered us to climb the wall* has officer as its subject, ordered as the verb, and us as the object of the verb. The basic Orcish sentence would be *officer order me*. The subject is not modified, but the verb is modified by the phrase *(to) climb the wall* and by being placed in past tense by the modifier *dotad*. The object is modified by adding the plural suffix, *-a*.

The complete rearranged sentence

reads: *Officer order (past) to climb wall us*. A direct translation of this sentence into Common Orcish yields: *Jeddar jen dotad teg kokad dagada*.

If players ever get too familiar with the language, it may be time to sprinkle your Common Orcish vocabulary with some "indirect translations," otherwise known as dialects. As the use of a language spreads (and any language worthy of the name "common" would certainly be widespread), differences arise in the way various tribes pronounce various words. For example, one tribe may pronounce the harsh *T* more softly, so that it would be written *TH*; the *K* could become a breathy *KH* at the end of a word only.

Much of the Portuguese language is similar to Spanish, with the words shortened, some of the vowels left out. Perhaps one tribe of orcs speaks this way, so that *gogker* (west) becomes *go'k'r*, and *tagrat* (wine) is *t'grat*; in an adventure, this could be a source of friction between tribes that adventurers could exploit.

How will you make the most and the best use of the languages you design? That's impossible to predict; there are at least as many ways to use a language as there are words in the language itself. And no matter how much and how well you use authentic languages, one thing is for sure: Player characters in your world will use the languages you designed in ways that you didn't even dream of. 

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Language lessons: II

All games need names

But don't make a game out of naming!

by Katharine Kerr

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"You're in the Temple of Florwaks in Shinebright City," says the gamemaster. "You see the Priestess Oolala and her barbarian bodyguard, Upchuk, who serves the mighty god, uh, the god . . . how do you say Smkznrf, anyway?"

Does any of that sound familiar? All too often, role-playing games, to say nothing of the lower reaches of fantasy and science-fiction writing, are marred by the use of personal and place names ranging from the merely silly to the utterly incomprehensible. Even some popular published gaming campaigns are filled with banal random names.

Al though most fantasy role-playing systems have elaborate rules for determining which game-world languages a player may know, when we come right down to it, all their manifold tongues sound alike — a species of that truly common language, Gamer's Exotica. It's a pity, because the proper use of strange-sounding names adds the feeling of a different reality that's part of the pleasure of role-playing, whether your game-world lies on a futuristic planet or in a past that never was.

The problem seems to be that many gamers forget that names are part of a language, and that each language has a consistent character that sets it apart from other languages. By and large, most role-playing games are created and played by speakers of English, and American English at that. For centuries, English has been a linguistic melting pot, drawing roots and words from many other tongues and in the process losing any recognizable purity of tone and sound, such as one finds in, for example, Chinese or German.

In America, our cross-cultural society produces names drawn from all over the world. I've known a Kevin Woo and a Heidi Sanchez, for instance — ethnic combinations of names that would be unthinkable elsewhere, especially in a primitive, isolated society such as those in

most FRP games. As a result, when gamers create names, they start with the assumption that anything goes, just as it does in American English. Sometimes, in a desperate attempt to sound exotic, they fall back on handfuls of consonants; more often, they mix and match from widely different languages, with a healthy dose of just plain English thrown in.

It is possible, however, to have a system that will produce personal and place names in fantastic languages with a minimum of effort and brain-wracking. What the gamemaster needs to do is create the language from which these names will be drawn. Making an entire language would be too time-consuming and not necessary, but you can use a few basic linguistic principles to create a small part of a language in a surprisingly short time. This article explains those basic principles and gives specific pointers on language creation so that it can serve as a starter-kit for those who want to create partial languages for their campaigns. You should bear in mind that the article oversimplifies many a tangled concept, but on the whole, it sticks close to modern linguistic theory. It also uses two standard linguistic conventions by setting off example sounds in slashes (/g/) and example words in *italic* type.

What is a language?

Before we can get down to the step-by-step process of making up a language, it's necessary to define exactly what a language is: a system of sounds, all given arbitrary meanings and organized into patterns that carry meaning and show the relationships between the basic sounds.

The one primary reason that languages exist is to communicate information between individuals. Every existing language fulfills this need in a very precise way, no matter what speakers of other languages may think of it. You must understand that a truly "primitive" language — that is, a system of grunts, short words, and grammarless sentences, like those often attributed to primitive peoples in fantasy fiction — simply never has

been discovered and probably never existed among anyone recognizably human. It's likely that as soon as proto-humans were using tools, they were inventing real languages; the same will hold true for any sentient human or humanoid beings in a fantasy or science-fiction campaign.

Pick the right phonemes

The two basic parts of any language are its sound (what linguists call its phonetics or its phonological inventory) and its structure (grammar and syntax). To invent a language, you must first determine what kind of sounds your new language will have, then decide what kind of grammar it uses. Once these decisions are made, you can generate lists of personal names and words that can be used to build place names. Let us begin then with what most people call sounds but linguists call phonemes (for a reason that will become clear later).

The human mouth and throat, to say nothing of the speech-making parts of an alien anatomy, can produce an enormous variety of sounds, ranging from a Bronx cheer to a soft hiss. Any language that used all or even most of the sounds a creature is capable of making would be too complex to use for general communication. So, every language selects a relatively small number of sounds to use in building words. This selection is what gives a real-world language its basic "music" or character, because out of a simple human liking for what's familiar and orderly, languages tend toward consistency in their choice of phonemes.

Thus, the German language sounds throaty and harsh to many people because of its selection of phonemes pronounced farther back in the mouth than those of English, while Spanish uses the open, soft phonemes that give it its nickname of "the loving tongue." These judgements, of course, are culturally conditioned and emotionally subjective — but as a gamemaster, subjective emotional color is exactly what you want in your invented languages.

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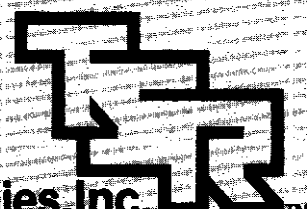
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Your first job, then, is to select basic sounds in an orderly, patterned way to give your new language character. Since the word “sound” is vague, let’s define our special term, phoneme: A phoneme is a speech-sound that must be precisely pronounced to communicate meaning, but this precision is a relative thing.

If a person with a high-pitched voice and one with a baritone voice both say the word *can*, for instance, the pitch of the two words is different, but they would both be understood. Similarly, a British and an American speaker would each pronounce the vowel /a/ in *can* slightly differently — but again, they would be understood. On the other hand, if someone pronounced the word as *con*, the word would not be understood for what it is. Thus, the British and the American /a/ sounds are variants of a single phoneme, while /o/ is a different phoneme.

When inventing your new language, then, remember to define the phonemes closely rather than broadly. For example, just how will the vowel /a/ be pronounced in your language? Don’t assume that it represents all the phonemes that the English letter *a* represents, such as the phonemes in *can*, *cane*, and *aha*, but decide which of these phonemes you want. (The spelling in your new language will be a breeze, unlike English, if you play your cards right.)

The number of phonemes used in human speech is vast, and far from bounded by our English alphabet. Some African languages, for instance, use the phoneme /!/ (no, that exclamation mark is not a mistake), which is pronounced roughly like a bottle-top being popped by an old-fashioned opener. Welsh has the phoneme /ll/, produced by putting the tip of the tongue on the hard palate and hissing. Many languages use the throaty /ch/, as in the Scottish word *loch*. Closer to home, consider all the ways that /r/ may be pronounced: open as in American English, rolled or trilled as in Celtic tongues, swallowed like in British, nasalized as in New England dialect, or even aspirated like the /rh/ in Welsh. Each language selects one method as the “right” way to pronounce /r/, and so can your new language.

Vowels and consonants

Varied as they are, however, all phonemes fall into one of two groups: vowels and consonants. A vowel is a phoneme produced by vibrating the vocal cords and allowing the air to pass out of the mouth or nose or both without obstruction. It’s the vowels, in other words, that actually allow a word to be pronounced by a human or humanoid mouth.

A consonant may be simply defined as anything that isn’t a vowel. Certain consonants, such as /s/ at the beginning of a word, do carry air with them, but this air is insufficient to allow the word to be heard from any distance away without the

following vowel. Say the word *stop* aloud and pay attention to the way that your voice becomes automatically louder when you hit the /o/. Thus we see that a word without vowels, such as the god Smkznrf of our example, is unpronounceable and thus unusable, no matter how dandy it looks on the printed page.

Both vowels and consonants are classified into categories on the basis of certain technicalities. Although you don’t need to learn all these categories to create a partial fantasy language, included below is a table for those who like this sort of thing. The table shows most of the basic

ways of producing consonants, defines those terms, and shows how the English consonants are classified. Notice how few different consonant sounds English uses, in comparison to the number of different sounds the human vocal apparatus can make. For a new language, it would certainly be possible to introduce new consonant sounds — but make sure you and your players can actually pronounce a nasalized dental, for example, if you choose to include one. (Perhaps written as /nt’/, it would be sounded with the tongue pressed against the upper teeth as the air went out your nose.)

TABLE OF CONSONANTS					
	Nasals	stops		Spirants	
		voiced	voiceless	voiced	voiceless
Labial	<i>m</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>wh</i>
Dental				<i>th</i>	<i>th</i>
Labio-dental				<i>v</i>	<i>f</i>
Alveolar	<i>n</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>zh, z, l</i>	<i>sh, s, l</i>
Cacuminal				<i>r</i>	<i>r</i>
Palatal	<i>n</i> (as in onion)			<i>y</i>	<i>y</i>
Velar	<i>ng</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>k</i>		
Uvular	(not used in English; <i>ch</i> in German, as in <i>achtung</i> , is one example)				

Definitions of terms in table:

Nasals are sounds produced with the nasal passage open.

Stops are produced by first closing the lips, then opening them with a puff of breath.

Spirants narrow the lips, but allow air to escape with a feeling of friction.

Voiced consonants are those where the vocal cords continue to vibrate as they are pronounced. (Put your fingers on your throat and say first /s/, then /z/ to feel the difference.) Many consonants have both voiced and voiceless pronunciations.

The technical terms reading down the left column show how the consonant is

produced by the vocal apparatus. *Labials* are produced with the lips. The other types are produced by contact between the tongue and another part of the mouth: *dentals* with the tongue touching the teeth; *labio-dentals* with the tongue and the lower lip; *alveolars* with the tongue touching the gum above the upper teeth; *cacuminals* with the tongue toward the hard palate; *palatals* with the tongue close to the hard palate; *velars* with the tongue on the soft palate; and *uvulars* with the tongue back in the throat. (Say some English consonants, noting how your tongue is positioned, to get a better understanding of these terms.)

Taking the table further

To go beyond the table of consonants given here, write out the English alphabet and make notes of the variety of phonemes each letter represents in actual speech. If you know other languages, think of how those languages would pronounce the various phonemes. Pay attention to any foreign languages spoken in your community and try to distinguish different phonemes. (If you’re unfortunate enough to live in an English-only community, you can ask at the public library for language-learning records.) You may want to incorporate distinctive foreign phonemes into your new language. A little bit of thought will give you a long list of possible phonemes — more than can be incorporated into a single language. Remember, however, that any unusual sounds must be easily

learned and easily spoken during the heat of play.

To make your new language sound properly exotic, it’s not even necessary to have a large number of non-English phonemes. Languages also take on character by the way in which they combine their phonemes and the frequency with which they use certain combinations. English, for example, readily uses consonants in pairs or clusters, such as in the words *strong track star*. Other languages, such as the Polynesian group, rarely use more than a single consonant per vowel, and many syllables consist of a single vowel, as in *Hawai’i* or *Nu’kalofa*. The Welsh language strings together a variety of diphthongs, as in *haearn*, while English avoids such combinations.

What about frequency? Well, if you look over this paragraph you will see

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many uses of /t/, /r/, /e/, /a/, and /n/, but hardly any appearances by /x/, /q/, and /v/, to name three relatively rare letters in English. In other languages, /x/ (for instance) might be a common consonant, even at the beginning of words, while /t/ may be exceptionally rare. When you select phonemes for your new language, give them a different frequency rate than in English; that is, use some of them more and some less than the corresponding English phoneme. The choice of a phoneme pattern is just as important as the choice of the phonemes themselves.

