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SUPER ENDLESS QUEST™ Adventure Gamebook

The
GHOST TOWER

By Jean Blashfield



All the thrills of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®
Game in an exciting new GAMEBOOK!

DAKINSON

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Adventure Book

CHARACTER STATS CARD

THE GHOST TOWER



NAME: Carsten Soldar

AGE: 24

CHAR. CLASS: Fighter

COMPANIONS: Flip (Thief)
Sulex (Cleric)

SKILL POINTS:

	Carsten (9)	Flip (8)	Sulex (8)
Fighting			
Strength			
Dexterity			
Wisdom			

HIT POINTS:

Carsten 22	Flip 12	Sulex 10
+ _____	+ _____	+ _____
= _____	= _____	= _____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

SULEX'S SPELLS:

Cure Light Wounds	Flee
Cure Light Wounds	Freeze
Detect Evil	Protection From
Detect Magic	Evil
Dispel Evil	Protection Against
Flamestrike	Petrification

ATTACKED BY A LIVING STATUE!

You and your companions—Flip, the irrepressible halfling thief, and Sulex, the cautious cleric—have made your way deep into the dreaded Ghost Tower of Castle Parcesstar.

Cautiously you enter a mysterious, darkened chamber. As your eyes become accustomed to the gloom, you are startled to see several gigantic figures in warriors' garb, poised in a variety of threatening, warlike postures. You breathe a sigh of relief as you realize the still, shadowy figures are only statues.

As you make your way carefully past the mysterious statues, your eye catches a sudden movement. One of the statues moved! And another! They're not statues at all, and one of them is advancing toward you threateningly, its huge battle-ax raised high over its head. As the towering yellow-skinned creature advances toward you, you realize you're going to have to fight it.

Can you defeat this fearsome creature?

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **44**. If it is less than 11, turn to **204**.

Whatever the outcome, only your decisions, and the luck of the dice roll, can help you escape from
THE GHOST TOWER



A SUPER ENDLESS QUEST™
Adventure Gamebook #2

The GHOST TOWER

BY JEAN BLASHFIELD

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TSR, Inc.
PRODUCTS OF YOUR IMAGINATION™

**To Patricia Maloney Markun—good
friend and good listener**

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AN EXCITING NEW EXPERIENCE IN BOOKS!

Welcome, you who are about to enter the diabolical Ghost Tower of Castle Parcesstar, to an exciting, totally new concept in role-playing gamebooks.

Based on the popular **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** and **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** games, **SUPER ENDLESS QUEST™** Adventure Gamebooks require only two standard six-sided dice, an ample supply of luck—and, most of all, your skill in making decisions as you play the game. If dice are unavailable, a simple alternative, requiring only pencil and paper, may be used instead.

SUPER ENDLESS QUEST™ Adventure Gamebooks read easily, without complicated rules to slow down the story. Once you have read through the simple rules that follow, you should seldom find it necessary to refer back to them. Your options are repeated clearly in the text at each choice point, with occasional reminders about additional options you may wish to consider to improve your chances. Your adventure reads like a book, plays like a game, and offers a thrill a minute—with YOU as the hero!

YOUR CHARACTER

In this book, you are Carsten Soldar, a young Fighter who has been falsely accused of being a thief and imprisoned by the evil Count Lasson. In order to gain your freedom, you must journey into the dreaded Ghost Tower of Castle Parcesstar in search of the fabulous Soul-Gem, said to have the power to entrap the souls of men within its icy beauty. No one has ever emerged from the Ghost Tower alive!

Accompanying you on your dangerous quest are two companions who are also trying to earn their freedom from the Count's dungeons. Filippa, called Flip for short, is a clever, agile female halfling Thief. Sulex is a frail Cleric, dedicated to serving his gods, but his ability to enlist their aid in casting spells may come in handy. You have promised to do your best to keep both Flip and Sulex alive—but you have also been warned that one of them has been instructed to kill you once you have possession of the Soul-Gem.

PLAYING THE GAME

ESTABLISHING YOUR CHARACTER

YOUR Carsten Soldar will be different from someone else's because YOU help to create him.

Carefully tear out the removable **Character Stats Card** at the beginning of this book. This card is your record of Carsten's character makeup, as well as his companions. It also doubles as a bookmark.

Since you will probably be playing this adventure many times, we suggest that you write on the card lightly and in pencil only, so that your character stats can be erased easily when you are ready to play again. If you have access to a photocopier, you may wish to make photocopies of the Character Stats Card before you fill it

in. Another alternative is to reproduce the card on a 3" x 5" card or a slip of paper.

You are now ready to complete the individual identities of Carsten and his companions by establishing their strengths and weaknesses. Your character's **name** (Carsten Soldar), **age** (24), and **character class** (Fighter) have already been entered for you. Before you fill out the rest of the card, it is necessary for you to understand the game's scoring system.

SCORING

Playing the game requires you to keep track of three things—**hit points**, **skill points**, and **experience points**—on the tear-out **Character Stats Card** located at the front of the book. An explanation of each of these follows.

HIT POINTS

You, Flip, and Sulex each have a specific life strength, represented by **hit points**. Once a character's hit points are gone, that character ceases to exist, and the adventure has ended, whether the text has come to an end or not.

The characters lose hit points each time they fail, through the roll of the dice, to hit an enemy, because their opponent strikes them back. As a result, they must deduct a stated number of hit points from their hit point totals.

A character may also lose hit points through sneak attacks or through carelessness when he has no chance to fight back. In such instances, roll the stated number of dice for **damage**. The result of the die roll is deducted from the character's total hit points and recorded on the Character Stats Card.

Carsten Soldar, as an experienced Fighter, starts out

with 22 hit points, plus one random chance to improve this score. Roll one six-sided die and add the total to 22 for your total hit points. Record this number in the blank space labeled "hit points." If you roll 1, 2, 3, or 4 and are dissatisfied with the result, you have one additional chance to improve it. You may, if you wish, roll again, but you *must* accept the result of the second die roll, even if it is smaller than your first roll. During the course of the game, do not erase the original number of hit points, since you may need to refer to it at certain times when your character is "healed." A character may never be healed of more hit points than he had at the start of the game.

Now repeat the process for your companions, Flip and Sulex, again rolling one die, with the option of a second die roll if you are not satisfied with the first. Add the result to 12 for Flip and to 10 for Sulex and record the scores on the Character Stats Card.

Guard your characters' hit points carefully, but use them when the goal seems worthwhile. At times throughout the adventure, you will have the opportunity to recover some of your hit points by means of a **healing throw**. However, it is important to remember that *you can never recover more hit points than you had at the start of your adventure.*

You, as Carsten, have promised to preserve the lives of your companions. Therefore, whenever Flip or Sulex have 7 or fewer hit points remaining, you may not *elect* to send them into combat. Instead, you must try to avoid battle or fight yourself. However, once you have found the Soul-Gem, this rule no longer applies, since you know one of them plans to kill you.

SKILL POINTS

Now you are ready to determine the **skills** of your characters.

Skill points allow you to increase a character's chances of success by adding the score for a specific skill to the dice roll. In this book, you will be asked to divide 9 skill points in any way you want for Carsten, provided that you give him at least 1 point in each of his three skills.

For Flip, divide 8 skill points among her three skills, again placing at least 1 skill point in each category. A further condition is that the agile halfling's dexterity skill must have the highest score, or be equal to the highest score, and the small thief's *strength* score must be the lowest of the three, or match the other lowest.

For Sulex, again divide 8 skill points among his three skills, once more with a minimum of 1 point in each category. Since Sulex requires wisdom to communicate with his gods, it must receive the highest score, or match the highest, while the frail cleric's dexterity score must be lowest, or match the lowest.

Note that each character has three skills only. Carsten and Flip receive no wisdom score, while Sulex lacks a strength score. This does not mean the characters are lacking in this quality, but simply that it doesn't play a part in the game choices.

Each character in this book has three of the following four skills: **fighting, strength, dexterity, and wisdom.**



Fighting

A character's **fighting** skill score increases his chance of success in combat.

When you fight an opponent in this book, roll two dice and add the sum of the dice to your fighting skill score. If the result is equal to, or larger than, the number required to "hit" (given in the text), you are successful.

Strength

A character's **strength** skill score enables him to have a better chance of success when any task involves physical strength.

To use your strength skill, roll one die and add the result to your strength skill score. If the total is equal to, or greater than, the number given in the text, you have succeeded.

Dexterity

A character's **dexterity** score increases his chances of success in feats involving such traits as nimbleness, agility, speed, and the like.

To use your dexterity skill, roll one die and add the result to the character's dexterity skill score. If the total equals or exceeds the number given in the text, he is successful.

Wisdom

Wisdom is the principal ability needed by the cleric Sulex, whose gods will not allow his spells to succeed if he makes an unwise choice.

To use wisdom points, roll one die and add the result to Sulex's wisdom skill score. If the total equals or exceeds the number given in the text, he is successful.

Unlike hit points, which may decrease or increase

during the adventure, skill points remain constant throughout the game. However, as you replay the adventure, you will want to experiment with different combinations to determine what works best.

If you have not already done so, it is now time to assign skill points for each of the three skills of Carsten, Flip, and Sulex. Remember, your placement of skill points can have a great effect on the outcome of your adventure, so choose wisely!



EXPERIENCE POINTS

As in real life, experience increases chances of success in a given situation because you have encountered a similar situation before and understand the possibilities that may occur. You, as Carsten Soldar, begin this adventure with from 1 to 6 **experience points**, depending on the luck of the die roll. As the leader of your group, you are the only one who has experience points. You may spend them to increase your chances on *any* dice roll throughout the book, but once experience points are used up, they are gone and must be deducted from your total. We suggest you save as many as you can until you reach the Soul-Gem. You'll need them!

To use experience points, you must decide how many points you will spend *before* you roll the dice, then add that score to the dice roll. Whether the roll of the dice is successful or not, the experience points are gone and must be deducted from your total.

To determine Carsten's **experience points**, roll one six-sided die and record the result in the blank space marked "experience points." If you roll a 1 through 4, you have one, and only one, chance to improve your score by rolling a second time if you wish, but you *must* accept the second roll, even if it is less than the first. Remember, your experience points can be used on any roll, but once spent, they are used up and must be subtracted from your total experience points.

Use your experience points wisely, saving them for crucial situations. At a number of places in this story, you may be rewarded with extra experience points for playing the adventure well.

COMBAT

Combat occurs when you fight an enemy—a monster, a person, a ghost. To engage in combat, roll two dice, add them together, and add the appropriate character's fighting skill score to the result of the dice roll. The text will tell you how many points you need to hit the monster. The tougher the enemy, the more points you need to hit it. If the total is sufficient to hit the monster, turn to the "win" section. (Note that the numbered sections you are directed to turn to are section numbers, *not* page numbers.) If you miss, the enemy automatically hits you back, and you will be told how many hit points of damage to deduct from your score. Unlike the first book in this series, you may only fight your opponent once in each numbered segment. Once you have lost all your hit points, you are dead and have come to the end of the adventure.

CLERICAL SPELLS

As a cleric, Sulex may ask the gods he serves to intercede on his behalf and grant him the power to cast spells. His gods may or may not grant such requests, for their own unexplainable reasons.

Sulex has found that his gods will rarely grant his request for a spell a second time before considerable time has gone by. Therefore, Sulex may use only those spells listed on the Character Stats Card, and you must cross each spell off as he uses it. If the opportunity to choose an already used spell presents itself again, he may *not* do so unless that spell is listed more than once.

PLAYING WITHOUT DICE

Should you ever wish to play the adventure when dice are unavailable, there is a simple substitute that requires only pencil and paper. Simply write the numbers 1 through 6 on separate slips of paper and mix them up in a container. Then draw one of the slips, note the number, and place it back in the container. Mix up the numbers and draw a second time. Each draw represents one roll of a die. If only one die is called for, draw only one number.

Your characters—Carsten the Fighter, Flip the Thief, and Sulex the Cleric—are now complete, and you are ready to begin your adventure. Turn to page 14—and good luck!

1

The large, rusty key clangs as the jailer removes it from the lock on the door of your cell.

"Come on out!" the jailer commands. "Count Las-son wants to see ya!" He turns and starts down the hallway, mumbling, "Can't imagine why, though."

You move stiffly after the squat figure, your muscles protesting the activity after three days in a dungeon cell. "I just hope they get a chance to keep on protesting," you say to yourself bitterly.

Only when the jailer shouts, "What're you mumbling about?" do you realize that you said it aloud.

The stone passage widens as you round a corner and almost run into the jailer. He has stopped outside a small door set in a heavy iron gate sunk deep into the surrounding stone.

"Watch it, thief!" he orders. You back out of the way as he unlocks the door, then gestures you through it. Turn to 40.

2

You move toward the chair next to Sulex, but just as you start to sit, a violent wave of pressure pushes you into the chair. Through a swirl of color, you watch as Flip is knocked to the metal floor by the unseen force. You realize you are fortunate you were sitting—the chair cushioned you from the shock. As your eyes clear and the pressure wave disappears, you see that a large hole has opened up in the ceiling. Roll one die for damage and deduct the number from Flip's hit points, then turn to 65.

3

You draw your sword, ready for anything lurking in the darkness above, and start up the stairs.

Arriving at the top of the staircase, you step onto

the platform. The light from Sulex's staff behind you forms gigantic shadows on the cavern wall.

As the halfling and the cleric push onto the platform from behind you, you suddenly feel your feet fly out from under you. You land on your back, plunging into darkness down a slick, twisting slide!

You try frantically to sit up, but you're zooming around a series of turns so fast that you can't. Behind you, you hear a gasp and a shriek as first Flip, then Sulex, follow you down the slide.

Where are you headed? Will you suddenly crash into a solid wall? Will you slide off into another plane of existence altogether? Is there some monster waiting at the end of the slide to slay you? Or does the slide just go on forever? You begin to panic. You've got to try to stop! But even if you do, how will you get off this strange slide?

Do you want to try to stop (47) or will you just keep on sliding (138)?

4

The evil creature's glare rivets you in place. You try to call to Flip and Sulex, who don't yet realize what is happening, but only a faint gurgle escapes your throat. Suddenly you stop trying to do anything, and you realize you have turned to stone.

The deceptively beautiful woman's face gives a grimace of pleasure, then whispers to the snakes on her head, "Patience, my sweet ones. I'll let you deal with that halfling and the other human."

5

You dart back and forth, trying to keep the giant off balance. But the painful wound in his back has driven him past caution. He simply sweeps his huge iron sword from side to side, catching you with a

mighty blow that knocks you to the ground.

Roll one die for damage and subtract the result from your hit points, then watch helplessly as Flip and Sulex try to finish off the giant. Add their fighting skill scores together and add them to the roll of two dice. If the total is 11 or more, turn to 54. If it is less than 11, turn to 42.

6

Stepping on her toes as if she could make her small body weigh even less, Flip steps diagonally onto the gray square. The instant her foot makes contact, she stumbles and cries out in pain. Then the pain stops and the square turns white. Deduct 1 point of damage from Flip's hit points.

Puzzled, you realize that she went from gray to gray and was injured. Maybe that's the key. Do you want to ask her to move again? If so, she can go forward to a yellow square (149), diagonally to a gray one (165), or straight toward you to a blue square (301). Or you can ask Sulex to move instead (55).

7

The quicker I can get that thing open, the better for us all, you think.

You dig your feet into the coral, straddling the hatch, so that you have a firm stance. Then you turn the wheel with all your might. For a second, nothing happens, but then the wheel begins to turn freely. Finally you feel the hatch cover release.

You look up and see two pairs of legs moving frantically in the water, now stained dark with blood. You're worried about your companions, but there's one more thing you have to do before you surface.

Your heart in your throat, you raise the hatch a bit. There's no sudden rush of water, so the pressure must

be the same on both sides of the hatch. With relief, you pull the hatch cover up, forcing it back against the water until it stays open by itself.

Pushing off the bottom, you zoom to the surface to find Sulex and Flip calmly treading water as the monstrous beast swims off erratically, trailing blood.

“What did you do to it, anyway?” you ask.

“What a cleric is supposed to do,” Sulex says calmly. “Once I remembered, I cast a Protection from Evil spell that kept the fish away from us.”

“But we were still able to attack it,” adds Flip.

“Great,” you say. “But now we’d better get going. The hatch is open. All you have to do is follow me.”

“But what will we find on the other side of the hatch?” asks the halfling.

“I don’t know, but I hope it will lead to the end of this quest.” Cross out Sulex’s Protection From Evil spell and turn to 28.

8

The stairway ends in a huge, bright chamber filled with moist, warm earth and dense greenery. A few trees even reach to the ceiling, some thirty feet above your head. The jungle atmosphere makes you sweat beneath your leather armor.

