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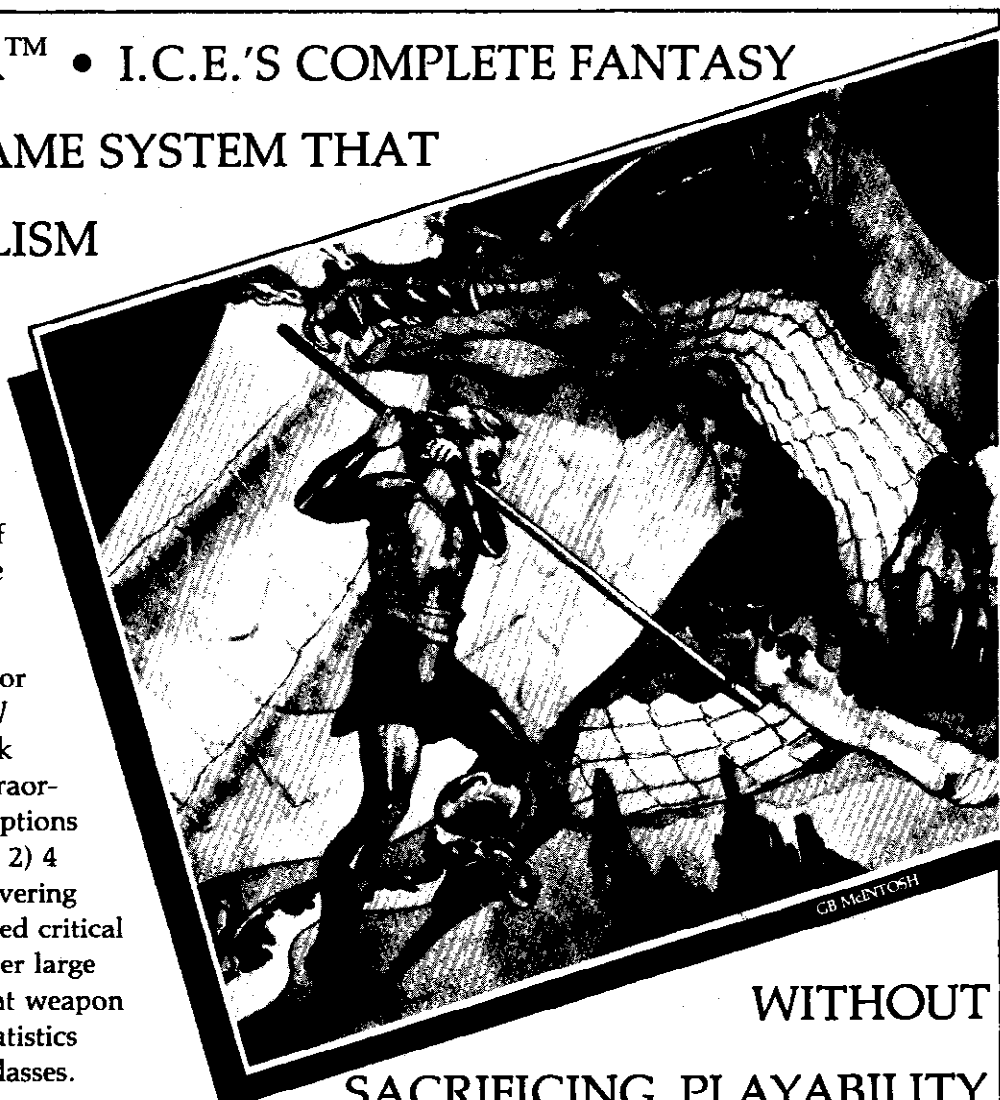
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## We're listening

Hmmm. With 1984 more or less around the corner, maybe that's a bad way to start a column. But I'll let it stand, because it sums up the point of this month's sermon: Why All of You Should Fill Out and Return the DRAGON Magazine Readership Survey (pages 55-56).

As is always the case with a magazine and its readers, you know us, the magazine, a whole lot better than we know you, the group who reads us. We *think* we know what you like, and we try to fill up the magazine with Good Stuff. If you're happy, we all win. If you're not, vice versa.

We *think* we know you based on two things we get a lot of: Letters, and responses to other readership surveys we've published. The letters expressing individual readers' opinions, numerous though they are, represent only a small fraction of you. And it's been a while since we printed a survey; a lot of you weren't even with us the last time. (But those of you who were with us helped contribute to a couple of tremendous response totals. Keep it up.)

We need to know more, about all of you, than we've ever known before. We need to ask some standardized questions, because that's the best way to get exact readings of fact and opinion from a large group of people. And the larger, the better. The more people we hear from, the more sure we can be that you are really talking to us.

The picture of you that we get from analyzing the returned surveys will be used to shape the future of this magazine. You better believe that - we *are* listening, and we'll try to do whatever you say you want.

No, I can't say we'll be able to handle everything you, the individual, might want us to do. But we'll try to give the greatest benefit to the greatest number, because (a) it seems like the lawful good thing to do, and (b) it's worked pretty well so far.

We know our readership has changed and continues to change. We try, by paying attention to letters and doing some educated guessing, to keep changing with you. But sometimes we have to make a really formal check of our position. We need you to help us navigate when the horizon starts to look too much the same - let us sight on you, like a star, to keep ourselves on course. And, to complete the nautical analogy, then we can all really start sailing. - KM







ou may have been King of the Mountain when you were a little kid. If you're one of our older readers, you may have been King of the Drive-In once upon a time. But not until now has anyone ever had the chance to be **KING OF THE TABLETOP**.

Our latest game offering, in the center of this magazine, is a mixture of things: a combat game, an economic game, and above all a prestige game. (You'll see what we mean.) It is brought to you by a mixture of people: Tom Wham, who has more game designs in his head than most people have in their houses; Rob Kuntz, known throughout the land for his work on *Greyhawk* articles and the *DEITIES & DEMIGODS™* book; and Dave Trampier, author of *Wormy*, who will illustrate every counter sheet we publish from now on if I have anything to say about it.

We've heard from people who think the games we print *would* be fun, but they never play them because they don't want to "destroy" the magazine by pulling out the innards. Well, this is one time when anyone who feels that way should make an exception - it's a regally good game.

If the scene on the cover reminds you of something from your mind's eye, that means artist Jerry Eaton did his job to perfection. The painting is his interpretation, using the *Players Handbook* as a guide, of the appearance and effect of a magic-user's *wall of fire spell*. Although this is Jerry's first cover painting for us, his signature is also on some striking color illustrations done for fiction stories in earlier issues.

The next time anyone asks your AD&D character to play cards, you'd better find out exactly what he means before you look at your hand. Presented across lots of pages inside is an article on a 78-in-1 magic item, *The Tarot of Many Things*. Every campaign with characters who are gamblers at heart should have one (but *only* one) deck of Tarot cards, as described by author Michael Lowrey for incorporation into the AD&D game. Things may never be the same again. . . .

Obviously, there are times when we can't exactly go to the source in preparing an article on "The Ecology of" something. But Roger Moore managed to get a friendly neighborhood dryad to talk about *The Ecology of the Unicorn* for this month's issue, and he got more than he bargained for.

Also inside is a somewhat unusual article - intended for *non-gamers*, as well as for all of you who usually buy this magazine. Frank Mentzer tells the story of the new, improved version of the D&D® Basic and Expert Sets that are expected to attract even more people into the hobby of fantasy role-playing games. After you've read the article, lend it to some friends who don't play - and be sure to tell 'em who sent you. - KM



## He or she?

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed Mr. Greenwood's article concerning the Nine Hells [issue #75]. However, I found one apparent mistake. In the article, Sekolah is described as a female. The *Deities & Demigods Cyclopedic* states that the deity is a male. Can you explain?

Greg Lewis  
North Augusta, S.C.

*Yep, the article was - technically - in error. But I think we can figure out where Ed Greenwood was coming from when he referred to Sekolah as a female shark (see page 31 of issue #75). In the entry for sahuagin in the Monster Manual, it is noted that "the religious life of these creatures is dominated by the females." The reference to "females" in that passage specifically concerns female sahuagin, who are the clerics of the race.*

*But, carrying the interpretation of that statement a little further, it makes sense for a religion "dominated" by females to have a female deity at the top of their hierarchy, and it seems safe to assume that this was how Ed's reasoning worked when he called Sekolah a "she." In light of the fact that the Monster Manual is part of the official AD&D™ rules and the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedic is not a rule book in the same sense, it might be argued that the MM takes precedence over the DDG book on this point. Fortunately, for the purposes of playability, it makes no difference (that we can see) whether Sekolah is male or female. We won't disagree with anyone who thinks the article was in error, and you can certainly change "she" to "he" anywhere the article talks about Sekolah if you're more comfortable with that. - KM*

## Same module?

Dear Editor:

One of the events listed in the insert on Gen Con in issue #74 of DRAGON seems to be very similar to the AD&D module I entered in the Dragon Publishing Module Design Contest. Do you use the modules from the contest that you don't plan to publish in DRAGON for events at Gen Con and possibly other gaming conventions?

Darren Butler  
Orem, Utah

*In a word: NO! We do NOT use entries to our module contest for convention tournaments or any other purpose. Only a very small number of people, all of them associated with DRAGON® Magazine, even see module contest entries that don't get published. In this case, Darren's question is very understandable, since the title of his contest entry (The Lair of the Minotaurs) is almost identical to the title of*

*a tournament event, called "Into the Lair of the Minotaur" - but that is where the similarity ends. We know that to be absolutely true, and I hope that any of you who might also have been wondering about what happens to contest entries will believe us. A module submitted to the Dragon Publishing contest doesn't leave our hands in any way, unless and until it is published in the magazine. - KM*

## Weather words

Dear Kim:

I enjoyed reading the various letters you've published in issues #70 and #73 about my article on the weather of Greyhawk in issue #68. For one thing, I (like any author) cannot help but take pleasure in the knowledge that there are people out there who have read my work, even if only to then disagree with it. I'd like to respond to some of the comments, both generally and specifically.

The generality is this: My article, like many others published in your magazine, is not intended to be taken as gospel truth, but should be applied with what is termed "DM's discretion." In short, the DM has not only the right, but also the responsibility to ensure that all the rules, official or otherwise, are applied in a reasonable and fair way to the world he or she presents to the players. If something in my weather system doesn't work in someone else's world, that person should modify the system, remembering to keep things fair for both characters and monsters.

Now, the specifics. First, I'm pleased that all three letter writers complained only about the Appendices, which dealt with topics that, to be honest, deserved detailed articles of their own, done by someone more expert than myself. It's nice to know that the body of the article got the approval of DRAGON's readership.

The issue that received the most comment is that of developing tidal systems for a fantasy world. I'm afraid that both Jonathan Roberts and Dan Laliberte have, in part, misunderstood what I was describing. The article notes that there are, for a planet with a single moon, a lunar high and low tide *plus* ". . . a matching pair of high and low tides . . ." of a solar nature; i.e., a total of four tides which may cancel and/or reinforce each other, depending on the relative positions of sun, moon, and planet. In essence, I was describing all three of the varieties of tide (mixed, diurnal, and semi-diurnal) that Dan mentions, though in terms that were perhaps too general. Since Dan is clearly more knowledgeable on this topic than I am, perhaps you could get him to write more on this field, as well as on such related topics as the development of navigational techniques in a fantasy environment. (Hmmm, how would adventurers know where they were at sea if there were no stars at all . . . ?)

Lois Sparling's letter, on the other hand,



takes me (and another author) to task for a lack of experience with cold weather. Well, though I do live in Philadelphia, I happen to be half Canadian and have spent several winters in Toronto, which has weather of the type that Ms. Sparling thinks I ought to get to know first-hand. Will that do?

The unpleasant experience of having one's teeth break while drinking a hot beverage in an extremely cold climate, however, is not a fantasy. Several journals of various Arctic and Antarctic explorers actually report such events happening to members of their parties.

As for Ms. Sparling's claim that, in the winter, life in the Hudson Bay area "... generally carries on normally ... for those who live in this area," well, I think she's vastly underrating the effects that several centuries of European technology has had on the way all the area's residents, Inuit and Caucasian alike, now deal with the weather. Yes, it's true that "to a person properly clad and out of the wind, -20° F. is quite pleasant in a dry climate and horrible in a humid climate," but the items which make today's Hudson Bay resident "properly clad" are not necessarily those which would be available to a character in a fantasy world with medieval technology.

In other respects, though, her comments and descriptions are right on target. I, too, would like to see an article on the effects of temperature extremes, as well as extremes of other climatic phenomena such as moisture, dust, and the like. Much of the information she mentions, such as the boiling and melting points of various materials, is readily available at the nearest library; perhaps some enterprising author will soon fill us in on the details. Finally, my thanks again to all who took the

time to read and comment on the article. Should it ever see re-printing, these comments may lead to a bit of fine tuning.

David M. Axler  
Philadelphia, Pa.

## 'Personal survival'

Dear Editor:

After reading Roger Moore's article in issue #73 ("All for all, not one for one"), I feel I must disagree. In many fantasy games, the idea is personal survival. In many instances, player characters have tried to work in a group effort, and have found that running into a trap to save a fighter of low level actually wastes time and valuable hit points required to fight monsters or overcome traps later.

While I can see that Mr. Moore has a point about no character being proficient in all fields, this is rarely necessary in the campaign I master. Often, when a character survives to much higher levels, magic weapons and current abilities negate the need for a group effort. Even at low levels, the PC is often concerned not with the group, but with individual achievement.

Where Mr. Moore complained of an evil thief killing the paladin at the outset of the adventure and blaming it on alignment, his feelings are justified. In my campaign this would have been disruptive to play.

As for Mr. Moore's comments about PCs attacking PCs that were new, outcasts, or troublesome, I don't see his point. In my campaign, it always provided a competitive spirit. Often, PCs who no longer served the "head

honcho's" purpose were simply eliminated. It added intrigue, rivalry, and mystery to the gaming sessions. And all the people behind the characters still get along. After all, Roger should keep in mind that it's just a game.

D. Klisewin  
Easthampton, Mass.

Roger Moore's reply:

When I wrote the article, I was not trying to preach to people about how they should conduct their role-playing games. Everyone has different tastes and likes in gaming. It has been my experience, however, that groups that are cohesive and help their members stand much better chances of survival, and also are able to work more closely and coherently together. Such groups also seem to be more fun to game with, from my viewpoint anyway, and while some people may find it interesting to have their characters compete in some war-to-the-death scenarios, many of those I've gamed with have avoided doing this because of the hurt feelings and problems it generates. Granted, of course, it is only a game. The article expressed my views on what in my experience has made the game more fun, and I hope some people found it helpful in making their games more enjoyable, too. - RM

## 'Extremely accurate'

Dear Sirs:

While reading issue #73 of DRAGON Magazine, I came across something peculiar, and I wondered if you noticed the same thing. If you turn the map of the Lands of Launewt so that the top is east, you get an extremely accurate map of Brittany, including even the scale and the rivers. It excluded only some canals and the cities (and the name).

Allen Tulchin  
New York, N.Y.

Congratulations for your perception, Allen. (We hoped someone would notice. . . .) The coastline described in the map is Brittany -we "stole" that shape for the Lands of Launewt because (a) the map needed to be redrawn and (b) it's easier to use Mother Nature's ideas than come up with our own. Look for other famous geographical features in upcoming maps inside your favorite magazine. . . . - KM

## Missing address

Dear Sirs:

In issue #72 you reviewed *Myth Directions* by Robert Asprin, published by Starblaze Editions. I want to get all three books in this series, but the Stars & Stripes Book Stores don't carry them. Can you tell me how to reach the publisher so I can order the books?

Russell McKenzie  
APO New York, N.Y.

We got a lot of requests for the address, and decided to print it in this space in case even more of you are wondering. Information about Starblaze Editions books can be obtained from The Donning Company Publishers, 5659 Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk VA 23502. We don't normally print publishers' addresses in book reviews; we always figure anyone who's interested can find it out easily enough - even if that involves writing us a letter. - KM

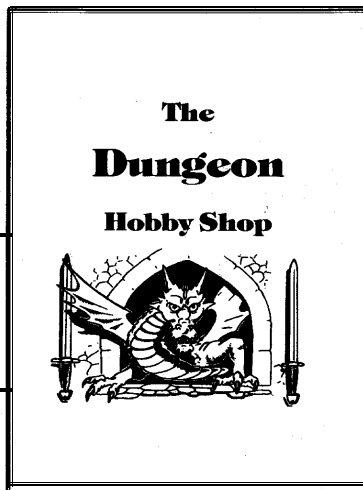
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# TAROT OF MANY THINGS



by Michael J. Lowrey

Although the *deck of many things* in the AD&D™ game is a powerful and interesting device, it is but half a reflection (the other being ordinary playing cards) of the original on which all such objects are based - the Tarot. This article describes the nature and meaning of the Tarot, and of that most potent and hazardous artifact known as the *Tarot of many things*.

The 78-card Tarot deck consists of two parts. The Major Arcana include the card known as the Fool, which is unnumbered, and the twenty-one numbered cards I (The Magician) through XXI (The World); these twenty-two cards are also known as the Greater Trumps. The Minor Arcana, or Lesser Trumps, are divided into the four suits of Wands, Cups, Swords, and Pentacles; each suit includes the "pip" cards (Ace through Ten) and the court cards (Page, Knight, Queen, and King).

Although their history and origin are unclear, Tarot decks are known to have existed in Europe by the end of the 14th century. Their origins have been "traced" to sources as diverse as the lost continent of Atlantis and a sonnet by Petrarch; but little hard evidence is available. Their curiously evocative symbolism has inspired and intrigued intellects ever since, from Jung to Yeats to T. S. Eliot. Today dozens of decks are in print, some of them reprints of 15th-century versions, others new designs made within the past decade. For further historical data and detailed information concerning the divinatory uses of the Tarot, the reader is referred to the bibliography.

If a *Tarot of many things* exists in a given AD&D universe, it will be the only one of its kind. Such a deck is normally the creation and/or the property of the most powerful deity of Fate in that universe, and will certainly expose a user of the deck to more than the usual amount of scrutiny from such beings. Under no circumstances will the deck be left unguarded, carried around in an orc's knapsack, or used for sheepshead games between high-level wizards. It is a most

awesome and puissant object, and will be treated as such.

The deck itself is a series of plaques or cards, fashioned of precious and rare substances: ivory, gold, vellum made from dragon skin, carved bulette scales, or the like, painted with costly pigments, gilded, or even jeweled. These will be wrapped in silk or other simple but costly cloth, and placed within an elaborate box or coffer of at least 5,000 gp value, expensively decorated with Tarot symbols, and with the holy symbol(s) of the deity who is the master of the deck. It could be sold unused for 39,000 gp plus the value of the box or coffer, but if anyone does more than look upon the backs of the cards, he will be compelled (no saving throw for any being below a lesser god) to draw from it.

A person who wishes or is compelled to draw from the deck will be allowed to announce an intention of drawing one, two, three, or four cards; when the last member of the party who wishes to do so has drawn, or if one hour elapses without any draw, the deck will disappear - unless the party is on the plane of the Tarot's master deity, which is not the party's own home plane.

It is suggested that if player characters are at all likely to encounter the Tarot, the DM obtain a real deck which has symbolism and imagery that harmonize with his campaign's cultures, familiarize himself with it, and shuffle it thoroughly.

The person making draws, hereafter called the "drawer," should shuffle the cards well, in such a manner that the images on almost one-half of the cards are inverted or "reversed" in relation to the others (which are termed "upright"). Each card is then turned over along the long axis of the card, and presented to the DM (from whose viewpoint "upright" and "reversed" are judged). After each person finishes drawing, the drawn cards are returned to the deck, and it is reshuffled by the next drawer (if any).

[In case the DM cannot obtain a real Tarot deck, each card has been given a number for the use of percentile dice; a card will be reversed or upright on a 50% chance. No card can be received more than once by the same drawer.]

The effects of the Tarot are instantaneous unless noted otherwise, and should be noted immediately by the DM (to himself); characters will not notice any change until they perceive it in terms of how it alters their abilities or activities. The effects are irrevocable unless otherwise stated, short of a full *wish* for the Major Arcana, or a *limited wish* for the Lesser Arcana.

If the effects of a card would raise or reduce a characteristic score to a level outside racial limitations, the change will affect another characteristic if possible within those same limits, in this order: constitution, charisma, wisdom, dexterity, intelligence, strength. If a character loses 1 point or more from an ability score and is therefore no longer qualified to be a member of the class he was pursuing, then the character loses the right to be in that class and (if not multi-classed to begin with) must begin anew as a first-level character in some other class. Even if the lost points are replaced later by some other means, the character cannot resume study in the class that he was forced to abandon; but he may re-enter that class at first level if, and only if, restoration of the lost point(s) takes place within 24 hours of the loss.

[If a player declares that his character is performing an action whose *only* conceivable motivation is the exploitation of a card effect which the characters have no way of knowing about, the DM should ask for an explanation; and if it becomes clear that the player has information which the character should not have, the DM must exercise his right and duty (as always in such cases) to veto character actions based on illicit player knowledge (this is colloquially called a "mindbar"). Tricks, traps, and variations, designed to deceive players who remember things their characters shouldn't "know," must be a part of every DM's arsenal.]

Above all, bear in mind that this is an artifact, not the tool of a chaotic game for foolhardy or suicidal characters; it should be handled with respect and gravity. (Whether the random aspects of the Tarot make its use an act of chaotic nature is a matter decided between lawful characters, their deities, and the DM.)

The effects and values of the individual cards in AD&D terms, given in the following text, are based on their divinatory and symbolic meanings. (The effects of draws made by characters are printed in *italic* type, with "upright" effects always given first.) Space does not allow for fuller explanation of details; the interested reader is referred to the bibliography at the end of this article.



## THE MAJOR ARCANA

### 00: The Fool

The Fool is a quirky and variable character; he may be clad in the fool's cap and motley of a jester (or joker), or in gorgeous, elaborate, and costly (though not cumbersome) vestments. A staff and pouch over his shoulder, a little dog behind him, he strides blithely into the World. The Fool is often seen dancing at the brink of the precipice, for his is the folly (and the wisdom) of childhood, the untrammelled innocence of the babe and the mischief of a child.

Upright, he signifies unformed potential, the need to make choices and the necessity of making the right choice, the wisdom of fools and follies of the wise.

*Drawer gains one more draw, but the new draw will not count unless and until the card drawn is one with an effect that is mostly good for the drawer.*

Reversed, he signifies thoughtless action, folly; choices must be made, but may well be faulty.

*Effect as above, but the subsequent card must be mostly bad in effect.*

### 01: The Magician

The Magician stands by or over a table on which are various articles: swords, wands, pentacles, cups, dice, balls, bells, or others. One hand holds a double-ended wand toward the heavens, the other points to the earth; over his head is a lemniscate curve, the symbol of eternity/infinity. The table, which resembles an altar, is surrounded by growing things. Represented here is the rational mind, confident in its power and right to use the forces of the infinite to reshape the world of matter.

Upright, The Magician signifies will, mastery, the ability to manipulate the universe through rational thought, self-confidence, ability to manipulate others.

*Drawer gains 1 point of intelligence, 2 points if a magic-user or illusionist.*

Reversed, he signifies ineptitude, failure of will, indecision; abuse of power; disquiet; mental illness.

*Drawer loses 1 point of intelligence, 2 points if a magic-user or illusionist.*

### 02: The High Priestess

The High Priestess sits enthroned in her temple, dressed in flowing robes that obscure the scroll or book of secret laws and wisdom she holds securely. She is the mother of wisdom, sometimes identified with Isis or Diana; the queen-protector of hidden knowledge and occult mysteries.

Upright, she signifies serene knowledge, sagacity, intuition, foresight, inspiration; the power of the inner mind to heal, create, enlighten, and inform.

*Drawer gains 1 point of wisdom, 2 points if a cleric or druid.*

Reversed, she signifies superficiality, conceit, shallowness, a lack of depth, of perception, or of understanding; an acceptance of external and superficial "knowledge," of trivialities.

*Drawer loses 1 point of wisdom, 2 points if a cleric or druid; in the latter case, the drawer will receive one new secondary skill from the Secondary Skills table (DMG, page 12).*

### 03: The Empress'

Royal and matronly, the Empress sits enthroned among rich fields, clad in rich garments, and crowned with a starry open crown. Befitting her position, she bears a

sceptre, for hers is the realm of universal fecundity and wealth.

Upright, she signifies material wealth, productivity for farmers and creative workers, profitability for merchants; practical application of knowledge.

*The next time treasures are divided, the drawer will receive some item which will turn out to be worth an extra 3d6 thousand gold pieces; but even the drawer will not notice until at least three days later.*

Reversed, she signifies poverty, sterility, inability to produce; waste or dissipation or resources.

*The next time treasures are divided, the drawer will receive an item which will prove to be worthless (a seemingly magical mace which actually has Nystul's magic aura on it, a "ruby" which is actually cut glass, etc.) as the largest part of his treasure share, but will not notice for at least three days.*

### 04: The Emperor

Regal and fatherly, the Emperor sits upon his throne, with open space surrounding him for a domain. He wears kingly robes, and in his hands bears a sceptre and/or orb of rulership. His crown is simple but majestic. He is the active principle, the ruler of the visible, material world through law.

Upright, he signifies leadership, strength of mind, dominance, law, control of natural drives, stability, power, conviction, protection, and the like.

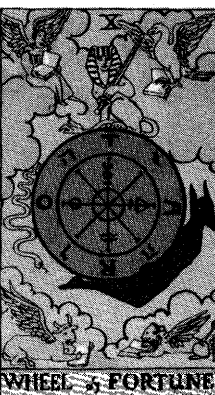
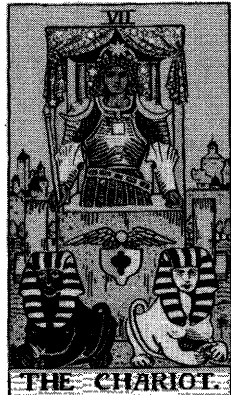
*A lawful drawer gains 2 points of charisma; a chaotic drawer must successfully save vs. poison or suffer confusion for 2d4 months; a neutral drawer is unaffected.*

Reversed, he signifies immaturity, confusion or loss of control, ineffectiveness, lack of self-control, irrationality, attempts to destroy one's authority or rights.

*Unless the drawer saves vs. death magic at -4 (-2 for neutral characters, no penalty for chaotics), over the course of four days he will gradually become insane in one of the following ways: manic-depressive, schizoid, dementia praecox, or hebephrenic.*

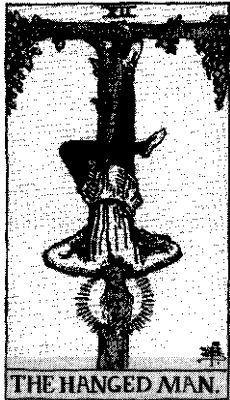
### 05: The Hierophant

Established in state within his temple, the Hierophant is the embodiment of the church in the world, the external pomp





and circumstance of organized religion; his elaborate crown, ornate robes, and sceptre of power establish him as a hierarch and potentate. He is the link between deity and worshiper, his is the role of mediator and medium. As the High Priestess is mistress of the hidden mysteries, The Hierophant is the master of external, manifest religion, law, and morality, usually depicted ministering to,



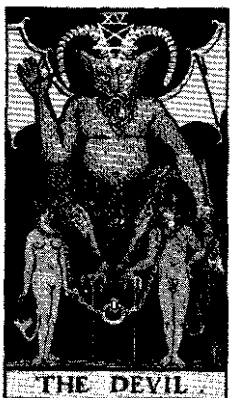
or being attended by, two lesser clerics, upon whom he bestows a blessing.

Upright, he signifies the outer form of religion; social relations with the world, ritualism; conformity, traditionalism, and orthodoxy; retention of outmoded ideas and attitudes; orderly hierarchies; mercy and forgiveness.

*Drawer gains 1 point of charisma (2 points if a lawful cleric); clerics also gain 1 point of intelligence. If drawer is a cleric who belongs to any body of a hierarchical nature, religious or secular, which does not base rank solely on levels of ability, he will be promoted therein soon (5-25 days) after returning from this adventure/expedition. The Hierophant also serves as a remove curse spell for a drawer who is in need of one.*

Reversed, he signifies overkindness, weakness; unconventionality, openness to novelty, unorthodoxy.

*Drawer gets a permanent -2 on saving throws against charm, suggestion, and other mental attack forms involving will force; he will also have a permanent +20% on his reaction roll to all persons and beings. If drawer is a member of any hierarchic body (as described above), within 5-25 days of returning from the current*



*adventure he will be demoted for "ineffectuality" and "lack of authority." If drawer is a chaotic cleric, he will gain 1 point of intelligence.*

#### 06: The Lovers

A winged supernatural being hovers over a man and a woman, behind each of whom flourishes a different tree. The man looks at the woman, but she, though

open to him, looks up at the supernatural messenger. The Lovers are emblematic of the necessity for the conscious mind ("intelligence") to approach the supernatural and transcendent through the unconscious ("wisdom"), for a harmonious and loving life depends on the cooperation of both parts of the mind.

(In older decks the Lovers are often shown as a young man standing between two women; some different divinatory meanings relate to this older symbolism.)

Upright, they signify attraction, amateness, love; difficulties overcome, tests and trials passed.

*The drawer's charisma increases by 1 point for every 6 points of wisdom or intelligence (whichever is lower), rounding down; in addition, the drawer's reaction rolls increase 1% for each point of wisdom or intelligence (whichever is lower), toward all persons (now known or encountered later) to whom she or he might be romantically inclined (based on race, gender, etc.).*

Reversed, they signify tests failed; fickleness, unreliability, infidelity; a need to stabilize and harmonize the self, the possibility of a wrong choice.

*The drawer's charisma is reduced by 1 point for every 6 points by which his wisdom or intelligence (whichever is lower) falls short of 18, rounding losses up; reaction rolls increase as above, but based on whichever ability score is higher, and if the drawer already has a loved companion or spouse, the reaction roll toward her or him is reduced by half the amount that other reaction rolls are increased by (round reduction up).*

#### 07: The Chariot

A youthful and triumphant figure (a conqueror rather than a hereditary ruler) stands in a chariot, covered over by a starry canopy and drawn by two steeds

(horses or sphinxes) of opposing colors and pulling in somewhat opposing directions. The charioteer bears a sceptre of dominion, but no reins; the Chariot must be controlled through dominion of mind. Here is represented the conqueror of the outer world, victorious yet not truly in control of the fullness of reality.

Upright, the Chariot signifies triumph, success, conquest over the physical plane (including illness and one's own weaknesses) by the rational mind, intelligence rather than wisdom; also travel in comfort, state visits.

*Drawer is cured of all diseases, lycanthropy, deafness, blindness, curses, charms, etc., of which he is a victim, and will be 15% less susceptible to them hereafter. Also, the drawer will be able to coax an extra 3" of movement out of any vehicle, mount, or other mode of travel, as long as his mind is clear and free to concentrate on doing so.*

Reversed, it signifies decadence, ill health, restlessness, victory through foul means, disputes, failure.

*Drawer, over the next seven days, will begin to manifest a severe and chronic disease, which can only be cured by a potion made from the brains of two different kinds of sphinxes. The disease will not prove fatal for at least 49 days.*

#### 08: Strength

A calm and self-contained, yet clearly quite human, woman controls the jaws of a lion with her bare hands. Strength is both hers and the lion's. They are not struggling, for she has already subdued the beast, and they are now in a harmony of opposites: Hers is the Strength of the mind at one with itself; his is the Strength of passion and the carnal needs, which is unable to withstand a consciousness aware of its link with the infinite, and must submit to its control.

Upright, the card signifies spiritual power overcoming material power, the fortitude of the self-aware mind; courage and magnanimity; the triumph of love over hate.

*The drawer gains +4 to saving throws against fear, charm, suggestion, illusion and other mental attack forms involving will force.*

Reversed, it signifies the dominance of the material and physical, lack of faith and moral force, failure of self-control, giving in to temptation, failure of will.

*Drawer suffers a -4 to saving throws against the attack forms listed above.*

#### 09: The Hermit

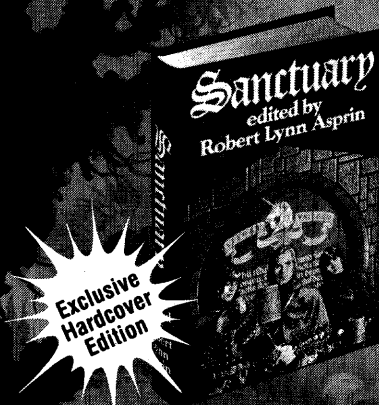
A robed figure, the archetypal "Old Wise Man," the Hermit stands alone. He leans on a pilgrim's staff and holds up the lantern of wisdom, offering light to those who are humble enough to seek it. He illuminates the path to wisdom for those who want to emerge from darkness..

Upright, he signifies prudent counsel, receiving wisdom or instruction from one



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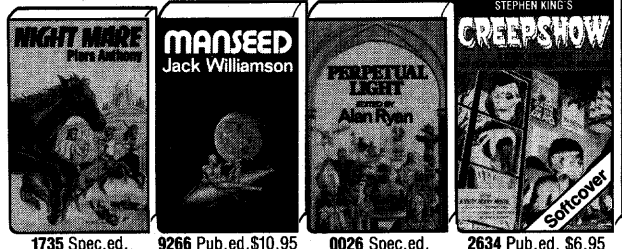
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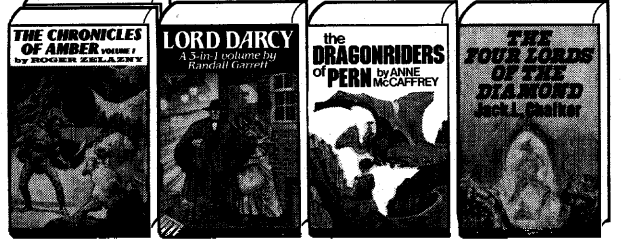
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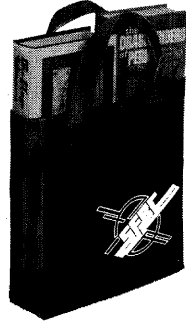
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more knowledgeable, guidance on the path to one's goal; circumspection and caution; a solitary nature.

*Within nine days of returning home from this adventure or expedition, drawer will meet a visiting cleric of his own faith, of a level higher than his own, who will offer religious instruction to the drawer, "for the improvement of the mind," with a warning that the instruction will not be quick. After one month of study (if the drawer accepts the offer; this should be a decision of the player), the drawer will emerge with a 2-point increase in wisdom, but a 1-point loss in charisma. The cleric will then give the drawer a hint to the location of a magic item, and depart for places unknown.*

Reversed, he signifies immaturity, folly, refusal to accept aging and growth.