Let's look at an example drawn from my own fantasy campaign, which has two prominent languages: Kazrak and Tribal. Kazrak predominantly selects the consonants represented by /j/, /k/, /z/, /w/, and /r/, with other phonemes added for variety, of course. It also clusters its consonants and isolates vowels from each other with consonants. Tribal, on the other hand, prefers smooth sounds such as /l/, /m/, /d/, and /p/, and rarely pairs, much less clusters, its consonants. If we have two characters, for instance, named Jezro of Haz Strokej and Marador of Rinbabadelan, it's obvious that the first is a Kazrak and the second a man of the Tribes. Any place with a name like Melimbalaban will be in Tribal lands, while Dazjarko must be somewhere in Kazrak territory. More importantly, neither could be in California or Indiana.

Reading, writing, and morphemes

At this point, let's consider the question of how to write down your new language. While it's tempting to make up an exotic alphabet, remember that you have to read these words out in the middle of a game. Since learning how to read a new alphabet takes a lot of time and practice, it's best to start by writing your new language in the alphabet you already know. For non-English phonemes, modify existing letters by such devices as putting a slash through or a dot over them. Make a key, and stick to it, to avoid confusion.

If you assign one and only one phoneme to each letter, spelling will be easy. The horror of English spelling arises from the fact that one letter can represent several phonemes, and some phonemes are represented by several letters. This situation arose because of the "linguistic melting pot" characteristic of English mentioned earlier — a characteristic you can avoid in your new language.

Before you begin making up word lists for your language, you have to decide some basic questions about its structure, because the grammatical structure of a language determines not only the length of its words but the details of the words' form. In spite of their amazing variety on an individual basis, all known human languages can be classified as one of two broad types: *isolating* and *inflectional*. (Modern European languages, including English, are a mixture of the two types, but most other languages are quite recognizably one or the other.) In the primitive and culturally pure worlds of fantasy gaming, languages will also follow one or the other of these patterns. To define these two language types, we need a new term — *morpheme* — to replace the common term, *word*.

Just as a sound can be made up of several phonemes, what are commonly called words can be made up of several morphemes. Consider, for example, the word *unfortunate*. It is made up of *un*, *fortun*, and *ate*, each a set of letters that contributes meaning to the total word: a negation, then the root meaning, and then a suffix showing that the word is an adjective. Although none of these pieces can stand alone as a word in a sentence, each has a definite meaning and thus is a morpheme — the smallest unit of a language that can carry meaning. Some words are single morphemes: *can*, *a*, and *is*, for instance, cannot be subdivided in the manner that *unfortunate* can be.

Isolating-type languages

In an *isolating* language, each morpheme is indivisible in the same way as *can* or *is*. In the purest type of such a tongue, one morpheme equals one word equals one syllable, always remaining distinct, never changing its form or sound, and revealing its grammatical function by its position the sentence alone.

Chinese is a good example of an isolating language. In a very rough transcription, in Chinese *jung* means middle and *gwo* means country; thus the word for China (the Middle Country) is *Junggwo*. The morpheme *hwa* means either "speak" or "speech"; there is absolutely no difference in the form of the morpheme to show whether it's a noun or a verb. The morpheme *bu* is used for negation. Thus, the sentence *Do you speak Chinese?* translates (very roughly) as *Junggwo hwa, hwa bu hwa?* or, more literally, *China speak, you speak not speak?* The listener understands that this sentence is a question from the pattern of the morphemes; that is, the repetition in *hwa bu hwa* is a vital part of the language and carries the information that the sentence is a question.

If you choose an isolating type of structure for your new language, its words will be short — ideally all monosyllables, but even Vietnamese, the purest known isolating language, does not attain that ideal. Such a language will have to have plenty of different phonemes in order to avoid words which sound alike but mean different things. Chinese neatly solves the problem by adding tones to its phonemic system; that is, a word like *hwa* means one thing when pronounced in a high, even tone of voice, but quite another when pronounced emphatically with a falling tone of voice. Unless you already speak Chinese or another tonal language, this system will be very confusing for your game-world language. Since you'll only need a small number of words, you can get by with simply including a lot of phonemes in the language and paying strict attention to make sure that you don't duplicate entire words.

Making up names in an isolating language is a relatively simple matter. Personal names will consist of two or three words placed side by side, such as "Ling Mei" or "Trong Nhu Tang," to give one Chinese and one Vietnamese example. One of these words will be the person's actual name, the other the name of the person's family, or perhaps the village where he or she was born or resides. An attribute can also be added to a personal name — as in "Thor Stormbringer," to give a common-sounding example with the attribute plainly stated in English. It would be much more interesting to have the name be "Tor Mek Al," for instance, and leave it up to the character bearing the name to reveal (if he chooses) how he earned the name Mek Al, or "Bring Storm." Place names can be formed in a similar way. "Big Tree Place" or "Orc Death Rock," suitably translated, could be names of places in a country speaking an isolating tongue.

Inflectional-type languages

Although the inflectional type of language is more complex, you can invent one with a minimum of effort once you

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understand the basic principles. Basically, an inflectional language changes the sound or form of its words to show changes in meaning. There are two ways of making these changes: (1) altering the sound, as in the English *run* and *ran*, *give* and *gave*, and so on, or (2) by adding morphemes, as in *fortunate* and *unfortunate*. When morphemes are added, some of them remain distinct; others have their pronunciation "blurred" and become part of the word. (Always remember that speech is the primary form and writing the secondary form when thinking about these matters.) In the purest type of an inflectional language, every single word in a sentence will change its form to show its precise function and various shades of meaning — but even in Latin, a good example of an inflectional language, some words are invariable. Inflectional languages are further subdivided into two types: *agglutinative* and *fusional*. Since the differences between these two types is confusing at first, let us examine them in more detail.

Latin is a good example of a fusional language. Remember our example of *unfortunate*, a Latin word taken over almost whole into English. To form that word, *un* and *fortun* and *ate* are "fused" into one longer word which has a meaning that goes beyond any one of its parts. In Latin itself, *unfortunate* undergoes another change when it's being used in a

sentence. Consider the examples *Marcus est infortunatus* ("Mark is unfortunate") and *Anna est infortunata* ("Ann is unfortunate"). The end of the word undergoes a further sound-change because Ann is female and Mark is male.

Suppose we want to say that Ann and Mark are both unfortunate; this becomes *Anna et Marcus sunt infortunati*. Notice that the verb changes its form to the plural, just as the end of *infortunatus/a* is altered yet once again. Are these changes at the end of *infortunat-* sound-changes, or are they morphemes added to the root? Scholars argue the point, because in a fusional language it's very hard to say. Fortunately, the answer is irrelevant for our purposes, except as it bears on the distinction between a fusional and an agglutinative tongue.

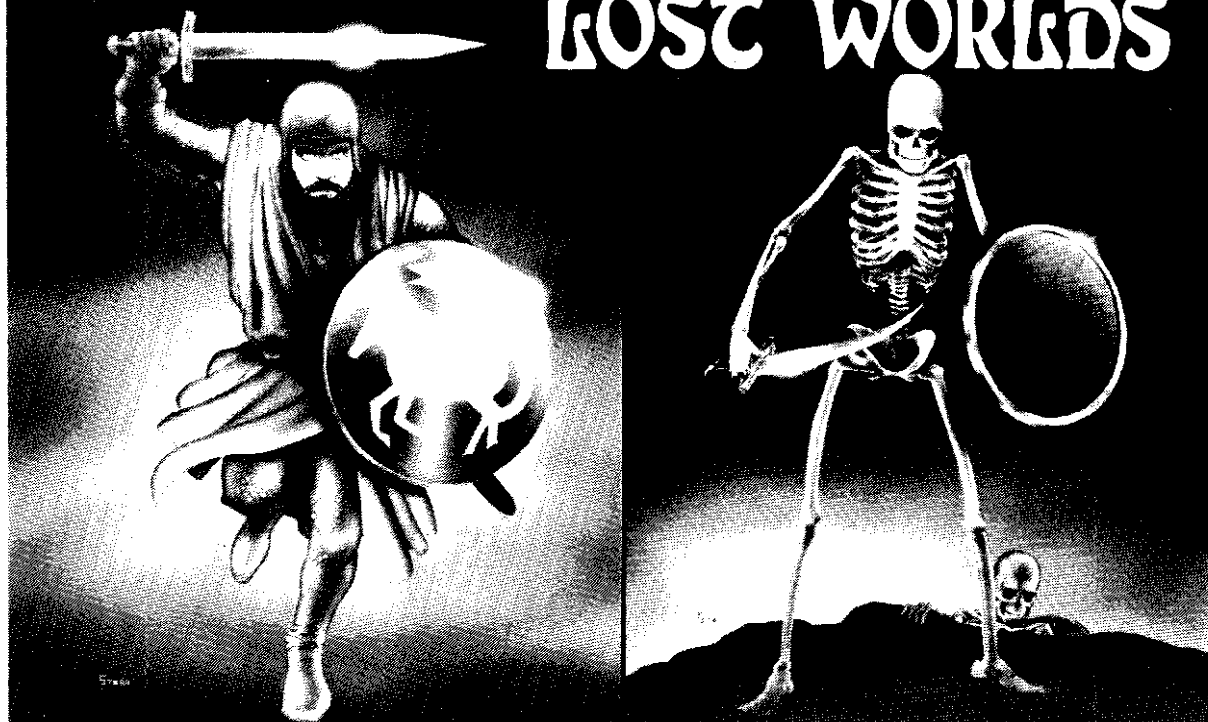
In agglutinative languages, there is no question of sound changes. Each morpheme has a distinct meaning and a distinct character, no matter how many of them are "glued together," or agglutinated. In Turkish, for example, the morpheme for house is *ev*. To form a plural, one adds *ler*, for *evler*. This morpheme is always a sign of the plural. In Latin, that *-i* which pluralizes can also be added to different kinds of words to fulfill other functions: *librum Marci* does not mean *a book* and *several Marcuses*, but *a book belonging to Marcus*. In Turkish, such confusion would never arise.

Agglutinative languages can string together quite a number of morphemes. In Turkish, the morpheme *den* indicates movement away from the root it's attached to, so that *evlerden* means *out of the houses*. In practice, most fusional languages have some agglutinative features and vice versa, but all you need to worry about is the predominant character of your new language. Since an agglutinative language can pack a lot more morphemes into a single word, names in this language will be longer but at the same time more distinctly pronounced.

Any inflectional language has a number of different kinds of morphemes. Some are what we think of as words, pure and simple, referring to events, things, qualities, and so on: *horse*, *ride*, *fast*, *under*. All morphemes of this class are complete, as it were, even in their most stripped-down form. If a Latin speaker, for instance, heard the incomplete word *caball-*, he would think vaguely of a horse, even though he would feel that something was missing without another morpheme on the end. Morphemes of this first type can be called, simply, "complete" morphemes.

A second kind of morpheme can be said to carry meaning by itself, but its meaning is so abstract that it can hardly stand alone. This second kind of morpheme is, for instance, a *-us* for *caball-* to make the word "horse" in the nominative case, or

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the *-i* which would make it *caballi*, the plural. The Turkish morpheme *ler* is similar, in that a Turkish speaker would recognize it as meaning "more than one," but would hardly consider it a word in the way that *ev* is a word. Morphemes in this second category are those that add something to the meaning or qualify the meaning of the root-morpheme to which they are attached; therefore, we may call them "qualifying" morphemes.

A third class of morpheme, which I'll term "relational" morphemes for our purposes here, is exemplified by the phrase *a horse's back*. The *'s* morpheme shows the relationship of *horse* to *back*, namely, that the horse possesses the back. All inflectional languages either add morphemes or use sound changes to show certain basic relationships such as possession.

Inflectional languages have an immense variety of morphemes in both the second and third categories for every part of speech, but you will be pleased to know that you need only a few morphemes for a few kinds of qualifications and relationships to make up names in a created inflectional language. (Anyone who's obsessive enough to want to create an entire inflectional language should read *Theoretical Linguistics* by John Lyons, Oxford University Press, to find out about the months of work that lie ahead.)

If you're inventing an isolating language, you'll need none of these secondary morphemes at all. Isolating languages leave such questions as number, gender, and time totally to the context of the sentence. Thus, *Two horses ran by yesterday* would become *Two horse run by yesterday* if English were an isolating language.