“Whew!” says Sulex, loosening his robe about his neck. “And we complained about the mist!”

“I can’t see anything but jungle. How are we supposed to know where to go?” Flip asks.

You realize that you can’t see over the growth either. Bewildered, you spot an opening on the north side of the clearing where you stand.

“That looks like it might be a path over there,” you say, pointing. “We can follow that.” (236)

“How about one of us climbing a tree to get our bearings?” suggests Flip (49).

Flip pushes past you to take a look. "Nothing!" she says, surprise in her voice.

Sulex leans in to look, too. "Nothing here but a staircase . . . and lots of cobwebs," he says.

Holding your sword in front of you to break the cobwebs, you walk to the staircase and look down. You see it make several turns into the darkness below. Looking up, you also peer into darkness.

And then it hits you. "We have no light!" you exclaim. "We have weapons but no lights!"

"At least one person was thinking ahead," Sulex says. And he holds up the ancient oaken staff and mumbles a few words you don't understand. Suddenly the top of the staff begins to glow with a small, clear light.

"There'll be no living with him now," Flip mutters.

"At least we can see," you reply, turning your attention back to the choice that confronts you. It appears to be a simple one—you can go up the spiral stairway (235) or you can go down (155).

10

Searching desperately, you find the shiny box in your pouch and hold it at your side. Your eyes to the ground, you wait, your heart in your throat, until you see the bottom of the robe coming near.

Then, in one swift motion, you raise the box before your face. You see the robe stop moving and hear a cry of anguish that ends abruptly. Then you finally lower the silver box and raise your eyes. There before you stands a stone medusa, petrified by her own malevolent gaze reflected back into her own eyes.

"Wow!" Flip approaches slowly from the other side of the clearing, her face a display of awe. "And all we found was more paths." Turn to 343.

The death-dealing light strikes you, and every inch of your body screams out in excruciating pain. You hear a long, thin scream and suddenly realize that it is coming from you. But at least you're still alive!

When your vision clears, you look down at yourself. Like Flip and Sulex, everything—your skin, your clothes, your weapons—all have been bleached a ghostly white. But you are still alive! Turn to 56.

Fighting is useless, so you let the invisible force carry you where it will. You find yourself dropping into a sea, this one not of flame but of salty, sea-green water. You're in an ocean! For a moment, you feel relief, as if you've finally reentered the real world, which you had begun to think might be lost to you forever. But then you remember that you got here by falling *upward*, and you know that you're still in the Ghost Tower.

After the murky fire room, this ocean chamber seems incredibly bright and quiet. The only thing visible above the water—or is it below, you wonder, remembering that you fell up when you entered?—is a small island on the north side of the circular room. The bright light also reveals a large coral reef, covering most of the southern half of the sea, a few feet below the surface of the water. You grin as you see Sulex's lost staff bobbing near you in the water.

"Carsten!" You turn from your survey of the room to discover Flip bobbing alongside the cleric. Sulex is having trouble with his waterlogged robes—they keep pulling him down—and he doesn't seem to swim very well anyway. He's beginning to panic.

You can't swim very easily either, because of the weight of your armor, but you struggle toward Sulex.

Roll one die and add it to the total of your strength and dexterity skill scores to see if you can keep Sulex above water while you get him out of his waterlogged robes. If the total is 9 or more, turn to **210**. If it is less than 9, turn to **45**.

13

The ride seems short, especially with your mind occupied by sinister reflections. Soon your group comes to a stop at the base of a barren hill. High above the trees, above a gray, swirling mist, you see the ruins of Castle Parcesstar. Its two crumbling corner towers seem to rise from the rock itself. Somewhere between them, almost indistinguishable from the mist itself, you think you see a shimmering image of another tower. With a shiver, you realize that it must be the Ghost Tower.

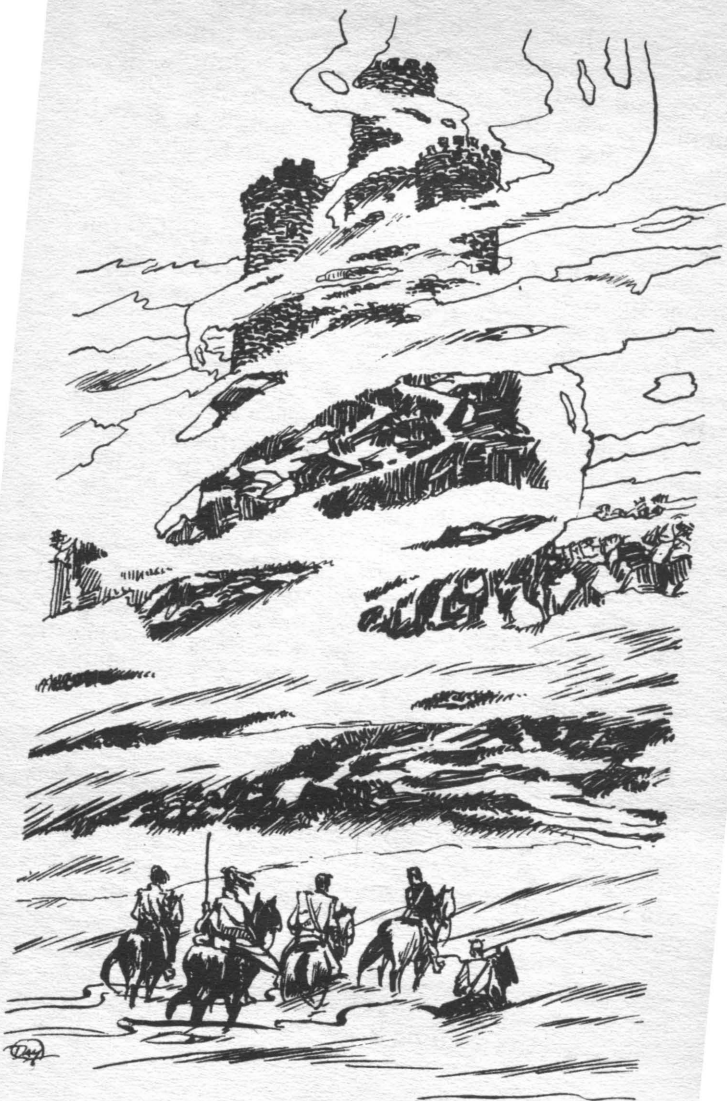
"This is as far as we go," says the leader of the guards. "Leave your horses here. We'll stay behind and watch . . . just to be sure that you make it safely up that winding path to the castle."

"Yeah, sure!" says Flip sarcastically. "You're all heart, aren't you?"

You say nothing, your mind awlirl. "How did I get into this?" you ask yourself.

You dismount and check your supplies, then start up the path. Your eyes dart this way and that as you near the black stone. There appears to be only one entrance to the castle, and it is blocked by a portcullis that leans, broken, in the opening. Your eyes are drawn to the scene beyond the grille of the portcullis. It is a vast, open courtyard. But instead of looking cheery in the late afternoon sun, it is a place of darkness and rubble that seems an appropriate place to begin a quest not of your choosing.

Shaking off such dark forebodings, you say, "We



might as well go right in through the gate.”

“I’m sure the ghosts won’t mind,” says Flip.

You find that the huge iron gate is balanced on a single chain so that when all of you push at it, it falls to one side. An opening large enough to crawl through appears as the grille tilts. Turn to **119**.

14

You are in the first sector, right by the ladder you came up. Suddenly the dazzling ray of light flashes out. Roll a single die. If you roll a 1, turn to **94**; 2, **298**; 3, **197**; 4, **246**; 5, **105**; 6, **223**.

15

You send Flip and Sulex, the thief in the lead, to follow the right-hand loop. You head for the left.

You have to pay close attention to the narrow causeway as you walk, but you glance up one and see the statue of the giant begin to move!

“Look out! The giant’s alive!” you shout.

Before long, you see him pick up one of the boulders and raise it high overhead to hurl it at you. You prepare to duck, when the giant notices the others approaching from the other side. A puzzled look crosses the giant’s face as he glances back at you and prepares, once again, to hurl the boulder.

“Keep moving!” you call to the others. “He can’t make up his mind who to throw that rock at.” You move as fast as you can and see Flip and Sulex doing the same. Just as you all arrive at the central platform, the giant tosses his boulder, which lands in the flames just short of the platform. Turn to **233**.

16

With a shock, you realize that whatever is emerging from the opening looks like a piece of rock itself!

The rocklike shape darts toward you. It has a dark, warty hide and a mouth full of sharp teeth.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **80**. If it is less than 11, turn to **199**.

17

The deadly light ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll two dice. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **11**. If the number you roll is higher, turn to **32**.

18

For a fraction of a second, you are aware that Flip has missed the monster and struck your head instead. During that moment, you feel the creature's claws tighten on your neck, and you know that you are beyond the help of the cleric's healing arts.

19

"I think I'd better warn you of something. . . ." There's a note of reluctance in the cleric's voice.

"What's that?" you demand.

"Sometimes this potion is stored in vials with enough for four people, but sometimes there's only enough for two." He finishes in a mumble, as if he himself were to blame for this new problem.

"How do we know which one this is?"

"We won't, until we drink it. Both vials look alike."

"Well, I want to explore that coral reef, so I'll take the first drink. Flip, you're the better swimmer, so you take the second drink. Then, if there's more left, Sulex can drink it. If there isn't, he'll have to tread water on the surface while we explore below."

"Thanks," the cleric says grimly.

Ignoring him, you tip the tiny vial and drink a mouthful. It tastes oily and rather sweet. You peer into the container to see if you can tell how much is left, but you can't see anything.

You pass the vial to Flip. She flashes a superior look at Sulex, then quickly drinks. Grimacing, she hands Sulex the vial. He takes it and tips it to his mouth.

Roll two dice. If you roll 9 or more, turn to **330**. If you roll less than 9, turn to **283**.

20

The white light strikes you, and you feel a long, thin scream escape from you involuntarily.

When your vision clears, you look down at yourself and gasp. Everything—your skin, your clothes, your weapons—has been bleached a ghostly white.

“Just get me out of here alive!” you whisper softly to your gods. If you are alone, turn to **56**. If Sulex and Flip are with you, turn to **31**.



21

Suddenly you swerve to the left, around the guard, but you have waited too long. The guard simply thrusts out his sword and trips you. As you go sprawling in the dirt, you hear the first guard come up behind you. You hear him say, “Oh, no, you don’t!” and then the butt of a sword descends on your head.

You regain consciousness to find yourself lying on the floor of what appears to be the armory. Three guards stand around you. Your halfling and cleric companions sit cross-legged on the floor, the cleric meditating and the halfling merely looking bored. The cleric raises his head as you stir.

"Would you like to choose your equipment now?" one guard says as if nothing had happened.

You realize that, in fact, nothing has—except that you have a nasty headache. Roll one die for damage and subtract the result from your total hit points. Then turn to **290**.

22

Using your whole being, you try to fight the invisible force drawing you toward the hole.

Add your dexterity skill score to your strength skill score and add the roll of one die. If the total is 9 or more, turn to **344**. If it is less than 9, turn to **12**.

23

You see the light flash out in the sector to the left of the ghostly bodies of the halfling and the cleric. *Well, you think, at least they can't be killed again . . . but you can if you don't hurry.* Turn to **56**.

24

You wade into the water and begin to swim out toward the reef, hoping you'll find a way to get out of this watery world. As you swim, you think you see, far off to one side, a moving shadow, as if a large creature of some kind were following you. You hurry quickly to the coral, order Sulex to keep watch above, and dive under the water.

At first, you're so impressed with breathing under water that you can think of nothing else. Then

you push it from your mind. The intricately branching coral is teeming with plant and animal life, swimming, crawling, or just lying in wait for whatever comes by. And among it all, you catch sight of a large round, shiny disk. Signaling to Flip, you point toward it and then swim down to investigate.

A small wheel projects from the center of the disk. You circle around the disk, about five feet in diameter, feeling with your fingers. The metal isn't merely a disk sitting on the coral—it's a hatch!

You signal to Flip to surface, where you can talk. Bobbing out into the air, you shout excitedly so that Sulex, treading water nearby, can hear you, "It's a hatch! I think we've found the way out!"

"But the hatch leads down!" Flip says excitedly. "Wouldn't it go right back to the fire room?"

"No! Remember? We're upside down! When we came up here, we fell *down* into this sea. So if we go down now, we should be going up."

Suddenly you hear a frantic shout from Sulex. If Sulex didn't use his Detect Magic spell back on the island, turn to **62**. If he used it, turn to **205**.

25

"Let's go through the curtain together," you say, holding out your hand to the cleric.

Sulex frowns, then stares at the curtain. Finally he clutches your hand so that, if it works, both of you will go through the curtain together. At the count of three, you both run toward the curtain.

As you near the strange bead barrier, you become convinced that you're never going to make it. At the last second, you raise your hands, tightened into fists, out in front of you.

You feel them sink into the beads, parting the multicolored strands as if you were moving through taffy.

You push the rest of your body on through, aware of Sulex beside you all the while.

Roll one die and add it to your dexterity skill score. If the total is 6 or more, turn to **224**. If it's less than 6, turn to **176**.

26

The problem of how to get through the curtain seems to dispel any fear you might have. You all crowd around the strange, colorful barrier to examine it. You find that the curtain gives slightly when you push against it, and you are able to push your finger into the hole your sword made.

Finally Flip suggests, "Maybe if we got a good running start and charged at it, we could get through."

"You have a hard head—you try it," suggests Sulex.

The halfling flashes him a scornful look, then turns to you. "What do you think, Carsten?"

"Do you have a spell that might work?" you ask.

The cleric frowns thoughtfully. "Hmm . . . I could try a Dispel Magic spell, but my gods have never allowed me to use it before now. I have no idea if they would this time."

Should Sulex try his spell (114) or should Flip should try to run through the curtain (262)?

27

Together the three of you dive toward the hatch. With all of you helping, it takes only moments to turn the heavy wheel. You hold your breath in fear, afraid that a difference in pressure between the two sides might cause a fierce current. But the hatch simply pops open, and you have found your escape from this danger-filled water world. As you prepare to exit through the hatch, the dark shadow of a giant fish blankets you momentarily in darkness. Turn to **28**.

Pulling Sulex behind you, you dive through the hatch. You seem to be in a round, stone passage filled with water. Within seconds, you start to feel dizzy. It reminds you of the queer feeling you got when you entered the upside-down water world.

Suddenly the water comes to an end, and you're bobbing on the surface, gasping for breath, with Flip and Sulex next to you.

"We must be right-side up again," says the cleric.

You find yourself in another round chute with metal handholds on the side. In minutes, you reach the top of the chute and pull yourself up inside another chamber. This one is hexagonal, of purest white. Before you get a good look at it, however, a piercing bright light shoots out from the center of the chamber and strikes the wall across from you. Your eyes snap shut, but the light imprints a dark spot before your eyes that lingers for several moments. You know you must avoid being hit by the incredibly powerful beam.

When you can see again, you realize that this new chamber is only about half the diameter of the first tower chamber, the world of air. In the center, suspended in midair, floats a white, opaque gem about the diameter of a human hand. The Soul-Gem!

The object of your quest holds your gaze . . . until Sulex shouts, "Hey, move aside and let us up, too!"

You pull yourself up into the chamber and discover that the floor is divided into a hexagonal pattern. Each section of the hexagon is a different color .

You must get out of Sulex's and Flip's way. You climbed up in section 1. Do you want to move counter-clockwise to section 2 (336), 3 (268), 4 (229), 5 (39), or 6 (115)? Note: Keep track of the number of times you see the flashing light; you've seen it once already.

With the giant out of the way, the three of you hurry over to the stone sarcophagus. "What are we looking for here?" Flip asks as she pulls herself up to peer inside. Sulex moves toward the stone staircase.

"The Soul-Gem could be anywhere," you reply.

"I'm afraid things aren't always what they seem," Sulex says. "This 'staircase' certainly isn't."

"It's not what it seems?" you ask.

"It's not a staircase."

"What?" You rush over to the stone column that has been your destination since you entered this evil place. What appeared through the smoky mists to be a spiral stone stairway going up to the next floor is merely a pile of stone. You see designs formed by different colored stones, as if the whole thing was planned as an interesting sculpture.

"What now?" asks Flip.

"Well, we can't just stand here. There's got to be a way out. There must be another floor above us!"

Hurriedly you all search the stone platform for some sign of an exit. The column leads nowhere. The stone sarcophagus holds only some rubble and a few commonplace gems. Besides that, there's nothing.

Your mind races. Could it be that this is the wrong tower? Could you have missed another way leading up somewhere along the line? Could the way up have disappeared at some time in the past? To each question—except the last—you have to say no.