*Drawer loses one third of his accumulated age, gains 1 point of charisma and loses 2 points of wisdom. When the drawer next seeks to gain a level, the process will be three times as long and expensive as usual, because of his refusal to heed the instructor.*

### 10: The Wheel of Fortune

The Wheel of Fortune rotates eternally, bringing the great to naught and the humble to power, for a time. Descending (on the left) is an evil creature (often identified with Typhon or Set); ascending is a canine-headed being (often identified

with Anubis, or Hermes Trismegistus); yet with another turn of the Wheel, the ascendant will descend and the descendant will ascend. Resting atop the Wheel (yet undisturbed by its rotations) is a sphinx casually holding a weapon, emblematic of the equilibrium which the enlightened mind manifests even in the midst of fortune's everchanging rounds. The sphinx, like the four winged beings of the apocalypse which occupy the corners of the field, is also a denial of the apparent randomness of the universe, and of the fatalism such false beliefs induce.

Upright, it signifies success, fortune, felicity, an unexpected bit of luck, a change for the better.

*Drawer gains a permanent +2 on all saving throws; in addition, the next treasure discovered by the party will include a magic item of not less than 800 nor more than 8,000 experience-point value, on which the arms, image, and/or name of the drawer are ineradicably engraved or otherwise incorporated, in such a way as to mark it as predestined only for that person. If the drawer sells the item, both the card and the materials used to purchase it will disintegrate, and the drawer's saving-throw bonus will be negated.*

Reversed, it signifies unexpected bad fate, ill luck, setbacks or interruptions in plans, unwanted change.

*Drawer suffers a -2 penalty on all saving throws; in addition, one magic item*

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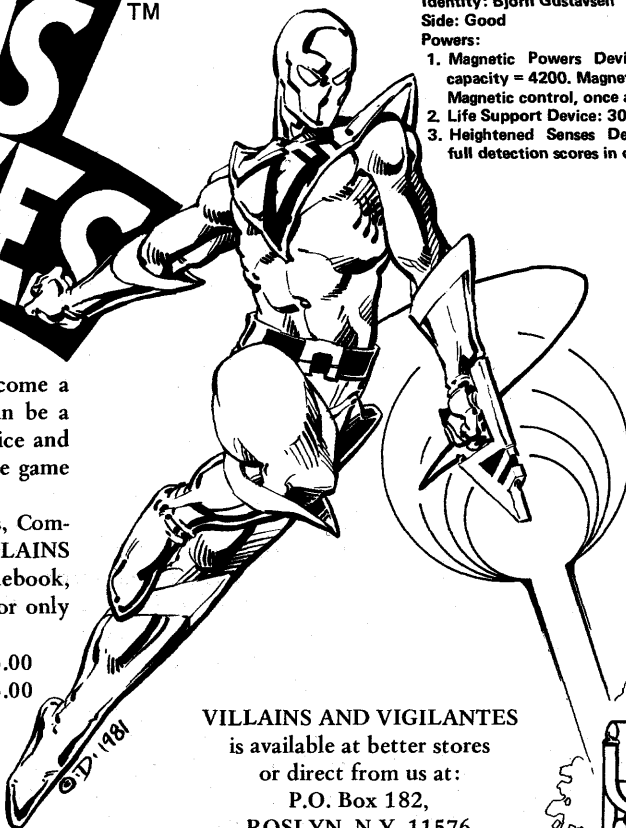
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**MAGNETOR:** A Swedish electronics researcher who built devices that he might become a champion of justice.

Identity: Bjorn Gustavsen      Age: 20  
 Side: Good      Level: 1

**Powers:**

1. Magnetic Powers Device: 10 charges. Magnetic capacity = 4200. Magnetic blast range = 21" Magnetic control, once achieved, lasts 12 turns.
2. Life Support Device: 30 charges; PR = 1 per hour.
3. Heightened Senses Device: Nightvision goggles, full detection scores in darkness.

Wt.: 160 lbs.  
 Str.: 14  
 End.: 13  
 Agil.: 12  
 Int.: 14  
 Char.: 11  
 Dam. Mod.: +1  
 Acc.: +1  
 Hit Pts.: 9  
 Heal: 1.2  
 Car. Cap.: 320  
 Basic HTH: 1d6  
 Power: 53  
 Movement: 39"  
 Det. Hidden: 10%  
 Det. Danger: 14%  
 Invent Pts.: 1.4  
 Inventing: 42%

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(at random) belonging to the drawer will disintegrate (if he owns no magic, this will not apply).

### 11: Justice

Like the High Priestess and the Hierophant, Justice sits crowned and enthroned between pillars. In her right hand she bears a two-edged sword, its point toward the heavens; in her left hand she holds a set of balances. Firm and resolute, hers is the power of moral strength and integrity, of righteousness (good) rather than rectitude (law).

Upright, she signifies justice, virtue, right judgments, the triumph of the good, just rewards, purity.

Drawer of good alignment gains 8,000 experience points; drawer of evil alignment loses 8,000 experience points or three fourths of all experience points, whichever is greater; neutral drawer will be unaffected. The DM may reduce these gains or losses by up to 50% if the drawer has not been entirely consistent in following his alignment.

Reversed, she signifies bias, injustice, excessive severity; legal complications.

Unless drawer has been acting in very strict conformance with his alignment (the DM should be very rigid in this evaluation), he is stripped of all property, effects, wealth, allegiance or loyalties of followers (those over 50% base loyalty), etc., except for non-magical clothing being worn; and all but one eighth of his experience points. Drawer will also forget all spells received or memorized.

### 12: The Hanged Man

From a gibbet or tau-cross of living wood a youth is suspended by one leg; his arms form a triangle behind his back, and his free leg is placed behind his first one to form a cross (if viewed upside down, he seems to be dancing a jig). He represents Everyman, suspended by his own consent as a pause and decision point in the creation of an enlightened self. He is clearly in a contemplative state, not one of suffering, suspended between the old life and the new; he must create his new self knowingly and willingly.

Upright, he signifies a pause, or suspension of ordinary activities; transcendence of material temptation; surrender to the purification of the self; spiritual wisdom, prophetic power; regeneration.

Drawer goes into a contemplative state for 24 days, in which he is open-eyed, can walk (at 3" rate), drink, and eat (lightly), but will not fight or otherwise interact with the mundane world; during this period he will also regenerate as if wearing a ring of regeneration. At the end of this period, the drawer will lose 1 point of strength, but will gain 2 points of wisdom. For a year and a day thereafter, he will refuse all wealth, whether earned or offered, except that necessary for his modest needs and those of his henchmen.

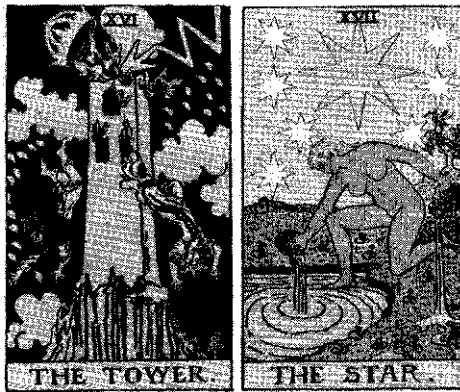
Reversed, he signifies absorption in the

ego and material matters, unwillingness to sacrifice; false prophecies.

Drawer goes into a trance as described above, but will "snap out of it" after 5d5 rounds, having lost 2 points of wisdom, but gained 1 point of charisma. He will seem to show a new ability to prophesy the contents of rooms, intentions of strangers, etc., but after five such detailed, correct "visions," the supposed new ability will go tragically awry (and will completely vanish after being discredited).

### 13: Death

Death, represented as a skeleton, regards a desolate plain strewn with his victims, who are of all ages and conditions, for Death has no favorites. He is



sometimes shown wielding a scythe, sometimes "terrible with banners."

Upright, he symbolizes transit to the next stage of being, transformation; abrupt and unexpected change of the old self (not usually physical death), the end of security and old situations and the beginning of a new kind of life.

Drawer dies. Body and effects burst into flame (which will do 10d10 points of damage if a character is foolish enough to go into it; after 1-8 rounds the flames will die down and from the ashes the character will step, reborn according to the following table (roll d%):

01-02	bugbear	31-36	halfling
03-08	dwarf	37-42	half-orc
09-14	elf	43-44	hobgoblin
15-16	gnoll	45-94	human
17-22	gnome	95-96	kobold
23-24	goblin	97-98	orc
25-30	half-elf	99-00	ogre

Note: A very good or very evil person will not be reborn as a creature whose alignment is the opposite. Regardless of the form in which the character is reincarnated, allow the new form to progress as far as possible in characteristics and abilities. Someone reborn as a gnoll might eventually gain hit dice up to 3,4, or even 5, plus bonus points for a high constitution; the figure would be eligible to wear armor, could use magic items available to fighters, and would have the intelligence level of its former incarnation (or racial minimum). If the new form is of a player-character race, the character must be generated as a new

character; the new form may be a member of any player-character class for which he is eligible, except the old character's former class (unless that is the only possible choice), and will be of 1st level, with no experience points.

Reversed, he signifies stagnation, mere existence, inertia or immobility, lethargy, sleep, petrification.

Drawer falls under a permanent slow spell and will receive no experience points for this adventure (while slowed, drawer will age at half the normal rate).

### 14: Temperance

A solemn angelic figure, a flower or sun emblem on its forehead, pours a fluid from one of a pair of different-colored chalices to the other; behind the figure are growing plants, and distant hills. The card represents the inner self, enabling one to balance the forces of the mind, to illuminate intelligence by wisdom and to clarify wisdom with intelligence.

Upright, it signifies control of self, adaptation, tempering of extremes; harmonious and fruitful combinations, wise management of resources; cooperation.

Drawer will gain 2 points of intelligence or wisdom (whichever of the two is presently the lowest) but will lose 1 point in whichever of the two is higher. If the two scores are equal, he will gain 1 point in whichever of his other characteristics is the lowest, with ties settled by player preference. Also, the drawer will never again injure a companion through carelessness, ill timing, bad luck, or the like.

Reversed, it signifies discord, hostility, failure to communicate, conflicts of interests, unfortunate combinations.

Drawer gains 1 point in whatever characteristic is most useful for his class (clerics and druids gain wisdom; fighters, paladins, and rangers gain strength; magic users and illusionists gain intelligence; thieves and assassins, and monks gain dexterity; and bards gain charisma), but loses 2 points from whichever of his characteristics is the lowest. If there is a tie for lowest, the loss will be from the one of the lowest characteristics which the DM judges to be most generally useful for the drawer's class. In addition, from now on the drawer will have a reaction roll adjustment of from -10% to -15% (1d6+9) to all persons.

### 15: The Devil

Bat-winged, horned, donkey-eared, with hairy legs and eagle's feet, the Devil stands or squats upon a blocky pedestal (which sometimes resembles an altar, sometimes an anvil). His right hand gives a cryptic salute; in his left is a weapon held in a bizarrely useless manner (a sword held by the blade, a torch which is upside down or burnt out). Connected by ropes to the altar are two figures (usually a man and a woman), mostly human but with certain animal characteristics such as horns and tails; they are much smaller



than the Devil, and appear strangely serene about their bondage.

Upright, the card signifies the bondage of human nature to its own lowest needs and impulses, desires of greed and domination, sensation without understanding; fatality, disaster, violence; weird and destructive experiences; evil influences.

*Drawer is attacked by the Devil of the Tarot (see below).*

Reversed, it signifies release from bondage to the material; conquest of pride and greed; the first steps toward spiritual enlightenment; freedom.

*Drawer gains 1 point of wisdom and is freed of all charms, suggestions, possessions, and other spells subjecting him to the will of another; he will give away all nonessential possessions at the end of this expedition (clothing and jewelry items of less than 500 gp value may be given to player characters or NPCs; all else will go to religion and charity).*

### THE DEVIL OF THE TAROT

FREQUENCY: Unique

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: See below

MOVE : 9"/15"

HIT DICE/POINTS: See below

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 4 or by weapon type

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-4/1-4/1-2/1-2

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Feet claw for 1-4/1 -4; surprise (see below)

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Can be attacked only by drawer

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 15%

INTELLIGENCE: See below

ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil

SIZE: See below

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil

The Tarot Devil appears as shown on the deck being used except that it has the face and gender of the drawer. It has the armor class, hit points, "to hit" rolls, weapons and magic items, intelligence, and size of the drawer as well. If the drawer fails to save vs. death magic, he will be surprised by the Devil, for as many segments as the saving throw was short. The devil fights with a claw/claw/horn/horn routine, and if it scores two claw hits during a single round of melee it will also rake with its feet claws in that round for 1-4 points each. When either the drawer or the devil is slain, the devil will disappear with all of its effects, but the drawer will receive 15,000 experience points. If the drawer is killed in this combat, the experience-point gain is applied to the character's total if and when he is raised from the dead.

### 16: The Tower

A tall square Tower topped with a crown is being struck by lightning, which topples the crown but leaves the tower standing. Hurtling (from its windows; it has no doors) earthward are two persons

(presumably a man and a woman) in rich garments, along with showers of sparks and debris; they are stunned to see their Tower of isolation and pride broken open by a stroke of fire from the heavens.

Upright, it signifies the overthrow of existing notions, the fall of pride; sudden and unlooked-for change; a perceived catastrophe which may bring enlightenment in its wake; the destruction of false concepts and ideas.

*Drawer loses one level (from the most advanced if a multi-classed character of uneven levels, choose randomly if equal; first-level drawer has experience points reduced to zero), all magic items, and all wealth, but drawer gains +1 to saving throws in a column of player's choice.*

Reversed, it signifies the same to a lesser degree; but also oppression, false imprisonment or accusations; living in a rut, inability to effect worthwhile change, being stuck in an unhappy situation.

*Reversed: Drawer loses one level (as above); also, for a year and a day he will not be able to gain a new level, regardless of experience points accumulated.*

### 17: The Star

A vast, flamboyant Star of eight points is surrounded by seven similar stars. In the foreground, a young woman rests one foot on land and one upon the waters, as from two identical jugs she pours the Water of Life both upon the land and into the larger body of water. Behind her is rising ground and a tree with a bird in it; in the distance are mountains.

Upright, it represents inspiration freely flowing, the gifts of the spirit, the fruits of meditation, understanding, hope; good health and pleasure; granting of wishes.

*The next time the drawer, after having earned enough experience points to advance to the next level, spends an hour or more under a clear and starlit sky, he will feel inspiration pour down upon himself from the very stars, and will find that the next level has been gained without formal tutoring. Drawer also gains a +2 to saving throws vs. mental illness.*

Reversed, it signifies pessimism, doubt; chance of illness; arrogance, haughtiness, stubbornness; lack of perception.

*Drawer becomes so smug, arrogant, and skeptical a pupil, he will require*

*twice the usual amount of tutoring before any new level can be obtained. This change is permanent.*

### 18: The Moon

The crescent Moon radiates its deceptive brightness upon a dim and foreboding landscape. In the pool which fills the foreground lurks a crayfish (or other creature from the abyss); beyond this two dogs (or a dog and a wolf) bark and howl at the Moon, which sheds a cryptic dew upon them. In the background are two towers, and a path leads from the pool to the goal beyond these towers.

Upright, it signifies the "dark night of the soul": trickery, deception, secret foes; unforeseen perils; bad luck for a loved one; danger, darkness, terror, occult forces; danger of falling into a trap or being misled, great danger of making an error.

*Drawer must make a saving throw vs. death magic or fall prey to lunacy at the next full moon (see DMG, p. 84). If the save is made, drawer must then save vs. polymorph or succumb to lycanthropy (as a werewolf) upon the next full moon. If both saves are made, a henchman or servitor (at random) will become disloyal over the next five turns (reduce loyalty and reaction rolls by 21-54% [3d12+18]).*

Reversed, it signifies peace gained at a cost; instability; lesser degrees of deception or betrayal, trifling errors.

*The best magic item in the possession of the drawer is permanently drained of all magical properties; if drawer has no magic, he will lose 20% of all experience points earned on this adventure.*

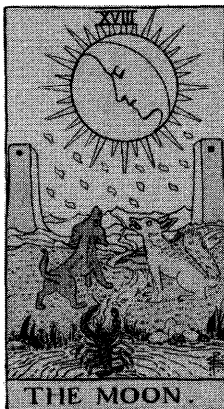
### 19: The Sun

The Sun in its splendor shines benevolently down, either upon a pair of children playing blithely and simply together, or upon a single child riding a white horse and waving a scarlet banner. The innocent children (pair or single) are playing in front of a walled-in garden which they have left behind.

Upright, it signifies happiness, success, contentment (particularly in marriage); achievements and studies completed, liberation to enjoy the simple pleasures; devotion, friendship.

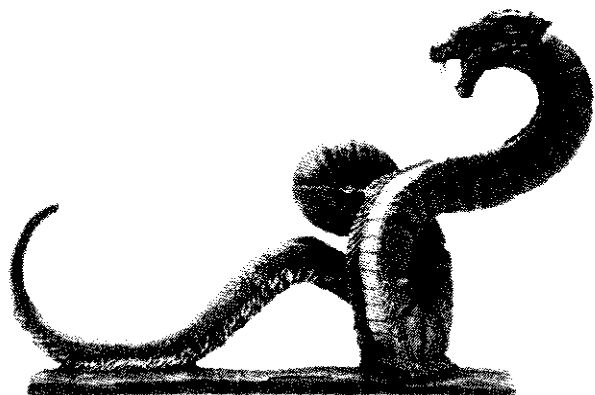
*Drawer receives enough experience*

*(Continued on page 50)*



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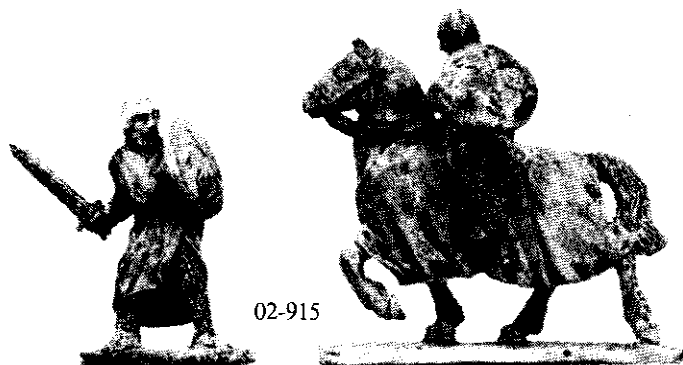
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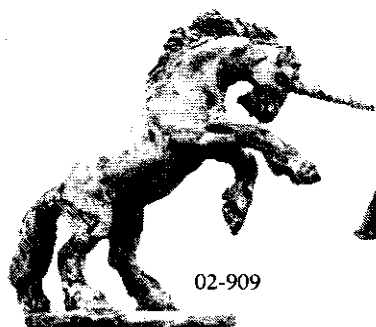
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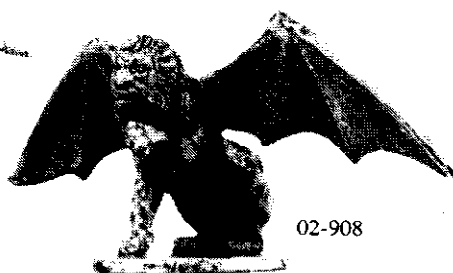
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# The ecology of the unicorn

by Roger Moore

"You would know about the unicorn?" asked the dryad. Her green eyes widened. "You are a hunter?"

After I assured her that I bore no weapons or armor, and sought to learn about the unicorn for my own curiosity, the dryad looked at me with head tilted. "Most of the mortal folk hunt the Free One for its horn, the magical horn, they would slay it, take its horn, iron in their hands and ice in their hearts, and we who loved it are left with the body, such is the way of the mortal folk. Long the Free One runs, far the Free One travels, deep the Free One hides from the mortal folk. The horn is its heart as the unicorn is the forest's heart, would you run if mortals chased you for your heart?" In such a way did the dryad speak, her words and sentences running together like water in a stream.

I bowed my head to hear this; I was not a killer. It seemed the dryad saw this: she bade me sit with her on a mossy stone for a while, and she told me of the unicorn.

The unicorn, she said, is many things. No two people will see the same unicorn, though one may be seen by many. Mortals see it and call it shy, fierce, proud, free, the spirit of magic, the spirit of unconformity, the symbol of purity, truth, change, goodness, chaos, innocence, grace, beauty, secrecy, and a thousand other things. There is truth in each of these, but each of them alone is not enough, and all the words that could be spoken would not a unicorn describe.

To human eyes the unicorn is less like a horned horse than is generally believed; it is smaller and more graceful than a horse, and far more beautiful. Unicorns are generally white in color, though some claim to have seen gray, black, silver and gold ones, and one or two adventurers speak of spotted ones. Their horns are most often a mother-of-pearl color, giving off a rainbow of hues in the sunlight; again, there are reports of silver, gold, and black horns as well. The cloven hooves of the creature are gray or silver. All unicorns have a wild silken mane that flashes in the wind as they run, a tail like a lion or wild boar, and a beard like a goat. Some say, though, that the strangest part of a unicorn is its eyes, for they are many colors at once and change even as one looks at them. No one can well remember the color of a unicorn's eyes.

You will find in the world learned sages who tell you the unicorn is not exceptionally bright, and that if you could converse with one you would get

little more than if you'd spoken with an average man who had lived in the woods all of his life. Yet little do mortal folk know of what a unicorn truly thinks. They are older than the calendars most mortals keep, and wiser than most sages. Their knowledge is not of building fires and laying stone, but of the nature of living things, the wisdom learned from watching the stars pass in the night, the endless cycle of nature repeated again and again yet differently every time. They know what is in the heart of a man or a woman, and can read meaning into the turn of the wind, the fall of a leaf, the sigh of a child, meanings no one else knows. Dearly they love secrets, and dearly they keep them.

It may be said that a unicorn lives for itself. It will defend its wood and its friends, but it exists for its own sake and serves no one but its own will. Even magic is powerless to control them; their wildness is too great to be constrained by a *dweomer*. They eat when it pleases them and sleep when they like; they feast on tender grasses and honeysuckle, sweet roots and bark, and some say they can draw energy from drinking the winds if they need. It is known that the best place to see a unicorn is near a still pond, for they love to look at themselves reflected therein; a vanity, perhaps, but they are entitled to it as well as anyone.

It is true, too, that unicorns are strong. Theirs is an endless strength; they may run for days without tiring at full speed, passing the winds and flashing through even the densest forest growth. "Chasing the unicorn," the common folk say when they mean someone is wasting time; "catching a unicorn," they say of someone doing the impossible.

The powers of the unicorn's horn are debated by serf and king alike. It is known that unicorns cannot be poisoned, and that the horn will protect a man, though to lesser effect, from toxins of all kinds. Yet there are always tales of other, hidden magicks that the horn can perform. A ranger will remember a unicorn coming upon him as he lay dying in the woods of a goblin's arrow; the unicorn but touches the infected wound and it is healed at once. A lost child, when found, will tell of seeing a "one-horned deer" who cured his sicknesses from eating wild mushrooms or berries with a tap of its horn, then guided the child home again. There is even a legend that two lovers, chased into a forest by their enraged families, fell from a low cliff and one of them

was slain; the survivor would have died of grief but heard a low sound, and beheld a unicorn coming, who touched the other one once and restored the lost one to life before fleeing. What can be made of all this is beyond even the sages to say; but clearly, one should never take a unicorn for granted.

A unicorn runs more like a deer than a horse, travelling in great leaps that clear the height of a man at times. Because of their speed, there are precious few creatures who will ever get close to one without its permission, and fewer still since unicorns have a magical intuition about the approach of anyone who has evil thoughts or has the intention of harming them. Unicorns avoid all but those of good heart and those who love the forests; the rest see little more than their tails flicking as they leap into the distance, and often they will see nothing of them at all; unicorns love to hide and can be more quiet than an empty cathedral when they want to be.

No one knows how old unicorns become. The dryads say that it is rarer for the moon to turn blue than for unicorns to mate, and the birth of a foal is cause for riotous joy among all the inhabitants of a unicorn's wood. Some elven folk remember tales of their ancestors of generations before, telling of the same unicorn those elves see now, which if true means that unicorns live for thousands of years. The dryad I spoke with had known two unicorns, and neither of them knew how old they were, much less how much time had passed since the week before. If time means little to elves, it means nothing at all to unicorns, and each day to them is special and new. The chaos in them casts boredom aside; a unicorn can watch the same event over and over, and each time will see something new about it to hold its interest.

Who befriends a unicorn? Everyone knows that a maid, old or young, who is good at heart will stand a fair chance of seeing and perhaps even touching a unicorn. Sometimes it happens that the maid may even gain the unicorn's agreement to serve her as a steed, and the unicorn will be faithful to her for as long as the maid is good; the unicorn will suffer no one else to ride it, however, and may not even let the maid ride it if the maid comes to believe she is the unicorn's master. No one is the master of a unicorn.

Druids also like unicorns, not so much for their goodness (druids also like green dragons) but because unicorns are so



much a part of the forests the druids protect. At times a unicorn may give aid to a druid, but always it is because the unicorn chooses to do so, not from any compulsion the druid may exert by charm. Rangers and unicorns seem to do well together, and unicorns will even let themselves be seen by male rangers and touched by them, though only female rangers may ride them. Good bards are known to chase after unicorns, and mad chaotic bards as well; the sight of a unicorn brings bards to tears, and they will write volumes and volumes of poems and tales and songs about their beauty, and recite them every chance they get.

Of the true woodland folk, faeries and elves are among a unicorn's closest friends, and some of them even have speech with unicorns. Dryads, satyrs, nymphs, pixies, and sprites see them often enough, and it is said that treants, who may be the only beings to live longer than unicorns, know more unicorns personally in their lifetimes than any human could guess at. All of the true wood folk except the evil ones love the unicorn and would throw down their lives for it, and even the evil ones would not cause it harm; unicorns are fearful when aroused for fighting, and have slain ogres and worse with a single thrust of their whorled horns.

Who is a unicorn's foe? It is true that

they avoid all who are evil, and who would cause them harm. Yet it is also true that those who are selfish and petty, who desire dominion over their fellows, and who are blind to the godness and innocence of childhood will never see the horned one. If one cannot see beyond the reach of his own grasping hands, he will wander the forests of the world and see nothing at all but trees.

Such was the tale the dryad told me, and I was utterly silent as I heard it, and afterward. I felt the wonder in me rising and my thoughts were adrift; the dryad seemed to know it and she laughed.

"Stranger, I have told you that a thousand words could not say what the sight of one unicorn can, and you look as if you've seen one a'ready."

"Your story has caused it," I replied, embarrassed. "I am no one like a bard or a prince or a ranger; I am a wanderer and the road is my home. I have heard many tales and seen many strange beings in my years, but never such a creature as you have told me."

The dryad's eyes twinkled merrily. "And if you were to see one, what would you do?"

I thought for a moment and laughed myself. "In truth I have no idea. Perhaps all in all, I would do nothing but wonder at it. Beautiful things are rare in the world, and, for myself, to be lucky

enough to see a unicorn would be all I could ask."

"Lucky thou are, then," said the dryad. "Look over your shoulder, slowly and with care." Her eyes were shining like stars and her face glowed with awe. She was looking behind me.

For all of my life I remembered that moment, as I watched her face and it dawned on me what she meant. In that moment I had an awareness of someone near me, very close to me, someone I had sought all my life. Even though I am older now than almost any man, I still remember the last few seconds before I turned around, and in the light filtering through the leaves and in the silence of the primeval wood, beheld the unicorn.

#### APPENDIX

Unicorns are also known as alicorns, monocorns, and have the technical name of *monoceros* in sages' texts.

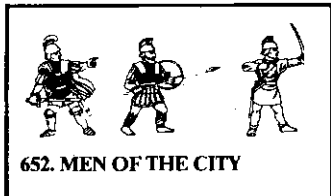
If desired, the awe effect of seeing a unicorn may be simulated by giving them a charismatic power that causes all creatures and beings with less than one hit die to be rendered immobile upon seeing one for 1-3 rounds; more powerful creatures will be able to act normally, but the sight of a unicorn will still affect them deeply in some manner. Good beings will love and admire them, neutral ones will seek to control or capture them, and evil



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ones usually hate them, for the unicorn's beauty reminds them of the ugliness of their souls.

Unicorns may be treated as having a 25 wisdom for purposes of immunity to *charm* and *hold* spells or powers, as per the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedic; *animal friendship*, *snare*, *trip*, and *sleep* spells, as well as any other enchantment/charm spells, do not affect them either. They will note a *hallucinatory forest* for the illusion that it is. Being immune to *death* spells covers all enchantment/charm, conjuration/summoning, or necromantic spells that cause death with or without saving throws (including *finger of death*, *destruction*, *symbol of death*, and *power word, kill*).

If desired, a unicorn may be able (once per day or less often than that) to simulate one beneficial clerical spell of any level with a touch of its horn. The effect of this touch will take place instantly. Unicorns will only use this power if another creature or being is *in extremis*; DMs should use this power with care.

The *dimension door* power of a unicorn will only rarely be used, but it takes effect instantly at the unicorn's desire. A unicorn could, for instance, vanish just a moment before being struck by an arrow or weapon if it was aware of the object's approach, and could even evade a *fireball* as it travelled on its way.

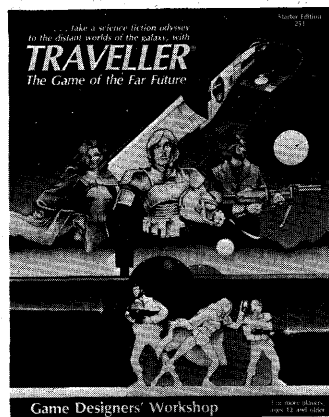
The druid spell *call woodland beings* is

not considered a *charm-type* spell; it does not put the unicorn under any compulsion to obey the druid, any more than any other creature called must obey the druid. A summoned unicorn will be aware that a druid is "calling" for assistance and may decide to help (represented by the saving throw vs. spell). In no case will a unicorn approach nearer than 24" from a druid if the presence of any enemy (an evil character or a hunter of unicorns) is sensed, and a unicorn will *dimension door* away if necessary to escape a trap.

Interestingly, lower-level druids have a marginally better chance to summon a unicorn for aid (using *call woodland beings*) than higher-level druids; this says something (indirectly, at least) about the unicorn. The way the spell is moderated, a lower-level druid has a better chance of *failing* to attract those woodland creatures mentioned ahead of the unicorn on the list, which means the chances for that druid to *succeed* in calling a unicorn (the last entry in the sequential list of possible creatures) are correspondingly better. And in the long run, a unicorn is more liable to heed the summons of a lower-level druid because (a) the druid is relatively more likely to need help and (b) a lower-level druid would not be seen as much of a potential threat to a creature as powerful and versatile as the unicorn. ™

-for Cassandra and all the others,  
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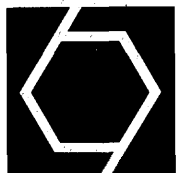
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# CURSES!

## Twenty good ideas for bad tidings

by Ed Greenwood

The excitement of curses in the AD&D™ game – danger and uncertainty for characters, and fun for the Dungeon Master – can contribute much energy to humdrum dungeon exploration, and unsettle those all-powerful, “expert” characters (to say nothing of their players!).

But, some of the curses suggested in the rules are more grim than exciting (cf. *bestow curse* spell description), and many others, such as those suggested for cursed scrolls and the *flask of curses*, are a mite too powerful for low-level characters, tending to be instantly fatal or having long-lasting effects on play. Here are some suggested curses of lesser power, for DMs who wish to be relatively fair and want to continue to be tolerated by their players:

1) Recipient of curse (character reading scroll or otherwise directly activating a curse, or who is touched by a *bestow curse*) is surrounded by a vivid yellow or orange *faerie fire* that lasts up to 2 turns unless dispelled (for which *dispel magic*, *limited wish*, or similar magic is required).

2) Most valuable magic item(s) of party (DM's choice as to which and how many) teleport away. These items should not travel far, and their new location – in the same dungeon, or perhaps in a nearby but unexplored area – should be revealed in hazy visions to characters employing augury, etc. A *locate object* spell would have its usual effect.

3) All drawn or held weapons are snatched from every character's grasp and *levitate* upward to the ceiling (if no ceiling, continue upward for 100 feet or more, at the DM's option), remaining aloft there for 1-4 turns. If a creature is hit by a falling weapon, the item should do

considerable damage (5d6 base suggested, more if falling from a great height; those who save vs. dexterity on d20 by rolling their dexterity or less take no damage).

4) *Reverse gravity* takes effect on curse recipient (one character), lasting for 2 rounds, with attendant injury (1d6 per 10 feet fallen, or refer to issue #70 of DRAGON® magazine for the “new,” more severe damage system) unless fall avoided.

5) One (or more) spell casters in the party “forget” a spell (DM's choice), losing it instantly from their minds.

6) A slithering tracker close by is alerted to the party's presence and location.

7) Any gold carried by the party when the curse is activated turns instantly to lead; anything inside a magic item such as a *bag of holding*, *Bucknurd's everfull purse*, or *Leomund's tiny chest* is unaffected.

8) One piece of paper (scroll, map, page of spell book, etc.) carried by the party (or in the same room at the time) is *erased*, becoming instantly blank.

9) A familiar or similar animal accompanying the party (pack mule, paladin's warhorse, etc.) is promptly injured in a freak accident such as a fall, being struck by aerial debris or driven into an obstruction by a gust of wind, pricked and/or torn by thorns, struck by falling stones or caught on collapsing pavement or stairs. This accident should disable the beast, inconveniencing the party.

10) One charge is lost from a magic item (perhaps with a visible aura bursting into light about the item to give away the event or, conversely, the loss can occur without warning or apparent effect).

11) One character (DM's choice or at random) is *confused* (6 rounds) or *feble-minded* or loses consciousness (2-8 rounds) immediately, in all cases with total spell loss if the affected character is a spell caster.

12) One or more characters (DM's choice or at random) begin to *hallucinate*. Such visions will include at least one monster (treat as illusionist spell *shadow monster*, of up to 12 hit dice, but invisible to others).

13) Constant noise accompanies party for 1-4 turns (or days!); for example, thunderous echoes of any words anyone in the party speaks.

14) Any one magical item (of the DM's choice) carried by the party will act as a *wand of wonder* (see table in DMG for effects) when next activated.

15) Recipient of curse is turned to stone. (This state lasts only 1-4 turns, but to withstand the initial transformation, the recipient must make a system shock survival roll.)

16) One magic item in the party's possession (DM's choice or at random) is activated and/or animated to attack the party or members thereof, for one discharge or one successful “to hit” – with full normal effects.

17) One or more protective magic items (i.e. *ring of regeneration*, *ring of protection*, *bracers of defense*, magic armor) will cease to magically function for 2-12 rounds.

18) One party member will *blink* (as in the third level magic user spell) for 5-20 rounds, unable to stop and with no control over locations reached.