Gender and number

To make up names in your new inflectional language, you will need qualifying morphemes or sound changes for gender and number. Gender is important for personal names for characters. It refers to actual sex only when the noun refers to a living being, but inflectional languages assign genders to all nouns just for linguistic consistency. Often, as in Latin, a language will use three genders (masculine, feminine, and neuter), but at times, as in Welsh, there are only two (masculine and feminine).

A game-world language might well have an unusual way of designating gender. An hermaphroditic race, for instance, might use the two "genders" of living (sexed) and dead (non-sexed); or, a precise language might split up the neuter gender into categories such as active, passive, and abstract. When it comes to number, most languages distinguish only between singular and plural, but others include a dual number for a

pair of things or make distinctions between "one only," "a few," and "a great many."

Let's look at some examples of number and gender changes. In Latin, a common class of personal names ended in *-a* for the feminine gender and *-us* for the masculine. Thus, *Claudius* and *Claudia* are the same name, merely differentiated for a man and a woman. English has some names which follow a similar pattern, as in *Robert* and *Roberta*. An agglutinative language will have morphemes to show gender added onto the core of the name.

It's also possible to use internal sound changes to mark for gender, as in *John* and *Jane*. The plural of words will be shown in similar ways. *Arbor* is one tree in Latin; *arbores* means more than one tree. In English, *we* have one *man*, several *men*. For variety's sake, your new language can have several different morphemes or sound changes that mark for plural and gender. For example, you might decide that men's names always end in *-onno*, *-el*, or *-on*, while women's names end in *-alla*, *-or*, or *-ne*. If you are making up an agglutinative language, remember to make the morphemes consistent with the general sound of the tongue; in a fusional language, the morphemes should be short and colorless.

Possession and location

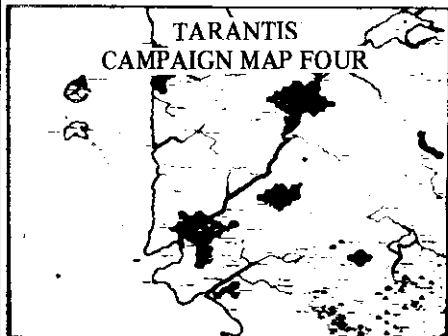
For place names, you will also need morphemes or sound changes to show possession and location. The possessive has an example in English: the *'s* added to nouns, as in *the house's roof*. Although English can also say *the roof of the house*, an inflectional language has no equivalent to *of*. The possessing noun will have to have a sound change or morpheme added to it to show possession. For example, in my Kazrak language, *haz* means "fort," and *stroko* means "sun." The name "The Fort of the Sun" translates as *Haz Strokej*, because *-ej* is the fused morpheme of possession.

The locative, or located-ness, quality is more foreign to English, which represents that idea solely with prepositions and makes no changes in the actual noun. Although most inflectional languages have prepositions, they also feel the need to add a morpheme or change the sound of a noun to show its subordinate status to the sentence. In Latin, for example, *arbor* means "tree," but "under the tree" is *sub arbore*. A word in this locative case can also stand alone; *domus* is "home" in Latin, and *domi* means "at home."

Prefix, suffix, or infix

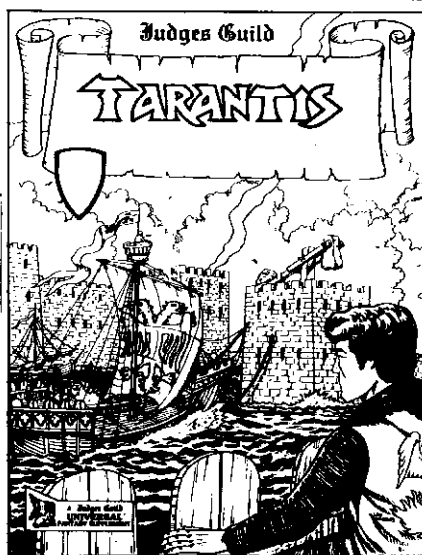
By now you may have noticed that most of these examples so far have added their morphemes at the end of the basic word, but many languages make changes at the beginning and middle as well. A morpheme added at the end of a word is a *suffix*; at the beginning, a *prefix*; and in the middle, an *infix*.

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All three of these forms can be used in the same language for a properly foreign feeling. In your fantasy language, "tree" might be *hendir*, and "trees" *bahendir*. In agglutinative languages, infixes become especially important. For example, in my campaign's Tribal language, the possessive morpheme is *bala*, which comes before the possessing noun and after the object possessed to form names. Since *rin* means "mountain" and *delan* is "moon," the name *Rinbaladelan* means "Mountain of the Moon." Simple sound changes can occur at the beginning or end of words as well as in the middle. In Welsh, for instance, "home" is *cartref*, and "at home" is *gartref* — a locative parallel to the Latin *domus/domi*. You thus have many ways of particularizing the different languages in your campaign.

Now, for the names

Now that you have determined the basic structure of your new language, made up a list of the phonemes for it, and invented the basic grammatical morphemes if it needs any, you are finally ready to make up names and words. Personal names are the easiest, simply because they don't have to mean any particular thing. After all, do you know what *Susan* or *Robert* actually means? Do you care? All you need, then, are words that are the proper length and consistent with the sound of your new language, and a

way of marking them for gender. You can prepare a list of such names and have it on hand for both NPCs and new player characters as the need arises. If a simple one-word personal name is unsatisfactory for some reason, you can add a place name, put into the locative case, to show the character's origins, or make up an attribute, such as "Stormbringer" or "Quicksword," using the principles detailed below for place names.

If you look at maps of various countries, you'll find that many place names fall into one of a few broad groups. One group is a description of the place, such as Salt Lake City or Stratham, which means "the hamlet on the strata (Roman road)." Another group incorporates the name of a god or a saint, as in San Francisco or Lyon, which once was called Lugdenensis, "the land of the god Lugh." Other places have been given the names of secular heroes, like Washington.

Natural features sometimes take their names either from their appearance, like the Black Hills, or from legends about them, like all the places named Arthur's Chair, Arthur's Castle, Arthur's Seat, and so on in Britain.

To make up names, you can use these same groups, make up basic word lists, and draw combinations from them. If your new language is an isolating type, all you have to do is decide whether adjectives come before or after nouns,

then place the chosen words in a row in the proper order. In an inflectional language, you'll have to relate the chosen words with the possessive and locative morphemes if necessary.

How many words is too many?

Doubtless you're wondering how many words you'll need to develop meaningful names. In actual practice, you'll find the number to be surprisingly small; most real-world languages use a relatively small vocabulary for basic, everyday communication — and even fewer words than that for naming.

A good many names can be built with only a hundred words of the right kinds. One group of words necessary for place names are prepositions: *on*, *by*, *on top of*, *below*, and so on. For personal names, you'll need a morpheme for *son of* and *daughter of*. Otherwise, most of the words you need are nouns and adjectives suitable for describing countryside. You can also use the names of the gods in your campaign, and secular heroes if there are any. In a science-fiction game, many places will be named after the person who first discovered or colonized them. In fantasy worlds, the inhabitants are more likely to give their gods credit for a deed as stupendous as founding a town.

At the top of the next page are some examples, to get you started, of words with a high degree of name potential.

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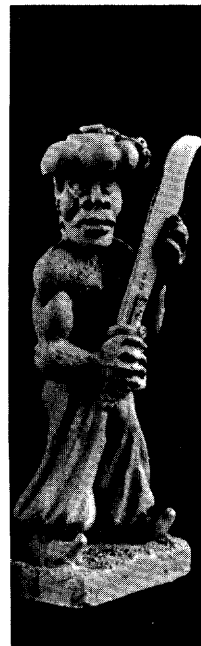
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You can also add some animals and the names of certain trees: bear, horse, oak, dragon, pine, and so forth.

From even this short list, you can generate a tremendous number of names. Just for starters: Black Bear Mountain, Little Fort, Great Blue Mountain, Dragon City, North Peak, High Fort, Holy River, and so on. Translated into your new language, these names will sound not only exotic, but consistent, as if they were thought up by real brains and spoken by real mouths, instead of having their names, and the history those names imply, come from an essentially random choice.

Watch out for weird words

When you're making up vocabulary, be careful to avoid inventing words with unwanted connotations, and stay away from downright puns. Once you're immersed in a brand-new language, it's easy to forget your English "roots" and produce some real howlers if you're not

careful. To use one of the examples from the beginning of this article: Oolala might be a respectable name if pronounced oo-LA-lah, but who's going to say anything other than oo-la-LAH? Upchuk, of course, is reminiscent of regurgitation no matter how you say it. To be reasonably sure of avoiding such mistakes, say each of your invented words and names aloud several times in several different ways, until you're sure it can't be twisted into something you didn't mean to say.

Another trap to avoid is words that sound like commercial products. If you watch television, all that advertising has soaked right into your subconscious mind, and it will reappear at the wrong moment. Take a name like Kolak, for instance, which sounds properly masculine and exotic at first hearing. But think about it for a minute, and it also suggests cola, Kodak, koalas, and to the historically minded, kulaks — none of those being words that have really suitable connotations for a heroic figure.

Of course, it's far from necessary to invent a language for every area in your campaign, particularly if the players are going to pass through it quickly, but I heartily urge every gamemaster to work up the two or three primary languages in his or her world. Such a process adds more than atmosphere. If you refrain from translating place names in foreign

countries, the rules about languages will have some point in the ongoing adventure. Players will have to get translations from NPC's to learn that a place called *Melimbalatanol*, say, means "River of the Monster," rather than getting an easy clue the moment they enter an area.

As player characters gain added proficiency in a language, you can offer more translations more easily, thus giving them the feeling that they are indeed learning something new. The cleverest of characters may even learn to pick apart names and decipher them for themselves. When faced with a string of border forts, all called Haz something-or-other, even a dolt can figure out what *haz* means.

The last ingredient: you

Following all of these rules and guidelines need not restrict your creation of a language in any way, because the one element that distinguishes each language from all others — its individuality — is something that only you can provide. The atmosphere and the conditions of your game-world remain the overriding considerations when inventing consistent and workable names for that world. When we consider what's in a name, we may conclude that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet — but if roses were called plontzes, it's unlikely that they'd figure as prominently as they do in poetry and song. ☞