"You both know, don't you, what the answer must be?" you say finally. Two worried faces turn toward you, reluctant to hear what you're going to say.

"We've got to go through that hole. It's the only way."

Sulex rolls his eyes toward the ceiling and says, "Well, at least maybe I can get my staff back."

You turn and walk toward the central platform. Then, before you're really sure in your mind that you want to go on, you take another step that carries the three of you into range of the mysterious force.

As if you weighed nothing, you, the cleric, and the halfling are drawn upward. The pressure of the force makes breathing difficult, your stomach begins to churn, and for a moment you begin to panic, but then you pass through the ceiling and enter a narrow chute of some kind. You realize that it looks like the one you entered at the bottom of this tower, and your panic subsides. Turn to 12.

30

You draw your sword and dash to help. Carefully, so as not to hurt your companion, you thrust the blade straight into the creature's body. The su-monster looks up at you angrily and lunges toward you, but the wound is too deep. The creature drops back, blood pouring from its abdomen, forming a scarlet pool on the vivid green of the jungle floor. Turn to 35.

31

The cleric and the thief pull themselves up into the chamber to join you. Leery, like you, of the dazzling light, they walk with their heads turned away from the Soul-Gem, in case it should flare out again.

"Well, how do we get the gem?" ponders Flip. "It looks as if it must be held there by some force. But I'm not sure I want to tangle with such a force."

"I'm not sure I want to either, but that's what we're here for," you say. You add to yourself, *At least that's what I'm here for.* Aloud, you ask, "Sulex, can you detect any evil around the gem?"

The cleric holds the holy symbol that hangs around his neck out toward the Soul-Gem, praying. Then

he replies, "Nothing magic will work here, Carsten."

"Then maybe I should just try to grab it." (280)

Flip suggests, "Maybe you can run your sword all the way around it and see if something invisible is holding the gem there." (48)

32

The death-dealing white light strikes you, and every inch of your body screams out in excruciating pain. You hear a long, thin scream and suddenly realize that it is coming from you.

The last thing you are aware of is a wrenching feeling as, like Flip and Sulex, your soul is drawn from your body and into the evil gem that awaits it.

33

As Sulex finishes dressing your wounds, it suddenly occurs to you that he had merely stood by watching during the fight. Suspiciously you ask, "Sulex, tell me one thing—why didn't you help out during the fight?"

The cleric looks at you with injured eyes. "Because you didn't ask me to," he says flatly.

Amazed at his straightforward answer, you nevertheless realize that he's right. You're supposed to give the orders, not panic. Turn to 51.

34

At the last second, you lunge to the side so that the vicious teeth miss you, but suddenly you find yourself in unbearable pain. It feels as if hundreds of sharp needles are pricking your skin, and the salt water makes them hurt excruciatingly.

You see that Flip and Sulex are also gasping in pain and are having trouble staying above the water. "What—what was that?" you cry.

"It's . . . an evil cleric," Sulex replies, choking. "My protection spell failed."

Add your three fighting skill scores together and add the roll of two dice. If the total is 14 or more, turn to **321**. If it is less than 14, turn to **185**.

35

Leery now, you study the paths, both of which turn in another direction within a few feet. There appears to be no difference between the path to the north (**244**) and the one to the south (**132**).

36

"It seems safe going this way," says Flip, staying near the wall as she steps toward you onto a gray square.

Again nothing happens, except that it turns white. However, you realize this path isn't getting her any closer to the door. You can have her move straight toward the door onto a blue square (**250**) or diagonally onto a gray square (**43**).

37

Trying to recover your own balance, you grab hold of Sulex's arm. You feel his muscles tense to try to hold you, but he is a man of thought, not action, and he can't stop the momentum of your fall.

Frantically you clutch him tighter, hoping for a miracle. But none comes. You fall into the flaming sea, pulling the cleric in with you. Your last conscious thought is that you never should have stopped to investigate that purse. . . .

38

As you dodge the blow from the bugbear's ax, you feel the blade whistle past your shoulder. When the

ax is at the bottom of its arc and the creature is vulnerable, you kick the huge yellow beast in the stomach and run toward where you last saw your sword skittering away. Finally you spot it about fifty feet away, next to another of the inanimate "statues."

But will you be able to get to it before the bugbear can recover? Roll one die and add the result to your dexterity skill score. If you get a 4 or more, turn to **192**. If you get below 4, turn to **279**.

39

You are in sector 5, not far from the ladder you came up. Suddenly a dazzling ray of light flashes out. Roll a single die. If you roll a 1, turn to **129**; 2, **298**; 3, **197**; 4, **166**; 5, **260**; 6, **223**. If Flip and Sulex have moved into sector 4 and you roll a 4, turn to **246**.

40

You enter an unlikely place. You pass from the cold, bleak stone walls of the corridor into a warm, bright room. A fire blazes in a huge open fireplace along one wall. Heavy banners adorn the stone ceiling above your head. You take a quick step forward and step onto a thick, patterned carpet, which feels strange to your feet, more accustomed to dirt roads. You marvel at finding such an inviting room only a door away from a dungeon cell.

"Ahem!"

Your eyes focus on the figure who apparently is the man who summoned you. Sitting at an ornately carved, polished table in the center of the room is a slender, gray-haired, bearded man dressed in midnight velvet and gold cloth. His sumptuous clothing matches the rich furnishings of the room.

"If you are quite through with your inspection," he says sarcastically, "we'll get on with the business at

hand." Then he adds, "Although you might as well take a good look. This is as close as you'll ever get to such things again . . . thief!"

You stiffen. "I'm not a th—"

"*Silence!*" thunders the man, leaping to his feet. His well-trimmed beard quivers with anger. "Thief, I say! You were caught red-handed with the countess's purse." He leans toward you, the force of his anger compelling you to step back.

"But I merely fou—" you start to protest.

"*Silence!*" he roars again. You are amazed at the volume of sound coming from someone so much smaller than you. But even more, you're amazed at finding yourself being accused of theft.

You can envision the scene clearly. Three days ago, you were riding through the woods when you spotted a glimmer of gold in the underbrush. You dismounted and discovered a small, beautiful purse, woven with golden threads, lying in the tall weeds under some shrubs. You heard no sound of anyone nearby.

The purse couldn't have lain there long—it was clean and dry—so you picked it up and looked for footprints. Leading your horse, you studied the ground as you walked . . . straight into three men who suddenly leaped out from behind some trees.

"We've got the rogue now!" shouted one.

"It's the thief we've been searching for!" shouted another.

Funny, you remember thinking, they sounded almost as if they were quoting lines.

The third man quickly tied your hands behind your back, gave you a swift kick in the behind, and ordered, "March! The count wants to see you!"

But the count didn't see you, not for three nights and two days, during which time you lay, wretched, in the small cell where they threw you.

Now, at last, the mysterious count is seeing you, and you find he won't listen to your side of things. You feel your anger rising.

If you think you should attack the count, turn to 311. If you decide to talk to him instead, turn to 162.

41

The shrieking creature lands on top of Flip, the force of its fall knocking her to the ground. The always leery halfling already has her dagger ready. Roll one die and add the score to Flip's dexterity skill score. If the total is 10 or more, turn to 148. If the total is less than 10, turn to 88.

42

Suddenly the giant spins around, his sword low. The movement catches the halfling and cleric by surprise, and the huge blade knocks them to the ground. Then, one by one, the wounded, angry giant takes your weapons and rolls you into the fiery sea.

43

"Hi, Sulex. How's tricks?" the halfling says from the gray square next to the one the cleric is on.

"Get on with it, halfling," he grumbles.

"No sweat," she says and steps diagonally onto the gray square.

Immediately she falls to the floor, groaning with pain. "Did you have anything to do with that, cleric?" she asks accusingly. Then the square turns white and Flip's pain eases. After a moment, she stands up. Deduct 1 point of damage from Flip's hit points.

"I was fine when I went straight ahead," she says. "I'm going straight as an arrow from now on, all the way to the statue!" And without a moment's hesita-

tion, she runs straight across the room to the gray square on which the statue stands, each square turning white as she passes over it. Turn to 55.

44

The bugbear looms over you, eager to draw blood. You spin away from it, drawing your sword at the same time. The monster raises its ax, ready to split your skull. You dance nimbly aside and watch the ax crash to the floor, leaving the beast vulnerable. You lunge forward, thrusting your sword upward into the bugbear's chest. With a grunt of surprise, its great, lumbering body crashes to the floor.

You turn toward Flip and Sulex to find that they have their bugbear down on its knees. The cleric is jabbing it in the stomach with his staff, forcing it to stay down low where the halfling can reach its head with her morning star. As you move quickly over to help, a final blow from Flip sends the monster sprawling in a pool of blood at her feet. Turn to 184.

45

When you reach the spot where you last saw the cleric, all you see is a mass of gray cloth floating in the water. You reach into it and discover Sulex's head. Working your way behind him, you try to get your arms under his shoulders so that you can raise him above the water, but the heavy cloth gets in your way.

"Do something! He's drowning!" shrieks Flip. Her apparent concern for the cleric makes you wonder if their perpetual arguing is faked for your benefit.

You can feel the weight of your own armor beginning to pull you down, and you know you must do something! Eventually you just grab the cleric's robe and start dragging him toward the small island.



Finally, near exhaustion, you heave his soggy form onto the sand and collapse beside it.

Gradually you recover enough to check on Sulex. Flip has followed you to the island and removed the cleric's wet robes, but he's still unconscious. Deduct 6 points of damage from Sulex's hit points.

Quickly you reach for the small vial containing the potion of healing. You open it and hold it to the cleric's mouth. Roll a single die to see how many hit points the potion restores, then add the result to Sulex's hit points. In minutes, the cleric is sitting up, complaining about his wet robes, and you take a moment to look around the island.

Turn to **98**.

46

"I suppose there's no difference between them," you grumble, "but I'll take a look." When you do, the second path looks exactly like the first.

"So how am I supposed to choose between two identical paths?" you say angrily. Even as you say it, you know that there's no reason to be angry at Sulex.

But your momentary bad temper makes you forget to look up, and in that moment, another su-monster drops from a tree above you and attacks. Turn to **230**.

47

In the darkness, you have no idea where you are, but you know that this slide was built by an evil wizard. It could be taking you to another world entirely!

Frantic, you spread your legs and arms wide, trying to feel the sides of the slide, trying to find something to grab on to! But there is nothing.

You push your hands flat on the surface of the slide, but it only slows you slightly, and your hands immediately feel searing pain from the friction.

Roll one die to determine the amount of damage to your hands and subtract the result from your hit points. Then turn to **138**.

48

You decide to follow Flip's suggestion. You draw your sword and hold it out to the side and slowly move it toward the gem. Suddenly it stops, about a foot away from the Soul-Gem. Something invisible is blocking it. You move the sword up and down and around the gem, tracing in midair the shape of an invisible sphere protecting the Soul-Gem. But you find no trace of anything holding the invisible sphere in place.

Just to make certain, you walk clockwise, three sectors, to the other side of the sphere and repeat the procedure. Again you detect nothing. You turn and see that Sulex and Flip have moved, too, and are now in sector 4. If you are in sector 1, turn to **14**; 2, **336**; 3, **268**; 5, **39**; 6, **115**.

49

You spot a tall tree that seems near. You head toward it, but you can't find any way through the undergrowth. You attack the growth with your sword, but thirty minutes of hard work produces nothing but weary muscles. The tree is just as far away as ever. You realize that there's nothing to do but head for the path.

Turn to **236**.

50

As you veer to one side to avoid hitting the tall figure that looms in front of you, you hear Flip shout, "Look out! They're alive!"

Then you see by the light of Sulex's staff that the

chamber you find yourself in contains a number of large, statuelike figures.

You think you see one of the figures move, then another! Suddenly you realize that they're not statues! Two of them are advancing toward you!

As the first creature approaches you, you see clearly its yellowish skin and malicious green eyes. At least seven feet tall and seeming even taller, it wears a metal helmet on its head. The other figure, wearing a battered breastplate, begins to advance toward Flip and Sulex. Plainly these creatures are not here to welcome you.

You steal a quick glance at Sulex and Flip and realize how small and helpless they look next to the smelly, evil creatures.

You can't afford to worry about Sulex and Flip until later. Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **44**. If it is less than 11, turn to **204**.



51

Turning back to the rubble that remains, you say, "Well, let's finish up with this mess."

But the words are no sooner out of your mouth than one stone starts to move, and immediately all the rubble behind it begins to slide. You leap back out of

the way and watch in dismay as stones once again clog the spiral stairway.

"All that work for nothing!" Sulex exclaims.

Surely there can't be much left, you think.

Do you want to try to remove the remaining rock (85), or should you forget it and go down the stairs (155)?

52

Sulex looks horrified at the sight of the flaming firebat swooping toward him. As it fans across his face, he strikes out blindly with his staff, missing the creature entirely and almost falling into the fire. The enraged firebat renews its attack, hovering over the cleric's head so that the searing flames almost encircle him. Roll one die for damage and deduct it from Sulex's hit points. Then go to the rescue.

Remembering your promise to keep the cleric and halfling alive, whatever their intentions may be for you, you rush to Sulex's aid. Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **220**. If it is less than 11, turn to **76**.

53

As you prepare to fight, you realize just how big the creature is. With a sudden feeling of hopelessness, you pull your sword out of its scabbard. With a weapon in each hand, maybe you'll stand a chance.

As the creature rushes in, all you see are its great teeth. You decide to drop down below the water so that the creature's momentum will carry it over you.

But the plan fails. With both your hands holding weapons, you find you can't dive—all you can do is churn up the water, increasing the pain from the cuts on your body. Then you feel the infinitely greater pain of the monstrous creature's teeth sinking into

you. Roll one die for damage from the monster's bite and add 2 more points of damage for the magical wounds. Deduct the total from your hit points.

As you gasp for breath and try to lie still in the water to ease the pain, you feel something tugging on your foot. "Oh, no!" you groan. "Not again!"

But up bobs Flip. "Come on, Carsten. The hatch is open," she says quickly. Turn to 28.

54

The giant spins around, raising his sword high. The tiny halfling ducks and the sword sails harmlessly by. Sulex strikes the sword blade a mighty blow with Flip's morning star. The blow takes the giant by surprise. He stares down at the hilt of his sword. Flip ducks around behind him and stabs him again in almost the same place as before. The giant drops his sword in astonishment, and Sulex begins to rain blows on the giant's huge body.

You rise to your feet, pick up your own sword, and with a powerful thrust, put an end to the giant's life.

The three of you stand there gasping, until finally Flip says, "I hope we don't run into any more his size. I don't think I can take it!" Turn to 29.

55

"Flip seemed to be safe when she walked straight ahead instead of diagonally," you observe. "You're lucky, Sulex, since you only have to walk straight ahead to reach the far door."

"I'll head for the green square," the cleric says, and he strides toward the green stone two squares ahead of him. As he steps from the gray one onto the green, the gray one blinks white. But he collapses in pain on the green one. Soon the square turns a cold white, and you see the cleric rise, his face pale. Deduct 1

point of damage from Sulex's hit points.

"I don't understand," you say. "That worked just fine for Flip."

"I'm *not* Flip!" Sulex exclaims indignantly.

Where should the cleric go next—straight ahead again but only one square (135) or diagonally one square to another green one (314)?

56

And still the Soul-Gem hangs there in midair. Now you know that it is covered by an invisible sphere that must be suspended magically. There are no strings holding it in place.

The only thing you can think of is to try to break the sphere. You hold your sword high and bring it crashing down to where you think the sphere is.

You feel the sword crash onto the sphere with a satisfying clang. Roll one die for damage to the sphere. But as you try to see how much damage the sphere has taken, you feel an increasing pain in your body.

"Oh no!" you moan as you realize the truth: Whatever damage the sphere takes you will take, too, to your own body. And the frightening question arises: Can you last longer than the sphere?

Do you want to use the amulet and leave, forgetting about the Soul-Gem (282)? Or do you want to continue to the bitter end, knowing that you might fail or that the killer light might flash again (178)?

57

"Use your Flamestrike spell, Sulex!" you urge frantically.

The cleric quickly searches his pouch, draws out a spell component, and utters the words of his spell. Suddenly a column of flame leaps from his fingers toward the creatures.

“Got ’em!” exclaims Flip as the foul-smelling, smoking creatures drop to the ground behind her. Sulex murmurs his thanks to his gods, a grim smile of satisfaction on his face. Delete Sulex’s Flamestrike spell from his list of spells and turn to **70**.

58

As you listen to the cleric’s murmuring and watch the strange motions of his hands, you begin to see and hear things—things so horrible and so frightening that you . . . can’t . . .

An inexplicable panic sweeps over you, urging you to get out of there instantly! You begin to run in blind terror. As you run, you shed your sword, your pouch containing the Soul-Gem, everything, in the hope of relieving the terror that holds you in its grip.