19) If individual or party is in open terrain, an uncontrollable storm is brought into being within 3-6 rounds; it will break with multiple lightning bolts (3d6 variety) discharging at random. Roll d6 once per round for 8 rounds; on every result of 5 or 6, a bolt comes to earth; every armored party member must save vs. breath weapon at +2 to avoid being struck. A bolt may fork and strike more than one party member in a round.

20) One member of the party is instantly *paralyzed* for 4-16 rounds (rigidly immobile, can breathe and blink eyes, but not speak).

The possibilities are endless; each DM knows his own players best, and can devise curses that are intriguing and add color and flavor to play. Don't let a curse be simply gloom and doom; make it interesting!

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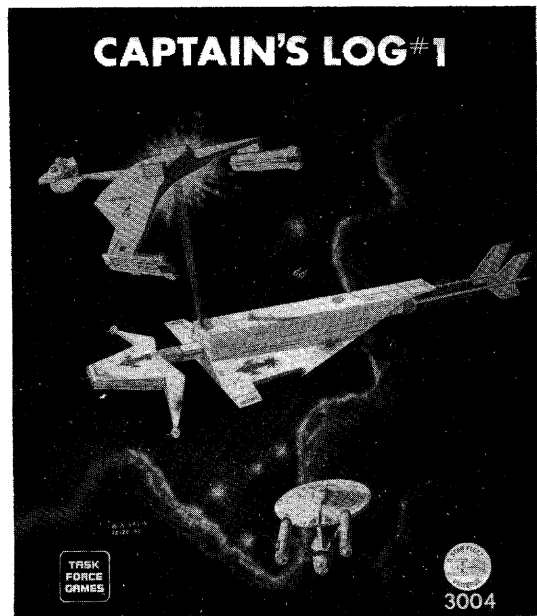
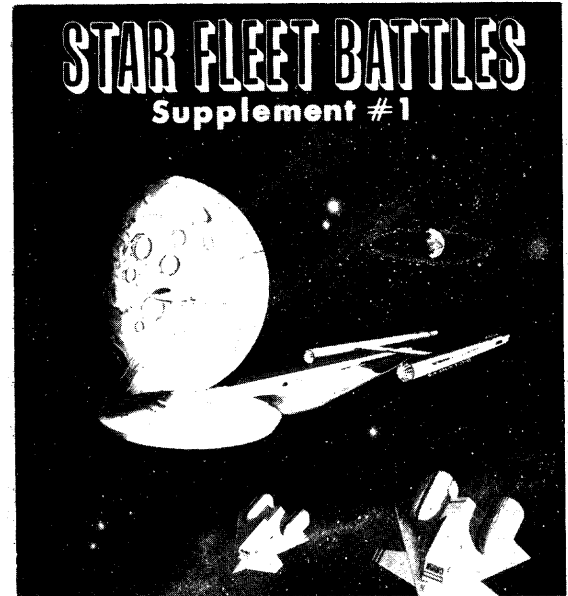
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# Nasty additions to a DM's arsenal

by Richard Fichera

Have you as a DM ever spent your creative energies putting a really fun (for you) cursed magic item in your dungeon, only to be faced with a player who can give you a complete inventory of them from the Dungeon Masters Guide? Even without this problem, there are so few malignly charmed articles that you could conceivably run out of tricks "from the book" to pull on your players. To fill this vacuum, here are a few additional items to pop into your campaign:

*Ring of gaseous form* - What would normally be a boon in potion form becomes the opposite when in the shape of a ring. It will operate exactly like the liquid, turning any character and all of his equipment, carried or worn, into an indefinable mist. While at first the player may be excited, his enthusiasm will quickly wane once he realizes that he can't find his finger to remove the ring. He will remain in gaseous form until the proper magics can be cast. While wearing the ring, the affected character will have all the abilities, and lack thereof, that are usually attributed to the potion, i.e., base movement at 3"/round; unharmable

except by magical fires, lightning, or whirlwinds; no combat ability; no spell casting abilities. The only way to remove this cursed ring is to cause the character to return to solid form by a *remove curse* spell cast upon the gaseous character (which will suppress the ring's effect for one turn) followed by a second *remove curse* before the character turns gaseous again. A single *wish* spell, properly worded, will also suffice, as will two *limited wishes* or a pair of castings of *alter reality*.

*Medallion of protection from thieves, 30' radius* - This ornately jeweled medallion, an item no greedy thief could possibly resist, is actually quite beneficial to the party - everyone, that is, except the thief. It is most effective if the filcher of the group is the first to spot it and decides to lift a little extra treasure for himself. Regardless of who is carrying this item, it will cause the thieving abilities (including back stabbing) of any thief or assassin character within 30' to drop to zero percent. Under no circumstances should the players be told of this predicament; all attempts by thieves to use their

abilities should be rolled by the Dungeon Master as normal, but all dice results should be ignored. Note that thieves will still have the usual 20% chance over the base rate (now zero percent) of going undetected on a pickpocketing attempt, although the actual attempt will still fail. Back stabbing becomes a normal rear attack (at +2) for purposes of the medallion's effects. It is always possible to take this item off, although it functions whether it is worn or carried.

*Helm of enemy nondetection* - This helm radiates magic if such is detected for, and is curious only in the fact that while it has a hinged visor, the visor is immovable, apparently stuck in the "up" position. The helmet can easily be put on and taken off until it is "triggered," which happens the first time any fighter wears it into actual combat. At this point, the visor will snap shut, and since it has no slits in it, this leaves the wearer blinded. Attacks will be made at -4 "to hit," and all attacks against the user are at +4 "to hit." The visor will automatically open once the battle ends or the character loses consciousness; however, at

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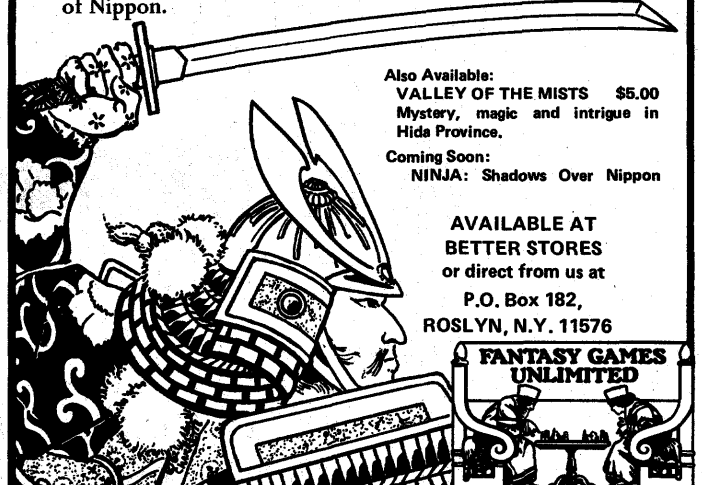
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this point the helm is not removable without a *remove curse* spell.


*Dagger of monster calling* - This little weapon operates just like a standard +1 dagger until it comes within sighting distance of any evil-intentioned monster.

Then it will begin calling out, in a very loud, high-pitched voice, to these nearby evil creatures in their native tongue, and will curse and insult them intolerably. If the encountered creature does not speak any language, the dagger will emit a screaming wail sounding remarkably like a poor, defenseless animal waiting to be eaten. This dagger can easily "teleport" into a character's possessions, like any cursed weapon, if the owner makes a simple attempt to discard it.

*Ring of hypochondria* - This ring may frustrate the most thorough of trial-and-error examinations, since it will do nothing for one week after the owner begins wearing it, although it will radiate magic (an *identify* spell may work to reveal its talents). Unlike most cursed rings, this ring is always removable. After the wearer has had the item on for the requisite week, he will believe himself to be suffering the symptoms of a randomly determined disease (see page 14 of the DMG). The symptoms will continue to be felt for one entire week once begun whether the ring is worn or not; note, however, that the disease itself is not actually present. If the ring is still worn

after the second week, a new randomly determined disease will be believed to plague the individual, but as before no actual disease will be present. This process will continue indefinitely, with the symptoms changing each week until the ring is taken off and left off permanently. Of course, there won't be a doctor anywhere who will be able to find anything wrong with the character. Other rings of this sort might provide +1 protection or some other minor magical benefit, making them of debatable usefulness.

*Arrows of conscientious objection* - These magical arrows absolutely refuse to fight. Once placed in a quiver or container with a character's regular arrows, they will transmute themselves to look exactly like the other arrows. Their difference will become obvious as soon as an archer attempts to use them. When one is fired, it will vanish only inches before striking a hostile target (doing no damage to the target). Since the cursed arrows have changed their appearance, it should be impossible to separate the mundane from the magical without a *detect magic* spell (and not even then, if the cursed arrows are in the same container with regular magical arrows). Twenty percent of these arrows will not vanish, but will turn into daisies just before reaching their destination (also doing no damage, of course, unless the creature has an allergic reaction).



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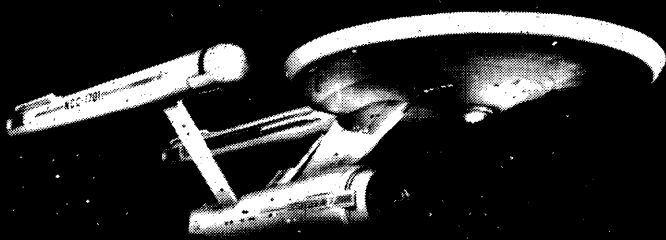
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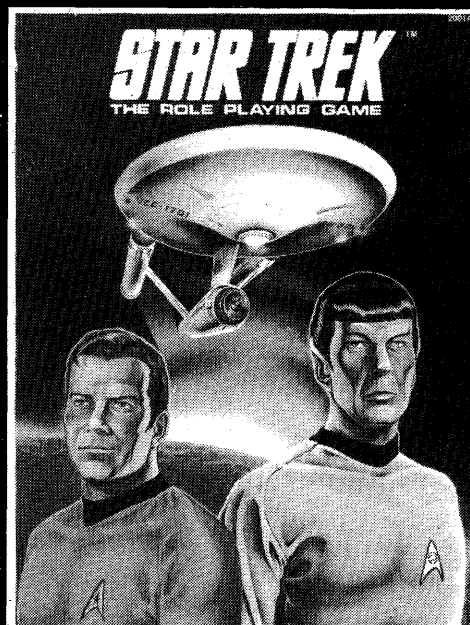
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# Elemental gods

## A four-part approach to campaign deities

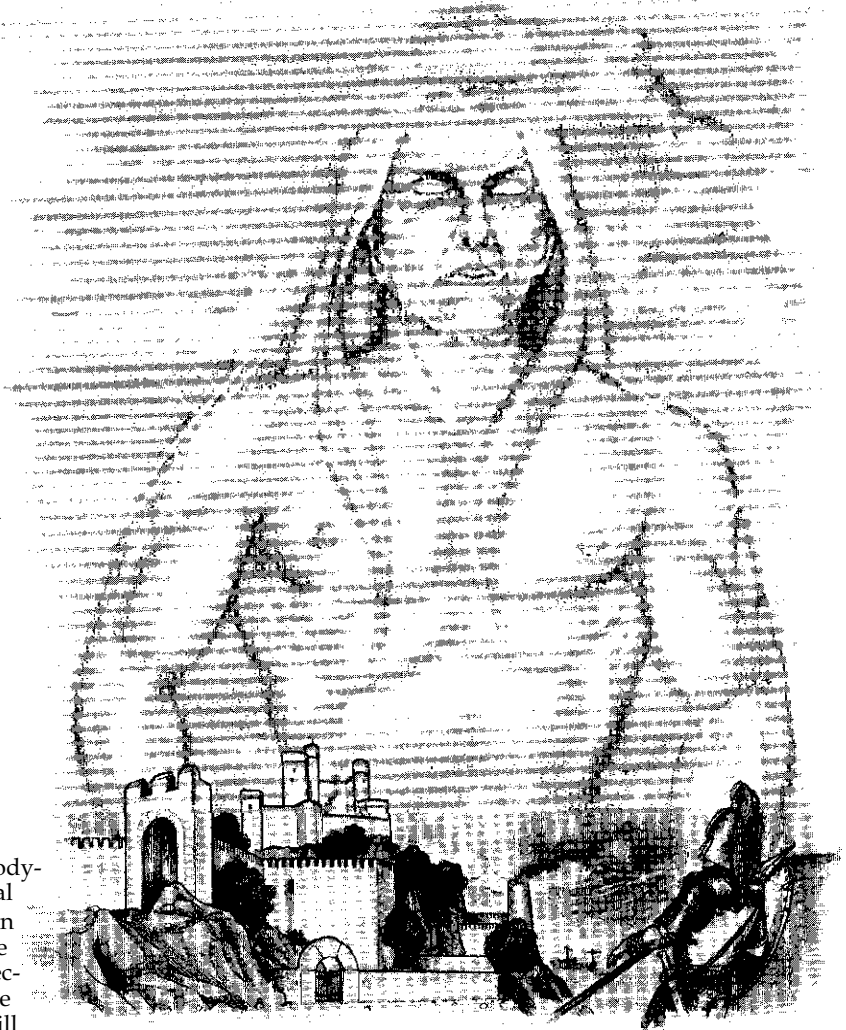
by Nonie Quinlan

Most role-playing game referees, in laying out their campaigns, have no trouble finding suitable gods. For "good-bloody-fun" campaigns, which include most FRP worlds, the general rule is: The more gods the merrier, and the more wars between the gods the better. In these warlike universes, gods should be killable by high-level characters and they should be clearly recognizable as belonging to one race and one alignment. On the other hand, campaigns designed for medieval authenticity will tend to reproduce the medieval church: a highly organized clergy, with a single abstract deity who never takes a direct part in the action.

But there is a third, rarer type of campaign that could be called the "high fantasy" style. It tends to involve consistent, non-anachronistic worlds; you will never hear "Frodo's Pizza Parlor, may I help you?" or "You . . . you mean this whole dungeon is one big pool hall?" The characters have real motivations, and will not jump into an abyss just to see how deep it is. They are part of an ongoing history which they respect; upon discovering a great hero's tomb, they will pour libations and pray for him, not try to figure out how to loot the tomb. The role-playing is well thought out, consistent and realistic, and the highest part of the game is not the loot and experience, but the sense of wonder.

Gods for such a campaign are hard to find. It is necessary that they be of a kind that a real person could take seriously, because the characters are going to be serious about their religious beliefs. The gods must be more than super-powered beings, because a strong and independent adventurer is not likely to worship a god just because the deity has more hit points than any others and better powers. On the other hand, it must be remembered that in the campaign world the gods are real, not simply manifestations of cultural religious beliefs; why would there be one god for gnomes and another for orcs? Fire is fire.

For the gods to be taken seriously by both the players and their characters, it is necessary that they be all-powerful, all-knowing, and truly immortal. For this reason they should not be assigned formal attributes; they need no armor class or hit points, because no creature of this world could harm them. They have infinite strength and unlimited power, and only the nature of what they rule constrains them; a god of fire will rarely control water.



Because they are so powerful, it is clear that they must not be hostile toward each other, or the world would have been destroyed in their first conflict. Their powers must be balanced, equal, and approximately at peace. For this reason, the four elements seem a good model for the nature of the gods, because the elements have always existed together without serious conflict. (Certainly water and fire, for example, may be mutually destructive on contact, but neither seems dedicated to locating and destroying the other, and both still exist as they always have.)

The requirement that the gods be at peace with one another also calls into question the assumption that a god has an absolute alignment. If there are truly good gods and truly evil gods, they will not endure each other's existence. But the elements, like any force of nature, unite both positive and negative aspects in themselves; without fire, civilization would barely exist, and yet fire is the great destroyer. And what could be more ambivalent than the life-giving, life-taking sea?

It is for these reasons that our local D&D® gaming group has developed a pantheon based loosely on the four elements and given them the characteristics described below.

### The nature of the gods

There are four gods: those of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. They are not hostile to each other, or to each other's followers. Each may be worshipped by someone of any race or alignment; they have many natures, and every worshiper may see them differently. They encompass opposites; good characters and evil ones may worship the same god, even if they pray at different fanes.

The gods are not limited in gender any more than in alignment; they may tend to be associated with one sex, but certain aspects will be of the opposite gender, or both, or none.

They rarely take an active hand in matters; they give power to their clerics and may answer prayers, but they do not wake up in the morning and decide to start a war. They are all-powerful, non-corporeal beings, but once in a while one aspect of a god may take apparently physical form and walk on the earth; even in that form they cannot be injured or constrained. The average character stands a good chance of seeing a god at least once in his life, which may seriously affect his religious beliefs.

### The nature of religion

In developing religion within a culture in a campaign using elemental gods, it must be remembered at all times that the gods are real and the people know it. Oaths sworn to the gods must be honored, or retribution will fall on the oathbreaker; this is an absolute law, as certain as a law of nature.

The gods do not demand worship. It is the nature of men to worship the divine, and so most men will perform religious rituals, offer prayer, and otherwise deliberately affirm their relationship to the gods. Other men may never perform an act of worship in their lives, but they too are aware that the gods exist. When the gods are clearly real, there can be no atheists.

In my campaign, I assume that each character has a closer tie to one of the gods than to the rest. It is to this god that the character prays most often, and this god is most likely to help the character in times of need. However, characters are not therefore hostile to the gods they don't worship, or even to other aspects of their own gods. They know the gods exist and they honor them, but each character's greatest devotion is given to his own deity. An analogy to this in our own world might be the tradition of patron saints.

Members of the priesthood, both spell-casting clerics and the little village priests who perform marriages and bless the crops, must be sincere in their beliefs, not hypocritical and avaricious, because the gods know the truth of their oaths of service. This is also true of such people as knights, kings, and judges; they may be mistaken or misled, but they must be true to their vows.

Details of religions vary from culture to culture, but the average man's life is much like what we would expect. He asks the priest's help with the rituals of birth, marriage, and death, and the priest's blessing on the spring planting or the launching of the fishing fleet, and he will later offer thanks for the harvest or the catch. With his family, he shares the lesser rituals of the table and the day's task, and alone in the night, or when he is greatly moved, he will speak to his god in spontaneous prayer. Belief will not dominate his life and his actions, but it will always be present, because he knows the gods are real.

### The Elements

A system of gods based precisely and exactly on the four elements is actually likely to be both dull and confusing. How worked up can someone get about the divinity of granite? And on the other hand, what element is a thunderstorm? The rain is Water, the wind Air, the lightning Fire. Is a volcano Earth or Fire? And what possible element is a human?

In our local gaming community, we have three established Dungeon Masters using a system of elemental gods, and several others just beginning. In no two campaigns are the gods entirely alike, because no DM uses a technically pure elemental system; if it were not colored by the personality of the gods and of their worshipers, it would be not a religion but a science. In the descriptions of the mythologies below, two campaigns' versions of each god are given to show how they can be varied according to each referee's desires.

A word of caution, from experience: Be careful about the tendency to use standard god-figures. It is almost automatic to assume that the Earth is a fertility god, the Fire a sun god, and so on. But these set-ups will degenerate quickly into monotony for players and DM unless the DM has a complete understanding of how they work, what opposed natures they represent, and how to make these "facts" real to the players. While I have had success with an Earth fertility goddess myself, it is an uphill struggle, and I have never seen a sun god well and interestingly handled

in a fantasy campaign. A certain amount of originality, if handled consistently, will yield a much richer and more fascinating system.

### The aspects of the gods

**The Earth:** In my campaign, the Earth is the goddess of birth and growth. She is primarily a deity of live soil rather than stone, and is responsible for farming and fertility. Called the Mare, she rules most animals except the wildest beasts that belong to the Air, and the animals of highest intelligence that share man's ability to choose their own gods. She is most worshipped by humans and halflings, but the elves know that she gives them their beloved forests, and the dwarves know that it is her strong hand that holds the stone roof over their heads and shelters them.

In her evil aspect, she rules the darker side of fertility; plague, poison and decay, and on the other hand sterility and famine.

Animals particularly associated with her are the mare, the bull, and the serpent, and her tree is the apple. Religious symbols and other objects made in her honor will often be made of copper or bronze, set with jade, carnelian, or amber. Her colors are green, brown, blood red, and harvest gold. In prayer, she might be addressed as Allmother, Giver of Gifts, Earthshaker, Bearer of Burdens, Mother of Horses, Shepherd of the Trees; in her darker aspects, Pourer of Poison, Barren Field, Mother of Vipers.

Another campaign in our group has a very different Earth goddess called the Bear, who is primarily a protector and defender; she is the goddess of good warriors (who in this world are gentle rather than fanatical), and she is the youngest and most personal and friendly of all the gods; not a mother goddess, but a beloved sister.

**The Air:** The Air god of my campaign is called the Raven, and he has two natures; even in his good aspects, he is the god of both the still air and the storm. In the first, he is the god of thought and speech, and thus of learning and music. Clerics who worship this aspect of the Air god tend to live contemplative lives of meditation.

In his second aspect, he is the god of storms and of wild things; stags and hawks, werewolves, berserkers, and the Wild Hunt. It is not far from this to his evil aspect, which rules insanity and the love of destruction. (It may seem difficult to unite poetic wisdom and cruel violence in one god, but a close look at Odin's character in Norse mythology will show a similar contradiction.)

The Raven's animals are primarily the wolf, the stag, and the hawk, and his tree is the pine. His metal is iron, his tones grey quartz and obsidian. His colors are grey and black; midnight blue in his sky aspects, pine-green and red as the Hunter. Some of his titles are: Shapeshifter, Teacher, Father of Wolves, Mask, Masterbard, Hunter, the Dark-Winged One.

In contrast to the wolf-like, masculine aspect of the Raven, another campaign sees the Air god more as a cat-figure, more Dionysus than Odin. This Air god is androgynous, playful, often malicious, and treacherous when angered.

**The Fire:** The Fire god in my campaign is worshipped as the Dragon, god of the forge. He is the patron of craftsmen, and especially of smiths. Dwarves have a particular love for the Dragon, but he is also responsible for the human's plowshare and the elf's harp. The Fire god is in many ways the god of civilization, because he is the god of tools; not just the hammer but also tools such as the loom, the saw, the net, and the cookfire. The Earth may be the goddess of creation, but the Fire rules creativity.

In his evil aspect he is the volcano and the forest fire; blind, uncaring destruction that can overwhelm a man or a city without noticing.

The animals of the Fire god are the dragon, the griffon, and the nightmare; his tree is the oak. Gold is his metal, and his stones are ruby, topaz, and all clear fire-colored gems. His colors are red, gold, and white. The Fire god is sometimes called Master



Craftsman, Forgefather, Goldenhand, the Maker, and also Firefang, Flaming Horse, Eater of Cities.

Another campaign has a very similar god, but he also rules magic and all the ways of the wizard, because magic is seen as a human act of creation and an act involving the use of skill, and the essence of magic in this campaign is fire.

**The Water:** Because of the connection of the moon and the tides, the Water goddess of my campaign is the ruler of light, and therefore of darkness. Called the Moon, she is the most revered of all the gods. She is the goddess of magic, worshipped most of all by elves and unicorns. Of all the gods, she is the most purely good and the most purely evil; both the holiest and unholiest of characters are her followers. She is the goddess of healing, the protector of the innocent, the goddess of justice and thus of war, when it is undertaken for noble reasons.

As the Dragon is the god of the hands of civilization, so she is the goddess of its heart and mind, and of the things that make humans more than mere beasts with tools. Thus, her evil aspect is the destroyer of civilization – not blind destruction, but careful, reasoned, and deliberate evil. One of the two greatest cities in my campaign world was brought to ruin by the deliberate designs of the Moon's evil worshippers, and a conflict fostered between two innocent races still smoulders centuries later.

The Moon's animals are the unicorn, the dolphin, and the gull; her tree is the birch. She is often represented as a horned hippocampus. Her metal is silver (mithral is said to be made from her tears), and her stones are pearl, sapphire and onyx. Her colors are black, white, blue, and green; as the goddess of magic, grey and purple are also her colors. Her titles include: Shepherd of Unicorns, White Lady, Silvershield, Protector, Lady of the Waters, Wavemantle, Shipbearer, and Fairest. In her evil aspect she is Deathgiver, Shipbreaker, Mother of Demons, Night's Queen, Drinker of Blood, and Mistress of the Abyss.

Another campaign has a different Water goddess. Called the

Old One, she is the goddess-of the ocean, in a world where the only land is a scattered group of islands. It is she, not the Earth, who gives men food and life, and she who withholds it. She is the creator and destroyer, the most terrible of elemental forces; oldest and strongest of the gods, she is the least human of them all, and to anger her is fatal. Even her clerics fear as well as honor her.

### Conclusion

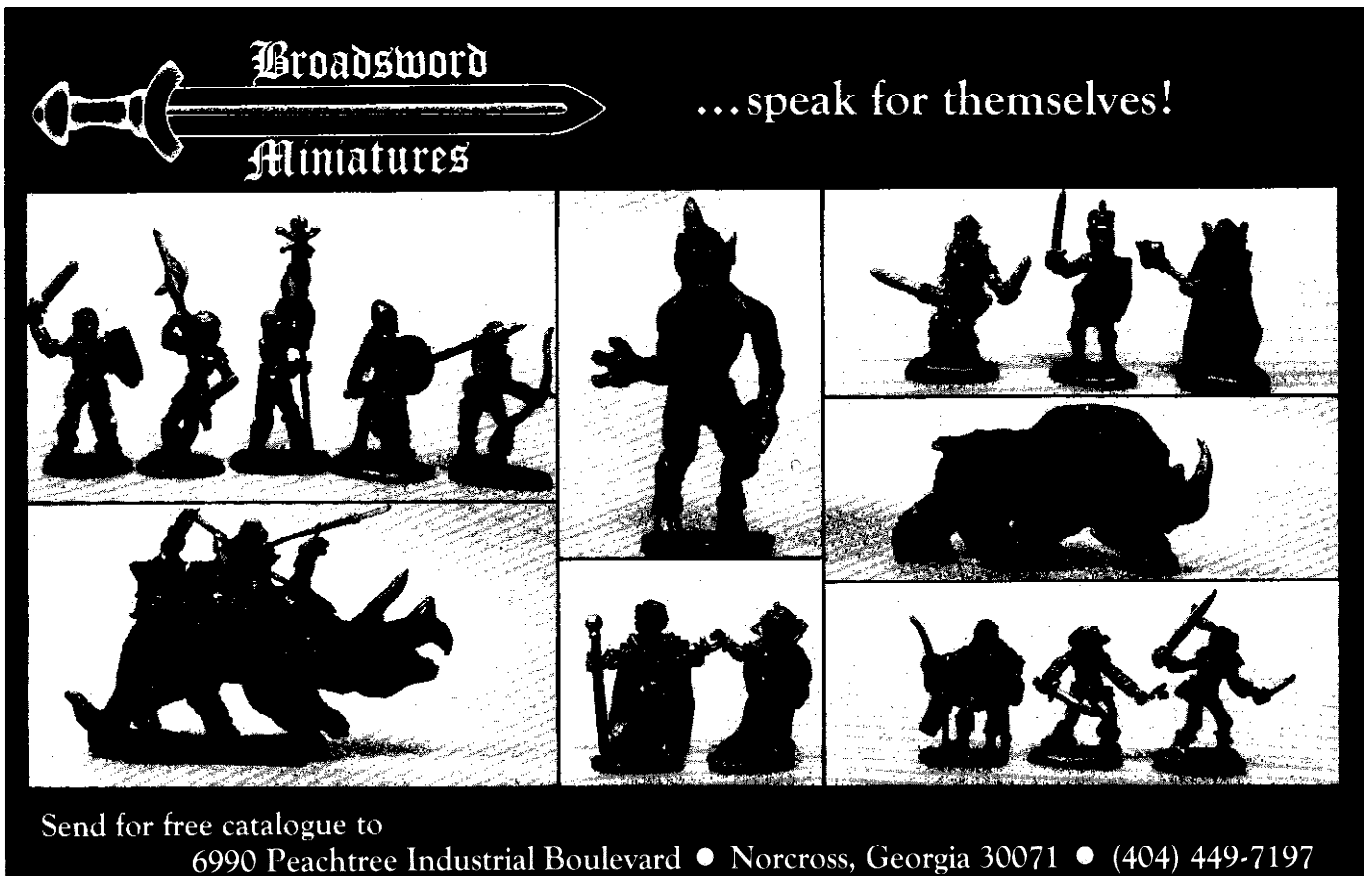
In the examples above the world has clearly shaped the gods, as the gods should shape the world. The details of these mythological systems are given only as an example of two such pantheons, not as a rule for all to follow. The great advantage of the elemental pantheon is flexibility in a framework of consistency.

If adapting such a system to your own campaign, consider seriously the geography and cultures involved. It can become an exercise in anthropology: If these people worshipped a fire god, how would they picture him? How are their beliefs like the beliefs of other cultures and races?

Above all, remember that in the campaign world the gods are real. Their worshippers are real. If the players are to maintain consistent characters within the world, then the gods must also be consistent, believable, and interesting, not just names and attributes to which a character pays lip service when necessary. They must be a living part of a living world.

Each campaign has its own style, and everyone thinks their own the best, but it seems safe to say that few players whose 50th-level characters manage to find and kill the evil god of gnomes have ever felt anything like the awe and the chill felt, not only by the characters but by the players, when, in troubled times in my campaign, the city of Arna looked out across its great bay and saw on a cold early morning, a long-forgotten masculine aspect of the Moon rise up from the waters to tower high above the world – his pearl-skinned body still waist-deep in the ocean while his streaming hair was crowned with clouds.

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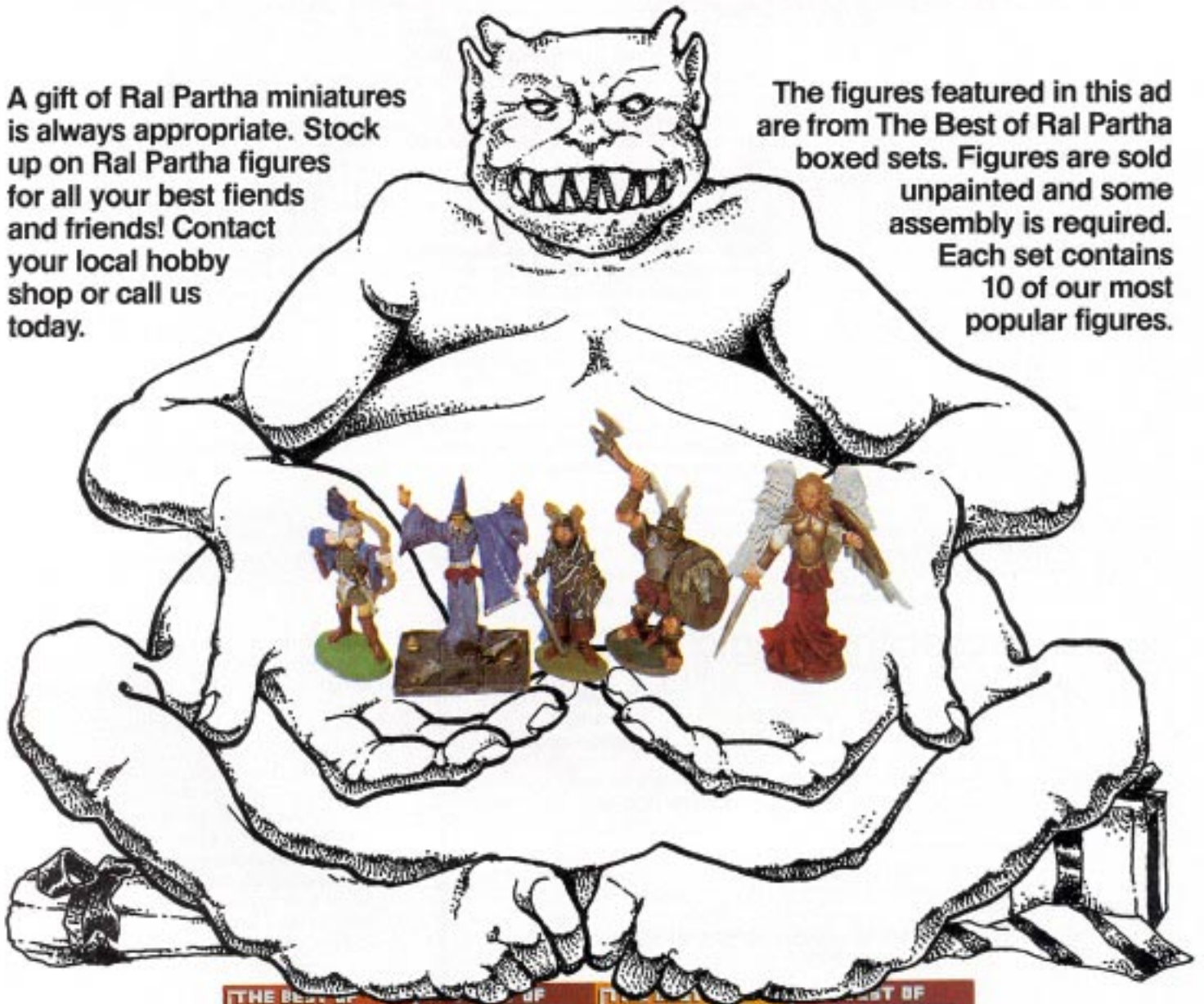
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# A new game with a familiar name

by Frank Mentzer

This summer and fall, TSR will release the newest version of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, revisions of the current Basic and Expert Sets.

"Again?" groans the hobby gamer, having seen the original "brown box" or white box" set evolve into the "blue book" edition which became the latest "red book" set.

"This one is different!" I reply.

"So were the others!" retorts the gamer. "Why change it again?"

Why indeed?

First and foremost: With the old set, you had to find someone to show you how to play. If you merely bought the rules and tried to learn. . . . Well, all kidding aside and facing the brutal, blunt truth, the big problem was that after buying the game, you couldn't learn to play.

A few experienced gamers could (and did) learn the game from the rules, but they were rare. While this fact would be fatal to the sales of an ordinary new game, it proved to be a minor obstacle in the case of the D&D® game. It was offset by a devoted following, people who

taught newcomers the ways of role-playing; it was bypassed by the extraordinary nature of this new type of gaming, and its incredible impact on the hobby. And so it grew, essentially unchanged, for years; one major effort to reorganize this mass of evolving, growing game data was made by the noted author J. Eric Holmes, who edited the 1978 "blue book" edition.

And the game inspired others. The man known as EGG (either E. Gary Gygax or Excellent Good Guy, depending on your point of view) wrote the detailed, highly technical ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. Many other fantasy role-playing games appeared, dealing with the topic in a variety of ways. Other topics were also addressed; we now see a wide spectrum of topics: wild west, science fiction, science fantasy, spies and espionage, gangsters, and other themes in role-playing form.