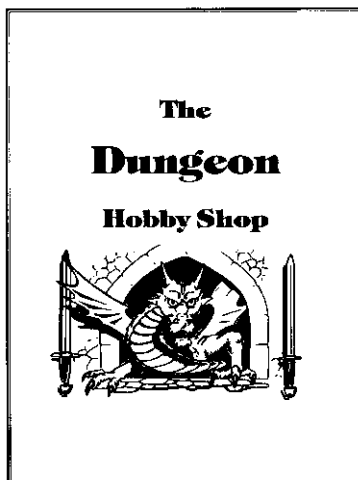
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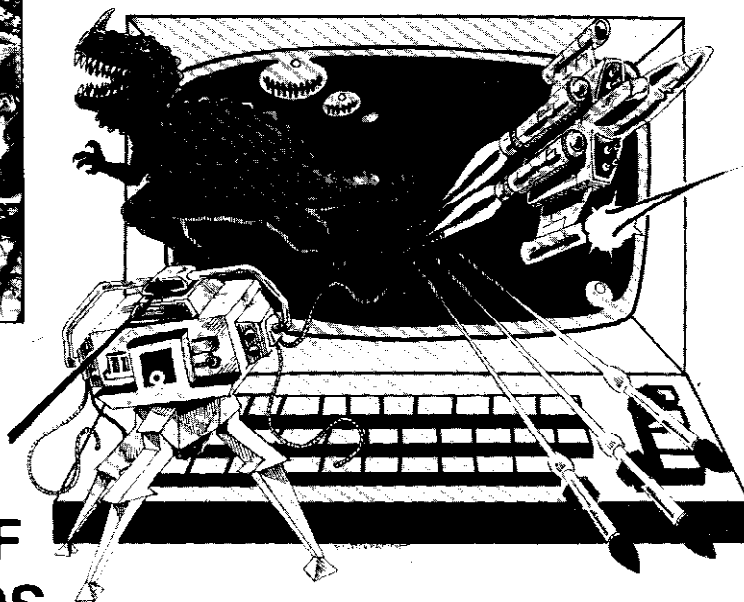
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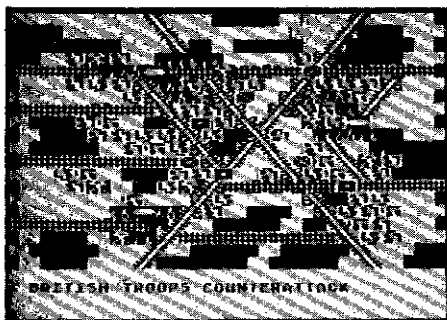
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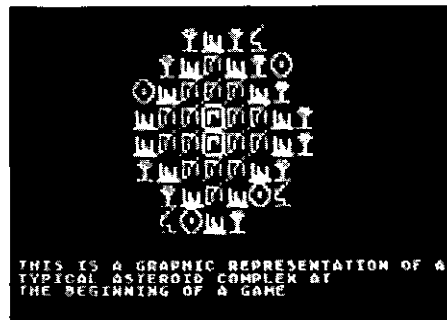
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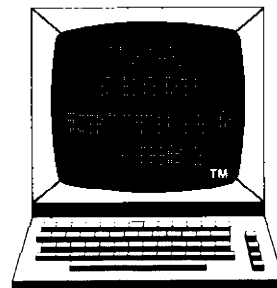
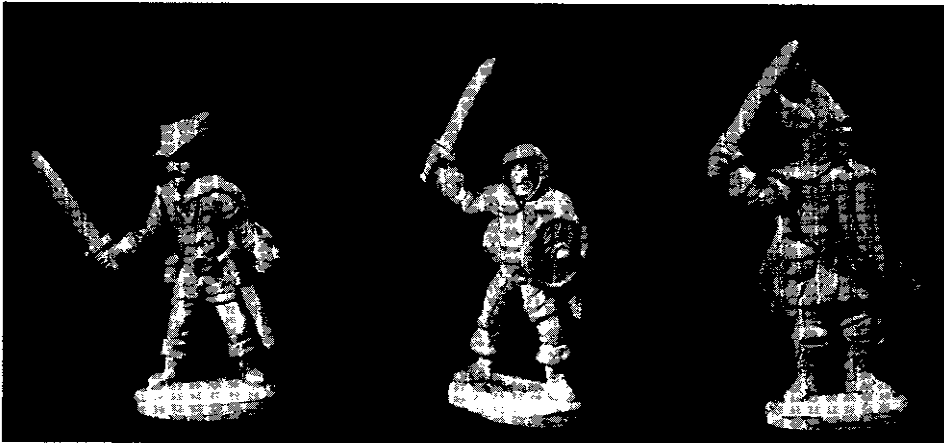


FIGURE FEATURE:



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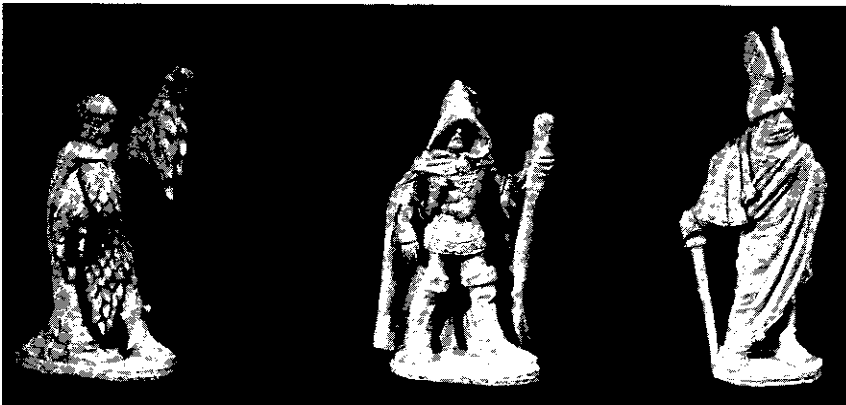
AD&D™ Metal Miniatures Ranger, Druid, and Paladin

TSR Hobbies' new figure sets were scheduled to be on the market by the time this column is printed. The first four sets are "character" miniatures specifically

designed for the AD&D game. When this review was prepared, only prototypes were available for photographing; hence, the druid in the photo is holding a sword and not the scimitar, as in the actual sets. The "protos" showed a lot of detail, especially in the druid's leather banded armor and the ranger's chainmail. Suggested retail price: \$9.95 per set.

*Text by
Kim Eastland*

*Photos by
Scheibe Studio*



RAL PARTHA
5938 Carthage Ct.
Cincinnati OH 45212

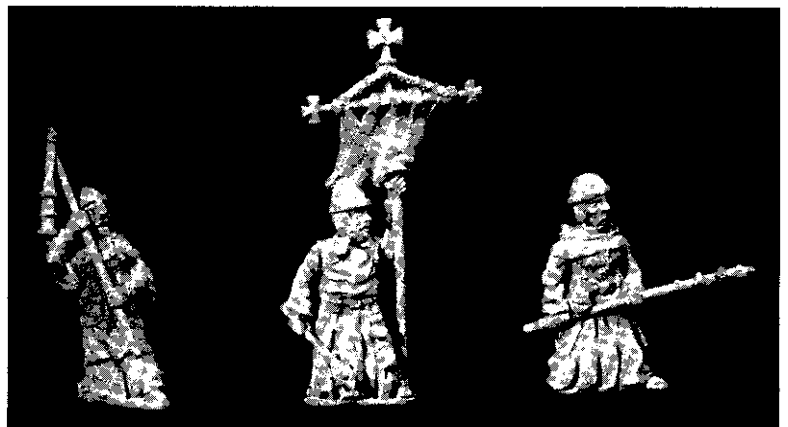
Personalities Line Half-elves (Sculptor: Tom Meier)

One of the problems in portraying fantasy races in metal figures is the limitation of the small scale. With half-elves, for instance, the physical difference between them and humans is almost impossible to see in a figure barely an inch tall. Something else must be incorporated into the sculpture to bring out the difference. Ral Partha's half-elves are made different by an elaborate and extensive fashion change. Note the scalloped robe worn by the spell-caster, and the distinctive cloak that covers all but the upper face of the warrior. This set of four figures is fun to look at, and it offers a real painting challenge. Suggested retail price: \$4.00.

ESSEX MINIATURES
c/o The Reiter
3440 S. Monterey
New Berlin WI 53157

Medieval Feudals Monk in mail shirt with flail, Monk holding large cross, Monk with two-handed mace

Warrior clerics are often difficult to find in 25mm scale. Consequently, these "monks" from Essex of England should be particularly welcomed by American collectors. Of continual note in Essex figures is the interesting weaponry; while historically accurate, these weapons seldom find their way into today's figure lines. Another fine aspect of this line is the avoidance of the "clone" look so often seen these days. As mentioned before in this column, about the only real drawback to the Essex lines is that they are slightly larger than the normal 25mm figure. Suggested retail price: 65¢ each.



HUMANOIDS

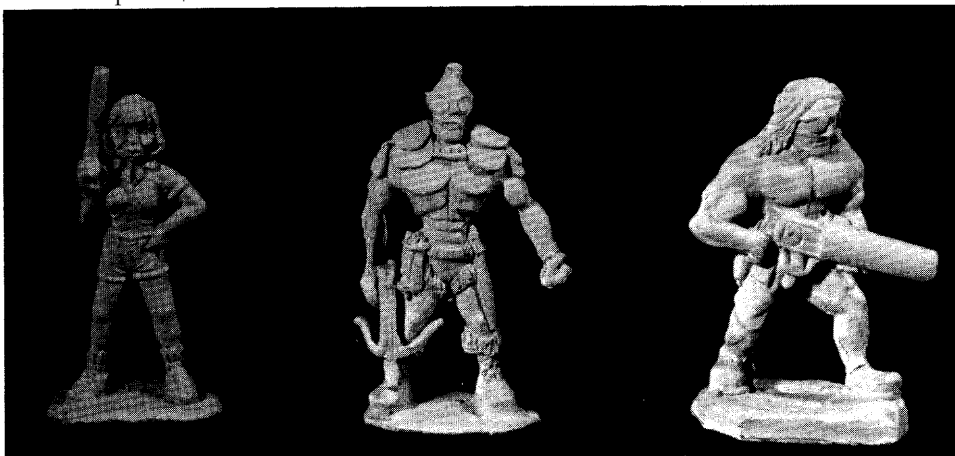
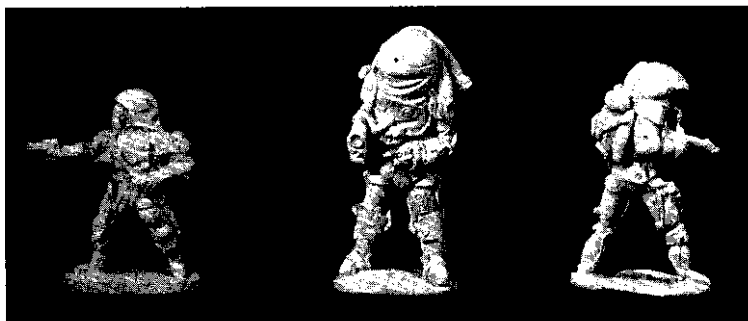
ASGARD MINIATURES

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Baltimore MD 21215

Space Marines

Space trooper captain, Space marine in full armor, Space marine in light space armor

If you have a need for science-fiction warriors in futuristic armor, then Asgard is the place to "hire" them from. The present low supply of good SF figures is boosted by this gorgeous collection of space marines. The line even includes a marine "taking off" — the blast from his backpack rockets is sculpted as part of the figure. Suggested retail price: \$1.00 each.



CASTLE CREATIONS

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Columbus OH 43229

Survival Force figure line

Warriors of the Devastation

(Sculptor: Russ Coddington)

Also in the category of futuristic figures are miniatures designed especially for post-holocaust SF games. This is one of the newest lines in this genre. They are

marketed as accessories for FGU's *Aftermath*™ game, but the humans and "muties" work just as well for other games, too. Pictured here are a female human sporting a laser; a plated, Mohawked mutie with crossbow; and one BIG dude with an eyepatch and a .50 cal. machine gun. Suggested retail price: \$3.00 for a blister pack of 3 figures.



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gaming group some night. All three of these guys look as mean and vicious as a 25mm figure can be — and the Grim Reaper is the grimmest of all. As usual, Citadel gives us figures that really convey a mood — they don't just stand there. Suggested retail price: \$1.10 each.

Companion fills the Glorantha gap

Reviewed by Ken Rolston

The *Runequest Companion* is a supplement for Chaosium's *Runequest*® role-playing game. For the \$8.00 price, the purchaser receives a collection of miscellaneous articles, stories, and adventures, including background history and geography of regions of Glorantha, notes on alien races, fragments from ancient chronicles, and a wry detective story with an imaginative fantasy setting.

Many game companies publish house organs that specialize in offering supplemental material related to their fantasy role playing games. Chaosium used to have such a publication, *Wyrm's Footnotes*, for its games; the April 1982 issue of this magazine was its last.

That magazine was an important source of information for those who play *Runequest*. This game system is set in the fictional world of Glorantha, an original fantasy realm with its own peculiar history, theology, and culture. *Runequest* has become organically identified with this particular fantasy universe — unlike most other FRP rules systems, which do not provided detailed universes.

The only problem with using Glorantha is that the gamesmaster becomes

dependent on published background material provided by Chaosium. *Wyrm's Footnotes* used to be invaluable for background material on Glorantha; it contained articles on the cultures of alien races and primitive human societies, on histories at a local and global scale, on tribal sports and exotic cults. When publication of *Wyrm's Footnotes* ended, a most important source of detail, both epic and trivial, about Glorantha disappeared.

To make up for the demise of *Wyrm's Footnotes*, Chaosium has undertaken a series of intermittently published supplements to *Runequest* and Glorantha — the *Runequest Companions*. They will contain articles, stories, and play-aids which do not fit readily into the company's other RQ supplement packs. Most of the *Runequest* supplements are coherently designed on a single limited theme or geographical region — for example, *Trollpak*, which details the troll race, or *Pavis*, which describes a remote town on a great river. In addition, there was a need for a suitable vehicle for publishing material that does not fall within narrow thematic or geographical bounds.