By the time the overwhelming fear subsides, you are lost in the wilderness, weaponless and alone. You will have to try to find your way out and hope that you don’t have to fight any terrible creatures. Unfortunately, you know that your chances of succeeding are small.

59

With a superhuman effort, you force your gaze away from the horrible medusa’s eyes. She gives a loud cry of rage, and you hear sounds indicating that she is running toward you, but you dare not look.

If, sometime during your quest, you have picked up a shiny silver box, quickly pull it from your pouch and hold it up, then turn to **10**.

If you don’t have such a box, you’ll have to fight the medusa while averting your eyes to the ground, which will be difficult. Roll two dice and add the roll to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **121**. If the total is less than 11, turn to **182**.

"Flip, Sulex—keep away from its mouth!" you shout frantically.

The great beast swerves after you, its jaws gaping. As it charges, you dive quickly to the side. It slides past you, and you grab its pectoral fin and jab savagely with your dagger. Then the creature is gone.

Suddenly you realize that Flip is nowhere in sight! "Flip!" you shout.

"Here it comes again!" Sulex calls excitedly.

The fish reappears, leaping above the water in a great arc . . . with Flip on its back! The halfling is perched between its two dorsal fins, hanging on to a spine in the front fin with one hand and stabbing at the creature with the other. The fish reenters the water with a crash, and you expect to see Flip fly off, but she hangs on for dear life, attacking all the while. Suddenly the fish dives again, and this time it stays underwater. It seems like several minutes before a gasping halfling bobs to the surface.

The fish also surfaces, but at some distance. It swims off with a slight list. It doesn't reappear.

"We did it!" says Sulex.

"'We!'" the halfling exclaims. "I didn't see much of you during that fight!"

"Never mind. The fish is gone now," you say. You're now free to head for the island (104).

Now, for the first time, anger and bewilderment give way to fear. You have heard of Castle Parcesstar. The creation of a grand wizard from long ago, the castle is a product of the craft of both the stonemason and the sorcerer. These days, only its stone ruins are visible . . . except at certain times, perhaps in fog, perhaps in the darkness of a waning moon, when a spec-

tral tower—a ghost tower—is briefly visible in the center of the ruins. Or so they say.

The count smiles slightly when he sees your reaction. “Carsten will lead you on your quest into the castle. You will search for the entrance to a tower”—you flinch—“within the ruins. Somewhere in that tower is an unbelievably precious and powerful magical gem.” The count’s voice lowers until it almost caresses the words as he speaks. “It’s known as the Soul-Gem, and it glows with the fire of the sun.”

He pauses again. Then a ferocious look crosses his features. “*I want that gem!*”

Again he looks at the three of you, and you know that he’s seeing only an image of you returning, Soul-Gem in hand. “Bring it to me and you will all go free. Fail and you will pay the penalty of your crimes . . . either in the tower itself or here. Fighter Carsten, you are the leader of the group. Filippa and Sulex are both sworn to do exactly as you ask them, nothing less. However, you may not ask them to die.

“Filippa is also a thief, but a more practiced one than you are. Her talents lie in discovering traps, appearing places before anyone—or anything—knows she’s around, and taking advantage of her small size. She is also adept with a morning star.”

The count pauses, examining the thief, and you wonder if they share a secret. Then he turns to the tall, thin man.

“Sulex is a cleric.” You look at the man again, surprised. “It’s his job to use his spell-casting powers to keep you healthy, assuming that *you* don’t fail to keep the three of you out of serious peril. Sulex, by the way, is partial to fighting with a staff.”

Again the count pauses. “However, the success—or failure—of all three of you will be on your shoulders, Carsten Soldar. I offer you two things that may be of

help to you." The count hands you a small silver box. "This box contains three magical wafers of healing. If Sulex is unable—or unavailable"—you see the cleric flinch—"to provide the necessary healing powers, you will be able to take care of yourself.

"Secondly, assuming that you succeed in getting the Soul-Gem, you may find it necessary to get out of the tower quickly." He takes another small box from the table and opens it.

"Here is a very powerful amulet. You need only grasp it to have it teleport you out of the castle—exactly where depends on how many other people you are holding on to when you grasp it." You hold out your hand.

"I'll take that!" says Flip.

"No, Carsten is responsible. He is the custodian of the amulet." And he holds the charm by its chain and drops it into your open hand.

The count glances down at some papers. "Now get out of here. The guards will see that you have supplies." Turn to **248**.

62

"Look out!" Sulex shouts. "There's a monster coming, and it's no ordinary fish—it's *evil*!" Delete Sulex's Detect Magic spell from his list of spells.

You turn to see a huge manta ray-like creature gliding straight toward you at great speed.

Will you fight the monster (**256**) or ask the cleric if he can do something to protect you (**174**)?

63

You watch, spellbound, as the fiery apparition dives at the cleric. Panic contorts his face as he tries to fight off the creature with his staff. Recovering your senses, you start to go to Sulex's aid when

another firebat emerges from the flaming pit and swoops toward Flip, blocking your path.

Roll two dice and add the result to Sulex's fighting skill score. If the total is 9 or more, turn to **122**. If it is less than 9, turn to **52**.



64

The deadly light ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll two dice. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **11**. If the number you roll is higher, turn to **32**.

65

That hole in the ceiling certainly wasn't there before!

"Where'd that hole come from?" gasps Flip.

"Hold the light up, Sulex," you order. The cleric holds his staff up high near the hole. The faint light reveals that the ceiling above your head is not the roof of the dungeon—it's the floor of what might be a whole new tower!

"We've seen both towers. This certainly isn't one of them," you muse.

"Maybe what's above us can't be seen under nor-

mal circumstances." Flip's voice sounds more serious than you've ever heard it.

"Do you mean the Ghost Tower?"

Neither the cleric nor the thief answers. They just look stricken.

"Sulex, can you use a spell to get us out of this tower?" you ask.

"No. Remember when we first reached the metal wall, I discovered that these walls are impervious to spells."

"Then I guess the only way to go is up." You peer upward through the opening. All you see is a shaft of worked stone that disappears into darkness. You think you see some metal handles sunk into the stone far above your head.

"Well, I'm pretty sure I can get up there," says Flip, looking you up and down. "But you're going to need some help, Carsten. And I guess I'm the one who'll have to give it to you." And she begins to scramble up the side of the shaft.

Now that you appear to be in the Ghost Tower itself, the words of the stable hand seem to echo in your head: "*Someone is supposed to kill you!*"

Do you trust the halfling to help you up the shaft (75) or not (130)?

66

Flip, who has to stand on her tiptoes, swings her morning star mightily at the sphere. It lands with a satisfying crunch that reflects the self-satisfied look on the little thief's face.

Suddenly her expression changes to one of alarm. Then she crumples to the floor. She has taken more damage than her small body can bear.

You will never know if Flip was your enemy, but you feel genuine sadness at the halfling's death. You

stare at her expressionless face, thankful that at least in death she can have some dignity.

Bid Filippa farewell, and if the sphere is not yet broken, return to 284, where only you and Sulex will take turns now. If Sulex is also dead, you must continue to strike the Soul-Gem alone. If the sphere was broken with Flip's final blow, turn to 89.

67

It seems best to you that the party splits up. You look at Flip and Sulex before announcing your decision. The cleric is staring in awe at the giant, ignoring his staff on the floor.

"Why don't you do something useful with your spells for a change?" asks Flip, poking the cleric.

Sulex sneers. "It seems to me that you haven't been all that successful locating traps in this evil place."

"Well . . . at least I've found *most* of them," the thief replies. She looks down at the floor and peevishly kicks Sulex's staff. It flies forward, then suddenly begins to rise in the air, heading straight toward the ceiling!

The halfling gasps. "But there's a trap I missed! Look!" She points toward the ceiling, where you see a large hole. "That wasn't there before!" As you watch, the staff disappears through the hole.

"How are we ever going to get past this place to get to the stairs?" Sulex asks.

You stand there thinking a minute. "Check for magic, Sulex," you say finally.

The cleric pulls out his holy symbol and concentrates for a moment. Finally he says, "It seems to have been created by magic, but it doesn't seem to do anything magical."

"Whatever that's supposed to mean," says Flip scathingly. "I guess I'll just have to find out for

myself." She opens her pouch and removes two small handkerchiefs. She tosses one of them toward the center of the platform and watches as it is drawn rapidly toward the hole in the ceiling. Then she tosses the second one to the left side of the platform, near the edge. The handkerchief merely lies there, undisturbed by any invisible force.

"It looks like we can walk safely along the edge," you say, relieved.

With you in the lead, the three of you start along the left edge of the central platform. You brace yourself against the unseen force, but nothing happens as you make your way slowly toward the beginning of the second set of loops.

"Wait a minute," Flip says. You watch as she picks up the second handkerchief and tosses it toward the middle of the platform. It floats to the floor and stays right where it lands. "We're safe here."

"We're not safe till we get by that giant," Sulex says.

"What if you and I walk around the outside loop while Carsten goes right up the middle and keeps the giant's attention?" Flip suggests. "Maybe Carsten could make the giant move forward after him and then we could sneak up and take him by surprise from behind." (99)

"Don't forget that I'm unarmed now, without my staff," Sulex says. "Maybe it would be better if I go up the middle, while the two of you go around the side." (338).

68

"Hello, stranger!" you call, trying to sound friendly as you step forward. The robed figure turns and holds up one hand, as if in greeting.

"Can you—" you start to say, but you stop instantly.

This is no friendly gardener—it's a medusa! The evil female figure glares at you with red, staring eyes that seem to capture your own. Snakes writhe on her head in a hissing, slithering mass. You're frozen by the evil creature's stare, and already you feel yourself turning to stone. Turn to 4.



69

You're still holding a rock from the rubble in your hands, so you raise it high overhead and hurl it with all your strength at the creature scurrying toward you. The rock narrowly misses, and now all thoughts of trying to reach your dagger are driven from your mind as the rat leaps for you and tries to sink its needlelike yellow fangs into your arm.

You may be a fighter, but you have an instinctive aversion to rats. Having one crawling right on you makes you panic. You flail out with your arms, trying to knock the creature off you. Only a tiny part of your mind is aware of the small figure that squeezes past you on the stairs. With one deft stroke of her morning star, she smashes the rat's head and then brushes the carcass off you.

"Thank you, Flip," you whisper weakly.

"Sulex, bind Carsten's wounds," she calls. You realize that the rat's teeth have torn into your arm deeply. Roll one die for damage and deduct the number you roll from your hit points, then turn to 33.

70

"Thanks for your help, Flip," you say pointedly.

The halfling flushes and replies defensively, "How was I supposed to reach those things? They were way too high for me to reach."

You shrug and say, "Just give me a hand with Sulex." From your pouch, you remove one of the healing wafers the count gave you and slip it into the cleric's mouth. In minutes, scar tissue has formed over his bloody wound, and he begins to stir. Add 5 points to Sulex's hit points.

"Look!" Sulex says suddenly. "The vial of healing potion didn't get broken. Why don't you two use it now?" The potion will repair a total of 6 hit points. You may divide it between you and Flip as you wish, but you must use all of its contents now.

Feeling somewhat better, you head toward the stairs, certain that you've met all the dangers in this misty place. But you're equally certain that more danger awaits you at the top of the stairs.

With you in the lead, the three of you quickly climb the mist-shrouded stairway. As you near the top, the mist suddenly clears. Your feet speed up the stairs.

Turn to 8.

71

Trying to recover your own balance, you reach out and grab Sulex's arm. You feel his muscles tense, and with a shudder, your own body stops falling toward the flame and the cleric manages to pull you erect.

Your feet planted firmly on the stone, you turn

toward Flip. Sulex holds one of your hands while you kneel on the path and reach for her with the other hand. You manage to pull her badly burned body back up to the path, but she has taken 6 points of damage. Subtract them from her hit points, then have Sulex use a spell to heal the halfling. Roll one die and add the number to her hit points.

Turn to 319.

72

Deciding to follow the first branch, you head straight north on a wide, clear path. You remind the others to look up as well as all around them.

"My head feels like it's spinning," complains Flip, but she's the first to spot another of the large monkeylike creatures hanging by its tail over a turn in the path up ahead. This time it has no chance to surprise you, however. When it jumps down to attack, the three of you simply step back and let it land between you. With all three of you attacking at once, the su-monster doesn't stand a chance.

You follow the path when it bends to the east and soon see a clearing up ahead. Give yourself 1 extra experience point for your alertness, then turn to 142.

73

The soft murmuring dies and Sulex's hand grows still. Then a puzzled look crosses the cleric's face, and he says the words over again, this time more loudly, making wider, more sweeping motions with his hands. It's obvious that his spell is not working.

You know it's time to kill him. But then you hear him ask plaintively, "Why didn't the spell work?"

"Maybe your gods knew I wasn't going to kill you, so they wouldn't let you kill me."

Sulex's eyes widen. "You weren't going to kill me?"

But what about Flip?"

"I was told before we started the quest that one of you was going to kill me. I thought it was Flip," you reply simply. Turn to 312.

74

"I'll go down and get the hatch open and then come back for you. Flip, you stay here with Sulex and keep an eye out for that fish."

You plunge down toward the coral, plant your feet firmly, and get a firm grip on the wheel. After a moment's resistance, it starts to turn. You hold your breath, fearing that differences in pressure on the two sides of the hatch might cause a dangerous current.

Suddenly the hatch cover opens. All you see is more water. As you swim to the surface to get Flip and Sulex, you pray desperately that the end of your quest lies through that tunnel.

"Okay, Sulex," you say. "Take a deep breath. We're going down and straight on through."

Silently, you add, "To whatever lies beyond." Turn to 28.

75

It's hard to believe that the friendly, exuberant halfling could be a murderer. Besides, you're pretty sure that the man in the stable said someone would try to murder you *after* you found the Soul-Gem.

"Here," you call up to Flip. "Grab this rope."

The little thief reaches down for the rope, then moves like a fly up the vertical shaft. When she reaches the first of the metal rungs, she calls down, "Okay, I'm tying the rope to the rung. You can walk up the wall, hanging on to the rope."

Suppressing a momentary doubt, you follow the



halfling's advice. When you're about ten feet off the ground, you have Sulex hand up his lighted staff, then pass it up to Flip. The cleric follows you up the rope, grunting and complaining.

Turn to **289**.

76

You move through the searing heat to the cleric's side, slashing out with your sword at the firebat attacking him. It turns toward you just as yet another of the fiery creatures emerges from the sea and swoops toward you. Each time one of the firebats gets close, the flame envelops you in pain. You slash wildly, not knowing how this encounter can possibly end. No matter which way you turn, there always seems to be a fiery, fanged monster clawing at you. Turn to **97**.

77

The pain that pulses through your body makes you wonder if you can even raise your sword. Perhaps there is no way to break the sphere. Perhaps you'll be here forever. You shake yourself, knowing that your mind is beginning to cloud from the pain.

Somehow you raise your arms again, holding the heavy sword firmly. Then you bring it crashing down onto the invisible shield.

Suddenly you hear a sound like glass breaking, and you see the sphere for the first time, turning into a mass of visible, fragile shards that break apart and fall to the floor.

The Soul-Gem is yours! You reach out and grasp the opaque diamond and stare at it, lying cupped in your hand. If you hadn't seen what happened to Sulex and Flip, you would never believe that souls could be imprisoned in such a beautiful stone.

Then you remember the lethal flashing light, and you know you must get out of the Ghost Tower as quickly as you can. Turn to 156.



78

You see the light flash out in sector 4, halfway around from the ghostly bodies of the halfling and the cleric. *Well, you think, at least they can't be killed again . . . but you can if you don't hurry.* Turn to 56.

79

Once more you collapse on the floor as the unexpected pain seems to drive nails into your legs. Then the blue square turns cold white. The thought that you might have to suffer such pain every step of the way across is more than you can bear. Deduct 1 point of damage from your hit point total.

The only thing you can do differently is to move diagonally to the green square (191) or try to leap ahead to the yellow one, two squares ahead (101).

80

The rock creature leaps toward you, its needle-sharp teeth bared to bite. You hurl the rock you're holding at it, but it merely bounces off the creature's back.



However, the blow slows it down enough to give you time to draw your dagger.

You stab again and again at the rocklike creature, but its hide is too tough to penetrate. Finally you duck low and thrust again, this time twisting your hand to come up from the underside. You breathe a sigh of relief as the weapon easily enters its soft underbelly.

The beast makes one last lunge toward you, but a final thrust to its belly finishes it off. As you examine its carcass, you can hardly distinguish its lifeless form from the surrounding rock. Turn to 51.