Enough of history; why another edition of the D&D game? Simply, the previous editions were not revisions. They were new attempts at using the same methods of organization applied to the original

data plus evolution. They were not "revised," merely "reorganized." This one is different.

For openers, you can play the game alone. That's a big step forward in itself; up to now, you had to have someone to run it, and someone else to play it. TSR is working on solo modules to support this technique; the M-1 module is already out. (Yes, I realize that other FRP games can be played solo. Agreed, this is just for openers. Stay with me.)

Secondly, you can start playing without learning the rules. (Huh?) There are two booklets in the set, one for beginning players and the other for novice Dungeon Masters. Everyone starts with the Players Guide; it begins with a tale about a fighter. You pretend that you're this character, and he/she comes equipped, ready to go.

During the adventure, many things happen - a giant snake bites you, a cleric is found; the cleric cures you, explains a few things, and turns some undead. An impassable locked door shows the need for a thief, and a magic-user attacks you in the grand finale. And by the time the story ends, you've seen how most of the game system works. You haven't read pages of rules, and you haven't been swamped by charts and tables; you've merely read an entertaining fantasy story.

From that point, the booklet explains how to use a character sheet, describing each part. Then you can start another adventure - but for this one, you make the decisions. A small dungeon setting contains a variety of monsters, tricks and traps, incorporating an easy introduction to mapping. By the time you're done, you know how to play, when and what to roll, and so forth. Lastly, the Players Guide explains how to play in groups, a few more options for your character, and pre-made characters of other types.

The Dungeon Master's Rulebook builds on what you learn in the Players Guide. To play in a group, the new DM uses a step-by-step adventure given there; it includes what things you should say and ask, and when and what to roll. A later section called "Procedures" covers most details that are needed. The DM rulebook also contains the "usual" monsters and treasures, gives a complete first level dungeon with maps for the rest (and guidelines for filling it), and explains how to make more dungeons.

Of course, it took a lot more than the previous 64 pages to do all this; it took over 100, counting both booklets. For financial reasons, the module had to go; EGG's "Keep on the Borderlands" is not

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in the revised edition, nor is any other module. But the "play value" remains; the solo and group adventures offer great amounts of playing time, and were designed specifically to help you learn to play. And with the redesigned set, more purchasers will be able to use the rules in the first place. We could have kept the module in and kicked the price up, but we'd like to keep the cost down where everyone can afford it.

It's not really a set for experienced gamers. It's for those friends of yours, the ones who just haven't gotten around to trying the game. It's for that younger (or older!) brother or sister who might like to try it, or even for parents, (Hey, parents are people, too. They might want to understand those terms you keep using, like "a-cee" and "hit points" and so forth. Don't expect them to play as often as you do, or necessarily as well; but if they read the new Basic Set, they might surprise you!) This set is for the non-gamer novices who might play a few card games or board games, but who seem to think that role-playing is too complicated. Well, it is a lot more complex than Old Maid, but it's a heckofalot simpler than it used to be - with the revised D&D Basic Set.

The artwork is outrageously good. I remember seeing those cute little sketches in the Original set, and the "great new pictures" in the "blue book"; and the

"red book" was even better. Well, hang on to your eyeballs, because a couple of guys named Larry Elmore and Jeff Easley did most of the art in the Players Manual. Elmore's the guy who did the cover for DRAGON® magazine (issue #62) showing the paladin facing the three orcs, with the mountains in the background . . . state-of-the-art fantasy graphics. He also did the covers for the first few ENDLESS QUEST™ Books. And Mr. Easley is about three brush hairs behind Mr. Elmore in quality, and moving up fast.

And we've got a new department at TSR, a group called "Product Finishing." In the old days, we just slapped the games on paper as best we could, and rolled 'em out the door. But the big-time game makers do it right; they make the games as pretty as they are playable. The best chefs make food look as good as it tastes; it then tastes even better (a bit of applied psychology). This applies to everything that people buy; we like to buy pretty things. In the publishing biz, there are professionals at this sort of thing, called "Product Finishing" people. So they got to work on Basic and figured out ways to make it all look delicious.

I changed almost nothing in the actual Basic game rules. The spell progressions for clerics and magic-users were a little lopsided, so I fixed those, but they'll only affect Expert-level play and up. I inverted the game mechanic for "opening doors";

now they open on 5-6 (on 1d6), and you just add your strength bonus to the roll. So minor things like that have been changed, for easier play, but the rest stands. It's just presented differently, a bite at a time, until you find that you've digested the whole thing, and it's easy. Or at least edible.

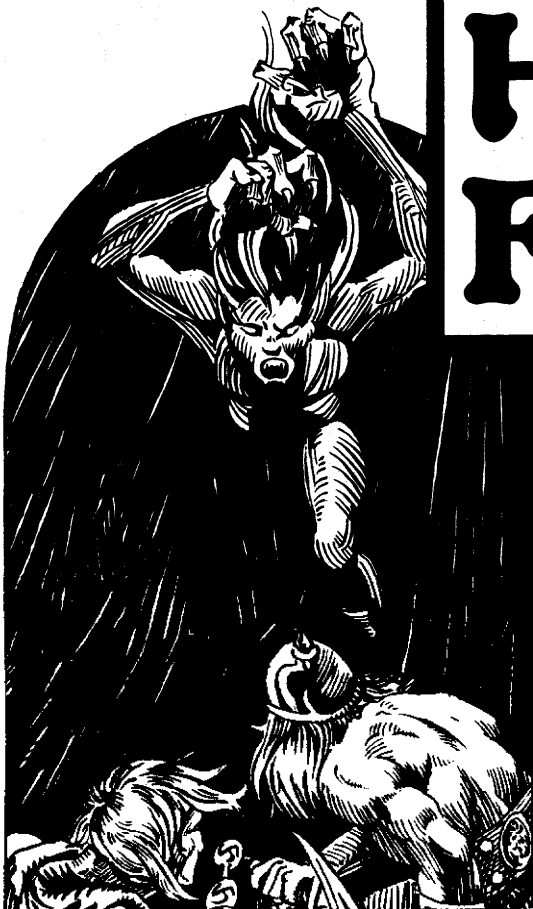
The D&D Expert Set should be out in late summer or early autumn. I took the fantasy world from module X-1, as described by Dave "Zeb" Cook, shook it once or twice, and got the basis for a fantasy world for the whole D&D game system. (You could call Zeb a game designer, much as you could call an artifact a "magic item"; technically correct, but not

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forceful enough. With a foundation like his, the thing almost builds itself.)

The Expert Set includes spells and character details for levels 4-14. It describes a "Home Town" for the characters, and gives a few plot outlines for DMs to develop in to interesting adventures. It covers the same things it used to, plus a few more details on campaign-type games. As for rules - instead of just saying "here they are," the book tells you how to apply them.

All the "B" and "X" modules can be located on the territory map, and future modules should all fit nicely - a ready-made campaign. Notes on designing your own areas are also included. The guidelines are general but thorough, enough so that existing AD&D game DMs may want to get the set.

All of this material has been crammed into the same amount of space; Zeb's "Isle of Dread" module will still be in the set, and the rules booklet will still be 64 pages. No price increase is expected in the near future. But I wouldn't count on that for long; you'd be wise to get a set soon, before paper and printing costs force an increase. There hasn't been a price change for a good while, but all things must pass.

Now I'm working on the rest of the D&D game system, planning and outlining what is to come in Set #3, Companion, and #4, Masters. The old Gods,

*Demigods & Heroes* book is due for revision, too. I'm lucky enough to get large chunks of EGG's time, for brainstorming sessions and design approvals, and Francois Froideval is adding his creativity to the projects. He's already done a map of the globe, with all the continents and things, and the area described in Expert is in one small corner of the world, the starting point for epic adventure.

Humans can work their way up to level 36 (15-25 in the Companion Set, 26-36 in Masters). All characters can either travel or settle down to rule their domains, living in and running their own castles. The demi-human Clanmasters have ancient secrets to be shared with their deserving PC kinfolk; magic-users consult with their brother wizards and discover new details of magical power. Paladins, knights, and druids roam the land, but are very different from their AD&D counterparts. And the Overlord reigns supreme - but only until deposed by some lucky, clever, and powerful player character.

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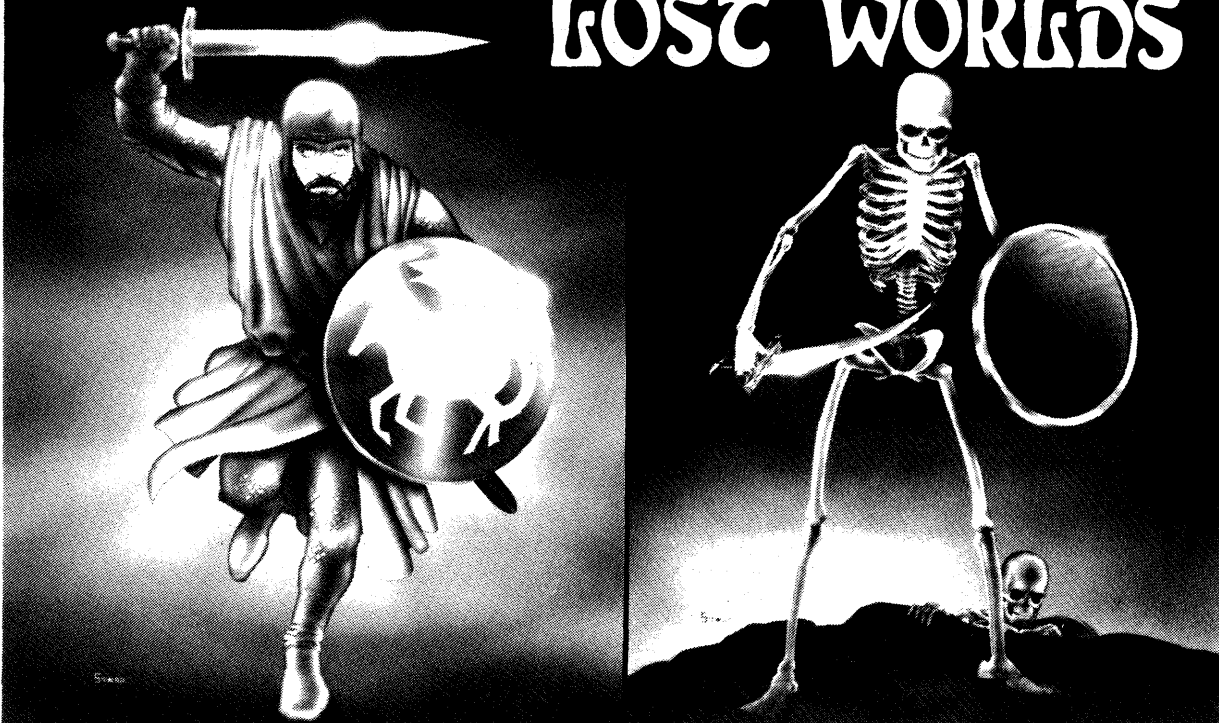
And it's not hard. It takes a little reading and a little thinking, but most of all, it's fun.

It's fun when you and your friends get together, isn't it?

It's fun when you discover that nobody loses, and everybody wins!

It's fun when you get *good* at the game - for example, knowing what to expect

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Ah, yes; it does cost one more thing, which you also have, right now - a bit of time. It takes a few minutes to learn the basic rules, and another hour or two to play a full game. You'll probably want to spend more time, and might even make it a hobby; millions of people have.

But for now, just sit back and let your imagination run: Your character stands atop a grassy hill. The sun glints off your golden hair, rippling in the warm breeze; you absent-mindedly rub the gem-studded hilt of your magic sword, and glance over at the dwarf and the elf, bickering as usual about how to load the horses. The magic-user has memorized her spells, and says she's ready to go. A dangerous dungeon entrance gapes at you from the mountainside nearby, and inside, a fearsome dragon awaits. Now, it's time to get moving. . . .

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### *Villains & Vigilantes™ Line*

*Pictured: Crushers & Crusaders*

*(Sculptor: Russ Coddington)*

There are currently many superhero role-playing games on the market. Castle Creations is filling the need for good guys (Crusaders) and bad guys (Crushers) with a total of 6 blister packs. Each pack contains three hefty figures who work well in the comic-book genre and can also be used as "crossovers" into fantasy or science fiction. The photo displays a large, brutish Crusher, a winged Crusader, and a neutral-looking robot that could be a good guy or a bad guy. Suggested retail price: \$3 per pack.



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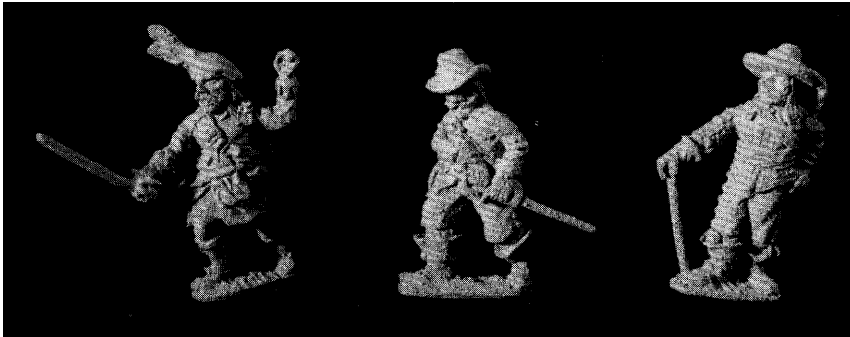
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### *English Civil War Line*

*Pictured: Highlander Chieftain, New Model Army Officer, Royalist Foot Officer w/Cane*

The problem with most fantasy fighter figures is that they are the standard fare: medieval-style knights and men-at-arms that may or may not look like adventurers. For those gamers who want an unusual identity or flair for their characters, we suggest they look into some of the historical miniatures on the market. Essex has a broad line of historical fighters, and some fit into fantasy games nicely. The English Civil War period also offers some interesting-looking figures to use as thieves or bards. All the figures shown are one-piece castings. Suggested retail price: 65¢ each.



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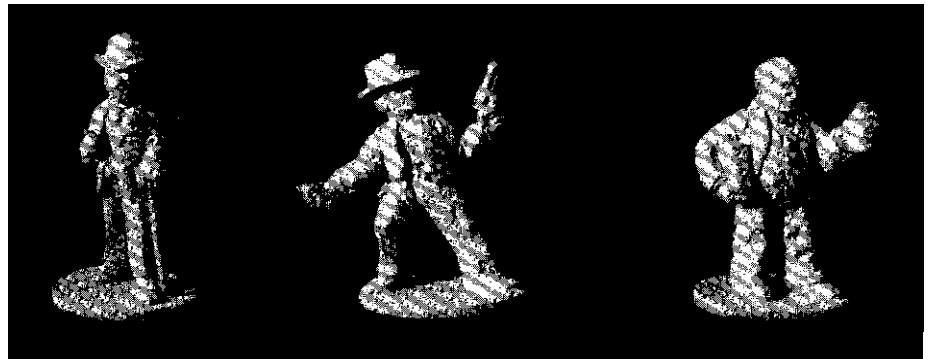
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### *Call of Cthulhu™ Adventurers, Call of Cthulhu Monsters*

*Pictured: Gentleman, Adventurer with pistol & whip, Professor with tome, Serpent People, Great Race of Yith*

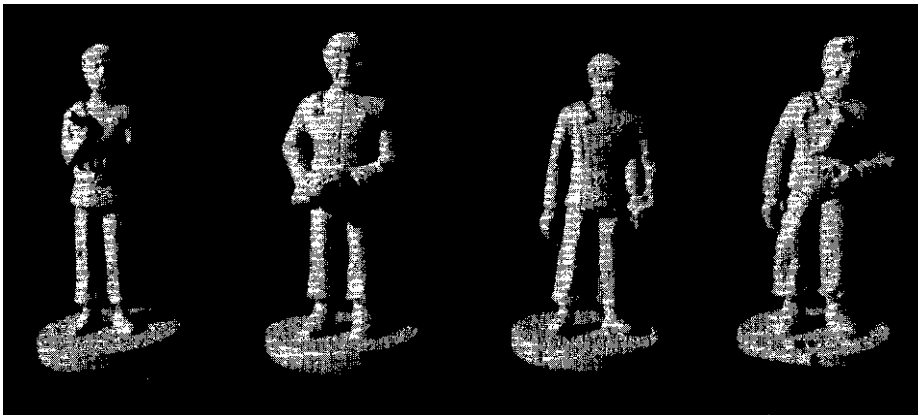
*(Sculptors: Andy Chernak, John Dennet)*

The popular Cthulhu genre joins forces with Grenadier's creativity in the first two sets of a new line. The 12-piece set of Adventurers (samples shown at right) includes characters that can be used for any role-playing game set in the Roaring 20's. The detail is quite nice, and the "costuming" is authentic. The 10-piece Monsters



set (samples shown on facing page) gives us a glimpse into the unusual imagination of H. P. Lovecraft. The monsters are both beautiful and horrid at the same time, and very well crafted (the Yith is a one-piece

casting!). It's obvious that both sculptors researched their subjects well, and the sets are valuable either as gaming figures or as collector's items. Suggested retail price: \$10 per set.



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**STAR TREK® II, The Wrath of Khan**

*Pictured: McCoy, Spock, Scotty, and Kirk, all in dress uniforms*  
 (Sculptor: Scott Penn)

Although the *Star Trek* characters have been attempted in figure form a couple of times previously, no one has captured the feel and detail of the crew members like the FASA line has. The photo shows four of the pieces in the boxed Collector Set #1, which includes a figure of the USS Enterprise and eight members of the bridge crew. Collector Set #2 contains the USS Reliant, Khan, and seven of his followers. The same figures are also available in more animated poses for use in role-playing games. All uniforms and personal items are based on those found in the *Wrath of Khan* movie. Suggested retail price: \$10 each for the Collector Sets, \$1 each for single character figures.

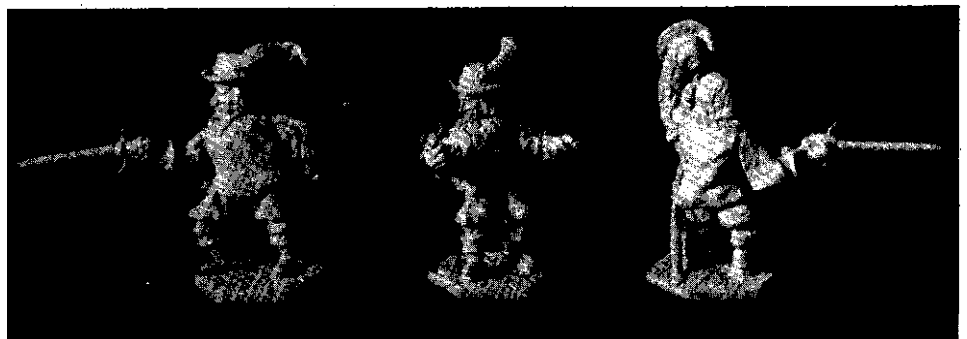
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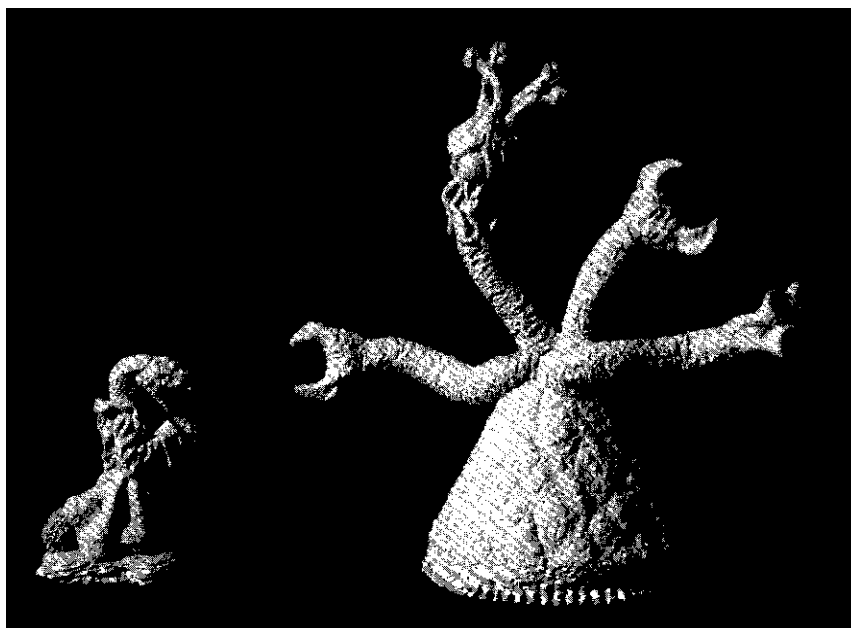
*Pictured: Musketeers*  
 (Sculptor: Richard Kerr)

Swashbucklers and pirates are specifically needed for some role-playing games, and many of them can be used in a fantasy context as well. To meet this demand, Task Force Games is now producing a line of figures dueling and brawling in typical Errol Flynn fashion. Each pack contains four figures, and most packs have four weapons cast separately that easily fit into a swordsman's gloved hand. Note that the bases are hexagon-shaped, making them easy to use with some



gaming map sheets, and are also fashioned with cobblestones, planks, and the like, for added realism. The most common poses are parrying,

lunging, and, in the case of the gent doffing his chapeau, just plain showin' off. Suggested retail price: \$3.95 per pack.



*Text by  
 Kim, Eastland*

*Photos by  
 Scheibe Studio*

# Spy's Advice

by Merle Rasmussen

## Answers to Questions for TOP SECRET® players

**What would be the effects of someone being exposed to 1 cubic inch of uranium?**

More data is necessary to completely answer this question. The proximity of the uranium, the duration of the exposure, and the type of shielding, if any, must all be taken into consideration. As a general rule, anyone with severe radiation sickness will suffer 1-10 injury points each day until killed or cured.

**How much does a thermite bomb cost? How much is needed to burn a man-sized hole through different surfaces?**

A thermite bomb (grenade-type canister) costs \$30. Thirteen of these thermite grenades set around the perimeter of a 30" diameter circle will melt through 1/2" of any metal in 40 seconds. This process will create a man-sized hole. The same arrangement will burn through 1/2" of wood and/or plaster in 40 seconds. Thermite bombs are not effective against brick or concrete. Some Administrators allow agents to have thermite paste; when this paste is applied in a 1/2" wide strip and

detonated by flame or electricity, it burns with intense heat along the length of its path. Thermite paste comes packaged like toothpaste, with a 12-ounce tube (enough to lay a 10-foot-long strip) costing \$30.

**How long would a flash grenade blind a character?**

Official statistics for flash grenades are not currently available. The Administrator might roll a random value from 1-100, which is the number of minutes the victim is temporarily blinded by any non-permanent damage.

**How much would a tripod add to the PWV of a rifle?**

If an agent was using a two-handed shooting stance, would it increase his chance to hit? By how much?

Your Administrator may rule that bipods, tripods, and a two-handed shooting stance may be considered as a weapon at rest on a solid object. The miscellaneous Hit Determination Modifier for each shot would be +10.

**The Life Levels of player characters in missions I administer are around 140, but the average NPC has a LL of 15. What am I doing wrong? What can I do?**

Life Level is equal to the total of Physical Strength plus Willpower divided by 10. All fractions are rounded to the nearest whole number. See the rules for Character Construction on page 5 of the TOP SECRET rule book. The "Life Level" line on the Agent's Dossier in the back of the rule book does not make the proper calculation clear, which is probably why the LL figures for your player-agents are so high.

**How do you determine if an agent has made a successful parachute jump?**

It is far more likely that a parachute will open improperly than not at all. Square chutes are more than six times safer than round chutes. When the ripcord is pulled, roll percentile dice: 01-99, chute opens; 00, roll again. With a square chute, on a second roll of 01-97, the chute opens; on a roll of 98-00, the chute malfunctions. With a round chute, on a second roll of 01-80, the chute opens; on a roll of 81-00, the chute malfunctions. Always pack a back-up chute, and when possible always pack your own parachute to avoid sabotage.

**When you gain points in Knowledge through experience, does your basic AOK go up accordingly?**

Yes.

**Is there a limit to AOKs?**

Yes, an AOK score for a player character can never exceed 150.

**If you have a 99 Knowledge and you gain 2 more points in it, do you get another superior AOK roll?**

No, you only have the superior Areas of Knowledge you start the game with. It is possible by applying experience points that any AOK value can increase in value to 150 whether it started out as a superior AOK or not.

**Can NPCs have Fame and Fortune points?**

Generally, no. The only way a non-player character could have Fame and Fortune points is if he was formerly a player character who is now being played by the Administrator.

**When a character's Life Level is reduced to zero from drinking alcohol, is the character dead or unconscious?**

Since alcohol is a depressant poison, the character has literally drunk himself to death.

**How can I run a campaign with multiple groups of investigators, confiscators, or assassins without the players finding out about each other's major objectives?**

Have you considered handing every player a note telling him his agent's true major objective? Each agent could also have a cover objective that players might reveal to each other. You can request that the agents' Bureau designations (under Classified Information on their Agent's Dossiers) be left blank and are only known by the Administrator. No agent, or the player of an agent, will be sure of anyone else's true major objective, since some will reveal it and others may lie or not tell anyone anything.

**Are the correct prices for many of the Other Weapon Types found on the "Weapons Chart" or on the price list under "Equipping the Character"?**

The correct prices for Other Weapon Types are listed on the Weapon Chart. A manual speargun costs \$50. A CO, speargun costs \$100 and pressurized CO, capsules cost \$1 each. A sword (\$30) and a sword cane (\$50) are used much the same but are concealed differently. Dart guns can cost \$250. A boomerang that returns is only \$5. If it hits anything greater than its weight (1/2 pound) it will not return. Boxing gloves cost \$25 a pair, and karate padding for both hands and feet costs \$50 a set.

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This is a fantasy game played with a large assortment of cardboard tiles. You begin the game as a landed aristocrat in a strange kingdom (you wouldn't really want to live there). You hold great territories of land and guard them with large armies that defy description.

You are given a Player Chart on which to organize your holdings. You begin the game with a random selection of wealth, allies, cities, villages, and willing warriors. The inhabitants

of this world are all small bits of thin paper (hopefully, you glued them to some cardstock) that come to life in your imagination.

All of this activity occurs on a wooden platform in the middle of an enclosed space, surrounded by large bipedal creatures who don't know any better. The large mass of protoplasm that is reading these very words is only now coming to realize that this is her, or his, chance to become . . .

# KING



## OF THE TABLETOP



## Inventory of Game Parts

Your **KING OF THE TABLETOP** game should contain the following parts:

- 1 Rules booklet
- 276 small square cardboard tiles (you must glue these down and cut them out yourself), consisting of:
  - 54 Terrain tiles
  - 60 Gold piece tiles (money)
  - 11 Special Character Tiles
  - 27 Fortification tiles (9 Towers, 7 Keeps, 7 Castles, 4 Muniments)
  - 124 Playing Deck tiles, including:
    - 90 Character tiles (5 sets of 18 each)
    - 5 Mines (1 Gold, 2 Silver, 2 Copper)
    - 14 Settlements (5 Cities, 9 Villages)
    - 9 Magic Items
    - 6 Treasures
- 4 Player Charts (must be cut out)
- Lots of 6-sided dice (you must provide these)

## The Playing Pieces

The playing pieces of **KING OF THE TABLETOP** are divided into three main types: those that constitute the Playing deck, those in the Land deck, and the Support Tiles.

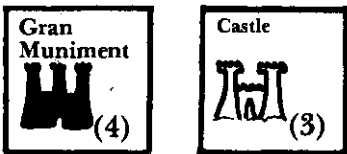
### Support Tiles

#### Gold



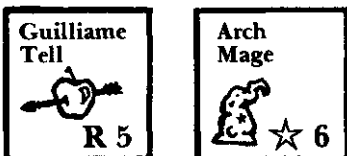
The number indicates the value. Gold is kept in a "bank" on the table and watched over by an honest banker/player.

#### Fortifications



The number in parentheses indicates the defense value of the fortification. One fortification may be built on each land tile. One level, starting with a Tower, may be built per turn. Thus, it takes 4 turns to build a Gran Muniment. Each level costs 10 gold pieces.

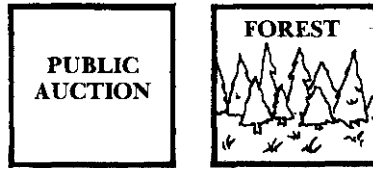
#### Special Characters



The numbers represent the combat value of the tile. Most have special abilities which are explained later in the rules. These pieces represent the upper crust of

the fighters and nobles in the land. They are kept face up in the bank. Each player in turn may try to get one of these characters to join his army by a roll of two dice.

### The Land Deck

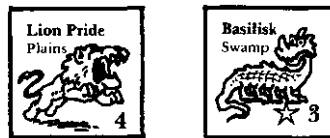


The Land Deck consists of two types of pieces, land tiles and instruction tiles. On each turn, a player draws from the deck until he draws a land tile. If no instructions have been drawn, the player gets the land for free. Otherwise, the last instruction drawn must be followed before the player can claim the land tile.

Land tiles form the basis of each player's holdings. The characters drawn from the Playing Deck are keyed to different types of terrain. Cities, villages, mines, and fortifications may only be built on land tiles.

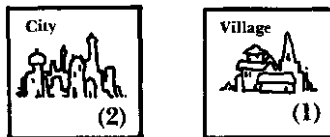
### The Playing Deck

#### Characters



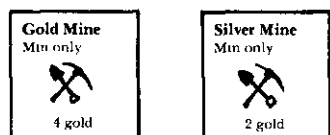
Most of the Playing Deck consists of characters. Each character is coded to a specific type of terrain. If a player has that type of terrain, characters keyed to that terrain may be placed in the player's standing army. The number on a character tile represents its combat value. Symbols and letters preceding the combat value indicate special abilities, explained later.

#### Cities and Villages



One city or village may be played on a land tile. The number represents the defense value, prestige value, and gold value. The more cities and villages a player has, the richer he becomes.

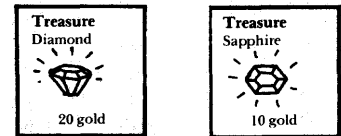
#### Mines



One mine may be played on a Mountain tile, instead of a city or village. The number indicates the gold and prestige

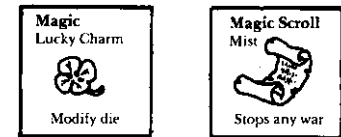
value of the mine. A mine has no defense value. Mines may only be played in the mountains.

### Treasures



The six treasures in the playing deck may be concealed in a player's hand. When he decides to spend one, the treasure is returned to the deck, and the player is given the listed gold piece value from the bank.

### Magic Items



The Playing Deck contains nine magic items. When drawn by a player, these must be kept in the player's hand until he desires to use them. Magic can be used at any time, even if it is not your turn. The magic tiles are explained in more detail later.

### Some Terms Explained

**Defense Value** - Fortifications, cities, and villages each have a defense value. This is the number of hits the tile may absorb before defenders within sustain damage. In addition, it is the number of combat dice the owning player may roll against attacking characters.

**Combat Value** - Special Characters and characters from the Playing Deck all have a combat value. This is the number of combat dice the character may roll during a battle, either on attack or defense.

**Gold Value** - At the beginning of each turn, a player collects gold from the bank, according to his holdings. Each land tile is worth 1 gold. Mines, cities, villages, and fortifications have a gold value equal to the number printed on the tile.

**Prestige Value** - Each land tile is worth 1 prestige point. Mines, cities, villages, and fortifications have a prestige value equal to the number printed on the tile. Each Special Character in a player's standing army is also worth 1 prestige point.

### Preparing for Play

All players should help sort the various tiles. The Playing Deck, consisting of characters, magic, cities and villages, and the mines, are all placed in a clean, dry cup. The Land Deck, made up of land and instruction tiles, are all placed in a separate cup. The fortifications, Special

Characters, and the gold tiles are all organized at the edge of the table to form a "bank" for easy use during the game.

Once the sorting is completed, each player takes a Player Chart and places it on the table in front of him. Everyone now rolls two dice and collects the amount shown in gold from the bank. The high roller is the first player. In case of a tie, roll again, but do not collect any more gold.

The first player now draws (without peeking) 10 tiles from the Playing Deck and places them face down in front of him. This is his hand. He then draws 4 tiles from the Land Deck in the same manner, but places these face up across the top row of squares on his Player Chart. If any of the 4 tiles drawn are information tiles, push them off the Player Chart to the center of the table (do not put them back in the cup yet) and draw tiles to replace them. Continue this procedure until the player has 4 land tiles.

The other players, proceeding clockwise around the table, draw 10 tiles from the Playing deck, and 4 land tiles in the same manner. Players may look at the tiles in their hand, after they have been drawn. Once all players have their starting tiles, put any instruction tiles that were drawn back in the Land Deck.

Before play begins, all players should look through their hands and place as many or as few tiles as they wish, face down, in the standing army box on their Player Chart. Only characters keyed to the types of terrain a player holds may be placed in his standing army.

Once all players have placed their standing armies, play is ready to begin!

**Example #1:** Rob's land tiles consist of 2 Forest, 1 Mountain, and 1 Plains tile. In his hand, he has 1 City, 1 Village, 1 Magic Scroll, 1 Ruby, 2 Elves (forest), 1 Sphinx (desert), 1 Centaur (plains), and 1 Crocodile (swamp).

Cities, villages, mines, magic scrolls, and treasures cannot be part of his army. He does not have any Desert or Swamp land, so the Sphinx and the Crocodile cannot be placed in his army. Therefore, Rob puts his 2 Elves and 1 Centaur, face down, in his standing army box. The rest of his hand is kept face down, off the Player Chart, to avoid confusion.

## Sequence of Play

KING OF THE TABLETOP is played in turns that are divided into four phases. During each phase, all players (beginning with the first player and proceeding clockwise around the table) perform the actions indicated for the current step.

When all four phases have been completed, the turn is over. The person to the left of the first player then becomes the first player for the next turn. Play continues in this manner until someone has accumulated 30 prestige points and built a Gran Muniment, thus becoming King of The Tabletop and winning the game.

### Turn Sequence:

Phase 1, Collection & Construction

- Collect gold
- Count prestige
- Roll for Special Character
- Build (forts, cities, mines, villages)

Phase 2, Events (roll 2 dice, consult chart)

Phase 3, Acquire Tiles

- Draw from Land Deck (follow instructions, if any)
- Purchase extra tiles from Playing Deck
- Free draw from Playing Deck

Phase 4, War

- Select & pay attacking army (option)
- Determine initiative
- Line up for battle
- Roll dice for each battle and remove losses

No player may go on to the next phase until all players have completed the current phase. If a player forgets to take an action, and play has proceeded to the next phase, tough luck!

## Gold

At the beginning of a turn, each player collects gold from the bank, according to his holdings. Each land tile is worth 1 gold. Fortifications, villages, cities, and mines are all worth their printed value in gold.