The *Companion* series fills this need. Edited and maintained according to Chaosium's usual high standards, the

Companion volumes will draw material from a number of sources. First, they will contain material revised and re-edited from out-of-print issues of *Wyrm's Footnotes*. Other articles will be drawn from materials cut from other Chaosium projects because of space limitations. Some of the *Companion* contents will be miscellaneous articles from the Chaosium staff; some will be free-lance submissions.

The offerings of the first *Companion* range from soup to nuts — almost literally. The most substantial contributions are provided by Greg Stafford and Alan LaVergne.

Glorantha is the original creation of Stafford, and he has insisted on preserving its coherence and quality through his authority over the piecemeal publication of supplementary material. Given here is a history and geography of the Holy Country, an important region that has been mentioned in side references for many years; at last we have an official account of it.

The two other major pieces are from LaVergne, the author of Chaosium's excellent solo adventures. One of his solo adventure is in the *Companion*, as well a delightful short story, "The Smell of a Rat." LaVergne's contributions are as solid in their detail as Stafford's are in their broad scope; the minor details of the setting and circumstances of the short story add color and life to the abstract framework of the *Runequest* rules and campaign background materials.

There are a number of other useful and entertaining articles, including a description of illusion Rune magic by Stafford and notes on unicorns and trolls by Sandy Petersen. Other pieces include fragments of correspondence and excerpts from chronicles of historical figures of Glorantha, and the musings of a legendary hero from his own accounts of a forgotten age.

These pieces, individually and as a group, provide the texture and atmosphere that are Glorantha's hallmark; just as in superior literary fantasy, the setting is perhaps the most important "character" of all — and the setting must be compelling and lifelike, or the fantasy will fail.

This publication will probably be of little use to anyone who doesn't play *Runequest* and use Glorantha as his campaign background. Much of the charm and humor of the contents relies on references recognizable only to a *Runequest* gamer. However, it's a little like the popular magazine *Arizona Highways* — you don't have to live in Arizona to appreciate the quality of the magazine. For *Runequest* players, this package is a must-buy, both for its utility and its entertainment value.



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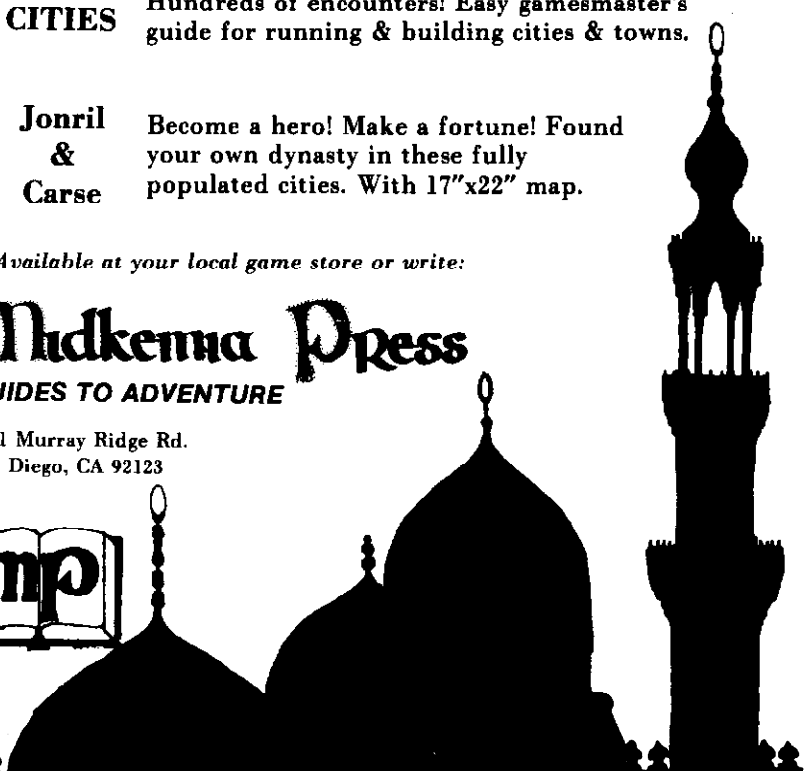
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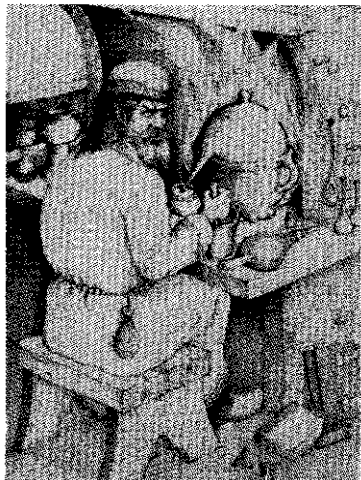
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Visit *The Solomani Rim*

Reviewed by Tony Watson

The Solomani Rim is Supplement 10 in Game Designers' Workshop series of accessories for its *Traveller*® game system. A profusion of play-aids for *Traveller* have been marketed by other companies. Some of them make it possible to expand the scope of a campaign by introducing the referee to another sector of interstellar space — and this is also the purpose of *The Solomani Rim*. But this supplement is noteworthy, because it's only the second work of its type ever produced by the company that created the game. Referees whose campaigns have outgrown *The Spinward Marches* (Supplement 3) can now turn their attention to the other side of the Imperium, where a brand new region awaits the players.

This is the region where Terra can be found — the home planet of the species *Homo sapiens*. The three-page history outline in the front of the 48-page booklet history is full of insights on the Terrans' rise to interstellar importance, starting with the development of the jump drive in the year 2089 and the Terrans' subsequent challenge to the already established Vilani Imperium. The long Interstellar Wars followed, ending in the defeat of the

Vilani and the founding of a Second Imperium, the Rule of Man. All things being transient, the Second Imperium collapsed after 400 years, giving way to an interregnum, the Long Night. From this emerged the Third Imperium, the political setting for current *Traveller* adventures.

The humans of Terra, now known as the Solomani, continued to play an important and aggressive role in interstellar politics after the rise of the Third Imperium, eventually leading to the outbreak of The Solomani Rim War. But the Solomani were defeated, and Terra was occupied after a bitter struggle. The Solomani Movement, however, remains a potent force in the sector covered in this supplement.

This summation of the history outline included is intended to point out how carefully GDW has constructed the "future history" of the planet we occupy. What's written here makes sense and fits well with the pieces of information we've already been given about the inhabitants of Terra. The Solomani Rim has been the site of two of GDW's *Traveller* adventures, *The Argon Gambit* and *Prison Planet*, and it has been used in two GDW

(concluded on page 74)

● ☸ □ ○ ⊙ ⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ☸ RUNEQUEST ☸ ⊗ ⊘ ⊕ ⊖ ⊙ ○ □ ●

PAVIS

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board games, *Imperium* and *Invasion Earth*, which chronicle the Interstellar Wars (in part) and the final battle of the Solomani Rim War, respectively.

The Solomani Rim is a measurable improvement over *The Spinward Marches*. The sixteen subsector maps are considerably more detailed and provide more information. Facts about starport type and bases, the presence of gas giants and water (for refueling purposes), and large populations are included right in the hex on the map; all the pertinent information about a world is available at a glance. Another very useful item is a large map in the centerfold which shows how the subsectors fit together. Each of the subsector maps is accompanied by a listing of the worlds included and their statistics and a brief word about any planets of note in the region. As for those "familiar" planets, GDW has continued its traditional use of place names from fantasy and science-fiction works as the names for worlds in the *Traveller* universe. I spotted Anacreon, Barsoom, Krypton, and Boskone at first glance.

If your *Traveller* campaign has somehow managed to exhaust the opportunities presented in the *Spinward Marches*, or a change of venue just sounds like a good idea, *The Solomani Rim* should prove valuable. The supplement, designed by John Harshman, is available for \$3.98 in game and hobby stores. 

Tales stranger than fantasy

MAZES AND MONSTERS

Rona Jaffe
Dell 0-440-15699-8 \$3.50

HOBGOBLIN

John Coyne
Berkley 0-425-05380-6 \$3.50

Presently on the shelves of newsstands and bookstores are these two mundane novels dealing with players of fantasy role-playing games. Although very different in their approaches and effects, these novels have a lot in common.

Above all else, both writers view fantasy gaming as something that must be *explained*, like teenage alcoholism or joining the Moonies. And *examined*: Just what is it, anyway, that leads intelligent, seemingly normal people into fantasy role-playing? In both works, game players are eventually shown suffering from dissociative schizophrenia (or some similar malady), which the reader is invited to blame on fantasy role-playing.

Another important similarity: Both are by established writers (Coyne has published three previous books, Jaffe ten) who clearly have not done much playing of role-playing games, but nonetheless have decided that they would be an interesting subject for a novel.

Coyne's *Hobgoblin* would generally be considered the lesser of the two works, although he seems to have put more research into his work than Ms. Jaffe displays in her book. Coyne tosses about names of games like *Traveller* and the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game with a spurious facility. He presents an "original" monster (a Brobdingnagian from *Gulliver's Travels*) in a format evidently cribbed from the AD&D™ Monster Manual. And he even tries to depict a gaming session, in which polyhedral dice (which he perpetually calls "pyramidal") display bizarre ranges of numerical values. His research shows to much better advantage in the creatures of Irish myth with which the fictitious game "Hobgoblin" is populated: banshees, spriggans, ghillie dhus, and others even more obscure.

The story concerns high-school student and FRP gamer Scott Gardiner. His mother and he live near Ballycastle, a vast medieval Irish fortress that was transplanted stone by stone to the U.S. decades ago. Scott's father has died (simultaneously with the demise of his 21st level paladin: heavy symbolism), and his mother has had to move near Ballycastle, since she is writing its history. Scott must adjust to a number of major changes at once, including going from BMOC at a prep school to freakish newcomer at a rural high school. When he begins to encounter bugganes in the bushes, his mother and friends (and the reader) must decide whether they are dealing with the visions of an overtaxed mind, pranks by vicious classmates, or something . . . else? The answer, of course, must be found by the reader within the book.

The central characters in Ms. Jaffe's *Mazes and Monsters* are students at a small Ivy League university in eastern Pennsylvania. Kate, Jay Jay, Daniel, and Robbie meet, love, laugh, and play "Mazes and Monsters," until one of them vanishes mysteriously and the less competent media types raise a nationwide hysteria about this ominous and bizarre cult-game. (Does that ring any bells, folks?)

Much of the book is taken up with analyzing why the players are who they are. All of this psychoanalysis, of course, is for the purpose of explaining the deep insecurities, neuroses, or even psychoses that *must* exist within the players of these games. This is a Problem Novel, and the Problem is role-playing games.

Neither of these books is likely to be enlightening to the FRP gamer, except as examples of what reasonably intelligent adult non-players imagine we must be like. In both books, the attainment of mature adulthood is accompanied by the abandonment of role-playing games. Need I say more?

— Reviewed by Mike Lowery

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UK revisited: Games Fair 83

by E. Gary Gygax

Regular readers of this journal will recall that I was Guest of Honor at Games Fair 82, and upon my return from that British convention, a brief report of the event was presented in these pages for your edification and amusement. Wonder of wonders, the same sequence of events occurred, and is occurring, again this year. The status of honored guest at Games Fair 83 was bestowed upon this

Unworthy Writer, and so I was again able to spend about three days at Reading University's Student Union, where the event took place. The convention was quite a success, and everyone there, including myself, of course, had a splendid time of it.

Don Turnbull, Managing Director of TSR (UK), Ltd., informed me that the dormitory accommodations were filled in January. The capacity of the convention site was about 400 gamers, and this was

reached and surpassed on the first day! When I suggested that a larger facility might be in order, the convention staff replied that they preferred to maintain a smallish and closely knit event, and such a desire is quite understandable. Interested game enthusiasts should, however, look for a second convention to be offered by TSR (UK), so that more of the public can be served.

As is also typical of a convention in the United States, the gamers arrived early on Friday, the opening day. Likewise, there were many left in the halls when closing time came. In between, everyone was busy having fun. Since the minimum age for admittance to the Student Union building was 14, the conventioners were a bit older than is typical of a like event in this country, but the ratio of males to females was about the same.

My youngest son, Luke, accompanied me to Games Fair, and his perspective is noteworthy. Luke observed that he could just as well have been at a convention anywhere in the U.S., although he thought all the gamers had accents, and he was called "to-may-toe" in return of his japes. He had a lot of fun.