81

"Guards!" you hear the count call out behind you. You land safely on a grassy surface, and there, where you saw him before you left on the quest, a stable hand is just beginning to unsaddle a sleek black horse.

You push the groom aside and leap into the saddle. But the stable hand had completed more of his task than you anticipated, and the loosened saddle slips around the horse's body, dumping you to the ground.

Stunned, you try to get up and run, but the count's guards loom over you, ready to plunge their halberds into you. You hear the count's cruel laugh as he removes the Soul-Gem from your pouch.

82

Angered by the flailing staff of the cleric, the fearsome creatures dive as one toward Sulex. Gripping his staff tightly, he makes a wide, sweeping swing at the pteranodons. The staff strikes one in its skinny neck, breaking it instantly. As the dying beast falls, its razor-sharp beak brushes the other creature, cutting a streak of blood across its breast.

The beast with the broken neck drops to the ground as the other tries to get away, but Sulex swipes at it again, driving it, too, to the ground. You lunge at it with your sword, putting an end to its struggles.

"Well done, Sulex!" you exclaim. You see pride fill his face, undiminished by Flip's caustic, "Pure dumb luck!" Turn to 70.



83

You draw your sword and say quietly, "The Soul-Gem will never be yours." Then you turn and leap out

the open window. Add your dexterity skill score and your remaining experience points together. Then roll one die. If the total is greater than the die roll, turn to 345. If it is less, turn to 81.

84

In horror, you see the snake's sharp fangs enter Sul-ex's forehead before the reptile is dragged to the ground with the dying medusa. Writhing from the pain of the venom, Sulex falls across the brown-robed figure.

"Do something!" cries Flip. "You weren't supposed to let either of us die!" If you have a magical healing wafer left, turn to 110. If you have already used all of them, turn to 139.

85

Very carefully, you start to remove some of the rock, worried that at any moment it may start to slide again. But the work progresses smoothly, though not as fast as before.

Finally you see open sky above you. If you're in the east tower, turn to 146. If you're in the west tower, turn to 3.

86

You hesitate as the thought of fighting the count flits through your mind. Your hesitation is just long enough for the count to draw his sword and hold it to your neck.

"If you have plans for anything except giving me the Soul-Gem, I suggest you reconsider them," he snarls.

As he holds the blade with its point digging into your skin, he uses his other hand to open your pouch and remove the huge diamond.

"Guards!" he calls. Two men armed with halberds enter, and the count orders, "Take this man back to the dungeon. I'll decide what to do with him later."

As you are pulled from the room, headed back to where you started this strange, horrifying adventure, you see a terrible gleam in the count's eyes as he caresses the evil Soul-Gem, and you wonder what unspeakable evils he is contemplating.

87

Flip stiffens her small body, hesitates, and then steps straight forward. Nothing happens, and you see her muscles relax. She marches straight to the wall where the door is, looking down as she goes to watch the squares turn white as she crosses them.

If Sulex has already moved, turn to **269**. If he hasn't and you aren't sure how he should move, turn to **55**. If you think you know why Flip got across safely and how Sulex could, turn to **201**.

88

By sheer weight alone, the creature appears to be smothering the smaller halfling. You see her try to roll out from under it, but the su-monster digs its claws into her flesh and Flip stops instantly.

Roll one die for damage and deduct the roll from Flip's hit points. Then rush to her aid (**30**).

89

With one final blow to the invisible sphere, it suddenly becomes visible. You see a large crystal sphere crisscrossed with a million cracks. As you stare, the sphere suddenly disintegrates.

With no time for deliberation, you reach out and grab the Soul-Gem. Now there is nothing keeping you from your goal.

The fabulous gem lies there in your cupped palm, looking strangely innocent in its opaque beauty. You wonder just how many souls are imprisoned in its midst, and you thank the gods that you aren't among them. You wonder if you should escape while you still can.

If you are alone now, turn to 156. If just you and Flip have survived, turn to 252. If only you and Sulex have managed to stay alive, turn to 331. If all three of you are still alive, turn to 342.



90

You tie one end of the rope securely to a large stone. Then, moving close to the edge of the platform, you give the stone a mighty heave. With a thud, the stone lands on the stone platform, leaving the rope dangling into the fiery sea. Quickly you pull it taut and anchor the other end to the largest rock you see.

"I'll go first—I'm lightest. Then Sulex," says Flip, grabbing hold of the rope.

“Wait!” exclaims Sulex. “Look!” You see that the part of the rope that dipped into the flames is on fire. Even as you watch, the flame spreads toward you and you see fibers begin to part. Turn to **195** and make another decision.

91

Having moved once without harm, Flip steps rather nonchalantly one square to her left, and nothing happens except that the gray square turns bright white when she steps on it.

Now she can either go forward onto a yellow square (**149**), diagonally onto a gray one (**165**), or toward you onto a blue square (**301**).

92

Moving as quietly as you can so as not to disturb the figure in the garden, you walk into the clearing. You notice that there are two other paths heading out of the clearing from the other side, so you still don't know where to go.

If you want to send Flip and Sulex to investigate the paths, turn to **320**. If you think it would be better for you to stick together, turn to **198**.

93

The two pteranodons seem to swoop and dive as one, as if they were linked together somehow. That makes them difficult to hit, but you realize it also means that one skillfully placed stroke might get them both.

You watch them for a moment as they swoop toward you. At the last minute, you duck. Then, timing your stroke carefully, you leap out and swing your sword with a long sweeping motion.

For a moment, the pteranodons fly on, and you

think you've missed them somehow. Then, as if still linked together, the two pteranodons fall to the ground, blood soaking their scaly breasts. Turn to **70**.

94

The ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll one die to make a saving throw. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **20**. If it is higher, turn to **203**.

95

Sulex freezes for a second as the screaming su-monster lands on top of him, but then he swings his staff upward suddenly. The end of the staff jabs the creature hard in the abdomen.

"Again!" you shout. The cleric pulls the staff back slightly, then sends it zinging into the monster's stomach a second time. The su-monster clings protectively to the end of the staff, trying to keep from being hurt, and is lifted right off Sulex's shoulder. Quickly Sulex flips the staff forward, dumping the beast on the ground. The cleric jabs at the beast again and again, until it lies motionless. Turn to **35**.

96

"Watch out! Giant spiders!" you shout. The large, hairy black creatures seem to appear on all sides, as if from solid stone.

"They're poisonous!" shrieks Sulex.

Your mind racing, you remember that halflings have a resistance to poison. "Take him, Flip!" you order, slipping down so the halfling can get past you.

Roll two dice and add Flip's fighting skill score to the result. If the total is 9 or more, turn to **194**. If it is less than 9, turn to **270**.

97

Suddenly the firebat attacking you flares into a ball of flame and disappears before your eyes. Then the same thing happens to the second one. You feel comparative coolness replace the searing fires.

Sulex is kneeling precariously on the edge of the stone platform, praying fervently to his gods. As relief floods over you and eases the pain of your burns, the cleric rises and smiles at you. "I knew my gods could dispel those evil creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire, but I needed time to pray. You gave me that time. Thank you."

Cross out Sulex's Dispel Evil spell, then roll one die each for damage, first for Sulex, then for Flip, then for you, and deduct the results from each of your hit points. Then turn to 134.

98

"Nothing here but two palm trees and a rock!" you exclaim. "Why would a wizard create such barren a place?"

"Don't ask. Maybe some monsters are going to appear out of the sand any moment," suggests Sulex.

Once more you scan the island and then add in a puzzled tone, "Nothing . . . simply nothing!" If it weren't for the smooth gray walls on the sides of the large chamber, it would be possible to forget you were even in the Ghost Tower. Turn to 171.

99

Flip and Sulex step onto the narrow stone causeway. You can see the giant's eyes following each step they make as he picks up another boulder.

Deciding that it's time to draw the giant's attention, you step forward. "Hey there," you shout. "Why don't you pick on someone your own size?"

The giant turns toward you, and you can feel his dark red eyes looking you up and down. Suddenly he tilts his head back and begins to laugh uproariously.

A glance toward Sulex and Flip shows that they have reached the midway point around the loop. You've *got* to keep the giant from noticing them!

You draw your sword and slash it challengingly through the air, then call out, "Is that big sword of yours for show or for fighting!"

The giant roars and draws his huge iron sword. Even at this distance, it looks fearfully large. The giant begins to lumber toward you, and you realize that you could be trapped alone out here on the platform.

You dash to the the giant's right, toward the back of the stone platform. The giant is almost upon you now, and he holds his huge sword ready to swing. You realize you have no place to retreat to. Your only chance is to leap over the blade when he swings.

Before you roll one die, decide if you want to spend any experience points. If you do, add your experience point(s) and the roll of the die to your dexterity skill score. If the total is 6 or more, turn to **272**. If it is less than 6, turn to **123**.

100

The monkeylike creature deflects your blade from its course, and it merely glances off its shoulder. You feel the su-monster's claws enter your neck. The pain makes your head spin, but you manage to gasp, "Flip, bash it over the head with your morning star!"

The halfling stumbles toward you, her weapon raised. The su-monster clutches you again, and you thrash around desperately, trying to relieve the pressure of the needle-sharp claws on your neck.

Roll one die to see if Flip hits the creature or if,

because of your thrashing, she hits you instead. If you roll an odd number, turn to **18**. If you roll an even number, turn to **332**.

101

For once glad to have long legs, you leap from the square where you're standing all the way to the yellow one, two squares ahead.

As you land, a shattering pain shoots up your legs. You crumple to the floor and lie there a moment until the square turns white and the pain eases. Deduct 1 point of damage from your hit points.

Shaking your head to clear it, you think, *I've gone straight ahead three times now, and I've been hurt each time. I must have to go diagonally!*

Without waiting to second-guess yourself, you step diagonally onto a blue square. You almost collapse again—but this time with relief. Nothing happens, except that the square blinks white. Turn to **240**.

102

For a moment, the giant looks puzzled. Then a look of terror spreads across his face, and he begins to lumber down the platform past the cleric. When he reaches the place where Sulex's staff disappeared, he suddenly shoots straight upward. Cross out Sulex's Command spell (Flee).

The giant lets out a loud bellow as he struggles against the inexorable force lifting him toward the hole. But his struggling makes him miss the hole! He strikes the ceiling next to it with incredible force, knocking him unconscious. And there he stays, pinned in place by the invisible force, as the three of you gather at the western end of the chamber. Shaking your heads in wonder, you turn toward the stone sarcophagus and the stairway. Turn to **29**.

At first the task seems insurmountable. But then Flip finds a large, flat rock to stand on and wedges her back under the slab. With the added leverage, the three of you are able to raise it enough for the cleric to thrust his staff underneath the huge stone.

Using the staff as a lever, Sulex is able to work the huge slab to the side. Finally it falls to the floor with an impact that shakes the chamber walls. The vast stone coffin is empty except for fifteen gold coins, a black, carved scroll case, and a strange, flat, curved metal bar with rounded ends. The thief takes the coins, the cleric takes the scroll case, and you are left with the metal bar. But just as you are about to leave, you see another object in the shadows of the tomb. It's a shallow silver box with a very shiny surface. It's empty, but you stash it in your pouch anyway.

"What's the scroll?" you ask Sulex.

The cleric opens the case and unrolls the scroll. "Oh, it's a spell of protection . . . against petrification."

The halfling's eyes open wide. "Do you suppose we'll need it?" she asks, horror in her voice.

"Let's hope not," you reply. Turn to 170.

You swim furiously toward the island, glancing back occasionally to be sure the fish isn't following you. As you swim, you catch a glimpse of the hole in the ceiling through which you entered this world of water and wonder, again, how you are ever going to get out.

The three of you reach the island safely, with no further sign of the fish. Exhausted, you collapse on the sand. After a short time, you sit back up to take a look around. Turn to 98.

105

You see the brilliant light flash in another sector of the chamber and breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that if the beam ever struck you, you would probably not live to tell the tale.

If this is the second flash you've seen, turn to **31**. If it is the third, turn to **284**.

106

You tie one end of the rope securely to a large stone. Then, moving as close to the edge of the platform as you dare, you give the stone a mighty heave. It drops into the fiery sea several feet short of the central platform.

You realize that there's no way you're going to get across the gap with the rope. You'll *have* to go around. As you turn to study the loops, you stop, stunned. Rising from the fiery sea and swooping by you, heading straight toward Sulex, is a flaming batlike form. You feel the dreadful heat as the creature passes. Ruefully you realize you must have disturbed its lair with the stone. Turn to **63**.

107

You are in sector 6, ready to try to break the invisible sphere, when the unbearably dazzling light flashes out again. Roll a single die. If you get a 1, turn to **209**; 2, **315**; 3, **181**; 4, **78**; 5, **131**; 6, **17**.

108

"Come on, Sulex. We've got to get out of here."

The cleric ignores you as he opens his pouch and removes what looks like a small straight piece of iron. Then he turns toward you, an expression of sadness in his eyes, and makes some small motions with the piece of iron as he murmurs some strange words.



Roll two dice and add the result to the cleric's wisdom skill points. If the total is 10 or more, turn to **207**. If it is less than 10, turn to **325**.

109

"I'll try diagonal this time," Sulex says as he moves one square diagonally. Nothing happens, except that the square blinks white.

"I'm sticking with a sure thing," he says, and he walks a zigzag pattern across the room, from gray square to gray square, ending up on the right-hand side of the statue.

"Boy, are you the lucky one," exclaims Flip. "You had almost no trouble at all getting across the room."

A flicker of an expression of superiority crosses the cleric's face, but he says nothing.

If you think you know how to move across the room safely, turn to **201**. If you aren't sure, turn to **269**.

110

"I can't let Sulex die!" you say fervently.

Quickly you pull from your pouch one of the magical healing wafers that the count gave you. Kneeling, you force the wafer between Sulex's gray lips and then start to pray.

You open your eyes again when the figure beneath your fingers begins to stir.

"He's alive!" breathes the halfling. You smile at how different she sounds from the usual insults she heaps on the cleric. As Sulex rises to his feet, add 4 hit points to his total and turn to **343**.

111

You wish you could send Sulex and Flip below while you fight the ixitxachitl, but Sulex didn't have any of the Potion of Water Breathing and Flip is too

small to open the hatch by herself. You'll have to go open it yourself, then come back for Sulex.

"Do the best you can," you say. "I'll be right back up. Maybe you can think of some spell to use, Sulex." Turn to 7.

112

You've heard that these ancient flying reptiles can swoop and dive at lightning speed, impaling their enemies on their long, pointed beaks. You see instantly that Flip's morning star won't be of much use. It's up to you!

Roll two dice and add the number to your fighting skill score. If the total is 12 or more, turn to **93**. If it is less than 12, turn to **214**.

113

Once more the creature charges, this time between you and Flip. Like you, she and Sulex, who is by your side, try to ignore the pain of the magically caused wounds. But it's no use—the pain is too intense.

Movement by movement, the monster overwhelms the three of you. In a brief moment of clarity breaking through the haze of pain, you remember the Potion of Water Breathing you drank, and you dive deep. But to your dismay, you discover the effects of the potion have worn off during the struggle, and you have no strength left to keep from drowning.

114

Before you can even ask, Sulex begins to commune with his gods, asking for their help with a spell to counteract the magic that binds the beads.

Roll two dice and add the result to Sulex's wisdom skill score. If the total is 10 or more, turn to **215**. If it is less than 10, turn to **126**.

115

You are in sector 6, near the ladder. Suddenly a dazzling ray of light flashes out. Roll a single die. If you roll a 1, turn to **129**; 2, **298**; 3, **197**; 4, **166**; 5, **105**; 6, **189**. If Flip and Sulex have moved into sector 4 and you roll a 4, turn to **246**.

116

The cleric stands there looking chagrined at the failure of his spell.

Next to you on the causeway, Flip murmurs, "Some help he is!"

"Shh!" you reply. Then you hurry to the central platform and say to Sulex, "It's all right, Sulex. You go with Flip, and I'll try to keep the giant busy while you go around the side."

The cleric starts to object, still hoping to prove the usefulness of his spell, but you send him out onto the causeway and turn to face the giant, who has been watching with growing amusement. Turn to **99**.

117

The three of you dart about blindly in the thick mist as the sphinxlike creature dives at you. You know that just one blow from its heavy wing could knock you flat, but even more you fear the thought of its thick, evil beak piercing your skin!

"Let's trick it!" you shout. "Sulex, be ready to drop to the ground when it approaches next time!"

The cleric looks apprehensive but does as you say. When the monster swoops from above, Sulex falls onto the rough ground, looking like easy prey. The creature swoops low to attack with its massive paws, and you thrust upward with your sword. At the same time, Flip smashes it over the head with a violent blow of her morning star.