**Example #2:** Tom has 7 land tiles, 3 Villages (1 each), 1 Copper mine (1 gold), 1 Tower (1), and 2 Keeps (2 each). His total holdings are calculated as follows: 7 land = 7 gold; 3 villages = 3 gold; 1 copper

mine = 1 gold; 1 tower = 1 gold; 2 keeps = 4 gold.  $7 + 3 + 1 + 1 + 4 = 16$  gold that Tom collects during phase one.

A player's gold must be kept face up by his hand. The total amount cannot be kept a secret. Treasures held in a player's hand, however, need not be revealed until they are cashed in for their gold value.

## Prestige

After collecting gold, a player counts his prestige points. This is done to determine whether he is entitled to a bonus on the roll for Special Characters.

Prestige is counted in the same manner as gold: 1 point for each land tile, the printed value for all forts, villages, cities, and mines. In addition, a player also gets 1 prestige point for every 10 gold he has, and 1 prestige point for each Special Character in his standing army.

**Example #3:** In Example #2, Tom collected 16 gold from his holdings. He also has 1 Special Character (the Thief) in his standing army, and had 5 gold before he collected 16 more. For his holdings (counted in the same manner as gold), he gets 16 prestige points. His 21 gold gives him 2 more prestige points, and his one Special Character is worth another point. Tom's prestige point total is 19.

Players should be constantly aware of prestige point totals once anyone's score reaches 20 points or more. Any time, during any phase, that a player can prove that he has 30 prestige points and a finished Gran Muniment, he wins the game.

## Roll for Special Character

After collecting gold and counting prestige, a player has a chance to get one of the Special Characters (those left in the bank) to join his standing army. First, the player states which character he is trying for. Then he rolls 2 dice. If the dice total equals or exceeds twice the combat value of the character wanted, the player gets that Special Character.

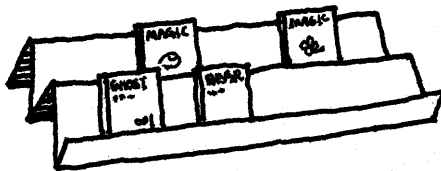
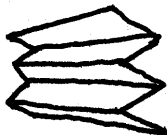
A player may add 1 to his dice total for every 10 prestige points he has. If no Special Characters are left in the bank, no roll may be taken.

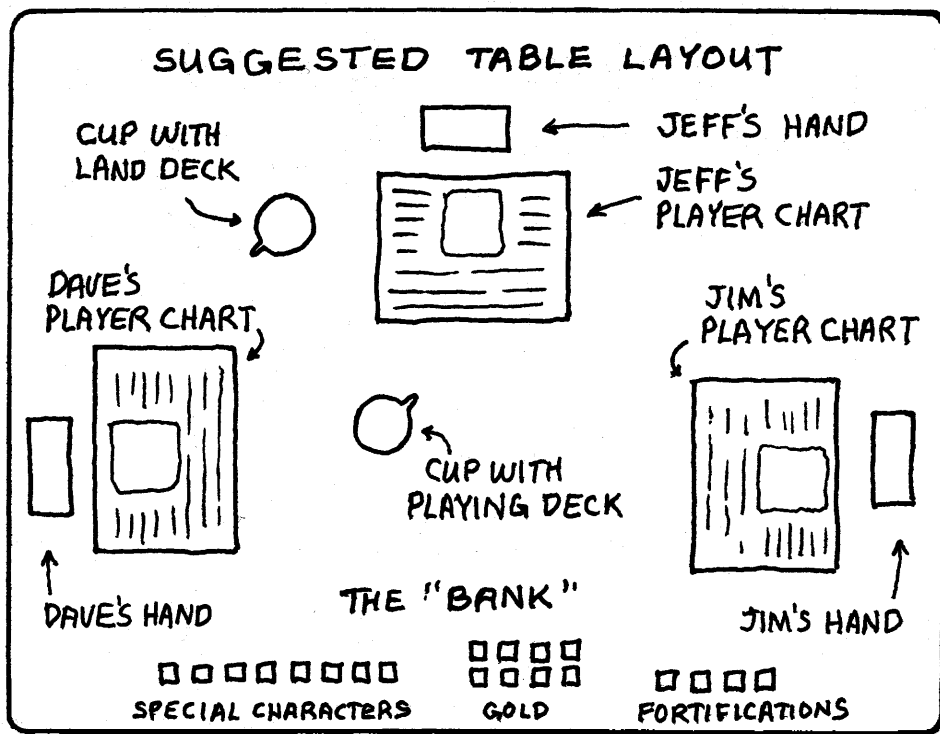
**Example #4:** In Example #3 Tom counted 19 prestige points. This gives him a +1 to his dice total. (If he had just 1 more prestige point, he could add +2 to the dice.) Tom decides to try for Guillaume Tell, who has a combat value of 5. Ordinarily, a roll of 10 or better on 2 dice is needed to get him.

Tom rolls a 9 on two dice, and adds his +1 bonus to make 10 - success! Tom takes the Guillaume Tell piece and places it, face up, in his standing army.

TIRED OF KEEPING YOUR HAND FACE DOWN?  
MAKE A CHEAP CARDBOARD RACK WITH  
A 3 x 5 NOTE CARD

FAN  
FOLD





Special Characters must always be kept face up in a player's standing army. When a special character is killed, his tile is returned to the bank.

## Building

After rolling for a Special Character, a player has a chance to improve his lands through construction, by constructing fortifications and/or by playing a city, village, or mine in the land tile.

Note that the Player Chart allows room for one fortification and one "other" improvement for each land tile held. Only one fortification and one "other" improvement is allowed per land tile.

Fortifications are paid for with gold and taken from the bank. Cities, villages, and mines must be drawn from the Playing Deck and played from your hand.

## Building Fortifications

Fortifications come in four sizes: Towers (1), Keeps (2), Castles (3), and Gran Muniments (4). Only 1 fortification may be built in a land. Each level of fort costs 10 gold. Only one level may be built in a given land tile per turn.

**Example #5:** Tom builds a Tower in a Mountain area, to protect a mine. On his next turn, he may pay 10 additional gold and replace his Tower with a Keep. On the next turn, 10 more gold replaces the Keep with a Castle. Finally, on a later turn, Tom pays 10 more gold to convert his Castle to a Gran Muniment.

A player may build as many fortifications as he wishes, provided he builds

only one level per land tile per turn.

However, no player may ever have more than 1 Gran Muniment.

Players are limited to the number of tiles provided with the game. If a player wishes to build a Keep into a Castle, but no Castle tiles remain in the bank, he must wait until a Castle tile becomes available before he can make the improvement.

## Building a City, Village, or Mine

Cities, villages, and mines are not kept in the bank; they are only found in the Playing Deck. They may only be placed on land tiles during the Build segment of the first phase of each turn.

Only one city, village, or mine may be placed in a land tile. Cities and villages may be placed in any type of land. Mines may only be placed in Mountains.

For each city, village, or mine that a player puts onto his Player Chart, he may draw an extra tile from the Playing Deck. If the new tile is a city, village, or mine, it may be immediately placed, and another tile drawn from the deck.

If a land already has a village on it, and a player wishes to replace it with a city or mine, he may do so, but the village is discarded. Similarly, mines may be replaced by cities or villages, and cities may be replaced by mines.

## Roll For Events

On every turn, each player rolls two dice of different colors, stating which is the first die and which is the second die. He then consults the Events Table and takes the appropriate action.

## Events Table

1st Die	2nd Die	Result
1	1,2	Forest Fire
	3,4	Prairie Fire
	5,6	No Event
2	1,2	Floods
	3,4	Earthquakes
	5,6	No Event
3	1,2	Sandstorms
	3,4	Willing Workers
	5,6	No event
4	1,2	Good Omen
	3,4	Mother Lode
	5,6	No event
5	1,2	Pennies From Heaven
	3,4	The D6 Tax Law
	5,6	No Event
6	1,2,3,4	Good Harvest
	5	Black Plague
	6	Smallpox

## Events Explained

**FOREST FIRE** - Point to each Forest tile in play (including your own), and roll two dice. If the result is 7, a forest fire has broken out in that land tile. Any other result has no effect.

If a fire occurs, any fortification in the land tile is reduced by one level. If a city or village is in the tile, the owning player must make a saving roll (roll 1 die; even = saved, odd = lost). If there is no surviving fort, city, or village, or there were none to begin with, the burned Forest tile is returned to the Land Deck.

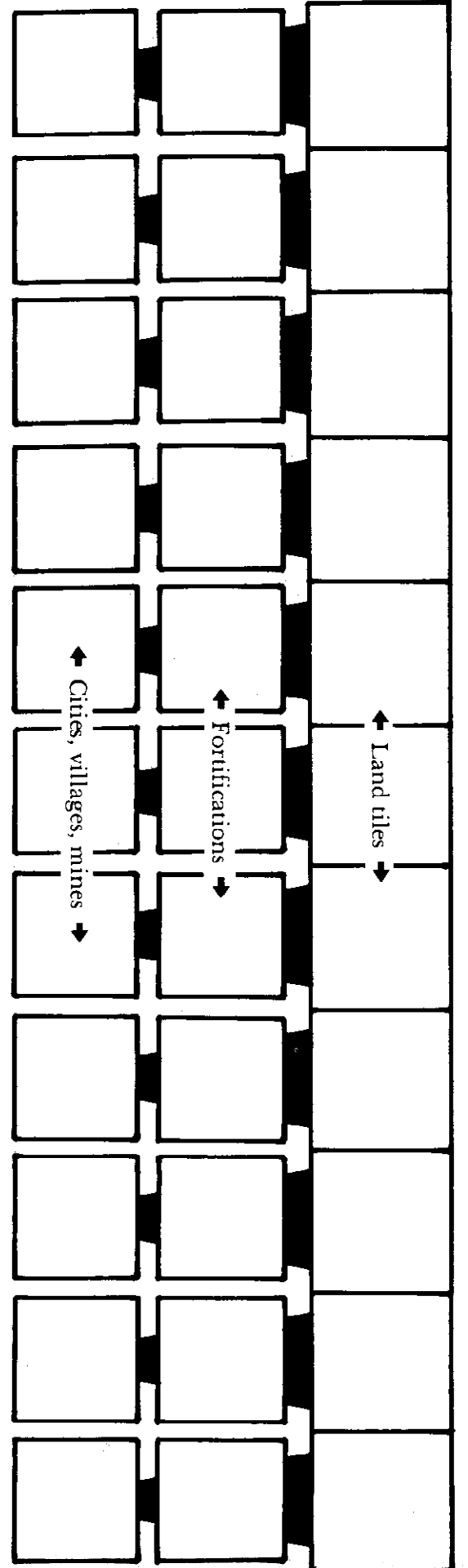
**PRAIRIE FIRE** - Point to each Plains tile in play (including your own), and roll two dice. If the result is 7, a prairie fire has broken out on that land tile. Any other result has no effect.

If a fire occurs, any fortification in the land tile is reduced by one level. If a city or village is in the tile, the owning player must make a saving roll (roll 1 die; even = saved, odd = lost). If there is no surviving fort, city or village, or there were none to begin with, the burned Plains tile is returned to the Land Deck.

**FLOODS** - Point to each Swamp tile in play (including your own), and roll two dice. If the result is 7, a flood occurs in that land tile. any other result has no effect.

If a flood occurs, any fortification in the land tile is reduced by one level. If a city or village is in the tile, the owning player must make a saving roll (roll 1 die; even = saved, odd = lost). If there is no surviving fort, city, or village, or there were none to begin with, the flooded Swamp tile is returned to the Land Deck.

(Use the tabletop if you need more room)



### Events Table

1st Die	2nd Die	Result
1	1,2	Forest Fire
	3,4	Prairie Fire
	5,6	No Event
2	1,2	Floods
	3,4	Earthquakes
	5,6	No Event
3	1,2	Sandstorms
	3,4	Willing Workers
	5,6	No event
4	1,2	Good Omen
	3,4	Mother Lode
	5,6	No event
5	1,2	Pennies From Heaven
	3,4	The D6 Tax Law
	5,6	No Event
6	1,2,3,4	Good Harvest
	5	Black Plague
	6	Smallpox

## STANDING ARMY



# KINGS

## OF THE TABLETOP

# PLAYER CHART

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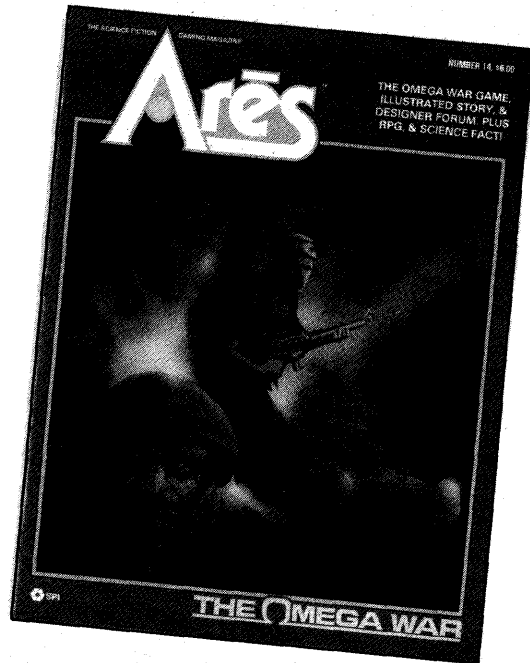
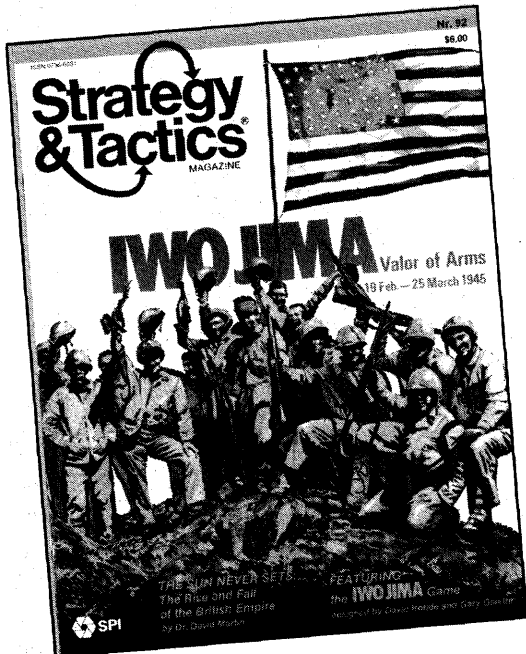
### Sequence of Play

- Phase 1, Collection & Construction
  - a. Collect gold
  - b. Count prestige
  - c. Roll for Special Character
  - d. Build (forts, cities, mines, villages)
- Phase 2, Events (roll 2 dice, consult chart)
- Phase 3, Acquire Tiles
  - a. Draw from Land Deck (follow instructions, if any)
  - b. Purchase extra tiles from Playing Deck
  - c. Free draw from Playing Deck
- Phase 4, War
  - a. Select & pay attacking army (option)
  - b. Determine initiative
  - c. Line up for battle
  - d. Roll dice for each battle and remove losses

- ☆ = Magic ability
- R = Ranged weapons
- ∞ = Flying creature
- C = Charge bonus



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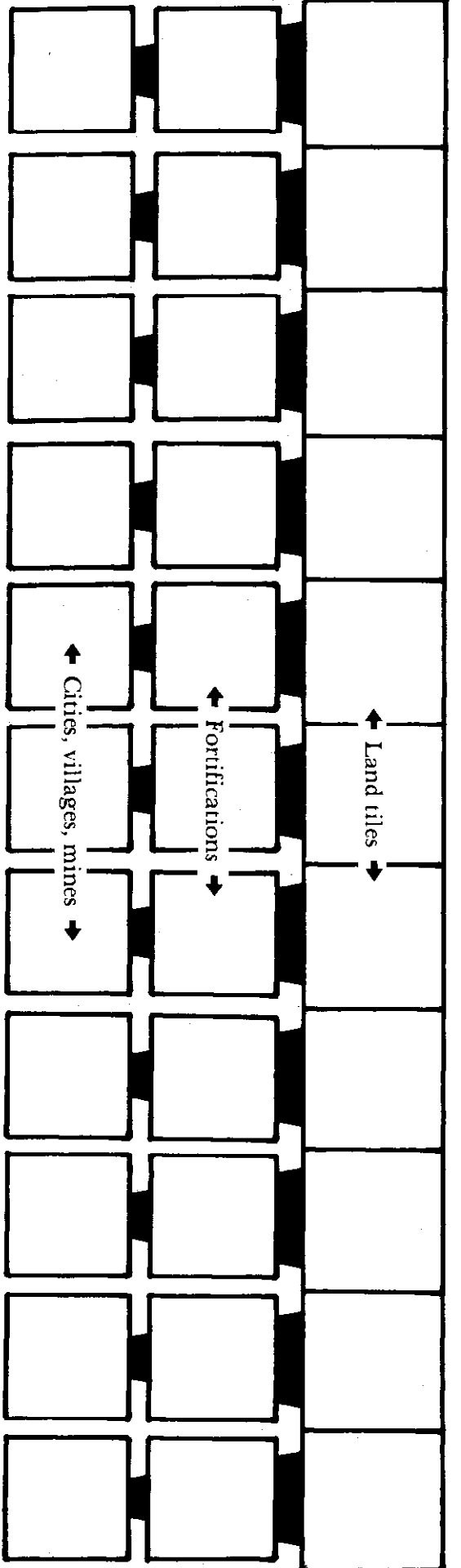
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**Events Table**

1st Die	2nd Die	Result
1	1,2	Forest Fire
	3,4	Prairie Fire
	5,6	No Event
2	1,2	Floods
	3,4	Earthquakes
	5,6	No Event
3	1,2	Sandstorms
	3,4	Willing Workers
	5,6	No event
4	1,2	Good Omen
	3,4	Mother Lode
	5,6	No event
5	1,2	Pennies From Heaven
	3,4	The D6 Tax Law
	5,6	No Event
6	1,2,3,4	Good Harvest
	5	Black Plague
	6	Smallpox

**STANDING ARMY**

**KINGS**  
OF THE TABLETOP  
**PLAYER CHART**

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**Sequence of Play**

- Phase 1, Collection & Construction
    - a. Collect gold
    - b. Count prestige
    - c. Roll for Special Character
    - d. Build (forts, cities, mines, villages)
  - Phase 2, Events (roll 2 dice, consult chart)
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    - c. Line up for battle
    - d. Roll dice for each battle and remove losses
- ☆ = Magic ability  
 R = Ranged weapons  
 ∞ = Flying creature  
 C = Charge bonus

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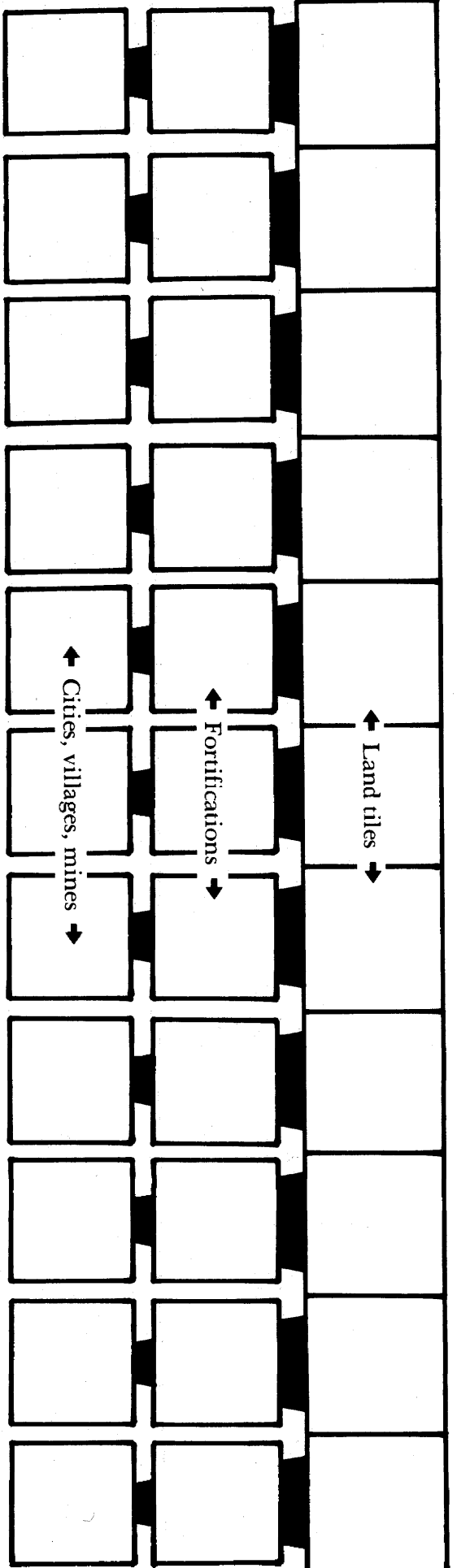
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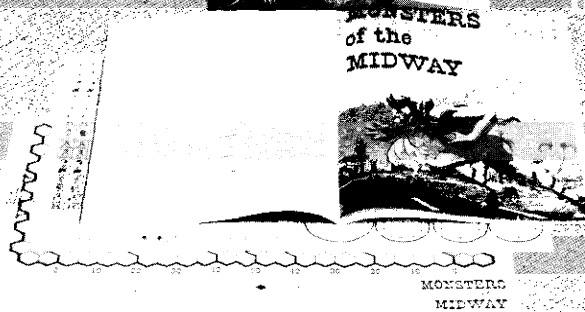
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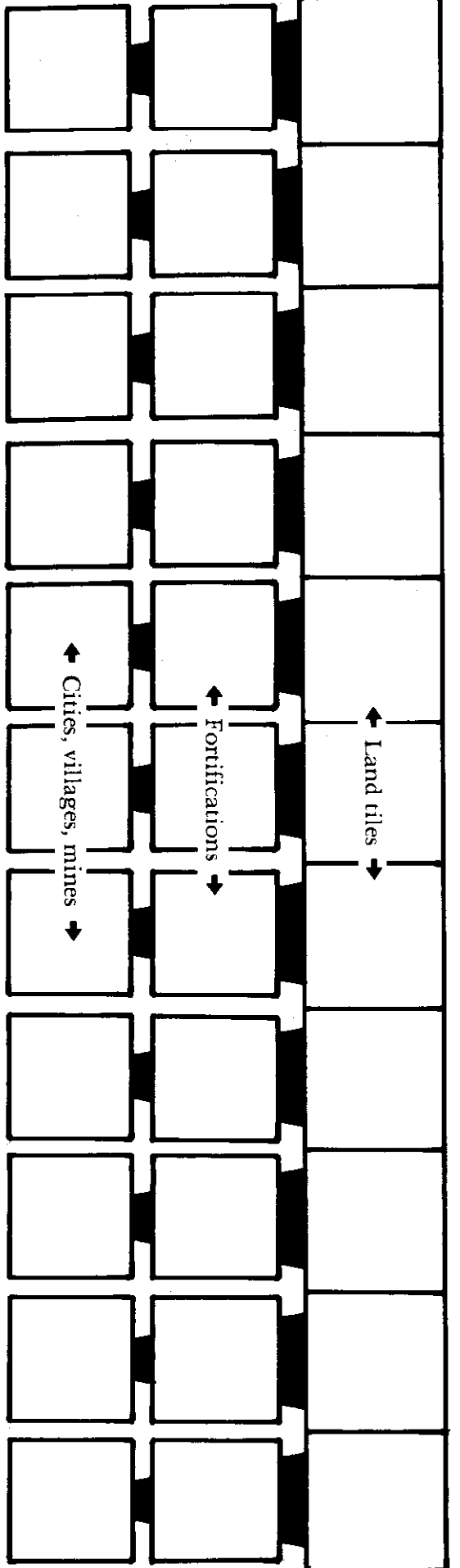
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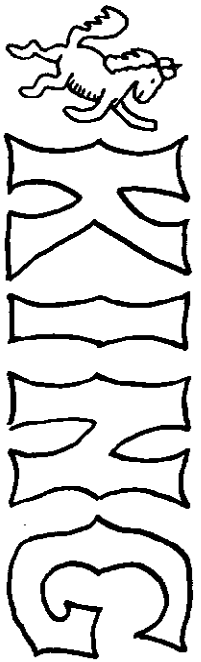
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### STANDING ARMY



OF THE TABLETOP

PLAYER CHART

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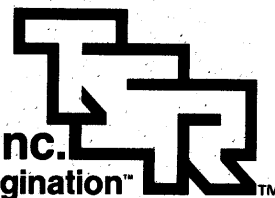
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**EARTHQUAKES** – Point to each Mountain tile in play (including your own), and roll two dice. If the result is 7, an earthquake occurs in that land tile. Any other result has no effect.

If an earthquake occurs, any fortification in the land tile is reduced by one level. If a city, village, or mine is in the tile, the owning player must make a saving roll (roll 1 die; even = saved, odd = lost). If there is no surviving fort, city, village, or mine, or there were none to begin with, the Mountain is lost to the earthquake and returned to the Land Deck.

**SANDSTORMS** – Point to each Desert tile in play (including your own), and roll 2 dice. If the result is 7, a sandstorm occurs in that land tile. Any other result has no effect.

If a sandstorm occurs, any fortification in the land tile is reduced by one level. If a city or village is in the tile, the owning player must make a saving roll (roll 1 die; even = saved, odd = lost). If there is no surviving fort, city, or village, or there were none to begin with, the land tile is returned to the Land Deck.

**WILLING WORKERS** – Your well paid construction crews finish one level of fortification for you. Improve any fort by one level (even if you built or improved it this turn). If you have no forts, build a Tower. Remember, you may only have 1 Gran Muniment. If there are no tiles available to improve any of your forts, or to build a Tower, collect 10 gold from the bank instead.

**GOOD OMEN** – Draw a free tile from the Playing Deck!

**MOTHER LODE** – Collect double the gold value from all your mines!

**PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** – Collect 1 gold!

**THE D6 TAX LAW** – Roll a die. Collect that many gold!

**GOOD HARVEST** – Collect your gold (as though you were just beginning a turn) again!

**SMALLPOX** – This affects all players. With a neighbor watching, players must point to each piece in their standing army and roll 2 dice. If the result is a 7, that character dies.

Magic may not be used to save characters from smallpox. The magic bow or the magic sword may be destroyed if they are in the standing army.

**THE BLACK PLAGUE** – This affects only the player with the largest standing army. He must point to each character in his standing army and roll 1 die. If the result is an even number, the character

lives. If the result is an odd number, the character dies. Magic may not be used to save characters from black plague.

## Draw from Land Deck

After the events phase, each player has a chance to obtain new land.

Draw one tile from the Land Deck. If it is a land tile, you may add it to your holdings for free. If the first tile you draw is an instruction tile, keep drawing from the Land Deck, taking one tile at a time, until you draw a land tile. All instructions except the last one (if more than one was drawn) are returned to the deck. You must follow the last instruction drawn if you wish to obtain the land tile.

If you acquire a new type of land, you may play characters of that terrain type from your hand into your standing army.

**FOR SALE** – You must pay (to the bank) the amount shown in order to gain the land tile. If you don't pay, the tile is returned to the deck.

**LAND AUCTION** – The land tile is put on public auction. All players with gold may bid. Proceeds are paid to the bank. If there are no bidders, you may take the tile for free.

**FIGHT** – The player on your left draws 4 tiles from the Playing Deck. Any cities, villages, mines, or treasures drawn are returned to the deck. These tiles represent the current owners of the land tile. If no owners remain, you may take the land tile for free.

You must defeat these owners in one round of battle (see War) to claim the land tile. You may use as much of your standing army as you care to commit. You need not pay gold to use your army in this instance. If you do not kill all the owners, or if you choose not to fight for the land, the tile is returned to the deck.

## Purchasing Tiles

After the draw from the Land Deck, you may buy 1 to 4 tiles from the Playing Deck. You must pay in advance, and say how many tiles you want to buy:

- Draw 1 tile, pay 2 gold
- Draw 2 tiles, pay 5 gold.
- Draw 3 tiles, pay 10 gold.
- Draw 4 tiles, pay 20 gold.

## Free Draw

Whether you buy extra tiles or not, you may always draw 1 tile from the Playing Deck each turn for free.

When a player receives a new tile from the Playing Deck, he places it in his hand. You may also play a new tile directly into your standing army.

## War

In the last phase of the turn you may, if you wish, send all or part of your standing army to attack the holdings of any one other player. If you choose not to do so, your part of the turn is over.

Wars are fought in this sequence:

1. Select & pay attacking army
2. Determine initiative
3. Line up for battles
4. Roll dice for each battle and remove losses

## Select Attacking Army

To send an attacking army, you must first pay your warriors 1 gold for every 2 tiles you send. You may send all or part of your standing army. Put the attacking pieces out on the table in front of the lands of the player you intend to attack. All but the Special Characters may remain face down. The attacking army is now considered to be "in the field."

## Determine Initiative

Once your attacking army is in the field, you and your opponent must count the number of tiles in your armies. The defending player must count his entire standing army. You (the attacker) count only those forces sent to war. The player with fewer tiles may add one to his Initiative Die Roll. If both sides have an equal number of tiles involved, no bonus is added to either player's die roll.

You and the defender both roll one die. This is called the Initiative Die Roll. The player who rolls the highest number (roll again in case of a tie) is called the first player, and must line up his army first.

## Lining Up for Battle

The first player must now place each of his tiles opposite (or behind) one or more land tiles in the defending country. When he is finished, there should be one or more rows of character tiles by the land tiles. When lining up, all but the Special Characters may still be kept face down.

The second player must now line up his tiles, on the opposite sides of the land tiles (attacker lines up in the field, defender lines up in his homeland). When all tiles have been placed, you are ready to resolve the battles.

## Roll Dice for Each Battle

Each land tile of the defending player that is being attacked is considered to be a separate battle. The attacking player may choose the order in which each battle is resolved. As each battle is resolved, all tiles in that land are turned face up.



A battle is fought in two stages. First, all ranged weapons (labeled "R") are fired, and losses extracted. Then the surviving characters have hand-to-hand combat (rolling dice) and losses are again removed.

In each stage of a battle, first the attacking player and then the defending player roll their combat dice. Keep track of hits scored on a piece of paper. Once both players have rolled their dice, first the attacker and then the defender must remove one character for each hit made on his forces. The player suffering the loss decides which characters are killed.

## Capturing Land

If all attacking forces in a battle are killed, the defending land tile is safe (even if all defenders were also killed). If all defending pieces in a land tile are killed and at least one attacking piece survives the combat, then the land tile is captured by the attacking player and transferred to his Player Chart.

If a land tile is not defended, and attacking forces are present in that land, it is captured without a fight.

A land tile containing a city, village, or fortification cannot be captured unless those pieces have been neutralized (see *Fortifications in Battle*) and no defending characters remain. If these conditions have been met, the capturing player must make a saving roll for each structure (roll one die; even = saved and captured, odd = lost).

Mines have no combat or defense value. If the Mountain tile in which one is located is captured, the attacking player must make a saving roll for the mine, just as for a city, village, or fort.

If a player already has a Gran Munitment and captures another, the captured one is reduced to the next lower level of fortification available in the bank.

If you lose the only tile of a certain type of land from your Player Chart, characters keyed to that type of land are taken from your standing army and returned to your hand.

If you gain a new type of land, you may immediately play characters keyed to that land from your hand into your standing army.

A player who loses all of his land is out of the game and must return his holdings to the decks and to the bank.

## Combat Dice

All character tiles have a number printed on them. This is their combat value, representing the number of dice they may roll in battle. A character such as the Cyclops, with a value of 5, may roll 5 dice in a battle.

A result of 6 on a die roll is a hit. Usually, one hit kills one enemy piece.

## Special Abilities

Character tiles with a star (★), infinity symbol (∞), C, or R printed before their combat number have special abilities.

**RANGED WEAPONS (R)** – Characters who use ranged weapons (bow and arrow, spear, thrown rocks) roll their combat dice first. Losses due to "R" dice rolls are removed before combat continues with hand-to-hand battles between the other characters. A character killed by ranged weapon fire does not participate in the hand-to-hand battle.

Characters who have already used ranged weapons do not roll again during hand-to-hand combat (but they may be killed during either ranged weapon fire or the hand-to-hand battle).

**CHARGE BONUS (C)** – Knights mounted on war horses are all able to charge into combat and receive a bonus for this ability. Each time a knight goes into battle, roll one die and add the result to the knight's combat value. Thus, the Black Knight (value 4) always rolls from 5 to 10 dice in combat (4 + 1 to 6).

**MAGIC ABILITY (★)** – Characters with a star printed next to their combat value have magic ability. They score hits on a roll of 5 or 6 (instead of just a 6).

**FLYING CHARACTERS (∞)** – Creatures that are able to fly are somewhat harder to kill than other characters. After ranged weapon fire and again after hand-to-hand combat, a hit flying character is allowed a saving roll (even = saved, odd = lost).

A flying character hit during ranged fire may be saved with a successful saving roll and still participate in hand-to-hand combat. If a flying character that is the last remaining defender of a land tile is hit but saves by rolling an even number, the land tile is also saved.

## Fortifications in Battle

Cities, villages, and fortifications provide protection to all characters defending the land in which they are located. For the purpose of battle, cities, villages, and fortifications are all called forts. The defense value of a fort is the number of combat dice that may be rolled against an attacking force.

The defense value of a fort is also the number of hits that the fort absorbs before defending characters can be hit. Once a number of hits have been scored equal to the combined value of all forts in a land, the forts are *neutralized*. After a fort has been neutralized, hits apply to defending characters in the land.

If a land tile is defended only by a fort (or forts) and no characters, all forts in the land must be neutralized for the

attacker to be able to capture the land. If this happens, the capturing player must make a saving roll for each fort (even = saved and captured, odd = lost, return to bank).

**Example #6:** Tom is defending in a Forest area with a city (2) and a Keep (2). In the land he also has a Wildcat (3) and a Bear (2). Tom has no ranged weapons. His forts will absorb the first four hits scored against him.

Rob attacks, first with 6 dice of ranged weapons, followed by 15 dice in hand-to-hand combat. Rob rolls all of his combat dice first (since Tom has no ranged weapons) and scores a total of 5 hits. Tom fights back with 9 dice (2 + 2 + 3 + 2), and scores only 2 hits.

Rob's first 4 hits neutralize Tom's forts. His fifth hit kills one of Tom's characters (Tom chooses the bear). One defending character remains, so Rob has no chance to capture Tom's land tile or the neutralized Keep and city. Rob selects two of his characters to be killed, and the battle is over.

## Applying Hits

In battle, after both players have rolled their combat dice, each player must remove a number of his characters equal to the number of hits scored by his opponent. The owning player always chooses which of his characters are to be killed. Casualties are removed after ranged weapon fire, and again after hand-to-hand battle.