Don Turnbull was kind enough to act as moderator for my seminar. About a hundred people showed up to listen and to ask questions. The range of questions was broad, and most were on subjects not commonly asked when I do this same sort of thing at GEN CON® conventions, for instance. This I attribute mainly to the desire of UK gamers to get to know more about me personally, and to learn more about TSR. I expect that if I am allowed to give a seminar at Games Fair 84, the questions posed will more closely parallel those asked by American enthusiasts: sticky ones about rules ambiguities and glitches in one game system or the other.

While at Games Fair, I spent most of my time chatting with various gamers. (If the pub hours in the UK were more liberal, I would undoubtedly have spent more time drinking good English ale and less time talking. . . .) In the course of the three days of the convention I was given more than half a dozen amateur magazines to read. Because the demands on my time are such that I am unable to properly review each of them, the whole stack has been passed to a reviewer for DRAGON® magazine. You may expect to see reviews of the lot appear in these pages soon, I think.

Games Fair is quite different from most U.S. conventions, so a comparison isn't actually meaningful. What can be said is that the convention is fun and thoroughly enjoyable. If any American gamer has the opportunity to attend, he or she will not regret the experience.

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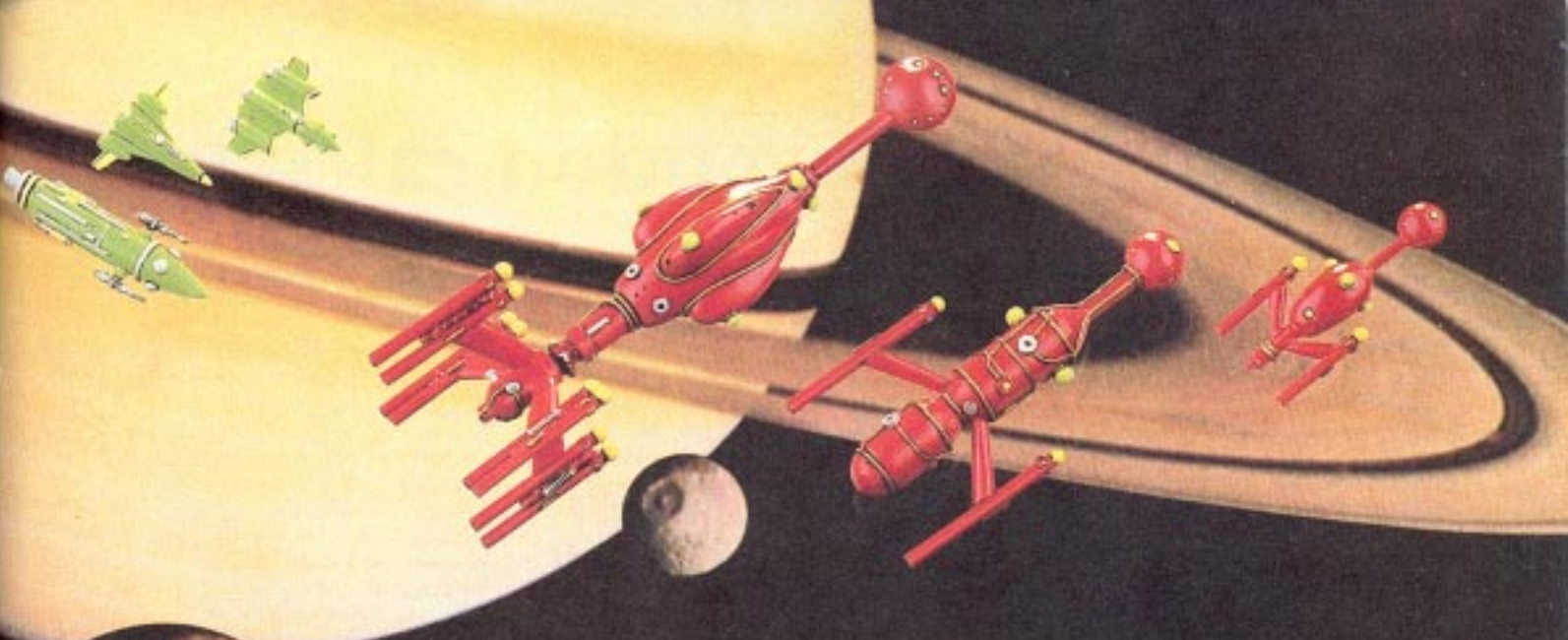
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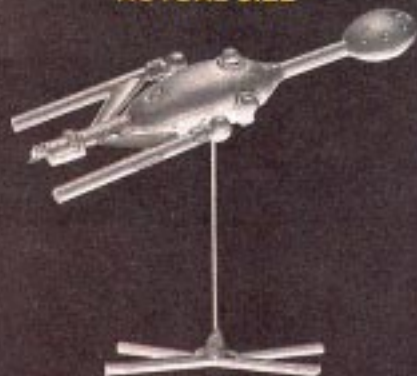




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SF/gaming convention calendar

DRAGONSTEETH I, July 16

A one-day event featuring tournaments in 18 different role-playing and military simulation games. The site will be the A&J Hobby House, 20 Auburn Ave., Utica NY 13501.

STARBORNE CON 5, July 1617

A science-fiction convention, with emphasis on films, sponsored by the Starborne Science Fiction Club. The location is Mull's Motel & Convention Center in Hickory, N.C. The special guest is actress Sarah Douglas (the villainess from *Superman II*). A D&D® tournament is among the scheduled events. For information, write or call Geoffrey Rayle, 806 Chesterfield Cr., Lenoir NC 28645, phone (704)754-4698.

ARCHON 7, July 22-24

A SF and gaming convention (originally scheduled for July 7-9) slated for the Chase Park Plaza Hotel in St. Louis, Mo. Gene Wolfe will be Guest of Honor, and the list of other guests includes Joe R. Haldeman, Ed Bryant, and Wilson "Bob" Tucker. Memberships are \$18; for more information, write to Archon 7, P.O. Box 15852, Overland MO 63 114.

NANCON 88-VI, July 29-31

Another running of the convention that has become a tradition in the Houston area. To be held at Stouffer's Greenway Plaza Hotel in Houston, and featuring a full range of role-playing, board game, and miniatures events, plus more. For further information, send SASE to Nan's Game Headquarters, 118 Briar-grove Center, 6100 Westheimer, Houston TX 77057, or call (713)783-4055.

MEMPHIS FANTASY CON, July 2431

A comics, SF, film, and game convention to be held in Memphis, Tenn. Registration fee is \$10 for all three days or \$5 per day. To obtain more information, write to Memphis Fantasy Con, 665 S. Highland, Memphis TN 38111, or phone (901)452-9376.

OMACON 3, Aug. 5-7

Described by the organizers as a "science fiction, gaming, & pro-space convention," this event will feature Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle among its guests of honor. It will be staged at the Sheraton Inn S.W., 120th and 'L' St., Omaha, Neb. The registration fee is \$13 until July 23, \$15 thereafter; one-day

passes at reduced rates are also available. For details, send SASE to OmaCon 3, 2518 S. 167th St., Omaha NE 68130.

ATLANTA FANTASY FAIR, Aug. 5-7

The Omni Hotel and the adjoining Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta will be the location for this SF/fantasy gathering. Special guests include *Elfquest* creators Wendy & Richard Pini and animator Chuck Jones. Memberships are \$16 until June 30, \$19 thereafter and at the door. For more information, write to Atlanta Fantasy Fair, P.O. Box 566, Marietta GA 30061.

ADVENTURE EXPO '83, Aug. 6

Sponsored by the Adventure Unlimited gaming club and the Wizzards and Warriors Guild of Michigan City, Ind., this one-day gaming event will be held at the National Guard Armory in Michigan City. Admission is \$4 for pre-registered guests, \$5 at the door. Contact: Adventure Unlimited, 2707 S. Franklin St., Michigan City IN 46360, phone (219)879-2781.

MYSTICON 2.5, Aug. 12-14

Science fiction author Orson Scott Card will be a guest of honor at this SF and gaming convention, to be held at the Jefferson Inn in downtown Roanoke, Va. Memberships are \$10 each; for more information, send SASE to MystiCon, P.O. Box 1367, Salem VA 24153, or phone Calvin Yates at (703)362-3562.

MIT SUMMERCON 83, Aug. 12-14

A gathering for board wargaming and military miniatures enthusiasts, sponsored by the MIT Strategic Games Society. To be held at the MIT Student Center, Cambridge, Mass. For details, write to MIT Summercon 83, East Campus, 3 Ames St., Cambridge MA 02139.

GEN CON® GAME FAIR, Aug. 18-21

The 16th annual gaming and fantasy extravaganza sponsored by TSR Hobbies, Inc. For more information, see the advertisement on page 81 of this issue of DRAGON® Magazine.

VULCON '83, Aug. 19-21

SF author Roger Zelazny will be the guest of honor at this science fiction/fantasy/gaming event to be held in Akron, Ohio. Registration is \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door. For more information, contact Stargate, c/o Sarah Blick, 150 Conger Ave., Akron OH 44303.

CAMPCON 83, Aug. 20

A game convention to be held at Camp Emmanuel near Astoria, Ill. For details, contact Kevin B. Sager, Box 833, Astoria IL 61501, phone (309)329-2934.

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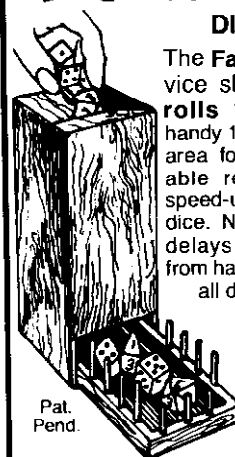
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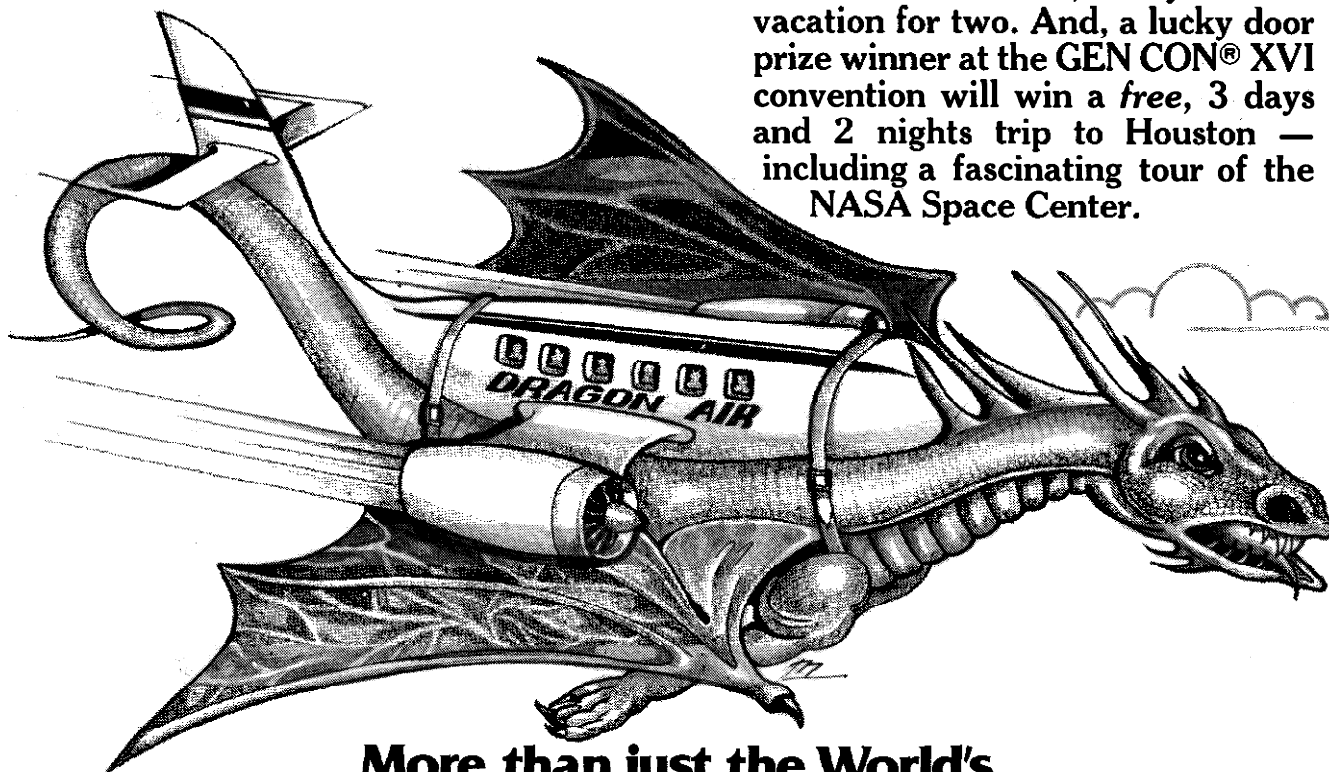
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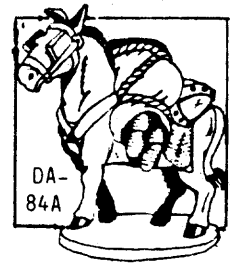
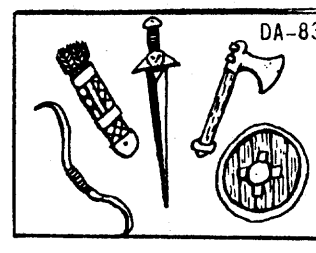
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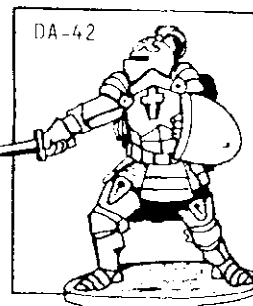
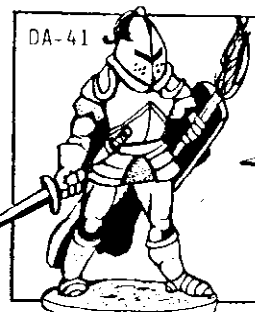
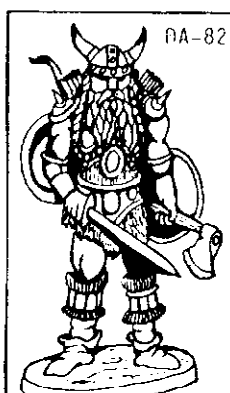
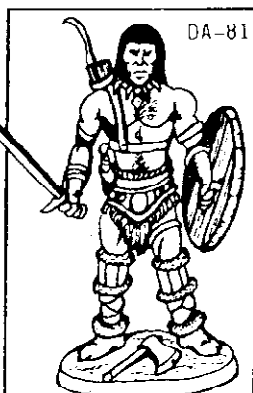
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January 1983. Kelly Freas cover; "Aquila Meets Bigfoot" by Somtow Sucharitkul; novelet by Poul Anderson; stories by Taniith Lee, Jack C. Haldeman, Michael McCollum, etc.; Avram Davidson Adventures in Unhistory; Silverberg.