The fearsome hieracosphinx flutters weakly once, then falls dead at your feet. You realize suddenly that Sulex isn't moving. You think he's been hurt until you realize that his lips are moving in fervent thanks to his deity. Turn to **249**.

118

Just as the snake lashes out, Sulex turns to the side, and the snake's fangs strike his leather armor instead of his head.

With a sigh of relief, you stare at the body of the medusa on the ground. You realize that you've got to stop expecting to find friends in this evil place and be on your guard at all times. Turn to **343**.

119

You squeeze through the opening and turn your eyes to the open courtyard. It's huge, easily large enough to hold a jousting tournament, but you doubt that such a happy event has ever been staged here. This is a place of shadows and evil. Footprints you don't recognize and long, slithering trails mark the dirt.

The courtyard forms a long oval shape, with a tower at each end of the oval. The crenellations on the top of each tower are broken away, so that jagged edges pierce the sky. You see a door at the base of each tower. But of that other tower, that ghostly apparition in the mist, you see nothing. You notice, however, that no grass grows in a huge barren circle in the center of the courtyard, and the probable significance of this sends shivers up your spine. . . .

A glance back down the path shows that the guards are still there, so you appear to have only one choice to make—between the east tower (**266**) and the west tower (**172**).

You decide to take the most direct route—straight across the sea of flames to the central platform.

“Who has something heavy?” you ask. No one answers, so you start looking around. All you see are some broken chunks of stone lying on the platform.

You know it’s going to take a mighty big stone to anchor the rope . . . and also a mighty big heave! To see if you can do it, roll one die and add it to your strength skill score. If the total is 7 or more, turn to **90**. If it’s less than 7, turn to **106**.

121

You stand there fearfully, your eyes looking down and everything in you telling you to run, as the brown-robed figure nears you. You hear the medusa’s soft singing change to a harsh cackle.

“So, you think you can fight against me!” she cackles. “My pretty snakes will take care of you!” You can tell that she is lunging toward you. You thrust out blindly with your sword. Enraged, she jumps back and forth, trying to trick you into letting her near you. But your sword seems to have taken on a life of its own, no longer needing your eyes to direct it.

You see two small feet appear in back of the medusa, then two larger feet. With a sharp gasp followed by a dying shriek, the medusa falls to the ground.

“Flip, Sulex! Thank you!” you shout, raising your eyes to look at them.

“It’s a good thing you sent us away,” says Flip, “or we’d probably all be goners by now.” She looks down at the dead figure of the medusa on the ground. “Whew! Look at those snakes! I sure wouldn’t want to meet up with her on a dark night.”

Turn to **343**.

The living flame swoops toward Sulex, its claws extended within inches of his face. The cleric raises one arm over his face protectively and blindly lashes out with his staff, which crashes into the firebat's head. You watch in horror, convinced that the cleric doesn't stand a chance against an enraged firebat. But suddenly the flaming creature erupts in a ball of flame that almost instantly dissipates into the air.

Relieved, you turn toward Flip. The small halfling is almost hidden by the large firebat attacking her.

Roll two dice and add the result to Flip's fighting skill score. If the total is 10 or more, turn to **216**. If it is less than 10 turn to **232**.

You crouch, ready to spring, as you watch the huge blade begin to swing toward you in a great arc. At the last instant, you leap straight up, but your foot catches on the blade and you go down with a crash.

You lie sprawled at the giant's feet, watching your own sword go skittering across the stone platform. Then you look up . . . and up . . . and up into the face of the looming giant. His red eyes burn into yours as he lets out a maniacal laugh.

Suddenly you see something else—it's Flip, headed for the giant's back, her dagger drawn! You try not to let your face reveal anything to the giant as he raises the huge sword once more to strike you.

Roll one die and add it to Flip's dexterity skill score. If the total is 7 or more, turn to **211**. If it is less, turn to **152**.

The shrieking creature lands on top of Sulex and digs its red claws into his flesh. The cleric panics and

seems unable to do anything that might help.

Roll one die for damage and deduct the roll from Sulex's hit points. Then go to his aid (30).

125

"Another gray square coming up!" Flip steps diagonally toward the statue . . . and falls to the floor in intense pain. Then the pain stops, and the square blinks white. "Darn you, Carsten!" she shrieks. Deduct 1 point of damage from Flip's hit points.

"You said you wanted to head for the door," you remind her.

Do you want to ask Flip to move again? You're sure she won't want to go diagonally again, but she could go straight ahead to a green square (145) or left to a yellow one (196). Or do you want to let Flip rest while you see what happens when Sulex moves (55)? Finally, if you think you have figured out how everyone can move safely in this room, turn to 201—but make a note of this section's number in case you have to come back to it.

126

Slowly Sulex turns back toward the curtain, makes a sweeping gesture with his hands, and murmurs some words you do not understand. You wait silently until he nods briefly toward you. "You can give it a try now," he says, "but I'm not hopeful."

You see no change whatsoever in the appearance of the bead curtain, but you decide to test it anyway. When you push against it, it gives slightly, as before, but no more.

"Sorry, Sulex."

"For some reason, known only to them, my gods, in their wisdom, still refuse to let me use this spell," the cleric says, shrugging sadly. Turn to 262.

"Sulex! Flip! Try to hold the creature off while I get to that hatch below! It's our only chance!"

You dive toward the round metal disk. You inspect it quickly, and you're relieved when you see no sign of corrosion. You pray the thing will open easily, however long it may have remained closed.

You grab the wheel and try to turn it, but your feet slip and your body swings around instead of the wheel. Suddenly a large, dark shadow falls over you. You look up and realize that the monstrous fish is directly overhead. You see two sets of legs, looking comically small in comparison to the fish, thrashing frantically in the water.

Do you want to go to the aid of Sulex and Flip (306) or continue trying to open the hatch (7)?

Looking determined and even a little angry, Sulex holds his staff high overhead, then brings it down solidly on the invisible sphere. He immediately goes pale, knowing that the solid blow will also hurt him.

Suddenly you realize that the paleness is not merely apprehension. The cleric's nerveless fingers release the staff, and it clatters to the floor. Before you can get to him, the cleric collapses, lifeless.

You will never know if Sulex was your enemy, but you have grown fond of him. You wouldn't exactly call him brave, but you know he always tried his best. You pray that his gods will be kind to him. He's beyond any healing potion now.

Bid Sulex farewell, and if the invisible sphere is not yet broken, return to 284, where only you and Flip will take turns now. If Flip is also dead, you must continue to strike the Soul-Gem alone. If Sulex broke the sphere with his final blow, turn to 89.

Just as the light flashes, Sulex and Flip poke their heads up through the opening into the new chamber. The intense beam of light strikes them both. All you can do is stand, horrified, and listen to their long, drawn-out wails. When your vision clears, you see their images, mere wisps of transparent color, stream out of their bodies toward the Soul-Gem.

As you watch, the images shrink and the screams diminish, until they touch the gem. Then a burst of radiance floods the chamber.

When the light fades, the forms of the halfling thief and the human cleric lie motionless against the top of the ladder. Their bodies and clothing have turned completely white. Even the halfling's morning star has taken on the hue of alabaster.

Your worry about who might try to kill you is over—both Flip and Sulex are dead. But now you are alone—with the Soul-Gem. Turn to **163**.

130

The words “kill you” echo inside your head, and in your mind, you see your body hurtling, broken, down the shaft.

“I’ll manage alone,” you say to Flip, and you begin to grope for handholds on the wall. The first metal rung looks a long way off.

Roll one die and add it to your dexterity skill score. If the total is 6 or more, turn to **193**. If it is less than 6, turn to **160**.

131

You see the light flash out in sector 5, almost halfway around from the bodies of the halfling and the cleric. *Well, you think, at least they can't be killed again . . . but you can if you don't hurry.* Turn to **56**.

Stepping over the su-monster's remains, you head south. You travel more slowly now, taking time to look above instead of just at ground level, but you see no more creatures lurking in the branches.

Once the path doubles back to the west, and you wonder aloud if you'll ever make any progress.

"Progress to where?" grouses Flip. "I get the feeling we're in a maze."

The path turns east again and continues straight for some distance. Finally you see a branch off to the left that appears to go north for some distance. You start to head down it (72) when Sulex says, "There's another path going north just up ahead of us. Maybe we should take that instead." (46)

After three days in a dungeon, the fresh air seems to bewitch you. Your mind simply can't tolerate the thought of going back into a dungeon! You make a swift dash to your right, heading for the woods.

Behind you, you hear the guard shout, "Hey! He's getting away!"

Then ahead of you someone else shouts, "Stop! In the name of the count, *stop!*" And out of a small shelter, which was hidden by the trees, steps another armed guard. Without weapons, you have only your rage and your desire to be free to oppose him. To see if you avoid the guard, roll two six-sided dice and add the total to your dexterity skill score. If the resulting figure is 10 or more, turn to 150. If it is less than 10, turn to 21.

"Thank you, Sulex . . . Flip," you say quietly, knowing it needs to be said but reluctant to do so. It

doesn't seem right that a cleric and a halfling thief should have to help out an experienced fighter in such a situation, but . . .

You shake your head and look around, knowing it's time to move on. You are still no closer to the stairway at the far side of the chamber. You can either split up (15) or follow one of the loops together (307).



135

"Sulex, please walk straight ahead again"—the cleric scowls at you—"but only one square this time."

"I—I can't stand pain, Carsten!"

"I know," you say soothingly, "but we've got to get out of here somehow."

"Maybe you'd like me to carry you," the halfling calls sarcastically from across the room.

You frown at her and say, "Just do what I told you, Sulex."

He sighs and steps onto the gray square. Nothing happens, except that the square blinks white.

"Maybe I always need to step onto gray squares," Sulex says thoughtfully.

"Then next you can go diagonally (109) or leap past one square to the next gray one straight ahead." (186)

"Look out! Giant rats!" you shout. You are closest to the two monsters, so it's up to you to fight them. Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If the total is 10 or more, turn to **299**. If the total is less than 10, turn to **69**.

You move quickly to Flip's side, your sword ready, just as yet another firebat emerges from the flames and attacks you. You feel its claws clamp on to your shoulder as flame rises up around your head.

Suddenly Flip screams again. Fighting to ignore the living flame around your head, you swing out wildly at the creature attacking Flip. The blow strikes the flaming creature in one wing, and it loosens its grip on her. Between the two of you, you manage to keep both bats at bay, for the moment, at least, but you don't seem to be able to kill them. Turn to **97**.

All you can do is continue to slide. You stretch your arms out in front of you for whatever protection that might offer in case you run into something.

Suddenly you realize that you're finally slowing down. In moments, you come to a gentle stop and feel your feet touch a floor. You stand up dizzily and grope around in the darkness, but you feel nothing.

"Look out below!" You step quickly to one side, just in time to avoid being hit by the halfling. She comes to a stop and rolls to one side as Sulex, still bearing his lighted staff, follows.

"We figured that we've got a stake in this quest now," says Flip, "so we'd better go where you go." She glares at Sulex. "It took a little discussion, though."

"You didn't have to kick me!" growls Sulex.

Hiding a smile, you look around in the light from Sulex's staff at your new surroundings. You're in a stone tunnel about ten feet wide. To your right, the tunnel appears to open up into a chamber. To your left, the tunnel continues.

"Come with me a minute," you say to Sulex. You explore off to your right and discover a circular chamber with a spiral staircase leading up in the center of it. You wonder if you would have ended up in this same chamber if you had chosen to walk down the stairs after entering the tower. Smiling ruefully, you head back to the stone tunnel. Turn to 300.

139

"There's—there's nothing I can do for him, Flip," you say sadly. "We've already used up the special healing wafers the count gave me."

Suddenly a small bundle of fury leaps through the air at you. You feel the halfling's dagger enter your right shoulder. You try to lash out with your own dagger, but the cut in your shoulder has left your arm without feeling, and the dagger falls, useless, to the ground. Now you can't fight—you can only die.

Oddly, your last thought is that the stable hand was wrong. Flip didn't wait until you found the Soul-Gem before killing you. . . .

140

Leading your party once more, you head in the direction where Flip thought she detected a heat source. You creep silently over the mist-shrouded, barren rock until finally Flip says, "We're getting close to something—a nest or lair or whatever. And there seems to be a column of some kind near it. Hey, maybe it's another stair—"

Flip is interrupted by a shriek that fills the air



around you, followed by the rhythmic thrum of powerful wings. A great dark shape emerges from the mist, heading right toward you! It's a giant hawk-headed beast, like a lion with wings. You know it would take all three of you to fight the creature (164), but it seems to radiate such evil that maybe the cleric should do what he can (242).

141

Ignoring Sulex, you move toward one of the walls, reaching out to feel it with your fingers. Suddenly you are knocked to the floor by a violent force that seems to come from nowhere. Colors swirl before your eyes, and you feel your stomach churn. As the colors and pressure stop, you see that a large hole has opened up in the ceiling and realize that you have been injured. Roll one die for damage and deduct the roll from your hit points, then turn to 65.

142

As you approach the clearing, you see a figure in a brown robe tending what appears to be a garden of roses. The figure is humming gently as it works, and you feel pleasantly surprised to see something familiar in this strange place.

"Oh, good," says Flip. "I was beginning to wonder if we'd ever see anyone else."

"What makes you think we'll find someone friendly in this diabolical place?" Sulex asks.

"We aren't going to find out arguing among ourselves. Let's talk to him," suggests Flip (68).

"What makes you think it's a him instead of an it?" asks Sulex. "I say let's attack from behind." (225)

"Or we could explore the clearing quietly for a bit before he sees us," you add, trying to strike a compromise (92).

"Yellow is my favorite color—I think," the halfling says as she steps diagonally onto the yellow square. But her face contorts with a gasp of pain as she collapses onto the floor. Then you see the grimace on her face ease as the square blinks white. Deduct 1 point of damage from Flip's hit points.

"I'm sorry, Flip," you say quietly.

"When I went straight, it was okay. When I went diagonally, it wasn't. I think I'll go straight. And if you don't mind, I think I'll get this over with. I'll aim for that green square, two squares ahead."

You can agree to Flip's suggestion (145) or ask her to move to the gray square to the left of the yellow one she's on (340). If you think you know how to move safely in this room, turn to 201—but note this section's number in case you have to come back to it.

Sulex swings his staff in a ferocious gesture, but it impacts only with the air and the momentum pulls him to the ground. The creatures sweep toward him, beaks poised to impale him. You recover from your own stumble and leap to protect the cleric with your sword. As they dive at him, you make two angry slashes with your blade. The pteranodons fall across the cleric, heads almost severed from their bodies.

But in their fall, one creature's beak stabs Sulex in the shoulder. Roll one die for damage and deduct the number rolled from the cleric's hit points.

Take a deep breath, enjoying the sudden quiet, and go to help Sulex. Then turn to 70.

Your heart in your mouth, you watch Flip move to the green square as if defying it to hurt her. When

nothing happens, she marches straight ahead onto a gray square, then a blue, and finally onto the last gray square. Each square turns white as she steps on it. At the far wall, she turns and walks toward the statue.

The halfling gives a shout of triumph and calls back, "Okay. Who's next?"

If Sulex hasn't moved yet, turn to **55**. If he has, turn to **269**. If you think you have figured out how to move safely in this room, turn to **201**—but make a note of this section's number in case you have to come back.

146

This time, you're not about to take any chances. You draw your sword as you climb the final steps. Finally you round the last bend in the stairs, and from the light of Sulex's staff behind you, you see . . . nothing. All that work was just a waste of effort.

Sighing, you retrace your path down the stairway and say, "Nothing there. Let's head back down."

You follow the thief and the cleric down the spiral stairs. Reaching the landing where you entered the tower, you consider for a moment going back out into the main courtyard, but you know your only other choice there would be to enter a tower that appears to be just like this one. Turn to **155**.

147

The fierce sphinxlike creature swoops down, swiping at each of you with its massive paws. Flip tries to leap into the air to strike it with her morning star, but she can't manage to leap high enough.

Sulex strikes again and again with his staff, but to no avail. Finally his weapon strikes a rock after he misses, and his staff snaps in two. He quickly starts to pray to his gods for assistance, but the creature

pounces on him, mauling the helpless cleric.

As you rush to help Sulex, the beast reaches out one massive paw and rakes you with its claws. You drop to your knees, clutching your face in your hands, only to feel the beast's sharp beak enter your neck.

As you contemplate the end, you know that your commands can no longer hurt or help Flip and Sulex. Your last regret is that you never learned whether one of them would have tried to kill you or not. . . .

148

The halfling rolls agilely out from under the creature, receiving only a few slight scratches from its claws. The su-monster tries to leap at her, but she forms herself into a ball and rolls forward, then springs to her feet, so that she is above it with her dagger poised. She plunges her dagger into it again and again, until the creature lies dead before her.

"Well done!" you exclaim. Turn to 35.