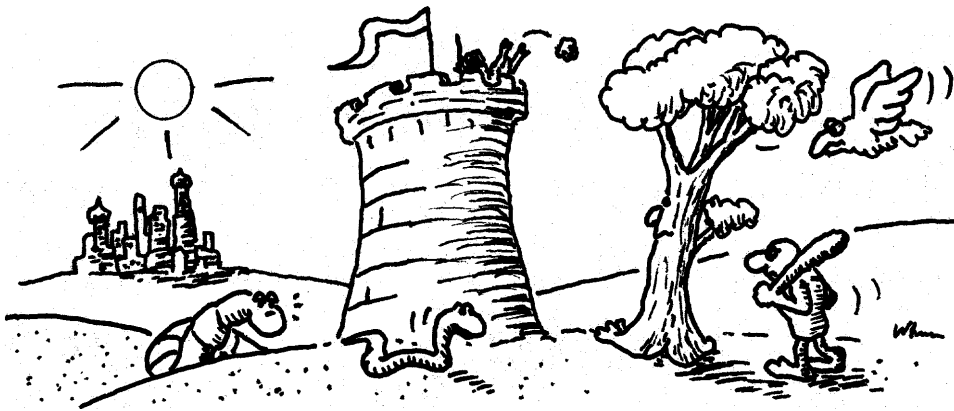
All characters except the Swordmaster are killed by one hit. Dead characters are returned to the Playing Deck. Special Characters that are killed are returned to the bank.

If the defending player has a city, village, or fort, hits are first applied to these structures until they are neutralized (see *Fortifications in Battle*).

Flying characters get a saving roll if they are hit (even = saved, odd = lost). However, flying characters are lost if more than one hit is applied to them. If more hits are scored against a player's forces than he has characters to apply them to, extra hits must be applied evenly to any flying characters in the player's forces.

**Example #7:** Neil attacks Rob with a giant snake (combat value 3) and two ghosts (flying characters, combat value 1 each). In the battle, Rob scores 4 hits on Neil's forces. One hit is applied to each of Neil's three characters, and one hit is left over.

The extra hit must be applied to one of the ghosts, killing it without a saving roll. Neil may make a saving roll for his remaining ghost. If Rob had scored 5 hits, neither of Neil's ghosts would have been able to attempt a saving roll.



## Special Characters

There are 11 Special Characters in the world of KING OF THE TABLETOP. They represent people of great importance or talent, or both. Initially, their tiles are kept in the bank. During the first phase of a turn, players have a chance to get a Special Character to join their army.

If a player rolls a number on 2 dice that is equal to or greater than double the combat value of the Special Character, he gets to put the tile for that character in his standing army. A player may add 1 to the result of this dice roll for every 10 prestige points he has (see *Prestige Points*).

When Special Characters are in a player's army, they must always be kept face up. If a Special Character is killed, either in battle or by other causes, the tile is returned to the bank and may be re-used.

The Elf Lord and Guillaume Tell are both great archers, the Arch Mage and Arch Cleric are pretty hot with magic ability, and Sir Launcelot is the greatest knight in the land. The others have special features that need some explaining:

**DWARF KING** - If the Dwarf King is in your standing army, you receive 1 extra gold when collecting gold at the beginning of a turn.

**SWORD MASTER** - The Sword Master is the only character in the game that requires two hits to kill. In a battle, you may apply one hit to him, and he will still survive.

If he gets into a battle where too many hits are thrown against the side he is on, the first excess hit (one hit greater than the number of characters with him in the battle) must be applied to the Sword Master, killing him. You may, however, apply extra hits to flying characters in order to save the Sword Master (see *Special Abilities, Flying Characters*).

**BARON MUNCHAUSEN** and **THE GRAND DUKE** - Both of these gentlemen are military geniuses. Their skill in the art of siege warfare is amazing. When one of them is in a battle, attacking any type of fortification (including a city or village), one hit is automatically applied to the fort. If both are in the same battle,

they apply two hits to any fort with a value of 2 or more. In addition, they may, of course, roll their normal combat dice.

**THE MASTER THIEF** - The thief may try to steal gold from the treasury of any other player. His attempt comes after the resolution of combat, just before the end of a turn. If you send the thief into battle, he cannot try to steal gold at the end of that turn.

To find out if the thief is successful, you and the player from whom you are trying to steal gold both roll one die. If you roll higher, the thief steals an amount of gold equal to the difference between the two die rolls. If you roll lower than your opponent, the thief fails to steal anything. If there is a tie, the thief has been caught in the act, and you and the other player must roll again. This time, if you tie or roll lower than your opponent, the thief is killed, and if you roll higher, the thief escapes with his life.

**ASSASSIN PRIMUS** - Usually the most sought-after Special Character, the Assassin may be sent to attempt to kill a member of the standing army of the player of your choice. As with the Master Thief, this attempt is made after combat is resolved, just before the end of a turn. If you send the Assassin into battle, he may not attempt a killing in that turn.

You and the player you choose to send the Assassin against both roll one die. If you roll higher, the Assassin has killed a character in the other player's standing army. If you roll lower, the Assassin fails, and if the die rolls result in a tie, the Assassin has been caught in the act. In this case, both players roll again. If you tie or roll lower, the Assassin is killed, and if you roll higher, he escapes.

If the Assassin succeeds in his deadly deed, your opponent must randomly determine which character in his standing army has been killed. (This includes Special Characters.) This can be easily done by dividing the army into halves and rolling a die (even = one half, odd = the other half), and keep dividing the army into equal parts, by roll of a die, until 6 or fewer pieces are left "in the running." Then assign a number between 1 and 6 to each piece, and roll a die until one piece's number is up.

## Magic

There are 9 pieces of magic in the Playing Deck. When you draw these, you must keep them in your hand until you use them. Generally, magic may be used at any time, even if it is not your turn. You may use the magic on your own forces, or to aid a friend or stop the player who is winning. A description of each piece, its effects, and when it may be played, follows:

**LUCKY CHARM** - This lucky little shamrock may be played any time you wish to modify any die roll in the game. You may change that die roll by +1 or -1. It may be the first or second die of an event, an initiative die roll, or a combat die roll during battle. The choice is up to you.

You must play the charm within a reasonable amount of time after the die in question has been rolled. If another die is rolled before you invoke the charm, you have missed your chance.

**TALISMAN OF DELIVERANCE** - A small green stone, fabled to have come from some other tabletop, this device may only be used after a war has been completed. During the war, set your dead to one side, instead of returning them to the deck or the bank. When the war is over, roll a die. The result is the number of characters you may bring back to life and return to your standing army.

Characters saved by the talisman are all saved too late to help in the capture, or prevent the capture, of land tiles. Once the talisman is used, it is returned to the Playing Deck.

**DUST OF DEFENSE** - You may blow this stuff into the face of an enemy, and end any one battle, before it begins! The attacking characters go home, and the land tile is saved. Once used, this piece is returned to the Playing Deck.

**GOLEM** - A part clay, mostly magic, monster. When called, the golem joins a player's army. It is immune to ranged weapons and may only be killed in hand-to-hand battle. The golem may defend or capture land for its owner. When the war is over, the golem is returned to the Playing Deck.

**SCROLL, THE MIST** - When read, this scroll causes a fearsome mist to spread over the countryside. It stops a war, in progress, or before it begins. All warriors go home and the gold they were paid is lost. Once read, the scroll is returned to the Playing Deck.

**SCROLL, DISPELL MAGIC** - When read, this scroll cancels all magic of any one player. It may be read at any time, but the effects last only to the end of the current player's phase of the turn. While under dispell, the player may not cast new magic, and any magic he has already played does not work. Characters in his army with magic ability only hit on a 6. As soon as the dispell wears off, the scroll is returned to the Playing Deck.

**SCROLL, WALL OF FIRE** - When read, this scroll creates a magic fort in any one land. The wall may be played in an undefended land, or added to any existing fortifications. The value of the wall is determined by the roll of one die. It may only be cast during a war. Once used, it is returned to the Playing Deck.

**MAGIC SWORD** - The magic sword is given to any character in a player's army. It cannot function alone. The sword imparts magic ability to its user, scoring hits on a 5 or 6. It does not improve ranged attack ability (R), but if it is given to someone with magic ability (☆), that character hits on a 4, 5, or 6.

The magic sword may be killed by a hit in battle (owner's option), by the assassin, or by disease. It remains in a player's standing army until it is killed, at which time it is returned to the Playing Deck.

**MAGIC BOW** - Like the magic sword, the bow is used by a character in a player's army. It cannot function alone. The bow gives magic ability to any character who has ranged weapons (R). If given to someone with magic ability (☆), they can make ranged attacks, but still hit only on 5 or 6. If the bow is given to a non-magic, non-ranged character, it simply imparts the ability to make a ranged attack (hit on 6 only).

The bow may be killed by a hit in battle (owner's option), by the assassin, or by disease. The bow remains in a player's standing army until it is killed, at which time it is returned to the Playing Deck.

## Game Etiquette

Players may not trade tiles with one another, nor may they loan gold to each other. They may, however, make alliances and attack the player who seems to be winning. Magic may be given to allies, or used against a common enemy.

If a player sends his army into the field, then loses the initiative die roll and decides he doesn't want to fight, his army will run away. They return home, shamefully, without fighting. The gold they were paid is lost.

Any die that goes off the table, bounces into an ashtray, or lands on anything but a flat surface must be re-rolled.

Cups are used to randomize draws from the two decks of tiles. When a player is to draw from either cup, someone else should take the cup, put his hand over the top, and give it a good shake. That same person should then hold the cup so that the drawing player cannot see into the cup.

## How to Win

The moment any player proves that he has 30 prestige points and a finished Gran Muniment, he wins the game. Or, if all other players are eliminated by loss of their lands, the remaining player is the winner.

## The Contents of the Playing Deck

### DESERT

1 Sphinx ☆ 4  
1 Old Dragon 4  
1 Dust Devil 4  
1 Baby Dragon 3  
1 Yellow Knight C3  
1 Sand Worm 3  
1 Camel Corps 3  
1 Griffon 2  
2 Dervishes 2  
1 Nomads 2  
2 Nomads 1  
1 Buzzards 1  
2 Vultures 1  
3 Skeletons 1

### PLAINS

1 Great hunter R4  
1 Wolf Pack 4  
1 Lion Pride 4  
1 Buffalo Herd 4  
1 White Knight C3  
1 Buffalo Herd 3  
1 Plains Eagle 2  
1 Ranger 2  
2 Tribesmen 2  
1 Villain 2  
1 Centaur 2  
1 Gypsies ☆ 2  
1 Gypsies ☆ 1  
4 Farmers 1

### SETTLEMENTS

5 City (2)  
9 Village (1)

### MOUNTAIN

1 Cyclops 5  
1 Giant R4  
1 Troll 4  
1 Blue Knight C3  
1 Giant Roc 3  
1 Dwarves R3  
1 Dwarves 3  
1 Dwarves R2  
1 Dwarves 2  
1 Great Eagle 2  
1 Ogres 2  
2 Mountain Men 2  
1 Great Hawk 1  
4 Goblins 1

### MAGIC

1 Lucky Charm  
1 Dust of Defense  
1 Talisman  
1 Golem  
1 Scroll - Mist  
1 Scroll - Dispell  
1 Scroll - Fire Wall  
1 Magic Sword  
1 Magic Bow

### TREASURE

1 Chest (40)  
1 Diamond (20)  
1 Emerald (20)  
1 Sapphire (10)  
1 Ruby (10)  
1 Gold Nugget (5)

### FOREST

2 Walking Tree 5  
1 Green Knight C3  
1 Wyvern 3  
1 Druid ☆ 3  
1 Elves R3  
1 Elves 3  
1 Elf Mage ☆ 2  
1 Elves R2  
1 Elves 2  
1 Wildcat 3  
1 Forester R2  
2 Bandits 2  
1 Bear 2  
1 Dryad ☆ 1  
2 Pixies 1

### SWAMP

1 Black Knight C4  
1 Vampire 4  
1 Slime Beast 4  
1 Basilisk ☆ 3  
1 Giant Snake 3  
1 Cutthroats 2  
2 Giant Lizard 2  
1 Huge Leeches 2  
2 Crocodile 2  
4 Ghosts 1  
3 Poison Frogs 1

### MINES

1 Gold (4)  
2 Silver (2)  
2 Copper (1)

## Optional Rules

You probably should play the game once before adding any of these optional rules. I like all of them except the trading rule, which was put in for all you wheeler dealers out there.

### Royal Influence

The Elf Lord and Dwarf King command great respect and loyalty from their followers. When the Elf Lord is in a battle, all elves fighting in the same land with him add one to their combat value. Any elves fighting against the Elf Lord in a battle must subtract one from their combat value. The Dwarf King has the same effect on dwarves.

### Terrain Bonus

Everyone fights better on his home turf. Any character fighting in its own terrain (either on attack or defense) adds one to its combat value.

### Army Reserves

Once an attacker's army has taken the field, but before the players roll for initiative, each player sets aside his reserves, if desired. Only flying creatures and Special Characters may be placed in reserve. The reserves must all be placed face up.

Roll for initiative, and set up armies in the normal way, but do not touch the reserves. Once both sides have lined up their armies, they roll again for reserve initiative. There is no die roll modification for this. The player who rolls higher must line up his reserves first.

### Trading

During the last phase of a turn, a player may announce that he wishes to trade instead of going to war.

A player may trade anything he wishes, but remember that structures are built on land. If land is traded, any city, village, or fort on that land must go with it. Players may buy and sell characters and magic items. The trading player may only strike a deal with one other player in a turn.

## Credits

Game design: Tom Wham and

Robert J. Kuntz

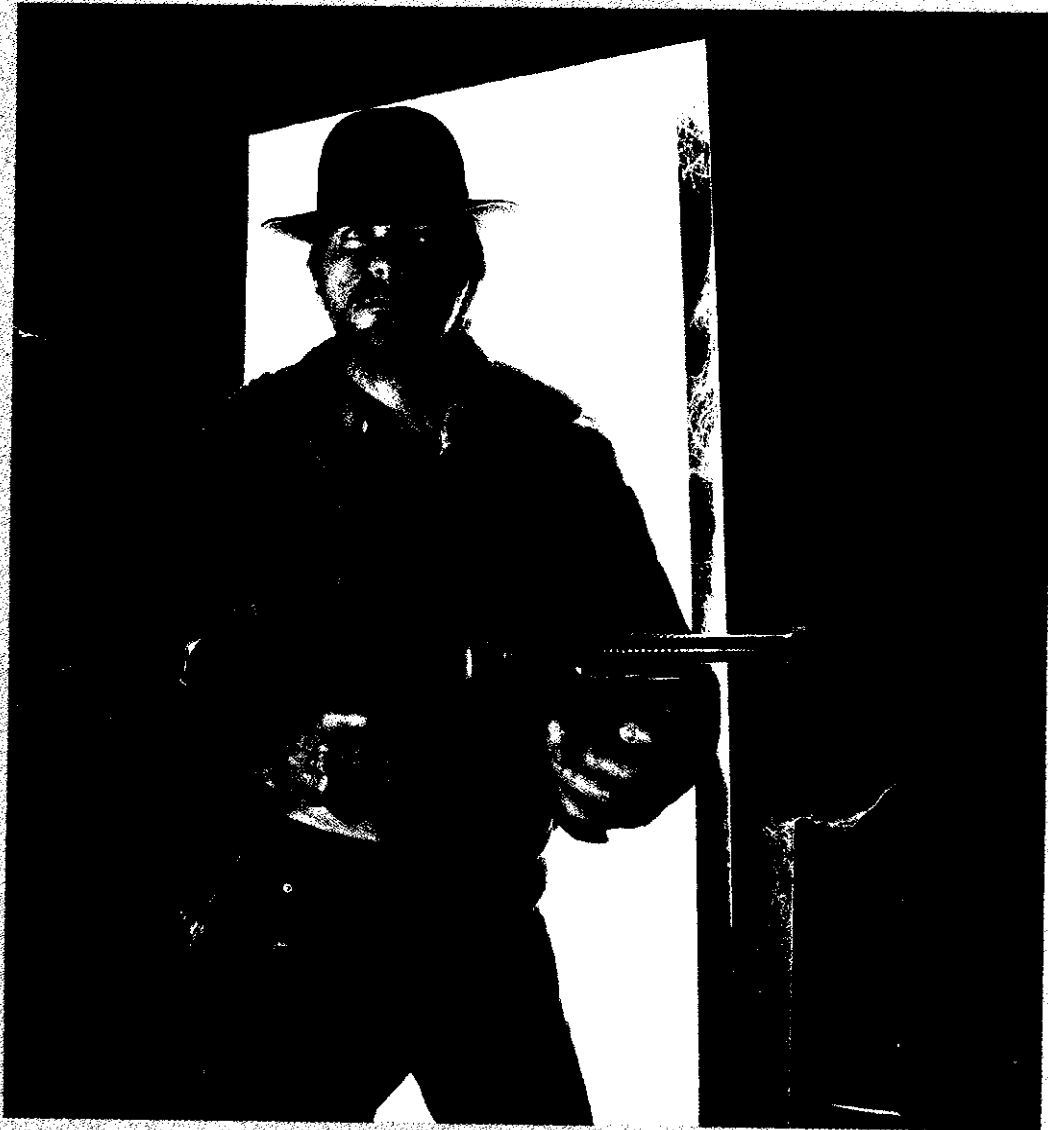
Counter art: Dave Trampier

Editing: Kim Mohan

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# Tarot

(From page 12)

points to enable him to reach the next level, but not more than 19,000 in any case. Also, drawer will have a +5% reaction roll toward all persons met later or known presently, and they will have a +5% reaction to him.

Reversed, it signifies unhappiness, loneliness; plans and triumphs delayed; broken friendships or engagements; possible loss of a job or home.

Drawer will lose all henchmen and servants after returning from this expedition (they will leave town, take another leader, or otherwise leave for "personal reasons," they will not become hostile). If drawer is a henchman or vassal of another, he will be dismissed, or stripped of his offices, unless he makes a saving throw vs. death magic. Also, drawer is stripped of enough experience points to reduce him to the bottom of present level, but not more than 9,500 in any case.

## 20: Judgment

An angel sounds forth the call to Judgment from a trumpet to which is attached a banner bearing a cross; the clouds from which it emerges radiate power. Below, a figure rises from a tomb while on each side a man and woman also rise; all these figures are as one in the wonder, adoration, and ecstatic awe which their whole bodies express as they answer the summons.

Upright, it signifies rebirth, renewal, awakening; rejuvenation, change of personal consciousness; a life well lived and a work well done; atonement, judgment, the need to forgive and to seek forgiveness, sincere self-appraisal.

Drawer becomes a young adult over the course of the next hour (if not one already) but without any changes in characteristics. To determine exact age, select a young-adult age randomly, then add half the difference between that age and maximum young-adult age, rounding down. If drawer is already a young adult, he will become 90% of the minimum young-adult age. If the drawer's behavior is judged by the DM to have been strictly consistent with his alignment and religion (observance of taboos, sacrifices, donations, etc.) he will also gain 2-12 hit points, determined randomly, but the gain can only be up to the maximum possible number of hit points for that character.

Reversed, it signifies weakness; stupidity; a sentencing; disillusionment, disappointment; indecision leading to procrastination and delay.

Drawer is affected as if struck by a ray of enfeeblement from a magic-user of 3rd level or the same level as the drawer (whichever is higher); the drawer is also henceforth subject to a penalty of -1 on initiative rolls, due to his inability to choose between alternatives.

## 21: The World

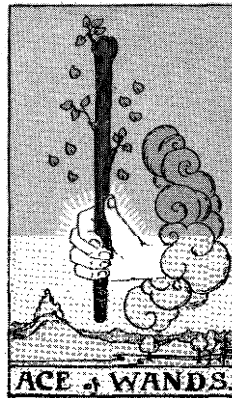
Surrounding by an elliptical wreath of living foliage is a female figure dancing joyously, a short wand in each hand. In the four corners of the card are the heads of the four beings of apocalypse, hovering protectively outside the wreath. Her legs form a cross, as do those of the Hanged Man, but she stands upright, supported by the ether, the very fabric of the World; her dance is of the sensitive life, of joy attained in the body, of the soul's intoxication in the World- turned-paradise.

Upright, it signifies completion, success, triumph in all things, perfection, fulfillment; the path of liberation and enlightenment; the admiration of others.

Drawer gains 1 point to each of his ability scores which is two or more below racial maximum.

Reversed, it signifies imperfection, failure, lack of vision, failure to complete task; fear of change or travel, fixity, permanence, stagnation.

After 1-4 days, drawer will begin to develop an increasing distrust of strange places: other cities or countries, dungeons, wildernesses, new taverns, etc. Within an additional 2-8 days this will become full-blown paranoia, with drawer believing that everyone and everything outside his home (eventually, his chambers) is out to get him, and that any so-called "friend," or "loved one", who tries to get the drawer to come out into the world is clearly part of the conspiracy.



## THE MINOR ARCANA

### Wands

Wands generally represent enterprise and growth, progress, advancement, animation, inventiveness, intelligence, and energy. This is the suit of the magic-user, and of the laborer.

### 22: Ace of Wands

A hand issuing from clouds grasps a still-verdant branch in the shape of a wand. In the background may be a city or castle on a hill.

Upright, it signifies creation, beginning (of an adventure, a journey, or an endeavor), invention, enterprise.

Drawer (affected automatically) and certain party members (those who fail to

save vs. spell at -2) are freed from all existing geas and quest spells and charms, and will be placed under a compulsion (equivalent to a combined geas and quest) to kill a single monster of 7,000 xp value (or a single group of monsters of 21,000 xp value) or more. Fulfillment of the task will gain each participant an additional 1,000 xp, over and above the xp reward for the monster(s).

Reversed, it signifies false starts, clouded joy, ruin, decadence, cancellation of projects, failure, retreat.

Effects as above, but the compulsion will be to cancel the expedition and return to base as quickly as practical.

While returning to home or headquarters, the party will have -2 to armor class (two places better) and +2 to saving throws, but will receive no experience points for actions performed during this retreat.

### 23: Two of Wands

A majestic figure wearing crown-like headgear regards the broad world from a height. He holds one wand, and regards a globe; another wand is nearby.

Upright, it signifies boldness, courage, rule over others; and also the anguish and sorrow that may accompany power.

Drawer gains 1 point of charisma; and if he is in danger of becoming insane, that possibility is increased by one fourth (i.e., a 4 in 10 chance becomes 5 in 10) anytime during the next year; the insanity will take the form of melancholia.

Reversed, it signifies trouble, fear, sadness, surprise.

Drawer's saving throws against fear and hopelessness are reduced by 1.

### 24: Three of Wands

A calm personage, his back turned, leans lightly upon one of three wands planted in the ground, and looks out upon a sea, beyond which are mountains.

Upright, it signifies established strength, wealth, enterprise, discovery, partnership in undertakings.

When the drawer next seeks to go on an expedition or adventure, a non-player character of 1-3 levels higher will offer to come along, and to loan equipment and supplies. (This should be an established NPC already friendly to the drawer.)

Reversed, it signifies cessation of adversity, an end to or suspension of difficulties; assistance with an ulterior motive.

Effects as above, but the NPC will be planning to trick or betray the drawer.

This could be by stealing a magic item from him, robbing him and stranding him on an island, or whatever; generally (80%), the betrayal is not meant to be fatal to the drawer.

### 25: Four of Wands

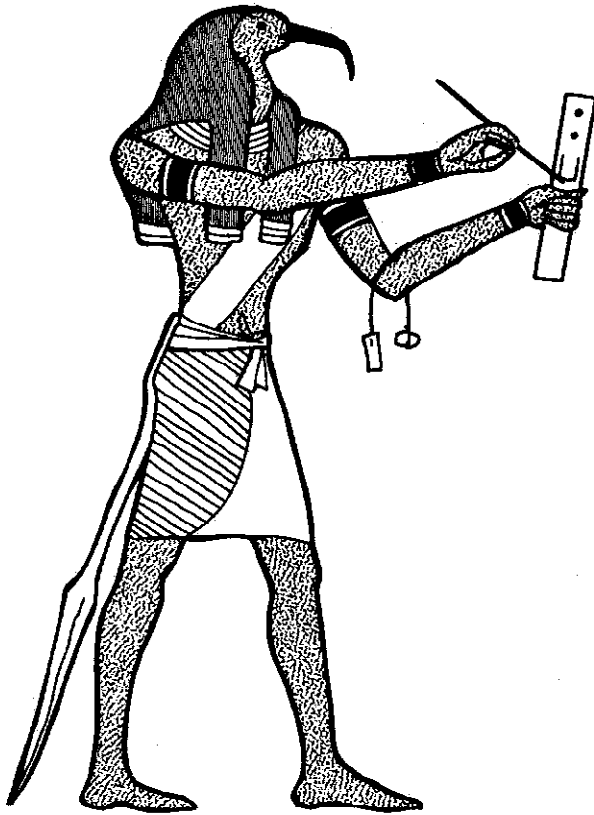
Four great wands are garlanded with chains of flowers, two women bear flowers, and behind them is a bridge over a moat, leading to a castle or manor.

Upright, it signifies repose, peace, rural

*Egypt*, her monuments were already 2000 years old when Christ was born.

*Egypt*, whose priests and scholars were heralded for their great knowledge, and her wizards envied for their power.

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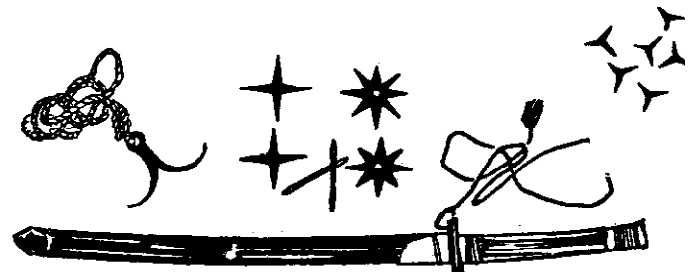
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refuge, country domesticity and felicity.

When drawer returns from this expedition to his home or headquarters, after healing is finished he will feel a strong desire to rest a while at home; for every month of rest thereafter up to four months, the drawer will (unknowingly) receive 1,000 xp. The desire may be resisted (roll for saving throw vs. spell, at -2, not more than once a week), but can continue beyond the four-month period.

Reversed, the meaning is the same but less intense.

Effects as above, but only 500 xp are given per month, and saving throws to resist the desire are at -1.

### 26: Five of Wands

Five youths are apparently battling with huge wands, yet there is no sign of actual bodily injury.

Upright, it signifies competition, strife, differences of opinion, non-fatal struggle.

The effects of discord (as per the symbol) will befall the drawer's party after 4-7 turns; grappling and other non-lethal combat techniques will be used, but serious injuries are nonetheless possible.

Reversed, it signifies victory after surmounting obstacles, contradiction or trickery.

All characters involved in the party's next victorious combat will receive double experience points for the action; thieves in the party will have a 10% better success rate in thefts attempted upon their own companions until the end of this expedition or adventure.

### 27: Six of Wands

A laurel-crowned rider bears a wand adorned with a laurel wreath, and is accompanied by five staff-bearing figures on foot.

Upright, it signifies victory, triumph, good tidings, the successful completion of a struggle.

Drawer will be doubly effective (double damage for weapon-wielders) in attacks against his next foe; magic-users and illusionists' spells will be of three times' normal duration, and saving throws against such spells will be at -3.

Reversed, it signifies indefinite delay, disloyalty, the success of an enemy, fear.

Drawer will learn upon returning from this adventure/expedition that his most hated and feared opponent(s) have had a great success and are said to be intent upon attacking the drawer soon. (The opponent(s) can be anyone from a professional rival to an entire tribe of orcs - anyone the drawer has defeated, attacked, injured, or merely outshone. Even a first-level character will have had a rival fellow apprentice, a traditional family or clan enemy, or something of the sort.)

### 28: Seven of Wands

A youth brandishes a staff from the top of a hill, and is confronted by six more wands in opposition from below.

Upright, it symbolizes a stand against unfavorable odds from an advantageous or superior position, the need to hold an unpopular stand or defy seemingly unbeatable opposition.

In the next combat where drawer and party are outnumbered 2:1 or worse, the drawer's party will have +4 on initiative rolls; they will also have a bonus of +1 on saving throws and AC (one place better).

Reversed, it signifies indecision, ignorance, perplexity, anxiety, embarrassment, doubt, hesitancy.

Drawer becomes indecisive; he will have a permanent -1 on all initiative rolls for drawer and any party he leads.

### 29: Eight of Wands

Eight wands fly through open space, but near the end of their flight; they will clearly fall to ground soon.

Upright, it signifies swiftness, haste; that which is moving; approach to goals; travel by air; too-rapid advancement.

When next attacked, drawer will be hasted for 2d4 turns, rest of party for 8 rounds; those who make their saving throws vs. death magic will not suffer aging (the drawer's throw will be at -1).

Reversed, it signifies delay, stagnation; quarrels and disputes.

When next attacked, the entire party will be slowed for 8+1d8 rounds; afterward, those who do not save vs. spell will suffer discord (as with the symbol), but they will not attack with lethal weapons.

### 30: Nine of Wands

A sturdy muscular figure, with a minor wound (already bandaged) grasps or leans on one staff and expectantly regards the surroundings. Behind are eight other wands, arranged as for a palisade or other sturdy boundary.

Upright, it signifies a pause in struggle, strength to meet opposition, power in reserve, discipline, preparation for an encounter, delay or suspension.

One time before the end of this adventure/expedition, drawer and party will be able to return to a designated sanctuary (as per the cleric spell word of recall) for 9-12 turns. They may bind their wounds, refresh themselves, and the like, but may not pick up or drop anything, or communicate with anyone; at the end of the duration, they will reappear at the time and place they left from, in the same positions and carrying the same equipment.

Reversed, it signifies obstacles, adversity, opposition, weakness, ill health, even calamity.

Drawer's strength will be reduced to racial minimum when next confronted by an opponent, and will remain reduced for 8 turns.

### 31: Ten of Wands

A weary figure stumbles toward a city or castle, oppressed by the weight of ten wands he is trying to carry.

Upright, it signifies oppression, testing

by work and pain; also force, energy, or power misused and applied to selfish ends, the burden of ill-controlled power.

An employer, liege, ruler, supervisor, or other person with power over the drawer, will soon (2-20 days) begin to overwork and overburden the drawer. If the drawer bears up under the oppression (which will not be unendurable, merely irksome in the extreme) for 1d10 weeks, he will be relieved of the oppression, and will receive a reward of 1,000 xp per week of suffering.

Reversed, it signifies loss, separation, immigration; intrigue.

Drawer is teleported a distance of 1-4 levels in a dungeon-type setting, or 2-20 miles in a city or wilderness setting, to a place he is not familiar with at all. At least one party member will urge that the rest of the party consider the drawer deceased, and that his possessions (if any) being carried by party members be considered extra treasure for the "survivors."

#### The Court Cards

The Court Cards of each suit (King, Queen, Knight, and Page) signify a being who will aid or attack the drawer, depending on whether the card is drawn upright or reversed. Each of these beings is a material form of that which is symbolized by the card (their appearance will be exactly that of the person depicted on the card) rather than a natural being

(human or otherwise); thus, they may possess combinations of classes or other attributes which might be forbidden to player characters or NPCs. They will materialize the next time the drawer is attacked by another creature or character, and will engage in combat until the combat is resolved by the defeat of one side or the other, or by the successful evasion of one party by the other, or until the card-being is slain. Upon this resolution or slaying, the being will dematerialize along with all its effects. Stated armor classes, damage figures, and the like, take account of the magics with which these beings are equipped, and of dexterity or strength bonuses. Ability scores for each individual in a set of court cards are as given for the Page in each case: 16 in the prime requisite score and 12 in all other abilities. All of the card-beings are neutral in alignment.

#### 32: Page of Wands

The Page is a fair youth with blond hair and light eyes, who stands boldly upholding a wand as if ready to deliver a message or proclamation (the Page is often a bearer of tidings, good or ill).

The Page of Wands: 3rd level magic-user (AC 8, HP 12, #AT 1, D 4-9 (d6+3), S 12, I 16, W 12, D 12, C 12, Ch 12); wears boots of speed and carries a staff of striking (15 charges). The Page's spells are magic missile, shield, stinking cloud.

#### 33: Knight of Wands

A handsome young man in plate armor, the Knight, wand in hand, rides across the plains in haste. His hair is blond, his eyes pale, and he is fair of complexion.

The Knight of Wands: 4th/4th level magic-user/fighter (AC 2, HP 26, #AT 1, D 4-11); wears plate mail +1 and carries a rod of smiting (30 charges). His spells are: sleep, burning hands, push, mirror image, scare. If the setting is suitable (open meadow, city street, etc.) the Knight will be riding a light warhorse (16 hp) which wears horseshoes of speed.

#### 34: Queen of Wands

The crowned Queen sits on her throne, a wand in her hand, a black cat (her familiar, with 7 hp) at her feet. She is a fair blonde with pale eyes.

The Queen of Wands: 7th level magic-user (AC 9, HP 28, #AT 1, D by weapon); wears a ring of protection +1, a ring of fire resistance, and a brooch of shielding (70 points left) and carries a wand of fire (40 charges). Her spells are: enlarge, magic missile, shield, sleep, mirror image, scare, web, dispel magic, protection from normal missiles, confusion.

#### 35: King of Wands

The King sits in royal robes upon his throne, a crown and cap of maintenance upon his head. A staff is in his right

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hand; a little alchemical salamander is at his feet (it has 4 hit points and is immune to fire as a standard salamander; so, therefore, is the King), which looks like a small black lizard. He is a mature man, blond and fair with pale eyes.

The King of Wands: 7th level magic-user (AC 8, HP 28, #AT 1, D by weapon); wears a ring of protection +2 and a necklace of adaptation, and carries a wand of frost (35 charges). His spells are: burning hands, shield, sleep (×2), invisibility, stinking cloud, web, blink, fireball, wall of fire.

### Cups

Cups generally represent love, happiness, deep feelings, gaiety, joy, and wisdom. They hold water or wine, symbols of pleasure and happiness. This is the suit of the cleric and the minstrel.

### 36: Ace of Cups

A large and ornate cup, usually shown accompanied by flowers and other living creatures. The incidental aspects of the card vary from deck to deck. The Waite deck shows the cup supported by a hand issuant from a cloud; pouring from the cup are five streams flowing into a body of water on which floats water-lilies; a white dove drops a communion wafer into the cup.

Upright, it signifies joy, nourishment, content; opulence, fulfillment, abundance; joys of faith, "my cup runneth over"; fertility, productiveness.