March 1983. Jack Gaughan cover; part 1 of *Against Infinity* by Gregory Benford; Bill Pronzini, Darrell Schweitzer, Sharon Webb, Damien Broderick; poetry by Thomas Disch; "The Amazing Years" by Cele Goldsmith Lalli; A. Bertram Chandler interview.

May 1983. Kelly Freas cover; *Against Infinity* by Gregory Benford concluded; "Aquila: The Final Conflict" by Somtow Sucharitkul; Gene Wolfe, Alan Dean Foster, William Wu; features by Silverberg, Ford, Catalano, Coulson.

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THE FIRST THING
YOU NEED IN ORDER
TO BE A SUPER HERO
IS AN **ORIGIN**.
ORIGINS SHOULD BE
IMPRESSIVE - HERE
IS A SAMPLE :

AFTER HIS PARENTS ARE MURDERED, AN INFANT MUTANT IS
ROCKETED TO EARTH TO ESCAPE THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS HOME
PLANET. HE IS FOUND BY A SECRET ORDER OF MAGICIANS LED BY
THE MYSTERIOUS ROBOT A-1. THEY TRAIN HIM IN THE PHYSICAL/
MENTAL/SORCEROUS ARTS. IN HIS 16TH YEAR, HE IS DOUSED BY CHEMICALS,
HIT BY LIGHTNING, BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER, BIONICALLY
ALTERED BY A MAD SCIENTIST AND GIVEN A WEAPON OF GREAT POWER
BY BENEFICENT EXTRATERRESTRIALS FROM THE FUTURE.



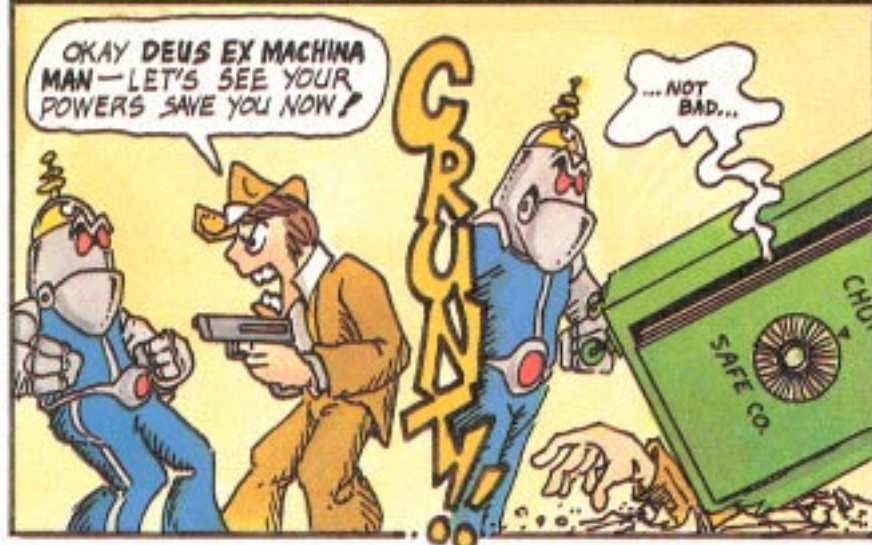
JUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO
OVERDO IT.



ONCE YOU'VE SURVIVED YOUR ORIGIN, YOU MUST
ASSESS YOUR POWERS. SOME IDEAS THAT **SOUND**
INTERESTING MAY PROVE WORTHLESS IN REALITY.



CONVERSELY, A CHARACTER WITH TOTALLY OVERWHELMING POWER CAN BE JUST AS UNSATISFYING.



A COMMON MYTH IS THAT A HERO CAN DEFEAT A VASTLY SUPERIOR VILLAIN MERELY BECAUSE HE IS A HERO.



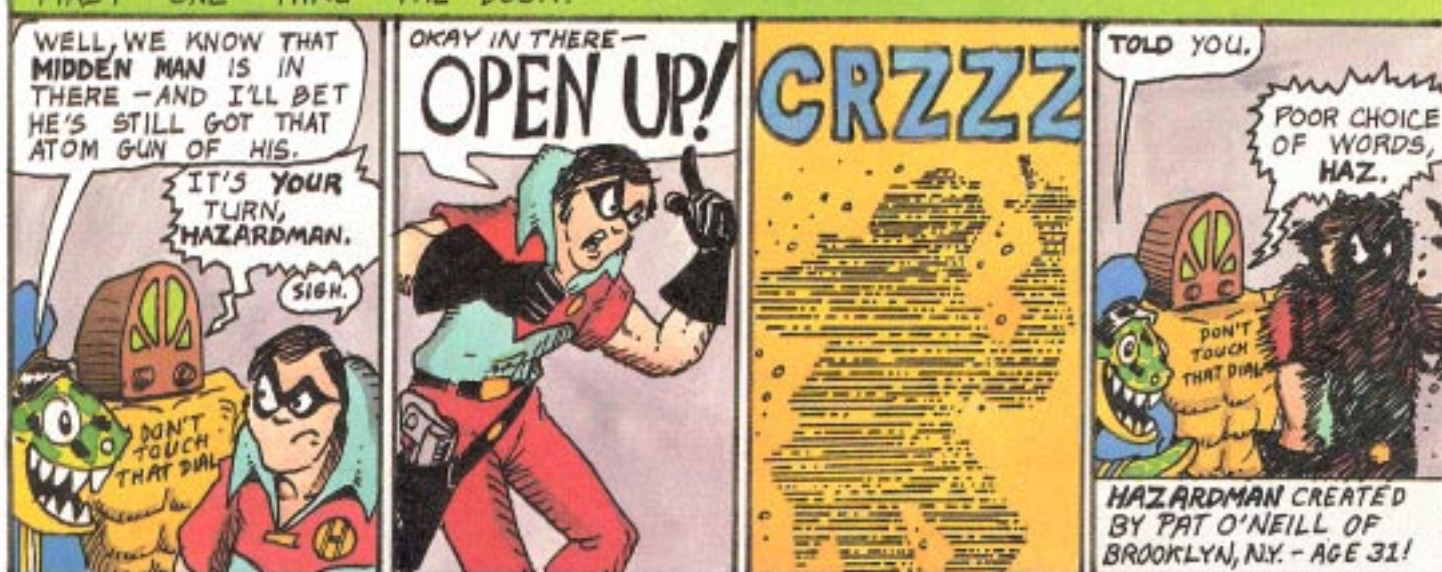
THIS IS A MYTH PROMOTED HEAVILY BY VILLAINS.



ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT EVERY CHARACTER HAS A WEAKNESS—WHETHER IT BE COLD IRON, MAGIC OR RICE KRISPIES. DON'T GET COCKY!



MOST SUPER HEROES FIND THAT THEY WORK WELL WITH A GROUP OR A COMPANION. THE MOST OBVIOUS ADVANTAGE IS THAT YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE THE FIRST ONE THRU THE DOOR.



A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF A SUPER HERO IS YOUR SECRET IDENTITY—TRY TO FIND ONE THAT WILL ALLOW YOU TO DISAPPEAR FOR HOURS AT A TIME WITHOUT CAUSING SUSPICION.



SECRET IDENTITIES ARE VERY USEFUL—THEY ENABLE YOU TO BE INCONSPICUOUS, DODGE FANS OR FOES, AND MOST IMPORTANT—EARN A LIVING. MOST PEOPLE EXPECT SUPER HEROES TO REFUSE REWARDS.



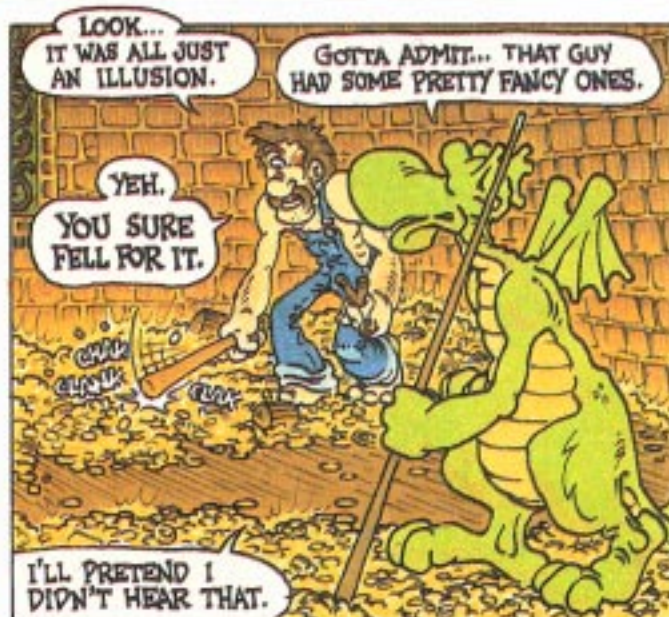
IN FACT SOME SUPER VILLAINS ARE JUST SUPER HEROES WHO'VE DECIDED TO MAKE THEIR ABILITIES PAY OFF.



TO SUM IT UP—BEING A SUPER HERO IS NOT ALL LAUGHS AND GLORY. AND, IS IN FACT ONE OF THE MORE DIFFICULT WAYS OF MAKING A LIVING—SO WHY DO IT?



WORMY





ONE THANG'S FER DANG SURE. THIS DADGUM GATE AIN'T NO ILLUSION... GOES RIGHT INTO OUTER SPACE OR SOMETHIN'.

NO SIGN OF THAT WIZARD?

NOPE.

GOOD.

THAT WAS ONE HELLOVA SHOT, ACE.

HECK...

AH WAS ADMIN' FER 'S HEAD.