149

"Maybe it's moving from gray to gray that's the problem, Flip. Try going forward."

Not anxious to be hurt again, the halfling edges forward cautiously onto the yellow square. But all that happens is that the square blinks white.

"I think I'll stay away from gray squares altogether," Flip says firmly. "I'm going to try to leap ahead two squares to the green one." You can agree to that (145) or ask her to move to the gray square one to the left of the yellow one she's on (340).

150

You see the guard before you thrust his sword out to the side to try to trip you. He clearly has orders not to injure you, and that renews your hope. Taking him

completely by surprise, you charge directly at him and butt him in the stomach with your head. Over he goes, while you charge on into the woods.

Although the search continues for hours, you manage to avoid your pursuers. Now all you have to do is *not* go to Garthrast in the near future, since the count knows you are expected there.

Congratulations on getting away safely. However, when you play this adventure again, do not give yourself extra experience points, because all you have learned is to be less quick to try to return to their owners fat purses left lying in the sun.

151

"We probably should investigate it," you say.

"It's going to be awfully hard to turn *that* stone," says Flip as she approaches the sarcophagus.

The sarcophagus stands higher than the thief's head. The stone slab that lies across the top appears to be about six inches thick.

"Maybe we can push it off," you say, thinking aloud. "Let's give it a try."

The three of you position yourselves on one end of the gigantic stone coffin and try to push the huge slab sideways, but it refuses to budge. Then Flip suggests, "How about if we all push up on it while Sulex shoves his staff under it to use as a lever?"

Add your strength skill score to Flip's strength score. Sulex's meager strength does not count. Then roll one die. If the total is 8 or more, turn to **103**. If it is less than 8, turn to **339**.

152

Flip springs onto the giant's back, stabbing as she leaps. But she fails to get a good grip with her other arm and legs, and she slides to the floor, her dagger

slashing a thin red line in the giant's skin as she falls. The giant spins around in anger, but Flip hurriedly rolls away from him, giving you time to leap to your feet and retrieve your sword. Turn to **228**.

153

You are in sector 4, ready to try to break the invisible sphere, when the unbearably dazzling light flashes out again. Roll a single die. If you get a 1, turn to **209**; 2, **315**; 3, **181**; 4, **168**; 5, **131**; 6, **23**.

154

"Let's explore where it's safe, first," you say, turning toward the east.

Soon the rocks become larger and rougher than they were at first, severely hampering your progress.

To see if you can get through them safely, roll one die and add it to your dexterity skill score. If the total is 5 or more, turn to **296**. If it is less, turn to **190**.

155

"Down it is," you say with a sigh. You fear that the stairs going down will lead to a dungeon, and having spent the last three days in a dungeon, you don't really care to enter one again. However, you don't seem to have a great deal of choice at this point.

"Why don't you go first with your lighted staff?" says Flip to Sulex. There's a commanding sound to her voice that you're certain has irritated the cleric.

"If that is the wish of our party's leader," he says testily, eyeing you.

You nod and, holding his staff at a downward angle in front of him, the cleric follows the spiral stairway downward, his other hand tightly grasping the iron post around which the stair turns. You watch as he brushes aside cobwebs as he descends, with you

following him and Flip bringing up the rear.

Soon you notice that the light has stopped, and you discover that Sulex has stepped off the staircase onto the stone floor of a large circular chamber.

The chamber looks like the floor above—empty, dusty, and dry—except for an opening at one side. You also notice, with relief, that there are no footprints in the dust. Sulex's light doesn't reveal whether the opening leads into a corridor or another room.

"So what now?" asks Flip, and you realize that she isn't going to help you make decisions at all.

After a moment's thought, you decide that you can explore this seemingly empty chamber for traps (219) or head for the opening (295) .

156

You pull the amulet from your tunic and cover it with your hand. You feel a rush of air and a strange change in the pressure, which forces you to close your eyes. In a few minutes, the strangeness stops. You release the amulet and open your eyes.

"Well, this is a pleasant surprise!" says a sardonic voice.

You are standing on the same carpet you left . . . how long ago? Count Lasson sits before you at the same polished table.

"Where are the thief and the cleric?"

"They were . . . left behind in the tower," you reply bluntly.

"But they were supposed—" He pauses, and you know he can conceal his eager curiosity no longer.

"Do you have the Soul-Gem?"

"Yes, I have it," you reply, backing away.

"Then give it to me!" the count demands. A look of excitement crosses his face, and you know that he has terrible plans for the stone. And you know, too,

that you'll never be responsible for giving it to him.

You can try to flee if you have at least 4 hit points left (83). If you are not strong enough to flee, turn to 86.



157

The huge fishlike creature circles around the three of you in the water, almost as it were herding you. Diving under the water, you decide to try to come up underneath the creature. You recognize the cleric's legs above as he tries to jab at it with his staff. You see Flip try to use her morning star, but it is useless in the water, and she switches to her dagger.

You come up under the creature's belly and stab again and again, but your blade merely glances off the creature's tough skin. Gasping, you surface for air . . . only to find the creature heading straight toward you. Frozen by fear, you watch as the fish opens its mouth, revealing sharp, pointed teeth.

Wrenching your body around, you throw yourself frantically off to the side. The leviathan turns abruptly and follows you. With a strength you've never dreamed you had, you swim toward the island, but of course the fish is faster. You feel its teeth clamp down on your leg, and the monster tosses you high in the air. You splash down on something hard, and you're sure that this is the end. Then your fingers

scrape wet sand, and you realize that the creature has tossed you up onto the beach of the island! And there, not ten feet away, you see Flip and Sulex. They must have made it to the island while the creature was attacking you. Gratefully you join them on the sand and take a look around. Turn to **98**.

158

When you stepped onto the gray square you're on now you were hurt, so you hesitate to go diagonally onto another gray one. On the other hand, your first move was from green to gray, so maybe a move from gray to gray will be okay.

You step diagonally onto the gray square, and there is no pain, just the sudden blinding white light as the square changes color. Turn to **240**.

159

Without another thought, you leap onto the count's horse, which has been grazing nearby. As you urge it into a gallop, you see two of Lasson's men running toward you. Crouching low, you urge the horse into a mighty leap, straight over their heads.

Riding hard, you don't slow your mount until you are far from the area ruled by the wicked count. But you know he will hunt you until he finds you. You have survived the dangerous quest into the Ghost Tower alive, but you didn't complete the quest that would have allowed you to go free without worry. Give yourself one extra experience point the next time you prepare to enter the deadly Ghost Tower.

160

You work your fingertips into a tiny crevice and then feel with one foot for a toehold. You can't believe your good fortune when you find one . . . and then

another. You're beginning to feel encouraged as you grope for still another one, but it isn't there. Instead, your fingers lose their grip and you crash to the floor below.

Deduct 2 points of damage from your hit points. Now you *have* to trust the halfling. Turn to 75.

161

Flip may be small and carry a small weapon, but you know she can still be lethal! You lower your sword so that she can't drop in beneath it. The halfling responds by leaping quickly to one side, hoping to get a better angle to attack you.

You turn to face her, keeping your sword moving at all times, and say, "Why, Flip? Why attack me now?"

She lunges at you as she gasps, "Because you were . . . going to . . . kill me . . . like you killed Sulex . . . by leaving him behind."

"I didn't kill Sulex—the tower did!" Then you add, "Besides, Sulex was supposed to kill me." You're finding it difficult to keep up your guard and carry on this curious conversation at the same time.

"We were told that you would try to kill us!" Then she adds, "And now Sulex is dead!" She leaps at you again, but somehow you have the feeling her heart is not really in the battle.

You decide to take a chance, perhaps the last one you'll ever take. You step back and turn your sword down to the ground, leaving your whole body exposed to the halfling. She lunges, her stiletto aimed right at your heart . . . then turns aside just at the last second. As she recovers her balance, she turns a surprised face to yours and asks, "We were each supposed to kill the other?"

"That's right."

"Then no one would know that Count Lasson has

the Soul-Gem. He could use it however he wanted."

"That's right."

She lowers her dagger and steps back, acknowledging the end of the duel. "So what do we do with the Soul-Gem now that we have it?"

You pat your pouch, where the hard-won Soul-Gem is safely stored. "Let's get away from here first. Then maybe together we can find a powerful good wizard who can release the souls trapped in the gem."

Flip holds out her hand to shake yours and says, "Now, that's a quest worth pursuing!"

162

"Listen to me, will you?" you shout back. "I did NOT steal that purse. I'm a fighter, not a thief! I found that purse in the forest and was trying to find out who lost it when your men—"

"*Enough!*" The count's shrill cry interrupts you. "Theft from your liege is punishable by death!"

You gasp, astonished that what you thought was a mere misunderstanding has reached this.

Count Lasson's voice softens and takes on a sly tone. Suddenly you know that the whole point of this strange interview has been reached. "However, you can save yourself by taking on a mission for me. You say you're a fighter. Well, I'll forget about your theft when you've completed a task for me. I'll even provide you with help, to make your job easier."

Lasson turns toward the door you entered and calls, "Guards! Bring in the other two miscreants!" He seats himself at the table once more, saying in purring tones, "Yes, I'll even give you some help. . . ." The self-satisfied tone in his voice worries you.

"I'm expected in Garthrast by the end of the week," you say, recalling your original destination.

"You don't seem to understand, young man. You

are a thief, a thief who remains alive at my pleasure alone. You are going nowhere until I say you are."

Your heart sinks. Now you know that you have been naive. Talking to the count won't cure a thing because that's not the way he wants it to be.

Behind you, the iron door clangs open. You turn in time to see two figures thrust roughly into the room. The first appears to be no more than a girl, clad in yellow and red. As she falls to the floor, she spins around and leaps angrily to her feet. And now you see that she isn't a child. She's a halfling.

"Keep your hands to yourself!" she hisses through her teeth at the guard.

"My, oh, my!" sighs the other newcomer, spotting Lasson. "It's the count himself!"

You see a tall, thin man in a baggy leather shirt. His shoulders curve forward as if he could hunch himself into invisibility.

The halfling gives him a look of disgust, then notices you for the first time. "Well, maybe there's hope for us after all—that is, unless you're here to sell us into slavery."

"Stop the bickering and come here, all of you!" demands the count.

You turn back, wondering despite your distaste for the count what his plan for you is. The girl steps to one side of you and the man takes his place on the other side of you. You wonder why you suddenly feel trapped. Turn to **239**.

163

You stand there, horrified, questions tumbling through your mind. What if the light had struck you instead of your companions? Do you dare try to touch the gem now? Will that appalling light flash again?

Gradually your mind focuses on just one question:

Do you dare just use the amulet and leave?

Your first thought is to pull the amulet out from under your tunic and get out as quickly as possible. You start to pull on the chain, then stop. If you leave now, the amulet will probably take you outside, where the count's men are sure to be waiting. And even if you do manage to get away, the count can have you charged with theft, even murder—you'll never be free!

If you want to use the amulet and leave now, before that deadly light beams again, turn to **282**. If you are willing to stay and try to complete your quest and get the gem, turn to **278**.

164

Once more the ferocious creature swoops toward you, its sharp talons extended. The three of you ready your weapons—you your sword, Flip her morning star, and Sulex his staff. Roll two dice and add the roll to the sum of all three of your fighting skill scores. If the total is 16 or more, turn to **117**. If it is less than 16, turn to **147**.

165

"Flip, would you try it one more time? Just move diagonally to the gray square."

The halfling scowls darkly but obeys. Again she falls in pain, which eases as the white light blinks on. Deduct 1 point of damage from Flip's total number of hit points.

"No more diagonals, I promise you, Flip," you say firmly.

"But how do you know that I won't get hurt no matter what way I go?"

"I don't," you admit, trying to plan the next move. You can ask her to go straight ahead to the yellow

square (87) or sideways to the green one (241). Or you can let her rest while you have Sulex experiment (55). Finally, if you think you know how to move safely in this room, turn to 201—but make note of this section's number in case you have to come back.

166

You see the brilliant light flash in another sector of the chamber and breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that if the beam ever struck you, you probably would not live to tell the tale.

If this is the second flash you've seen, turn to 31. If it is the third, turn to 284.

167

As Sulex holds his light near the rubble pile, you say, "Come on. I think we can move this without too much trouble."

"'We'?" echoes Sulex. "I don't go much for physical labor."

Great! you think. *Just what I need—a trouble-maker.* Your mouth tightens in rising anger.

Flip looks from Sulex to you, shrugs, and says, "You're the boss," and she starts to force a mortar-encrusted rock from the rubble.

You flash the halfling a brief smile of thanks. Then the cleric pushes past you and starts to dig in the rubble beside her.

After nearly an hour of concentrated effort, you suddenly feel air coming through the rubble. "I think we've done it!" you shout excitedly. But then something black and alive and vicious begins to push its way through the opening.

Roll two dice. If you get 2 through 6, turn to 136. If you roll 7 or 8, turn to 96. If you get 9 or more, turn to 16.

168

The deadly light ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll two dice. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **11**. If the number you roll is higher, turn to **32**.

169

With relief, you feel your dagger sink into the bone of the su-monster's chest. The creature's fearsome grip around your neck relaxes, and you are able to get in another quick jab. Suddenly the creature goes limp, slides off your shoulders, and falls to the ground, dead. If this is the first su-monster you have fought, turn to **35**. If it is the second, turn to **227**.

170

You approach the door out of the chamber cautiously, knowing that you are lucky to get out alive.

"So long, fellas," Flip says saucily, waving to the statuelike bugbears. "It's been nice knowing you." But you see fear in her eyes as she looks at the monsters, fear of what might have been.

Once more you find yourself walking down a plain stone passage, with no doors or other features. . . . Turn to **255**.

171

"There's *got* to be something here!" you say vehemently. "That evil wizard didn't put this island here just for the heck of it!"

You walk slowly around the perimeter of the island, with Flip dogging your footsteps. Sulex just watches. You peer up into the trees again. Then finally you walk to the lone rock and stand over it, staring. You give it a push with your foot, but it

doesn't budge. Again you find it incredible to think the wizard would make an island that served no purpose. "Flip," you say, "see if there's anything unusual about this rock."

The halfling bends over the rock and explores it inch by inch. "Nothing unusual about the rock itself," she says finally. Then she starts to brush away some of the sand at its base.

"Hey, look at this!" she shouts excitedly. "This isn't real rock below the sand. There's a false base that goes down into the sand."

You call Sulex over, and the three of you dig away the sand around the false base, gradually exposing an elaborate steel latch. Flip starts to reach in when Sulex says, "Wait! It might be a trap of some kind! Maybe something is just waiting in there to get out, something put there by the wizard!"

Even Flip seems willing to listen this time. "I'll look for traps—that's what I'm trained at!"

"First I think I should try to detect magic—that's what I'm best at!" exclaims Sulex.

You look from one to the other, knowing that by making a choice, you'll offend one or the other.

Would you rather have Sulex detect magic (263) or ask Flip to look for hidden traps (318)? Or, if you're feeling brave, you can just go ahead and open the latch yourself (202).

172

You turn toward the west tower. Your eyes squint into the setting sun. You walk toward the darkness at the base, where you're sure there must be a door.

Taking a deep breath to give yourself a lasting memory of fresh air, you come to an ancient iron door. You expect to have trouble opening it, but instead it opens easily on its iron hinges. Turn to 9.

You study the wall one last time, hoping to discover some clue you've missed. But there's nothing.

"All right, Sulex. Let's go."

You approach the indentation on the left, leaving the one in the middle for Sulex. You see him praying as he turns away from the wall and backs into the indentation. You add a prayer of your own as you enter the left-hand depression.

Suddenly, just as before, metal bands pop right out from the wall—the same wall where you saw no sign of anything but stone—and encircle your wrists and ankles. You have to convince yourself, second by second, not to fight the frightening clasp of metal.

The wall begins to pivot, and you are overwhelmed by the feeling that you are about to be crushed inside the stone. Then you sense a pressure against your body and realize that the wall is moving forward. . . .

All at once, the motion stops, and you find yourself facing a huge, brightly lit square room with a floor divided up into squares of many colors. The imprisoning bands open and slide off your wrists and ankles, and you step forward, eager to be away from the gravelike indentation. Suddenly the stone beneath your feet glows with a bright, cold white light.

But before you have time to consider that, you hear Flip shout, "It's about time! I was beginning to think you weren't going to show up at all." You see her off to your right, standing on a white square.

Your eyes take in the rest of the room. It's about forty feet square. In the middle of the opposite side, facing you, is a beautiful, life-sized statue of a man wearing a jeweled crown and holding a large sword in one hand. Between you and the statue, the floor is marked off into large squares. The squares that you, Sulex, and Flip stand on are a bright white. Alternat-

ing squares throughout the chamber are of gray stone. The others are blue, green, and yellow. Otherwise the room is empty.