*This draw serves as atonement, cure critical wounds, cure disease, dispel evil, dispel magic, exorcise, or remove curse (any two of the above needed by the drawer within the next 21 weeks) at the 16th level of clerical ability.*

Reversed, it signifies change, alteration, instability, bad faith, false love, erosion, inconsistency.

*The next two spells from the list above cast upon the drawer will be ineffective.*

### 37: Two of Cups

A young man and young woman share cups, perhaps in pledge; above them is a caduceus, surmounted by a winged lion's-head.

Upright, it signifies love or friendship beginning or renewed; union; understanding, cooperation, and partnership.

*Drawer will fall in love with the member of the party most attractive to her or him (based on charisma, racial preferences, etc.) over the next 24 hours; drawer gains 4 points of charisma at the same time - in the eyes of the beloved only.*

Reversed, it signifies misunderstanding, crossed desires, violent passion, disappointment in love, disunity.

*Drawer will fall violently, passionately in unrequited love with the member of the party most attractive to her or him, over the next 24 hours; drawer loses 7 points of charisma - in the eyes of the beloved only.*

### 38: Three of Cups

Three cups are lifted up, in a setting of flowers and other growing things.

Upright, it signifies victorious and happy conclusions, success, abundance, pleasure and hospitality, solace, fulfillment, and healing.

*Before the drawer appear three large cups or chalices (which are of wood, but resemble those on the card), on which are carved the drawer's name. In each of these the drawer can create food and water, one cubic foot of either, 7 times, after which they become simple cups worth 2 gold pieces each. If the drawer is a cleric, each cup will work 21 times. These items are not salable for more than the 2 gp, since the spell will only work for the drawer, and only if all three are together; their experience point value is 1,000 for the set, 3,000 for a cleric.*

Reversed, it signifies achievement; ending; overindulgence in drink and the pleasures of the senses; excess.

*Drawer becomes more susceptible to intoxication from alcohol and other drugs: slight intoxication (normally) becomes moderate, moderate becomes great, great becomes "beyond great." This change will first become evident after the end of this adventure or expedition.*

### 39: Four of Cups

A youth sits contemplatively on the grass beneath a tree. A hand from a mysterious cloud offers a cup; but the youth seemingly ignores both it and the three other cups upon the ground nearby.

Upright, it signifies weariness, surfeit, disgust with earthly pleasures and things of this world, boredom and discontent, a re-evaluation of lifestyle.

*Drawer will decline any nourishment but water for the next seven days ("to clear the mind and system"); at the end of this expedition, drawer will give all food and drink and 10% of his wealth to the poor, and give half of his gains from this adventure to his faith (100% if a cleric, druid, monk, or paladin). These donations will go to public institutions, not to any player character or NPC. The drawer will then withdraw from the active world for 4 weeks + 4d4 days, emerging only for religious services which cannot be carried out at home.*

Reversed, it signifies novelty; reawakening to new goals, new relationships, or new ambitions; refreshment.

*Drawer breaks free of any charm, insanity, beguilement, or the like by which he is afflicted. Drawer will move afoot at an extra 3" for 4d4 weeks, and will gain a bonus of 25% on all experience points earned for the rest of this adventure.*

### 40: Five of Cups

A gloomy, cloaked figure in a hilly setting looks sideways at three spilled and fallen cups; two full ones stand behind. In the background is a body of water.

Upright, it symbolizes partial loss,

failure to come up to expectations, disappointment or disillusionment, dissolution of a friendship or marriage.

*Drawer will lose the affections of a current lover or, if none, those of a henchman to whom drawer might be attracted (they will not become hostile, merely indifferent) over the next five days; drawer's morale and reaction rolls will be at -5% for 5d5 weeks.*

Reversed, it signifies return of pleasure, of an old friend or loved one, new partnership or alliance.

*Drawer will gain or regain an old lover or henchman to whom drawer might be attracted, within five days of returning from this adventure or expedition; drawer's morale and reaction rolls will be at +5% for 5d5 weeks after this.*

### 41: Six of cups

Two young children stand in a garden or village green, playing with one of six cups filled with flowers; the ambience is bucolic and nostalgic.

Upright, it signifies remembrance of things past, the joys and happiness of days gone by.

*Drawer sees a clear vision of a beloved friend and companion of days gone by (one who is still alive). Within 1-8 days of the drawer's return from this adventure, he will receive a parcel from this friend, passed on by an obliging merchant or other appropriate courier. In addition to a letter of reminiscences, the parcel will include either a gem of 4,000 gp value or less (49%), an item of jewelry of 4,000 gp value or less (40%), or a minor (gp and xp values of 4,000 or less) miscellaneous magic item usable by the drawer (11%).*

Reversed, it signifies renewal, thoughts of the future, that which is to come.

*Drawer has a clear vision of the next being or group of beings the party is to encounter after they have finished with the Tarot (although he will not know the meaning of this vision, of course).*

### 42: Seven of Cups

A startled figure is confronted by seven cups overflowing with fantastic visions: castles, dragons, jewels, and other sights more bizarre.

Upright, it signifies daydreaming, dissipation, wishful thinking, ephemeral or illusory success.

*Drawer has a -2 penalty on saving throws vs. illusions from now on.*

Reversed, it signifies resolution, determination, strength of will, intelligent choice.

*Drawer will save at +2 vs. illusions from now on; illusionists will gain one level instead.*

### 43: Eight of Cups

A dejected figure with a pilgrim's staff leaves eight neatly stacked cups behind, and trudges up a barren moonlit mountain into the distance.

Upright, it signifies abandonment of

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success, disappointment in material gains, the discarding of what has been achieved for a higher goal; journeying from place to place.

*Over the remainder of this expedition, drawer will feel an increasing discontent and an increase in religious interests. Within eight days of returning home from this adventure, he will sell all non-portable properties, abdicate (or at least take leave from) all official positions, and enter a religious retreat for at least 8 + 4d8 weeks (after donating half of all his worldly goods to the faith). If drawer is eligible, he will become a cleric, druid, or paladin of his deity (allowing for alignment, gender, and racial requirements, and the restrictions listed in, the Players Handbook). Clerics, druids, and paladins will stay in religious retreat for a year and a day, emerging with 4,000 additional experience points. Those who fall into neither of these classifications will emerge from retreat with renewed spirituality and 1,000 extra experience points.*

Reversed, it signifies feasting, joy, striving for material success, gaiety, a less spiritual outlook.

*While healing and resting after the end of this expedition, drawer will be feeling increasingly restive and frivolous. As soon as it is safe to do so, he will spend at least 8% of his wealth on a feast or series of feasts and carousals, stopping only after money starts running low or a daily saving throw vs. death magic (at -2) is successful. Depending on alignment, deity, and profession, this debauchery may require atonement by the drawer.*

#### 44: Nine of Cups

A prosperous figure, having feasted happily, rests before a counter on which nine cups, plenteously filled, have been neatly arranged.

Upright, it signifies success, satisfaction, all the good things of life, well being, the granting of wishes.

*Drawer gains one immediate wish, which can only be used for physical or material matters (thus, it could be used to restore hit points, but not to raise an intelligence score).*

Reversed, it signifies misplaced confidence, false assurance, material loss, imperfections, mistakes, disputes, failure to fulfill a wish.

*Effects as above, but the wish will go wrong in one of various ways; thus, a wish to bring a character back to life might result in the deceased becoming a zombie (as per the spell animate dead), or a wish to transport the party into the fortress of an enemy might transport them into the cells of his dungeon, without keys. The mistake or flaw may be disastrous, but should not be fatal per se.*

#### 45: Ten of Cups

Ten cups in a rainbow appear as in a vision; beneath it a couple raise their arms in joy and ecstasy and two children

dance together blithely; a home stands in the background.

Upright, it signifies contentment, repose of the heart, perfection of love and friendship, peace.

*Reaction/loyalty scores of the drawer's friends and associates increase by +20%.*

Reversed, it signifies betrayal, loss of friendship, waste, criminal behavior, strife, hatred, resentment.

*Reaction/loyalty scores of the drawer's friends and associates decrease by one third of their present amount (round losses up), but at least 10% in any case.*

#### 46: Page of Cups

A fancily dressed youth of medium coloration, the Page stands lightly, contemplating the fish or other curious image(s) emerging from the Cup being carried.

Page of Cups: 3rd level cleric (AC 4, HP 24, #AT 1, D 2-7, S 12, I 12, W 16, D 12, C 12, Ch 12); has bracers of defense (AC 4) and a mace +1. The Page's spells are: *command, cure light wounds, hold person*. The Cup is his holy symbol.

#### 47: Knight of Cups

Stately but not martial, the Knight carries his Cup firmly as he approaches a stream. He wears Plate armor, with a winged helmet; he is a young man, of medium coloring.

Knight of Cups: 4th/4th level cleric/fighter (AC 1, HP 42, #AT 1, D by weapon); has plate mail and a cloak of displacement. His spells are: *cause fear, cure light wounds, light, chant, hold person*. The Cup is his holy symbol. If the setting is suitable (plains, highway, etc.) the Knight will be riding a medium warhorse (18 hp) with horseshoes of a zephyr.

#### 48: Queen of Cups

Beautiful and dreamy, the Queen contemplates an extremely elaborate cup; she is quite capable of turning those dreams into actions. She is of medium coloring.

Queen of Cups: 7th level cleric (AC 7, HP 56, #AT 1, D 2-7 or 1-6 +3); wears a ring of protection +1 and a cloak of protection +2 and carries a sceptre which is also a mace +3. Her spells are: *command, sanctuary, cure light wounds, hold person (x2), silence 15' radius, animate dead, dispel magic, cure serious wounds*. The Cup is her holy symbol.

#### 49: King of cups

Solemn, level-headed, and responsible, the King sets the great Cup upon his right knee. Of medium coloring, he is a fair and lively-minded man.

King of Cups: 7th level cleric (AC 2, HP 56, #AT 1, D by weapon); wears bracers of defense (AC 5) and a ring of protection +3; and his Cup is also a decanter of endless water. His spells are *cure light wounds, light, sanctuary, hold person, slow, poison, resist fire, prayer (x2), cure serious wounds*. The Cup also serves as his holy symbol.

swords

Swords generally represent courage, boldness, violence, force, strength, authority, aggression, ambition, activity, accomplishment of goals (for good or ill); sometimes misfortune and disaster. This is the suit of fighters, and of the ruler.

#### 50: Ace of Swords

Issuing from a cloud, a hand grasps an upright sword, topped by a crown from which hang branches of olive and laurel.

Upright, it signifies conquest, the triumph of brute force, championship, excessive use of power.

*Drawer will hit his next opponent in physical combat on every attempt (unless 21 or more is required to hit); but he cannot strike to subdue that opponent.*

Reversed, it signifies debacle, disaster, lack of productivity, Pyrrhic victory.

*The next time drawer hits an opponent in physical combat, his weapon will do 2d4 + the normal points of damage but will then shatter irreparably. If the blow is with a body part, said part will suffer a severe break, requiring a heal spell and four weeks of immobility to become useful again. This applies even if the drawer was attempting to strike to subdue.*

#### 51: Two of Swords

A blindfolded female figure balances two swords upon her shoulders beneath a rocky sea; behind her is a turbulent or new moon.

Upright, it signifies balance of forces, expedience, conformity, alliance of arms, indecision or tension in relationships, stalemate, harmony, concord, affection.

*Loyalty and reaction rolls of friends, henchmen, and servitors will change 2d12 points toward 60%, going up or down as appropriate, over the next two turns.*

Reversed, it signifies treachery, disloyalty, duplicity, release, movement of affairs in the wrong direction.

*Loyalty and reaction rolls of friends, henchmen, and servitors will change 2d12 points toward 20%, going up or down as appropriate, over the next two turns.*

#### 52: Three of Swords

Against a turbulent background, a heart is pierced by three swords.

Upright, it signifies division, quarreling, separation, upheaval, civil war or political struggle, arguments.

*Those members of the party who do not make successful saving throws vs. spell (at -3) will start a violent fight within the party in the next 1-4 turns; the drawer does not get a saving throw. The basis of the fight may be philosophical, racial, political or religious. Those quarreling cannot be stopped (except forcefully, by those who made the saving throw) until at least one party member is unconscious or dead.*

Reversed, it has much the same meaning but to a lesser degree.

*Effects as above, but saving throws will*



be at +1, and those party members with a wisdom of more than seven will be using non-lethal combat methods. (Note: In both these cases the effects of the card will wear off in 4-7 hours, but the animosities created or revealed may linger.)

### 53: Four of Swords

The image of a warrior lies upon a tomb or altar; alongside it is one sword, and three more hang in the background.

Upright, it symbolizes repose, release, hermit's retreat, solitude, exile, replenishment (not death).

After this adventure is completed, drawer will refrain from adventure and excitement for an extra 4 weeks + 1d4 days after healing and other recovery are completed, regardless of inducements offered. The period of repose will be spent in solitary study and meditation, at the end of which the drawer will roll 4d4; if the resulting number is less than the drawer's wisdom, he will gain permanently 1 hit point, 2 in the case of fighters (including paladins and rangers).

Reversed, it signifies circumspection, precautions, a need for careful administration, economy, prudent action.

Drawer gains a permanent 10% increase in the chance of success of precautionary measures (listening at doors, attempting to detect evil/good, casting augury, and the like); but if the drawer is careless, the chance for him to be surprised is 2 in 6

greater. Thus, an elven drawer listening at a door behind which a band of orcs lurk will have a 5 in 20 (instead of 3 in 20) chance of hearing noise; a drawer checking an alley for danger with a medallion of ESP will suffer a malfunction on a 2 in 30 (rather than 5 in 30) chance, etc.; but a drawer who blithely enters a presumably empty woods without drawing weapons and taking similar prudent measures will be surprised on a 5 in 6 (instead of 3 in 6) chance by the werewolf therein.

### 54: Five of Swords

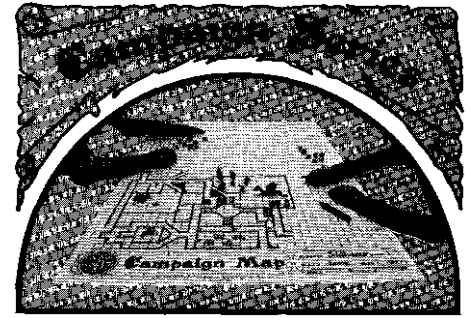
A scornful youth watches as two dejected figures slouch away; two swords lie on the ground, two more are slung over the youth's shoulder, and he holds the fifth confidently, pointed toward the ground. The sky is clouded and stormy.

Upright, it signifies defeat, dishonor, loss, degradation, infamy, destruction, conquest, cruelty, failure.

In their next conflict with beings not evil in alignment, drawer and party will be defeated and will surrender rather than be slain. They will be stripped of all weapons, valuables, and supplies, but no lives will be lost.

Reversed, it signifies more or less the same, plus sorrow, weakness, funerals, loss of a friend.

Effects as above, but the drawer will suffer some form of humiliation or



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injury, possibly including the slaying of a familiar, henchman, or servitor.

### 55: Six of Swords

A ferrykeeper conveys solemn passengers to a further shore across calm waters. Six swords stand hilt-up along the edge of the boat.

Upright, it signifies a departure, breaking away, travel, success after anxiety, voluntary separation, water journey.

The next effort by drawer and party to flee, avoid, or evade opposition that would normally fail, will succeed, unless the chance for success was zero (but also even then, if there is a body of water between the party and the pursuers). Drawer has a permanent 5% bonus chance of evading pursuit, etc., if he can cross a body of water ahead of the pursuers.

Reversed, it signifies outcry, lack of immediate solution, staying in place.

The next time the drawer and party seek to flee, avoid, or evade, they will fail badly because of slow speed, an involuntary outcry that alerts the opponents, or inability to get across a body of water. Drawer also becomes permanently sensitive (-1 on saving throw) to attack forms based on loud sounds or outcries.

### 56: Seven of Swords

A scurrying figure rushes away with five swords, while two other swords are left behind.

Upright, it signifies partial success, a plan that may fail, plots and schemes, tricky endeavors.

The next encounter in which the drawer takes part will be a partial success: some opponents will escape with part of the treasures, valuables will be damaged in the fighting, etc. Any attempt to make the encounter more nearly a total success will bring the whole effort to ruin (i.e., while sacking up the last copper pieces and checking the chests for false bottoms, the Party is surprised by returning opponents - and their allies).

Reversed, it signifies wishes soon to be fulfilled, chance of unexpected success; sound counsel, instruction.

The next plan devised in part or whole by the drawer which involves at least 7% but no more than 49% chance of failure, will be a success, if the scheme is based on stealth, cunning, or deception (rather than a "smash and grab" operation).

### 57: Eight of Swords

A female figure, her eyes covered, stands alone, surrounded by the swords of the card.

Upright, it signifies restriction, bondage, betrayal, imprisonment; chagrin; calumny or censure; temporary sickness.

Drawer will be taken captive (and stripped of gear, weapons, etc.) by the next opposing group the party meets of greater power than their own.

Reversed, it signifies prior treachery, disquiet, unforeseen mishap, fatality.

Drawer will encounter wandering monsters at twice the normal chance until the end of this adventure.

### 58: Nine of Swords

A woman, racked with despair, is surrounded by the swords of the card; she is blanketed with roses, but feels only their thorns.

Upright, it signifies utter desolation, despair, misery, death, failure, disappointment, miscarriage or delay, deception, doubt, illness, loss.

Drawer falls prey to melancholia (see "Insanity" in the DMG) after 9 turns; if he saves vs. death magic (at -2), the melancholia will last for 3-12 (1d10+2) months; if not, it will be permanent. During this period, he will be doubly susceptible to illness and parasitic infestation.

Reversed, it signifies doubt, suspicion, shame, patient suffering, "time heals all wounds," timidity, reasonable fear.

Drawer will have a -25% to morale and react at -10% for 3-9 (2d4+1) weeks; he will heal at half speed until fully recovered from this adventure/expedition, and will then require an additional 4-7 days of rest.


### 59: Ten of Swords

A body, pierced by ten swords, lies upon a desolate plain beneath a blackened sky.


Upright, it signifies defeat, darkness, disaster, woe, loss, and desolation (but not death).

Drawer loses the affection of all lovers, henchman, and associates (reaction and loyalty rolls will be reduced by 11-30 points, with a new maximum of 55%), with the rest of the drawer's party feeling uneasy around him and wishing to get rid of the drawer as soon as they can do so without endangering the party. Any home the drawer owns will be destroyed or taken from him, as will 80+1d20% of his material wealth.

Reversed, it signifies benefit, profit, success, favor, etc., but of a passing and impermanent sort.




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*Drawer will have 1d10 additional hit points for the next ten days.*

#### 60: Page of Swords

An alert, lithe, and energetic youth of dark coloring, the Page holds the Sword ready for action while walking briskly over rough ground.

Page of Swords: 3rd level fighter (AC 6, HP 30, #AT 1, D 1-8 or 1-12 +2, S 16, I 12, W 12, D 12, C 12, Ch 12); wears bracers of defense (AC 6) and wields the Sword, which is +1 (a long sword) with no special abilities.

#### 61: Knight of Swords

A dashing and chivalric young man of dark coloring, the Knight rides full tilt across open storm-swept country. Brave and proud, he brandishes his Sword at unseen foes, or from sheer spirit.

Knight of Swords: 5th level fighter (AC 2, HP 50, #AT 1, D 1-8 or 1-12 +3); wears plate mail +1 and wields the Sword, which is +2 (a long sword) with no special abilities. If the setting is suitable (heathland, plazas, etc.) the Knight will be riding a roan medium warhorse (18 hp) and will appear already charging (see p. 66, DMG).

#### 62: Queen of Swords

Dark and grim, the Queen sits on her throne beneath a clouded sky and brandishes her Sword as if to say "Approach who dares!"

Queen of Swords: 7th level fighter (AC 2, HP 70, #AT 3/2, D 1-8 or 1-12 +4); wears a ring of protection +1 and bracers of defense (AC 3) and wields the Sword, which is +3 (a long sword) with no special abilities.

#### 63: King of Swords

The crowned King, dark and stern-looking, sits on a throne of judgment beneath stormy skies; his Sword is held in a manner which makes it menacingly clear that he is familiar with its use, for good or evil.

King of Swords: 7th level fighter (AC 1, HP 70, #AT 3/2, D 1-8 or 1-12 +4); wears chain mail +4 under his robes, and wields the Sword, which is +3 (a long sword) with no special abilities.

#### Pentacles

Pentacles represent material and financial matters, money, occupation, material gain, business development, and involvement in the world. This is the suit of the thief, and of the merchant.

#### 64: Ace of Pentacles

A single pentacle takes the form of a large coin or other piece of precious metal or jewelry; it is usually held by a hand or hands. In the background are flowers, butterflies, and the like.

Upright, it signifies gold, content prosperity, the happiness and pleasure that wealth can bring.

*Concealed in or on some item acquired during this expedition, drawer will discover a gem worth at least 10,000 gp.*

Reversed, it signifies greed, miserliness, that prosperity which gives no happiness, misused or corrupted wealth.

*Effects as above; also, for 2d4 months, all wealth gained by the drawer has no experience point value whatsoever.*

#### 65: Two of Pentacles

A youth in frivolous costume dances and juggles two pentacles; in the background ships are tossed on the high sea.

Upright, it signifies gaiety, light-heartedness, grace under pressure; but also difficulty in launching new ventures or adapting to additional burdens; variability of moods.

*Drawer gains 1 point of dexterity, but will receive only half the experience points actually earned until he has enough experience points for the next level. At this point, drawer will take twice the usual time for training and study, in order to gain the new level.*

Reversed, it signifies enforced or simulated gaiety and enjoyment.

*The next time the drawer is under attack, he will suffer the effects of Otto's irresistible dance for 4-7 rounds.*

#### 66: Three of Pentacles

A master artist or mason carving pentacles in stonework is regarded approvingly by two robed figures (probably clerics), one of whom holds a set of plans from which the crafter has been working.

Upright, it signifies skill, craftsmanship, glory or renown (particularly in a commercial matter), mastery, rank and power in one's profession; it also is used to signify matters relating to secret societies, guilds and the like.

*Drawer will receive a 30% bonus on all earned experience points until the next level is attained; thieves will also gain a permanent 3% bonus in all their professional skills. In addition, if drawer is a member of a society, guild, or the like, whose ranks are not based on character class levels, he will soon (3-36 days) be promoted therein.*

Reversed, it signifies mediocrity and lack of skill, ineptitude, sloppiness, mercenary attitude, lack of distinction.

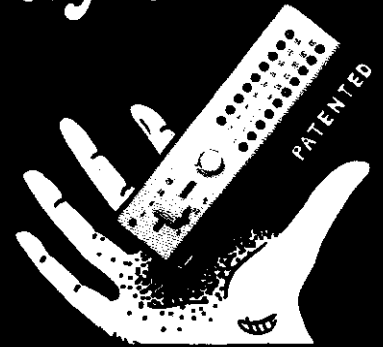
*Drawer will function in all skills of his class as if one level lower, until the next level is attained. In addition, if he is a member of such a group as is mentioned above, drawer will not be promoted therein for 3 months after the customary time, "having failed to distinguish himself."*

#### 67: Four of Pentacles

A hunched-over figure, crowned with one pentacle, grasps another fervently with hands and arms, and stands firmly upon two more; he clings avidly to what is already held.

Upright, it signifies making sure of material gains; worldly gain leading to

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nothing beyond it; sometimes (not always) miserliness and a lack of generosity, but always a monetary, mercenary concern and point of view.

*Drawer will receive no experience points for any material gains made during this expedition, except thieves and assassins, who suffer only a 10% penalty.*

Reversed, it signifies material setbacks, opposition, delay, hindrance, chance of material losses.

*From 4-16% (4d4) of the drawer's total wealth will disappear or be stolen in the next four days, never to be recovered.*

### 68: Five of Pentacles

Two ragged figures (one on crutches), a man and a woman, pass beneath a lighted window in a snowstorm. They are clearly in distress.

Upright, it signifies loss of home, destitution, joblessness; affinities discovered through mutual suffering; generally, troubles in the material-financial realm.

*Within 5 weeks of returning from this adventure/expedition, drawer will lose all homes, savings, jewelry, magic items and other valuables, and job (including henchman status), if any; for 5d10 weeks after drawing this card, drawer will be doubly susceptible to illness, and to parasitic infestations. If drawer has a lover or spouse, they will each increase in loyalty toward each other by 5%.*

Reversed, it signifies disorder, discord, severe toil, overcoming of ruin; new interest in spirituality; need for charity.

*Drawer will quarrel with the rest of the party over division of the proceeds of this expedition, and will receive only one fifth of his rightful share. He will spend at least 5 days in retreat and/or meditation under the tutelage of a cleric of his faith.*

### 69: Six of Pentacles

An opulently dressed figure, probably a merchant, gives money to the distressed from a balance or scales, giving out of goodness of heart from present wealth and plenty.

Upright, it signifies just and righteous charity, gifts and inheritance, wealth received for good reason, just desserts.

*When the proceeds of this expedition are divided up, drawer's share will be 6d6% larger than it normally would be; drawer will give at least half of this bonus to a good religious body, or to a charity (these monies are not to be given to a player character, NPC, or ruler, regardless of alignments). The effects of this good act, if done by an evil or neutral character, must be adjudicated by the DM.*

Reversed, it signifies greed, jealousy, pride or arrogance of wealth, envy, selfishness, refusal to give.

*When the proceeds of this expedition are divided up, NPCs will swindle the drawer, so that his share will be 12%-72% (1d6 × 12%) of what it ought to be. The drawer will not realize this for at least six days afterward.*

### 70: Seven of Pentacles

An intense young man leaning upon his staff hovers protectively near seven pentacles attached to the greenery of the garden-like space he is tending.

Upright, it signifies speculative pauses, fretting, anxiety, success not yet attained, disappointment.

*During the next project the drawer is engaged in which takes a long time (training for a new level, enchanting an item, etc.; anything requiring 10 days or more for completion), he must save vs. death magic once each week. Failure to make a successful saving throw means that the drawer has ruined the process through overanxiousness, and must begin anew or pay whatever penalty is imposed for such interruption. Such interruptions because of this card will not exceed seven in number; and on each saving throw after the first, the drawer will have a cumulative +1 on the roll (thus, the second roll will be at +1, third at +2, etc.).*

Reversed, it signifies impatience, apprehension, suspicion, especially in money matters.

*Drawer will have a permanent -7% reaction to strangers and casual acquaintances who ask for favors or act in any way "suspicious"; this penalty will double for loans or other financial favors.*

### 71: Eight of Pentacles

An artist sits happily carving out a pentacle; other completed examples are racked neatly nearby.

Upright, it signifies work, craftsmanship, skills (perhaps still at an apprentice level); job or commission to come.

*If drawer is less than 3rd level (or less than 4 total levels, for a multi-classed character), he gains 3d8 hundred experience points; if higher, the gain is 30-240 (3d8 × 10) experience points.*

Reversed, it signifies vanity, thwarted ambition, greed, usury, skill in cunning and intrigue, sharp practices.

*Drawer will soon (8-64 days) be short-changed or hoodwinked in a major transaction, losing at least 8,000 but not more than 80,000 gold pieces. If drawer is a thief, he will gain 1d12 hundred experience points; if an assassin, 3d8 hundred.*

### 71: Nine of Pentacles

A stately woman stands in a flourishing vineyard, presumably part of her manorial domain. On her wrist is a tame hawk; she is otherwise alone, and seems serene in her isolation.

Upright, it signifies security, prudence, wealth, self-sufficiency, love of gardens and home, comfort in material matters.

*For the rest of this expedition or adventure, any pickpocketing attempts upon the drawer will fail (although the thief will not be caught); and until the drawer returns, his home will be safe from robbery, burglary, and banditry. Drawer also gains a secondary skill in gardening. If he is a magic-user with no familiar, the*

*next time the drawer is in an outdoors setting a hawk will come to him tamely, to serve as a familiar; it will be fully trained for hunting as well.*

Reversed, it signifies robbery, loss of things treasured, roguery, danger from thieves. Caution is advised.

*There will be a burglary, robbery, or bandit raid on the drawer's home or headquarters during his present absence; much but not all (60-90%) of the drawer's property therein will be stolen, including at least one item precious to the drawer, but not necessarily intrinsically valuable.*

### 73: Ten of Pentacles

A man and a woman stand in the entryway of a house; a child and an elderly man each pet a dog contentedly.

Upright, the card symbolizes gain, security, riches, family, home, stability.

*Drawer will soon (5-50 days) gain a small but sturdy home, free of encumbrance; this may be gift of a ruler or patron, an inheritance or dowry, or whatever is natural for the campaign.*

Reversed, it signifies loss, robbery, family misfortunes; elderly people may become a burden,

*Drawer will soon (5-50 days) become obligated for the care of his parents, clan/guild/village elders, feudal dependents, or other aged persons to whom drawer is obligated (whether he knew of the obligation or not).*

### 74: Page of Pentacles

A Pentacle rests lightly in, or hovers over, the hands of the Page, a very dark youth who moves slowly through a flourishing field, his gaze seemingly fixed upon the lone symbol in studious reverie.

Page of Pentacles: 3rd level thief (AC 3, HP 18, #AT 1, D 1-4 or 1-3, S 12, I 12, W 12, D 16, C 12, Ch 12); wears bracers of defense (AC 5) and has a hidden dagger.

### 75: Knight of Pentacles

Sturdy, laborious, and patient, the Knight rides placidly through a freshly plowed field. A thorough-going materialist, he looks upon but not within the Pentacle of his suit. He is very dark and earthy in coloring.

Knight of Pentacles: 4th/4th level fighter/thief (AC 0, HP 44, #AT 1, D 1-8 +1); wears plate mail +1 and a ring of invisibility, and carries a scimitar +1 with no special abilities.

### 76: Queen of Pentacles

Very dark of coloring and meditative of expression, the Queen contemplates her Pentacle on a throne in a fertile bower; her serious, even, melancholy mien suggests that she sees curious things indeed within that symbol.

Queen of Pentacles: 7th level thief (AC 4, HP 42, #AT 1, D special); wears a ring of protection +4 and carries a dagger of venom (D 3-6 vs. S, 2-5 vs. M, 2-4 vs. L, + poison), fully charged.

### 77: King of Pentacles

A dark and courageous, yet somewhat lethargic figure, the King sits stolidly upon his throne within a flourishing garden, and placidly the Pentacle he holds upon his knee; a short rod or wand is his sceptre.

King of Pentacles: 7th level thief (AC 3, HP 42, #AT 1, D 1-4 or 1-3); wears leather armor and a *cloak of protection* +3, and carries a *wand of magic missiles* (70 charges) and a dagger.

### A note on effects and descriptions

Obviously, with literally dozens of different Tarot decks on the market, descriptions (and interpretations) are going to vary to differing extents; when wide differences exist, this writer has relied on the Waite deck (also called the Rider deck), which is perhaps the standard in the English-speaking world.

Also worthy of consideration (simply as an art collection, if nothing else) is the Fantasy Showcase Tarot, assembled and published by Bruce Pelz (15931 Kalisher Street, Granada Hills, CA 91344; attn: Elayne Pelz). With original cards composed by 84 fantasy artists, including many Hugo winners and nominees, it is a distinctive approach indeed, including some thought-provoking innovations (such as two added Major Arcana, Separation and The Farrier; and four Ladies to balance the genders of the court cards).

Many other sorts of decks are available, and the interested DM should investigate them. Certain decks will seem especially appropriate to certain campaigns; and the symbol(s) of your chosen deck should be mirrored in the broader campaign in omens, beliefs, legends, and songs.