DANG! THAT IS WEIRD! TAKE A LOOK AT THIS, WORM.



HNN... I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN.

INCREDIBLE!

I'LL SAY.



HOW IN THE WORLD IS THIS POSSIBLE?

IT'S NOT IN THE WORLD, THAT'S HOW.



YAH! THERE'S SOMETHIN' IN THERE! IT'S ALIVE! I FELT IT MOVIN'!!

SOMETHING KIND OF LEATHERY... COVERED WITH SCALES?

YEAH! DID YOU FEEL IT TOO?

NO... I FELT SOMETHING WITH HAIRY KNUCKLES AND BIG, FAT FINGERNAILS.



BETTER SEAL THAT THANG UP, WORM... THERE'S ALL KINDS A WEIRD CRITTERS IN THERE!



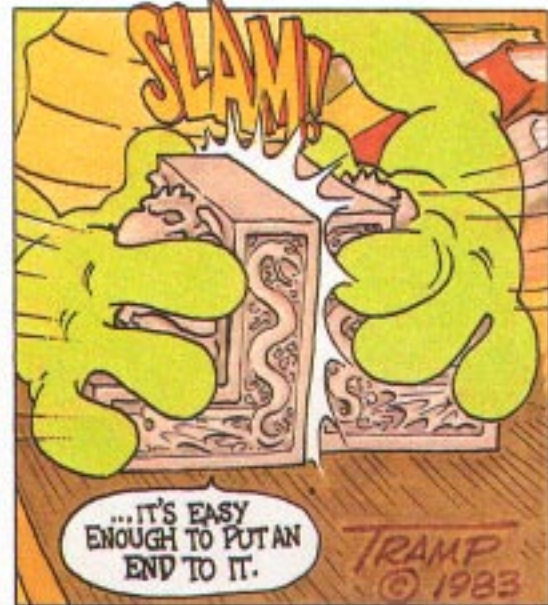
I WAS JUST THINKING... THIS GATEWAY MIGHT PROVE TO BE USEFUL.

FOR WHAT?

GARBAGE DISPOSAL, FOR INSTANCE.

FUMP FUMP

BUT FOR NOW...



SLAM!

...IT'S EASY ENOUGH TO PUT AN END TO IT.

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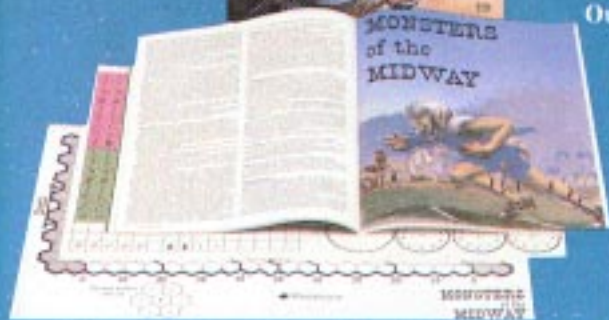
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SNARFQUEST

#1

BY ELMORE



COME GATHER ROUND ALL BRAVE WARRIORS AND HEAR THE WORDS OF OUR MOST WISE ELDER.



THAT'S YOU, SIR.

... OH... AHM... AS YOU ALL KNOW, ZIS TRIBE HAS RULED ZIS VALLEY FOR TWO SOUZAND YEARS..



ZE REASON VE HAVE BEEN SO FORTUNATE TO HAVE ZIS GREAT HERITAGE IS BECAUSE OF OUR GREAT LEADERSHIP AND ZE VAY VE CHOOSE OUR LEADERS.

VE ARE ALL AVARE ZAT ZINGART ZE SNEEK, OUR EX-LEADER, PASSED AWAY YESTERDAY IN A MOST EMBARRASSING VAY... SO, ACCORDING TO OUR TRADITION, EVERY WARRIOR IN OUR TRIBE IS ELIGIBLE TO BECOME OUR NEW LEADER.



ZE RULES ARE SIMPLE... ONE YEAR FROM ZIS DATE, ZE WARRIOR ZAT HAS ACQUIRED ZE MOST RICHES OR HAS PERFORMED ZE MOST HEROIC DEEDS VILL BECOME — OUR NEW LEADER !!!



MAN, A CHANCE TO BECOME
DA LEADER OF DIS WHOLE
TRIBE ...JUS' THINK- WORK
HARD ONE YEAR, DEN EASY
STREET FROM DEN ON...

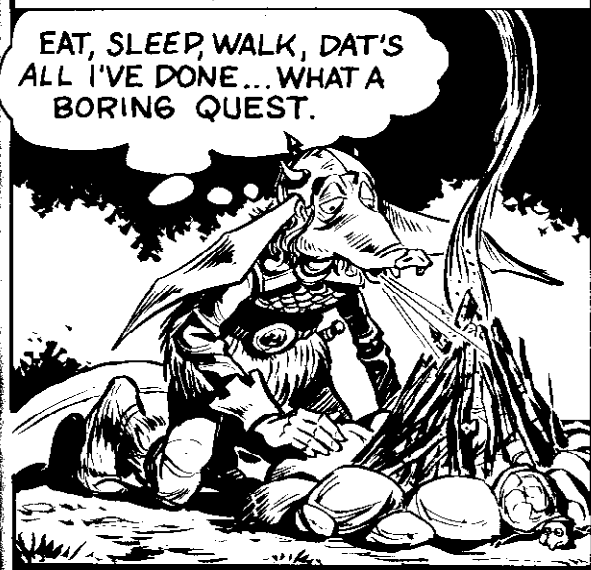


SO SNARF, LEAVING HIS SECURE VALLEY BEHIND,
SETS OUT ON HIS GREAT QUEST... WITH ONLY
HIS SWORD AND RAW COURAGE.



ONE NIGHT, WEEKS LATER ...

EAT, SLEEP, WALK, DAT'S
ALL I'VE DONE... WHAT A
BORING QUEST.



MY LUCK HAS GOTTA CHANGE,
I HAVEN'T FOUND A THING TO
FIGHT, DEFEND, OR STEAL.



HEY, DUDE

WAAIIIIIEEE

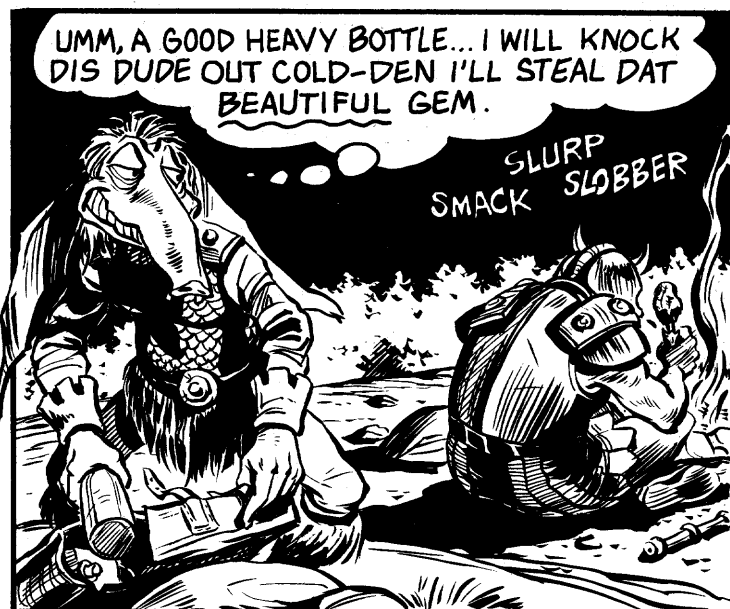


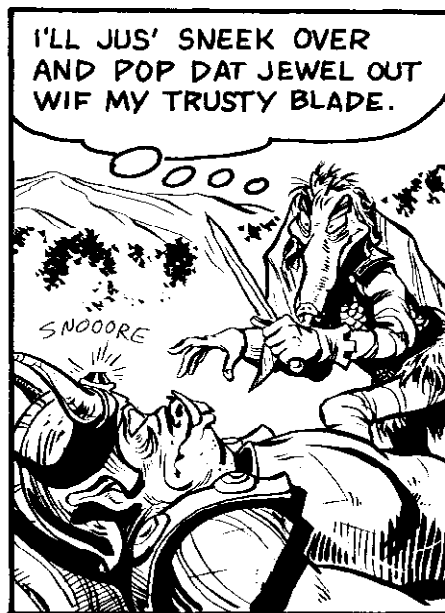
WOULD YA SHARE
YER FIRE AND
A BITE TO EAT?

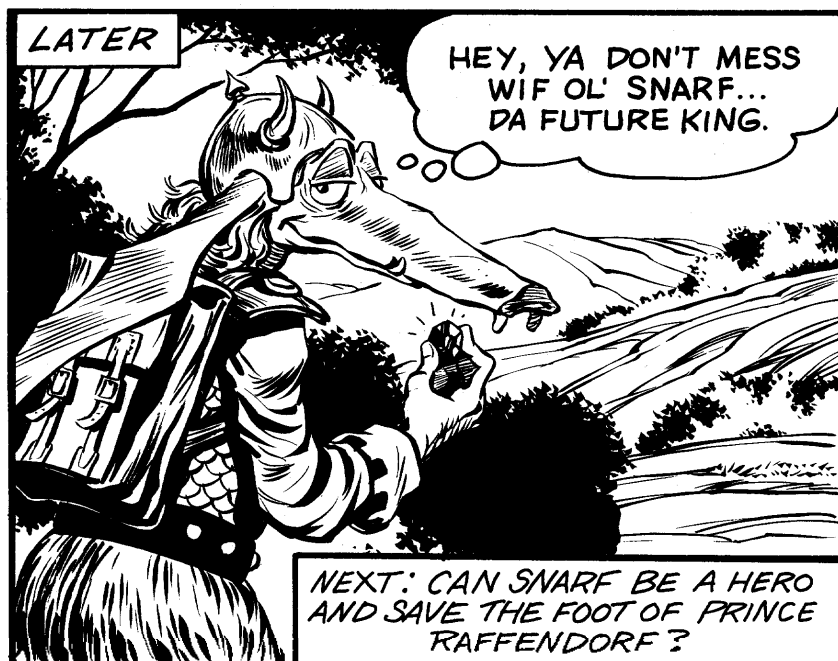
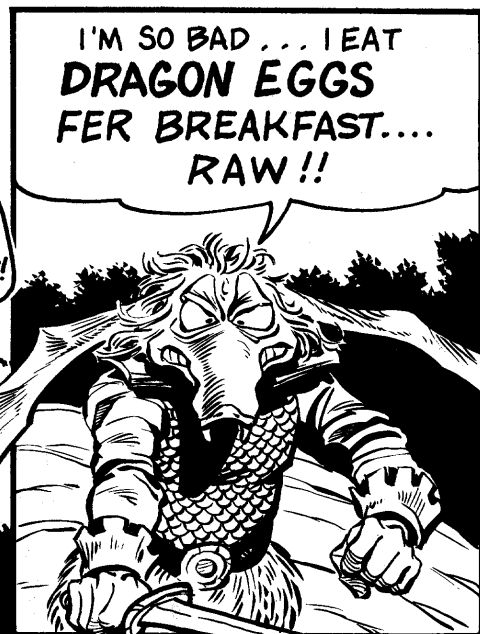
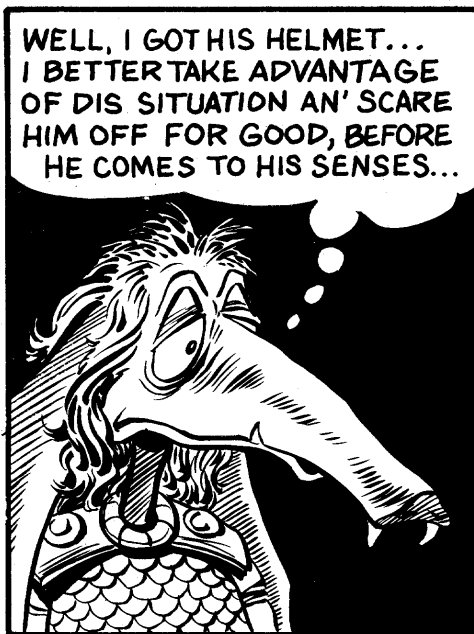
S, S-SURE,
PAL.

... SCARED DA
WITS OUTTA ME...









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