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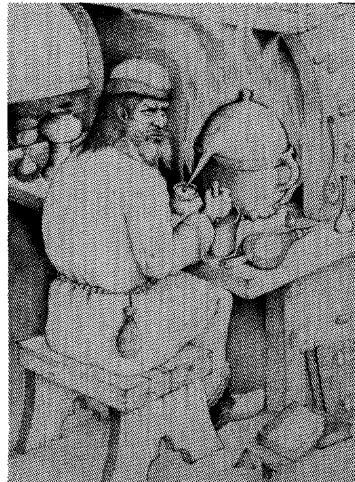
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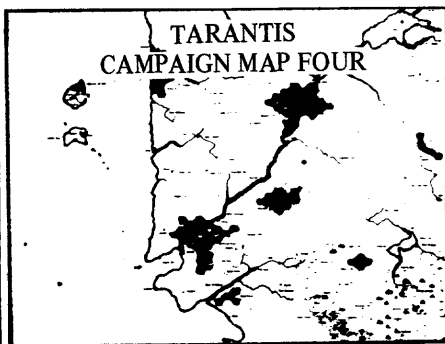
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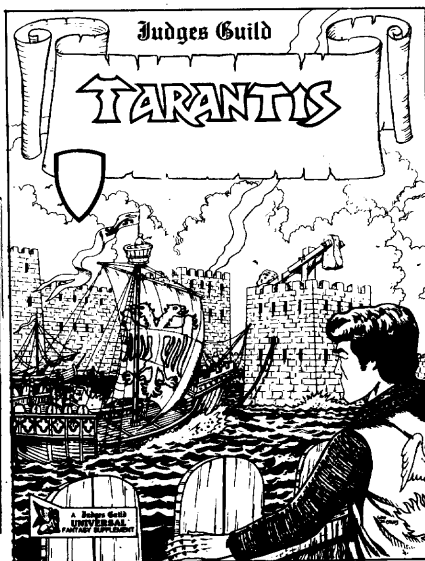
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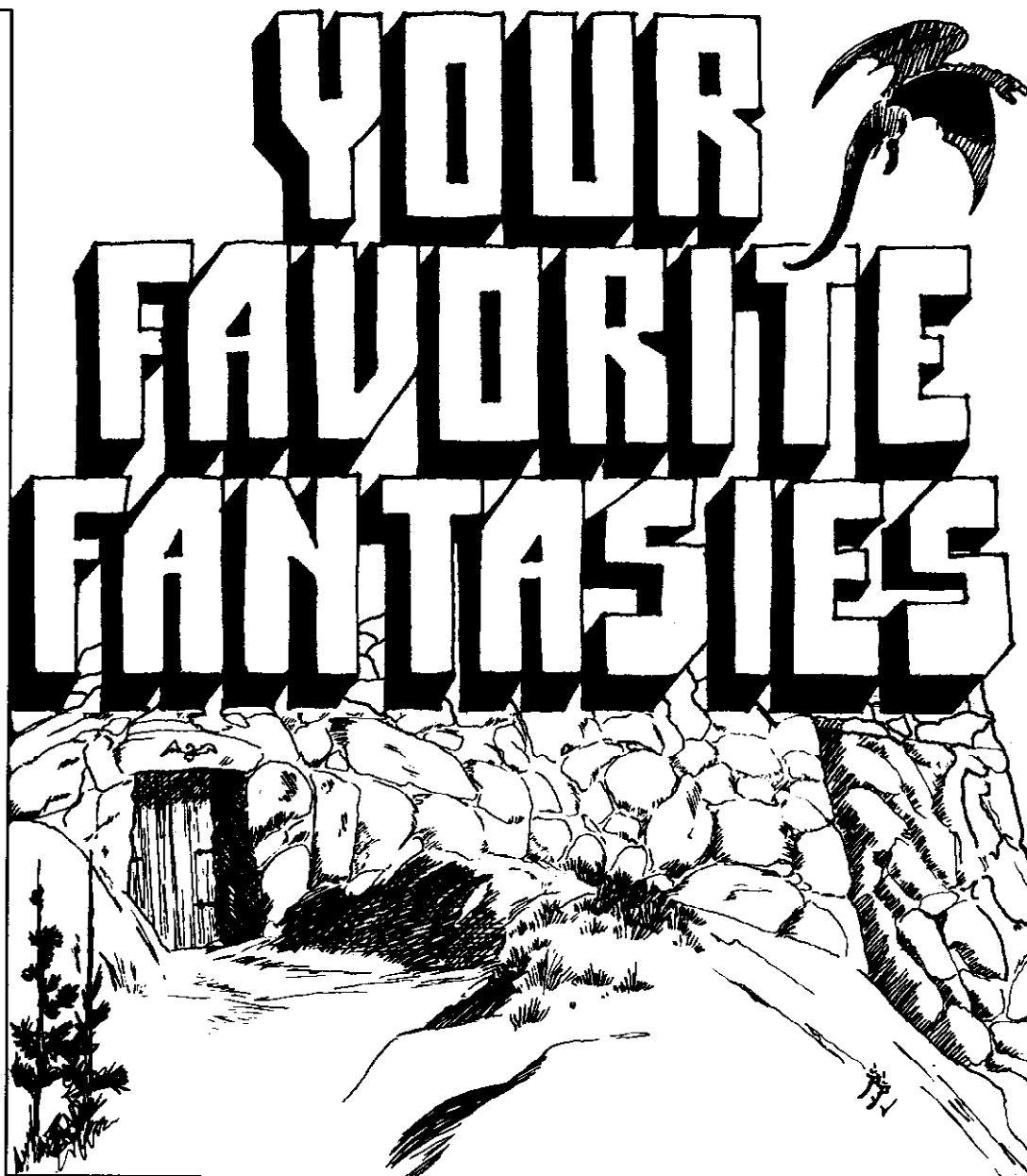
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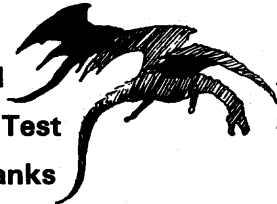
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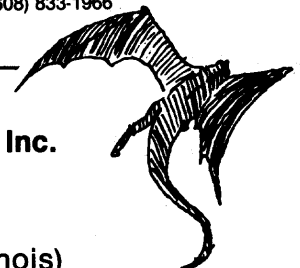
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# Harn universe is worth the price

In recent years a number of detailed role-playing campaign universes have appeared. Many have been packaged as gaming aids, most notable being the Judges Guild universe of the City States, the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ fantasy setting from TSR, Chaosium's Questworld and Glorantha universes, and Iron Crown Enterprises' series of modules depicting Tolkien's Middle Earth. A new entry into the field of such universes is HARN, by Columbia Games Inc., of Vancouver, B. C.

Advertisements for *Harn* have claimed that it represents the state of the art in playing aids, that the environment is authentically "medieval," and that the module has a high degree of complexity and detail. *Harn* also costs \$20, fairly steep for a campaign world (though trying to purchase all of the I.C.E. Middle Earth modules or Judges Guild universe modules would be much more expensive).

The *Harn* campaign package comes with a full-color map of the island of Harn, which is the size of Madagascar; the map covers an area of about 625 miles by 1,516 miles, an adequately large territory for many adventures. Two booklets, the Harndex (indexing major features of Harn and important aspects of the cultures and lives of its inhabitants) and the Harnview (giving a general overview of the history and societies of Harn, and notes on how to referee the campaign world) are also enclosed in an attractive cover folder.

The Harnview booklet describes Harn's kingdoms, cultures, religions, economy,

past history, and geography; weather charts, time and movement scales, and encounter tables are provided, as well as tables to determine characters' past histories and social classes. The character-generation section recommends that all player-characters on Harn be human; non-human races are very limited in power and number on Harn. The section on determining the sex of player characters is also rather irksome, but neither of these points is serious in any way, and the sections of the booklet in question may be ignored safely. There is also a section included on getting campaigns started on Harn, telling what information may be given to new characters and what should not, but this section is unfortunately all too brief.

The Harndex is a sort of encyclopedia/index listing various geographical, historical, political, cultural, economic, and religious terms in common use on or directly related to the isle of Harn. Like all world indexes, the Harndex is addictive; flipping through it, one reads of the Khuzdul (Harn's dwarven race), then turns to read about Kiraz, then about the Carnage of Kiraz, then Lothrim, and so forth. This sort of booklet-thumbing will keep one going for hours, even though the Harndex is only 64 pages long. The Harndex is well illustrated and has a number of tables and charts, but not excessively many. Some of the references, particularly the one for Kethira (the planet, upon which Harn is found), are interesting but not the sort of thing that the players would have any knowledge of.

The referee should carefully control access to the Harndex (or any of the rest of this material, for that matter) by players in a campaign.

A number of unusual aspects of the world of Harn stand out after reading the two booklets. Some of these things are curiosities; the monetary system consists of pence, shillings, and pounds, measured in silver pieces (gold coins are very rare). The influence of Tolkien can be seen in some places, particularly in the descriptions of the dwarves (Khuzdul), elves (Sindarin), and the deity Morgath. Game referees who don't care for close Tolkien ties like these may eliminate them without great difficulty. Harn is a magic-poor universe; there are mages, but not much is said of magic items. Again, this may be modified by referees if they so desire. Salt takes on an exceptionally important role in the economics and politics of Harn, and the ramifications of this logical concept are worth exploring in the Harndex. One of the nations, Kanday, is apparently the home of some of the hard-pressed good guys on the isle, and the reader is tempted to try drawing parallels between "Kanday" and "Canada" (in a tongue-in-cheek way). Some interesting new monsters not found in other game systems are noted in the Harndex, adding local color to the isle.

The map of Harn, finally, is beautiful. If you are a fan of fantasy cartography, the map makes a wonderful addition to one's collection, having lots of legible detail and a well worked out ecological system and geography. The map is overlaid with a thin-lined hex grid and includes all major topographical features down to "points of interest." The overall effect is very impressive. It would be rather sad for players to not have access to this map, and game referees may allow them to use it as "general knowledge" if so desired.

What sort of role-playing game systems best fit the *Harn* campaign? With minor modifications it will serve well for D&D® and AD&D™ gaming, and other fantasy RPGs that use races like dwarves, elves, and orcs should also find *Harn* usable with some changes. Chaosium's Basic Role-Playing game family (*Runequest*® and *Magic World* in particular) may require a bit more alteration and adjustment, but will do well nevertheless.

In short, if *Harn* is to be used at all, it should be used thoroughly. Small sections of it may be dropped or altered, and the referee will still feel like he has spent the \$20 well. One should not worry about using all of this material at once, since most of it will initially be irrelevant to the players and their situation; in time, however, the whole interlocking system

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will start to fall into place, and this adds considerable depth to any campaign based here.

In designing scenarios, the referee is advised to use the suggested list in the Harnview for high-level campaigns only, and should create appropriate scenarios for adventurers of lesser power and ability. Little is said about making up "everyday" adventures, but most referees should have little trouble doing this.

I recommend *Harn* for experienced referees who don't mind using a largely prefabricated universe with a few minor alterations to suit their own campaign tastes. It is not a good idea to purchase

*Harn* if you like to extensively alter game material, unless you don't mind spending money. The map is *almost* worth the price of the whole product alone, and the booklets that go with it even out the difference well. In comparing this to a universe like that of the GREYHAWK product, one gets a smaller campaigning area but with much more detail in *Harn*; characters do not need to have a whole planet mapped out for them to adventure across, and *Harn* should be more than sufficient for most gaming needs.

State of the art? It could be better, but it is very good.

- Reviewed by Roger Moore

## Plague has its problems

*Plague of Terror* is a role-playing adventure module (price: \$8.50) produced by The Companions, designed as a generic product for use with a number of role-playing systems. The action in the module centers around a small village called Wentworth, which is undergoing some bad changes of fortune when the adventurers are scheduled to arrive. The module provides for a large number of subplots and scenarios to get the adventurers involved in the tangled web of intrigue in Wentworth, and gives all the relevant maps and NPC descriptions that are necessary to run the scenarios as a game referee.

Unfortunately, *Plague of Terror* is plagued by some terrible problems. The subplots seem to be too interwoven, and pulling the threads apart can be very difficult for inexperienced referees (and for some experienced ones as well). There is a superabundance of detail in the module, and cutting through it all is very time-consuming; the module might have been better with about one-quarter of the material cut away and the rest streamlined to ease reading. The printing in the module is small and densely packed, which makes one feel overwhelmed with the amount of material to be gone through.

The most serious problem with *Plague of Terror*, however, is the graphic violence that goes on within Wentworth. This is not really a module that gamers in their early teens might enjoy, or gamers of any age. It is one thing to have modules in which player characters cheerfully hack their ways through hordes of goblins, zombies, trolls, and so forth. It is another thing to have a module that details torture, child abuse, sexual assault, sadistic vengeance, and other such activities. To make it worse, the picture of the guardsman killing the peasant girl for Encounter 11 doesn't match at all the way he is supposed to have killed her: a careless oversight.

In its favor, *Plague of Terror* has some amusing names for some of the townspeople; my favorites are the Gaullo brothers.

I cannot recommend this module for inexperienced role-players, for referees who like to do their own creative thinking in role-playing NPCs and setting up scenarios, or for those who feel uncomfortable with violence, torture, etc., etc. If the module is ever revised, it should be pruned carefully and printed in larger type, and the picture for Encounter 11 should match the text. *Caveat emptor.*

- Reviewed by Roger Moore

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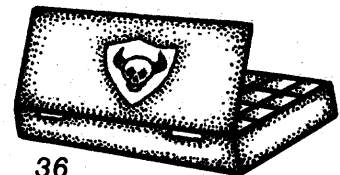
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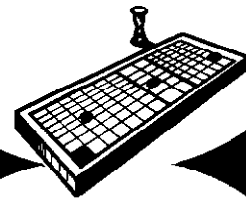
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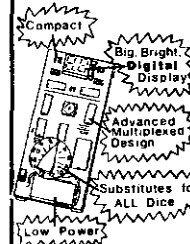
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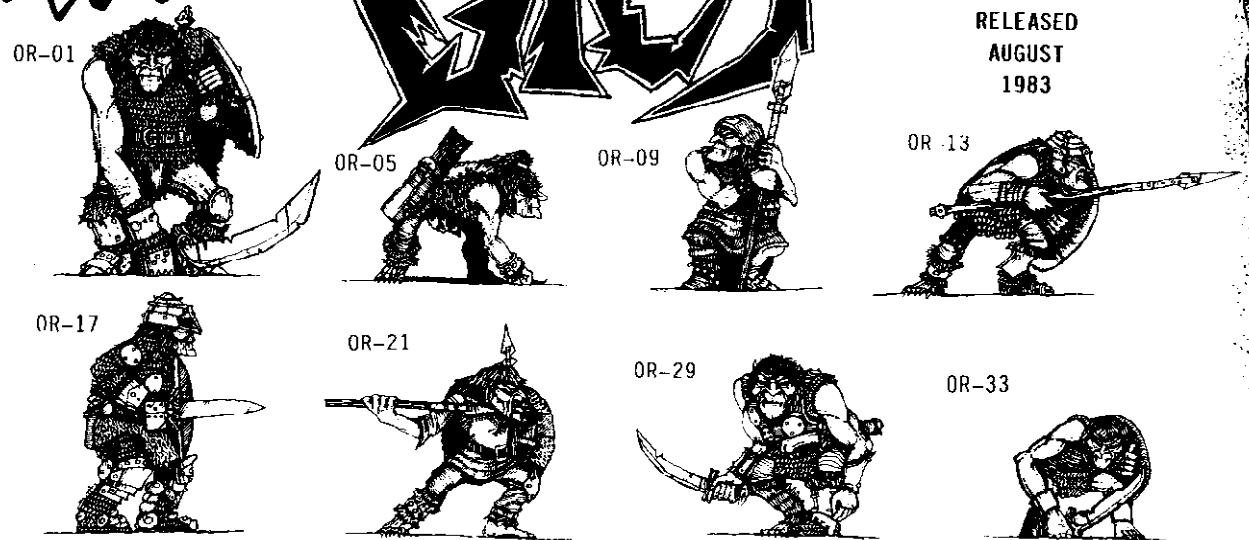
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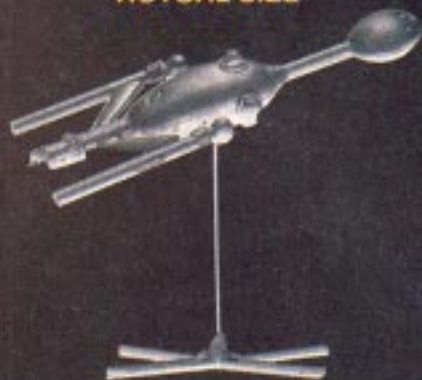




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# WHAT'S NEW?

~ WITH PHIL & DIXIE!

OKAY FOLKS— THIS MONTH WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT DEATH AND ONE OF ITS MORE INTERESTING CONSEQUENCES.

OH.....  
GREAT SUBJECT FOR A HUMOR STRIP.

DON'T WORRY— THIS'LL KILL 'EM.

ARGH!



ONE OF THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF RP GAMES IS: NOT TO BE KILLED.

THEY'RE WILLING TO LET THE REST OF US GO— IF ONE OF US STAYS BEHIND AS... A SACRIFICE!

BUT IT CAN'T BE ME— I'VE GOT THE MAP.

WELL IT CAN'T BE ME— I'VE GOT THE SUPPLIES.

WELL IT CAN'T BE ME— 'CAUSE I'VE GOT A LOADED CROSSBOW POINTED AT THE TWO OF YOU!



HOWEVER— EVEN IF YOU DO DIE, IT DOESN'T MEAN THE GAME IS OVER.

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! AN ORC DICES YOU UP, WE MANAGE TO BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE... AND WHAT DO WE GET? COMPLAINTS!

WELL— I THINK YOU COULD'VE BEEN A LITTLE MORE CAREFUL IS ALL!

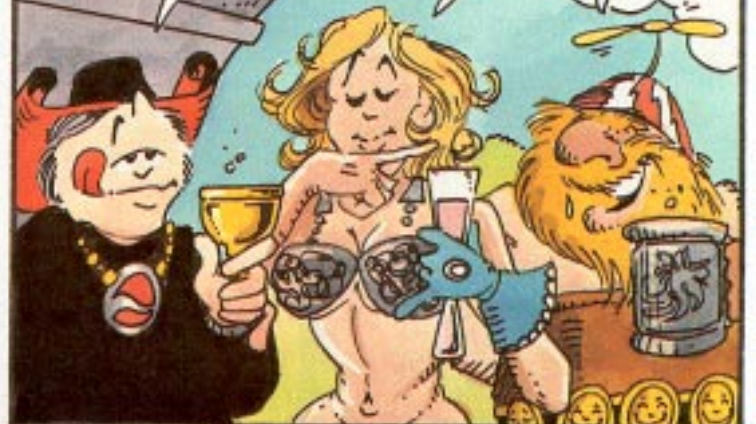


ONE CAN ACTUALLY GET BLASE ABOUT IT.

BY JOVE— I BELIEVE OUR "HOST" HAS PUT HEMLOCK INTO OUR DRINKS.

MMM— I PREFER DEADLY NIGHTSHADE— MORE MINTY.

I FAVOR THE CRISP FEEL OF CYANIDE, M'SELF.



ONE OF THE MOST COMMON RESULTS OF DEATH ARE GHOSTS.

Hi, GUY!

- SAME THING.

WAITAMINUTE! YOU'RE NOT DEAD— YOU'RE IN OHIO!?



GHOSTS CAN BE VERY USEFUL TO HAVE AROUND.

WELL?

LOOKS OKAY TO ME— NO TRAPS, MONSTERS, OR SORCERERS!







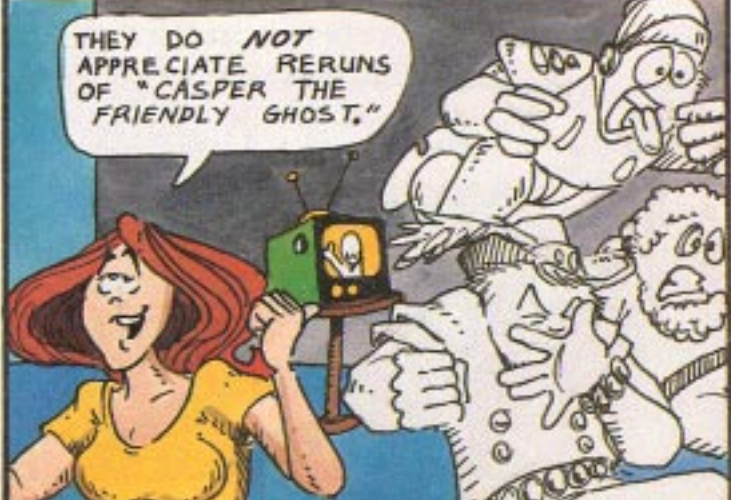
AND INDEED, CAN BE DOWNRIGHT TROUBLESOME.



WHENEVER YOU'RE AIDED BY GHOSTS- REMEMBER THAT THEY'RE NOT DOING IT FOR THE MONEY....



AS REWARDS, GHOSTS DO LIKE GOOD JOKES, SONGS AND STORIES.





GHOSTS ALSO LIKE THE SMELL OF GOOD FOOD AND DRINK.

MY FRIEND— THAT WAS THE FINEST MEAL I HAVE EVER BREATHED

CARE FOR A SNIFTER OF BRANDY?

THANK YOU, BUT NO, I STILL HAVE TO FLY HOME.



GHOSTS SOMETIMES GET NOSTALGIC ABOUT THEIR LIVES — BUT AFTER BEING DEAD FOR AWHILE — THEY BEGIN TO FORGET THE DETAILS.

SIGH — YOU KNOW WHAT I'D VE DONE IF I'D SEEN A GIRL LIKE THAT WHEN I WAS ALIVE?

...I DON'T KNOW.

ME NEITHER.



GHOSTS USUALLY HANG AROUND BECAUSE THEY HAVE SOME TASK THAT THEY WERE UNABLE TO COMPLETE WHILE THEY WERE ALIVE.



GHOSTS ARE AWARE THAT THEY MAKE PEOPLE UNCOMFORTABLE — WHICH IS WHY THEY FAVOR QUIET LOCALES.

BESIDES— ALL THOSE PEOPLE SCREAMING AT ME KEPT INTERRUPTING MY WRITING.

GHOST WRITER



FINALLY— THERE IS A GREAT DEAL THAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT GHOSTS. SERIOUS STUDENTS SHOULD NOT FEEL TOO FRUSTRATED HOWEVER— AS THEY WILL FIND OUT EVERYTHING THEY COULD POSSIBLY WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE SUBJECT— ALL TOO SOON.

WELL BOB, YOU'VE BEEN DEAD A WEEK NOW, SO TELL ME— DO GHOSTS PLAY D&D?

GREAT! WHAT'S THE BAD NEWS?

WELL, THERE'S GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS. THE GOOD NEWS IS YES, WE DO PLAY, IN FACT, WE'VE GOT A GAME ON FOR NEXT TUESDAY.

YOU'RE THE D.M.



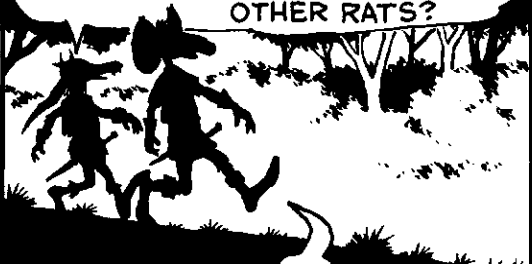


# SNARFQUEST

#3

BY ELMORE

SAY RAFFENDORF, WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A LONG TAIL LIKE ALL OTHER RATS?



THAT'S ANOTHER STORY... LET'S JUS' SAY I HAD A CLOSE CALL AN' LEAVE IT AT THAT.

DID IT HURT?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



SNARF, WHY DON'T YOU MAKE AN EARLY CAMP HERE, AND I'LL GO SCROUNGE UP SOME FOOD.



OKAY

A FEW MINUTES LATER.

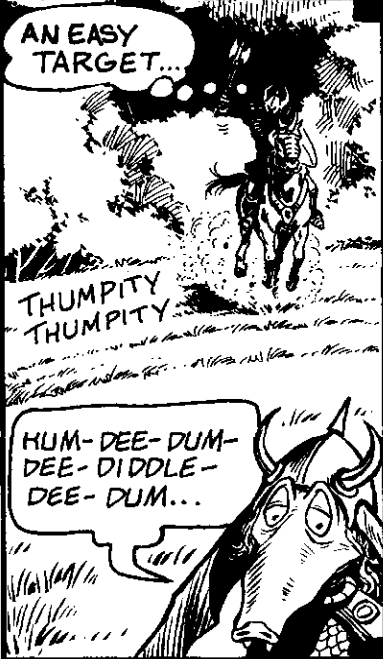
WELL, WELL... WHAT HAVE WE HERE?...



AN EASY TARGET...

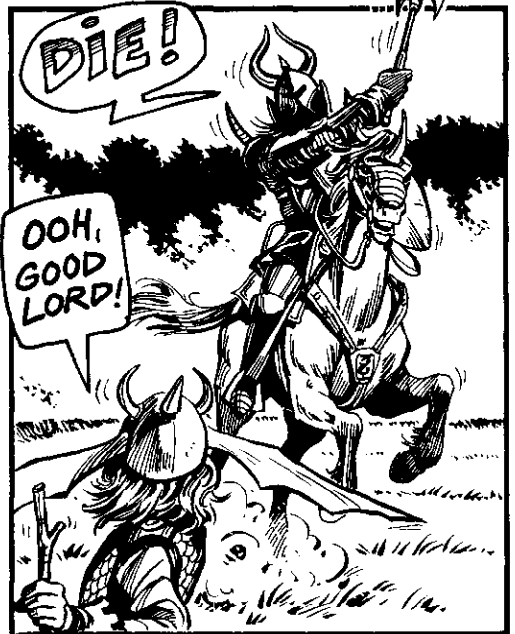
THUMPITY THUMPITY...

HUM-DEE-DUM-DEE-DIDDLE-DEE-DUM...



DIE!

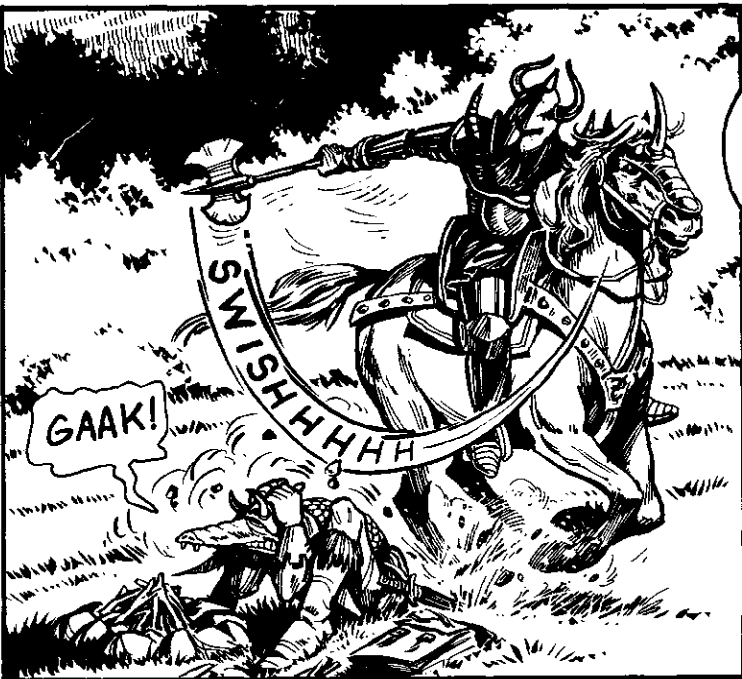
OOH, GOOD LORD!



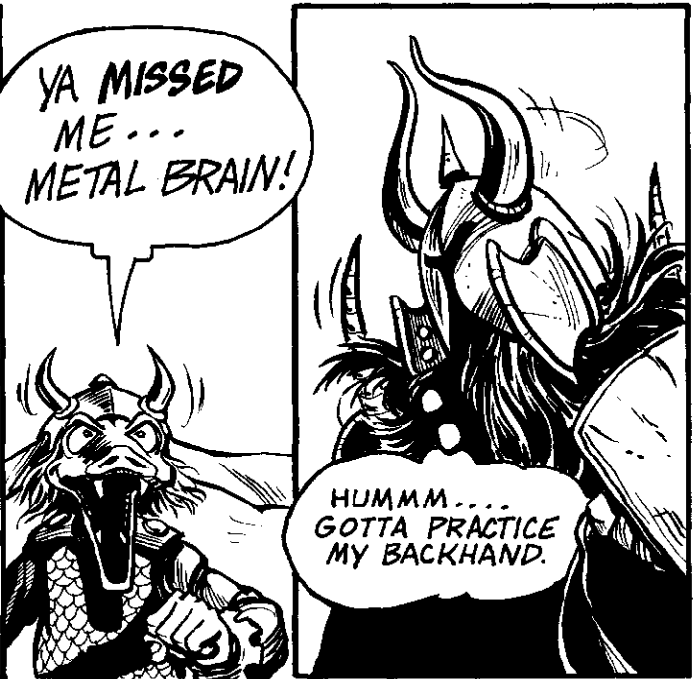
GAAK!

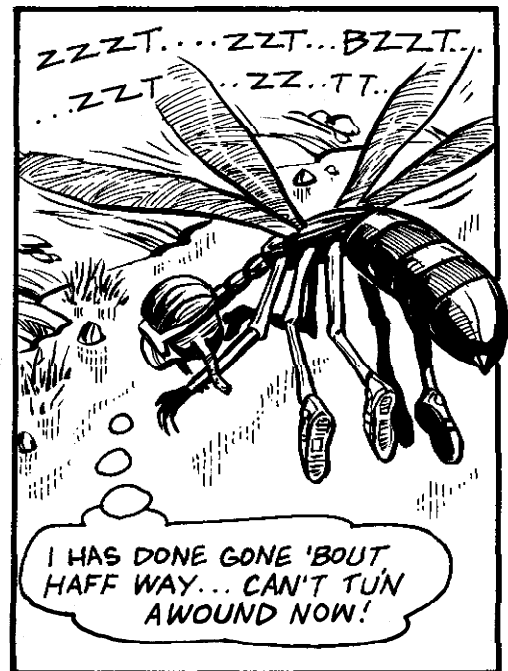
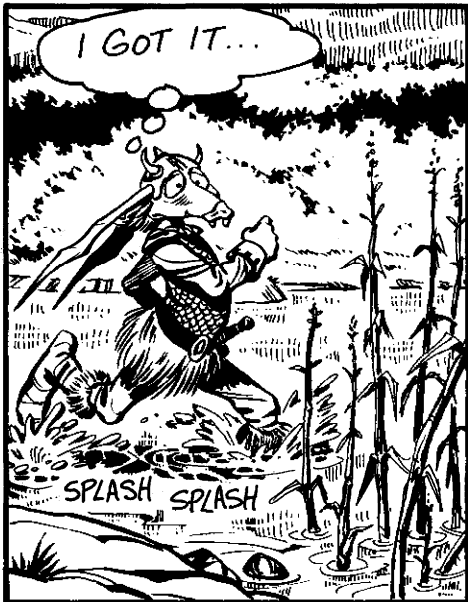
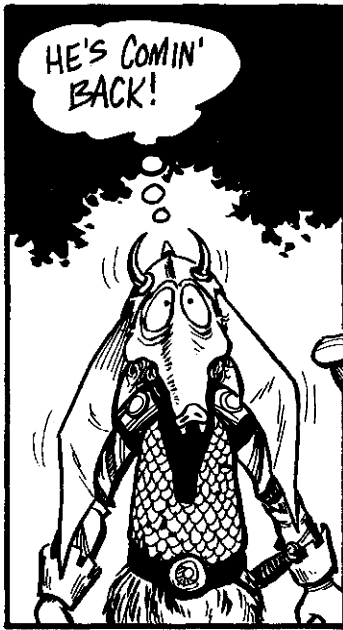
SWISHHHH

YA MISSED ME... METAL BRAIN!

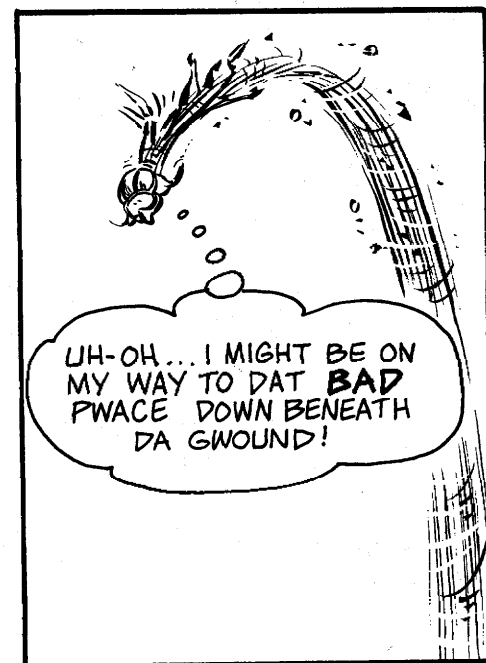
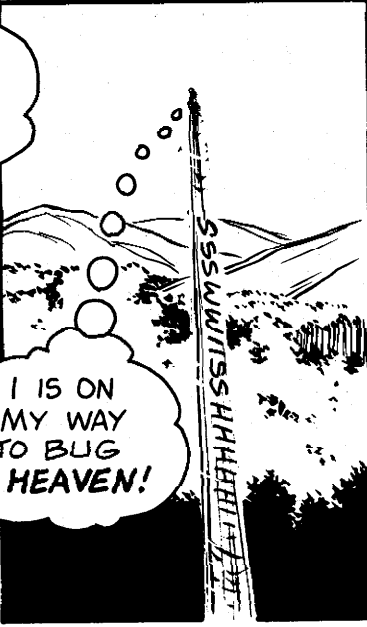
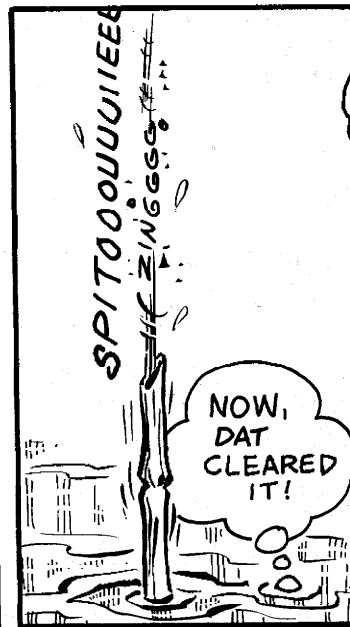
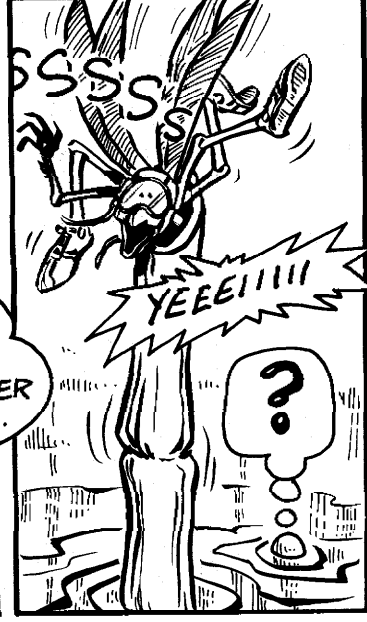
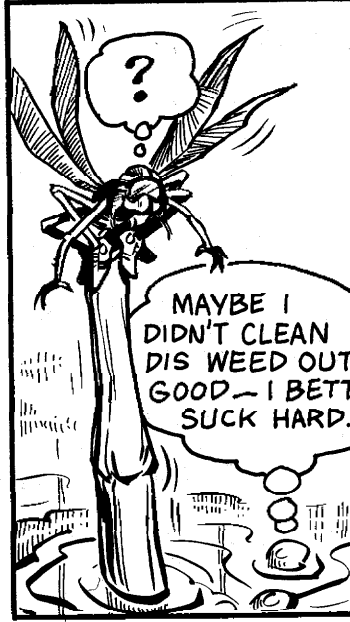
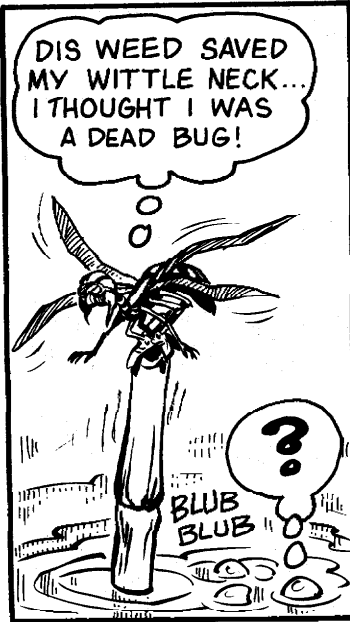


HUMMM... GOTTA PRACTICE MY BACKHAND.



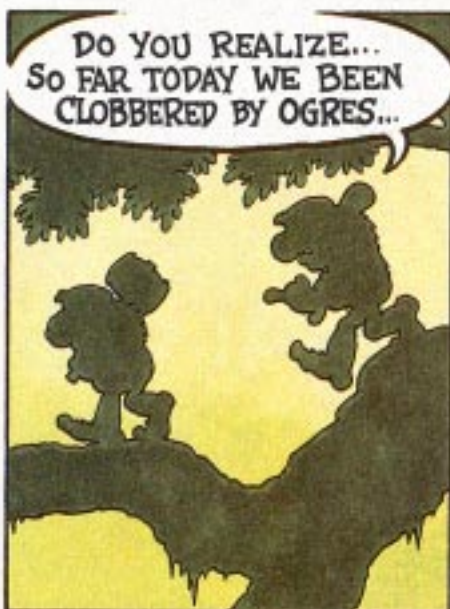






NEXT ISSUE: THE BUG BITES, SNARF FIGHTS... AND THE RAT WENT FISHIN'







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