"What happened when you came in, Flip?" you ask.

"Nothing. But one odd thing happened. The square I'm standing on changed from gray to this bright white color."

"Let's head toward that door," you say as you take a step forward . . . and fall to your knees in excruciating pain. Immediately the square you stepped on turns bright red, as if to reflect your pain. Deduct 1 hit point of damage from your total hit points.

"Everybody stay right where you are!" you gasp. As you stand, you realize that the stone square you are on has now changed from bright red to the same glowing white as the others.

You turn first to Flip, then to Sulex. Both look worried. "We've got to try to get across this floor somehow," you say. "Will one of you try it and see if the same thing happens to you?"

"If I have a choice, I think I'll stay right where I am," Flip says dubiously. "That looked like it hurt."

"It did," you acknowledge, not relishing the idea of trying it again. Flip is a lot lighter than you are. Perhaps she should be the one to move first (243). Or, remembering that you are the leader, will you step forward again (269)?

174

The cleric already has his eyes closed, and you can tell that he's pleading fervently to his gods. He reaches out and touches you and Flip lightly.

Suddenly the ray charges. The vast span of its winglike fins seems to take up the entire sea as it zooms straight toward you.

To see if Sulex's protection spell works, roll two dice and add the result to Sulex's wisdom skill score. If the total is 9 or more, turn to **302**. If it is less than 9, turn to **34**.

175

"We may find something useful here," you say, kneeling down on the mound.

A quick search reveals a pouch of gold, a shallow silver box, and a small glass vial. Sulex sniffs the latter and says with satisfaction, "It's a potion of healing! Who needs to be—"

You hold up your hand for silence. Yes, there it is again—the deep beating of heavy wings. Once more fear wrenches your heart.

"Is there no end of foul creatures in this accursed place?" you ask aloud, not expecting an answer. You quickly thrust the gold and the shiny box into your pouch and prepare to discover what made the noise.

You turn to see two monstrous pteranodons emerge from the staircase. Their sharp beaks and gaunt, winged forms chill your very soul.

You turn to Sulex. "Do you have any spells that would work against flying creatures?" you ask quickly.

If Sulex has not used his Flamestrike spell, turn to **57**. If he has used it, turn to **112** and prepare to fight.

176

You emerge through the strange curtain and find yourself heading straight toward a large, statuelike figure. You try to dodge, but it's too late, and you smash into the figure's side, then sprawl to the ground painfully. With a roar of rage, the figure comes to life and starts to attack you! You recognize it as a bugbear, a horrible, yellow-skinned monster.



This one wears a metal helmet and wields a stout poleax.

Out of the corner of your eye, you see that there is a whole roomful of the creatures. Most remain as still as statues, as if in some sort of suspended animation, but one other bugbear has come to life and is charging toward the halfling and the cleric.

There's no time now to worry about Sulex and Flip. You must fight your enemy first. Subtract 2 hit points for the damage you suffered when you ran into the bugbear, then roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If the total is 12 or more, turn to **44**. If it is less than 12, turn to **204**.

177

"Of course!" says Flip. "Chess! And I was the rook!"

"I must have been the bishop," you say.

"And I"—you can almost see the cleric puff himself up taller—"was the king."

Now that it's all clear in your mind, you quickly reach the statue. "I hope you've got a healing spell after all that," you say to Sulex. You can't resist adding, "That is, if you're not too busy being king."

Sulex has two Cure Light Wounds spells that will each restore as many hit points as you roll on one die. One of the wafers the Count gave you will restore 4 hit points. Distribute them among the three of you as you wish. Just remember to cross both Light Wounds spells off Sulex's list of spells. Then turn to **310**.

178

Something inside you urges you to go on. You wish it wouldn't, but you have to listen.

You will need to cause a total of 20 points of damage to the sphere for it to break. Now that you have

struck it once, the sphere is moving in space and will not be so easy to hit.

To damage the sphere, first roll two dice. You will need to roll a 7 or better to strike the moving sphere. Each time you hit it, you must also roll one die for damage. That number is deducted both from the sphere's hit points and your own.

If you break the sphere (do 20 points of damage to it, including the damage already done by your first blow), turn to **77**.

If you lose all your own hit points before breaking the sphere, turn to **237**.

If you fail to hit the sphere on three successive attempts, turn to **334**.

If at any point you decide that continuing is too dangerous and you want to quit, turn to **282**.

179

You know that this man has worked long and hard to arrange first your capture for theft, and second your death, regardless of how the venture turned out. He's not going to let you get away now!

The count swiftly draws his own sword and lunges at you. But you have already anticipated his move and leap aside. In a long-practiced move, you lean toward the count's sword and almost wrap yours around his. Then, with one powerful flick, you pull the count's sword out of his hand, leaving him weaponless.

Or so you thought. The count screams loudly, "Men! Over here!" and you know that never for a minute had the count really left himself vulnerable. If the Ghost Tower didn't get you, Flip and Sulex would. If they didn't get you, the count himself would. If he couldn't, his men would.

Turn to **159**.

180

"All right," Sulex agrees. "This scheme worked a moment ago, so maybe it will work again."

He steps diagonally into a blue square, which quickly—and painlessly—becomes white. Turn to 317.

181

You see the light flash out in sector 3, almost halfway around from the ghostly bodies of the halfling and the cleric. *Well, you think, at least they can't be killed again . . . but you can if you don't hurry.* Turn to 56.

182

You stab out blindly, trying desperately not to look at the medusa. You see her feet moving this way and that as she tries to get you in range of her snakes. Finally you feel your sword enter fabric and flesh. You pull your blade free and raise it before you . . . and look straight into the medusa's eyes.

She tricked you! Instead of robe and flesh, your sword merely entered a clod of earth wrapped in a piece of the foul creature's robe. Turn to 4.

183

As you watch the rock whistle toward you, you stand mesmerized, swaying from side to side, trying to calculate where it will land. But you wait too long and step aside just a moment too late. The rock ricochets off your shoulder, knocking you off balance. You grab your shoulder in pain as you fall backward. Deduct 1 point of damage from your hit point total.

In horror, you hear a scream behind you. Trying frantically to catch your balance, you turn and see Flip landing in the fiery waves.

“Grab her, Su—” you start to shout, but again you begin to lose your balance.

Add your dexterity skill score and Sulex’s to the roll of one die. If the total is 3 through 5, turn to **37**; 6 through 7, **71**; over 7, **221**.

184

“Whew!” exclaims Flip. “Do you suppose the rest of them are going to come to life, too?” She shudders.

“Just be careful not to touch them,” you advise. “There’s the door out.” You point to the far side of the room, past more of the shadowy “statues.”

“Wait a minute, Carsten,” says Sulex. “That looks like a sarcophagus of some kind over there on the right. Maybe we should take a look at it.”

“Clerics!” exclaims Flip. “Always thinking about something connected with death!”

Sulex glares at the halfling for a moment, then looks to you for a decision.

Do you want to leave the chamber (**170**) or explore the sarcophagus (**151**)?

185

“Gather back to back in a circle!” you shout. “That way we’ll be protected on all sides!”

But as the huge beast explodes into your midst, you know your plan is hopeless. In addition to the creature’s whiplike tail and sharp teeth, you feel what seem like hundreds of tiny pins pricking your body. Pain washes over you and you know that your own ineffective thrusts with your dagger are virtually useless.

“It’s—it’s an ixitxachitl—an evil magic-user!” gasps Sulex. “It’s using a Cause Light Wounds spell!” Deduct 2 points of damage from each of you and turn to **113**.

"Sulex, try leaping across one square to the gray square two places in front of you," you suggest.

"He couldn't jump over a pebble," Flip mutters.

Sulex glares at the halfling, then flexes his knees and leaps. He lands on the gray square and falls instantly to the floor, moaning in pain. Then the square turns white and he rises slowly to his feet. Deduct 1 point of damage from Sulex's hit points.

"Let's get this over with," Sulex says. He rubs his injured legs, then starts out across the floor in a zig-zag pattern toward the statue. When he has made it across safely, he clings to the statue in relief and announces, "You'll never get me out there again!"

If you think you know how to move safely across the room, turn to **201**. If you don't, turn to **269**.

187

The staircase winds around and around as it rises through the high forest room. As you climb, you expect the air to get cooler, but instead it seems to be getting warmer.

Ahead of you, Flip suddenly stops with a gasp. "Uh-oh," she says quietly.

"What is it?" you call out.

"You'll see soon enough," she replies as she moves away from the top of the staircase. You hear Sulex gasp as he arrives at the top of the stairway.

Finally you reach the top and see for yourself what has caused the unusual reactions from your companions. Before you is what can only be described as a room full of fire. You are standing on a stone platform at one end of a circular chamber that encloses a sea of flames. The heat from the fire rises and swirls about you, making it difficult to breathe.

The platform rises only a few feet above the top of

the flames. It is irregularly shaped, some twenty feet wide and jutting about thirty feet into the strange room. The platform has several chunks of broken rock on it. From each side of the front of the platform, a narrow stone path loops out over the flames toward the outer wall of the chamber, then comes back again to a similar stone platform near the middle of the room. At one time, there was probably a causeway extending across the chamber, but now the narrow paths are all that remain. Another pair of stone paths loop out from the sides of the central platform, which widens at the far wall into a stone stage . . .



On which stands a huge, dark-skinned fire giant, staring straight at you.

You tense, waiting to see what the giant will do, but it makes no move toward you. In fact, it makes no move at all. "It's only a statue," you breathe.

"But look in back of it," says Flip, wide-eyed.

The only column that could conceal a stairway out of this hellish chamber rises to the high ceiling—right behind the statue of the giant. Turn to 195.

Next you and your companions are led to the stable to select mounts for the ride to Castle Parcesstar. A wizened old stable hand scurries around tightening straps and adjusting bits. You notice that he keeps glancing at you out of the corner of his eye, but each time you look directly at him, his eyes slide away from you.

As you climb up on your steed, a party of five mounted guards falls in around you, as if daring you to try to get away. "We'll just make sure you get to the castle in one piece," one of the guards says.

"How many pieces you'll be in after you've been inside the castle for a while may be another matter," chimes in another, and all the guards laugh loudly. Flip starts to laugh right along with them but suddenly stops as she realizes he means her, too.

As your group starts off from the stable, the little stable hand suddenly darts to your side, calling, "Just a minute, sor," and he reaches up to adjust something on your horse's head. Then, his lips barely moving, he whispers, "Watch out, sor! Someone is supposed to kill you after you get the Soul-Gem."

Startled and not certain you heard correctly, you start to ask what he said, but he says loudly, "That'll do it, sor!" and scurries away.

At a command, your group moves out, but your mind is on what the stable hand whispered . . . or did he? Turn to 13.

The ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll one die to make a saving throw. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to 20. If it is higher, turn to 203.

As you make your way across the rough terrain, you feel several small rocks give way beneath your foot. You trip over a large boulder and go sprawling.

As you lie there berating yourself, the harsh shriek sounds again, just over your head. The beat of large wings stirs the mist around you. Suddenly you catch a glimpse of a huge, hawklike head on a furry body. Through a momentary clearing in the mist, you see vast feathered wings circling above you.

The beast dives at you and manages to swipe at you with its saucerlike paws and peck at you with its heavy beak before you can roll between the protective cover of several large rocks.

Roll two dice for damage done by the creature's paws and beak. Subtract the total of both dice from your hit points, then leap to your feet and turn to **164**.

Girding yourself against the expected pain, you step diagonally onto the green square—and *nothing happens!* The cold white light blinks on.

You hear a shrill whistle from Flip and look up. "Way to go, Boss!" she shouts encouragingly.

Smiling, you take a step toward the statue . . . and fall to your knees as the excruciating pain strikes once more. Deduct 1 point of damage from your hit point total and turn to **240**.

In the faint light, you can just see the faint gleam of your sword lying on the floor, with several heavy black shadows lying between you and the sword. As you dodge in and out amidst the shadows, you hear a heavy grunt behind you. You glance back just in time to see the bugbear hurl its ax toward you. You watch

as it sails by harmlessly.

Realizing that the monster is now weaponless, you grab your sword and hurry back toward the towering menace. The bugbear lumbers toward you in a rage, but your sword penetrates beneath the beast's outstretched arms and sinks deep into its chest. The creature falls to the floor in a pool of its own blood.

Turning toward the cleric and the halfling, you see that they have subdued the second bugbear. You look at the other "statues" and whisper thanks that no more of them came to life.

Turn to 184.

193

You work your fingers into a thin crevice and then feel for a toehold. You find one . . . then another . . . and another. Soon you've reached the first rung.

"Nice going, Carsten!" applauds Flip. "I didn't think you could do it." She seems genuinely pleased for you, and you find yourself feeling foolish for not trusting her. Turn to 289.

194

The halfling slides past you just as one of the giant black creatures drops down right next to you. You freeze until you see the thief's morning star smash the creature against the wall. You take a step back as Flip whirls around, smashing spider after spider. Finally the last of them lies dead before you.

"I'm glad I'm not a spider!" you breathe in awe.

The halfling simply smiles and wipes off her morning star. Turn to 51.

195

"First we have to get over to the stairway," you say, dismayed at the flame and heat.

"Maybe we could stretch a rope over the flames between the two sections of platform," Flip suggests. "It looks like it's only about thirty feet. We've got more rope than that."

"Over the fire? I should say not!" exclaims Sulex. "How about going across on one of those narrow loops?"

"How are you at walking a tightrope?" Flip asks.

"Better than at hanging upside down on a rope," the cleric replies testily.

You have a sudden vision of yourself dangling above the fire on a rope controlled by two people you don't really know, one of whom may be planning to kill you. For that matter, would you dare send Flip or Sulex off on a side path alone? You must be getting close to your destination. Do they really need you anymore?

You realize that your choice has to do more with trusting them than how to get across this sea of flames. If you think the three of you had better stay together, you can all three walk around one of the loops (307). If you're willing to split up the party, you can send Flip and Sulex around one loop while you go around the other (15), or you can throw a rope across the fiery pit and try to cross over on it one at a time (120).



196

"I'll go straight across to the yellow," the halfling announces. "I guarantee you can't get me to go diagonally again."

"Okay, Flip." You watch her step gingerly onto the yellow square. Nothing happens, so she steps onto the next gray square. Again nothing happens.

"This kid's going straight from now on!" she announces, and she does a sharp right turn and heads for the statue at the other side of the room. Behind her, each square she steps on turns white, and she receives no more damage.

If you think you have figured out how to move safely in this room, turn to **201**. But if you're not sure, have Sulex move next (**55**).

197

You see the brilliant light flash in another sector of the chamber and breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that if the beam ever struck you, you probably would not live to tell the tale.

If this is the second flash you've seen, turn to **31**. If it's the third, turn to **284**.

198

"Stay close together," you caution in a whisper, pointing toward the path to the right. "Let's go see if we can tell where that path goes in case we have to get out of here in a hurry."

You turn right and move quietly around the edge of the clearing until suddenly Flip trips over a tree root.

"Oof!" she cries as she falls.

"Clumsy!" exclaims Sulex, bending to help her up.

Suddenly you realize that the gentle humming of the figure in the brown robe has stopped. You look up and see that the figure has turned to face you now.

You see a horrible female face with writhing snakes for hair and a red-eyed gaze that pins you in place.

"A medusa!" you gasp. "Don't look!"

There's horrified silence for a moment, then Sulex murmurs, "I knew I'd find a use for this."

From the corner of your eye, you see him search through his pouch and pull out a scroll case. Quickly he unrolls it. As the strange words of the Protection Against Petrification spell reach your ears, you feel your eyes released from the power of the medusa's gaze. A shriek of rage from the evil creature drowns out Sulex's voice as she dashes toward you, obviously hoping to get close enough for the snakes on her head to attack the cleric. Cross out the Protection Against Petrification spell from Sulex's list of spells.

As the enraged medusa charges past you toward Sulex, you draw your dagger and hurl it. Your blade enters her back, and the creature falls forward, dying. But as she does, one of the snakes on her head strikes out at Sulex. To see if the snake's bite found its mark, roll one die. If you roll a 3 or more, turn to 118. If you roll less than 3, turn to 84.

199

The fierce rock creature lunges toward you with incredible speed, its mouth open, exposing spikelike teeth. Quickly you drop the rock you're holding and draw your dagger, but your blade just seems to bounce off the creature's hard carapace.

Again you thrust, but again the weapon fails to even penetrate the rocklike back of the vicious monster. Reacting quickly, the monster lunges for your arm and you feel its teeth sink into your flesh.

You sense a sudden motion at your side, and you realize that Flip is beside you. The halfling raises her morning star high and smashes it down hard on the

rock reptile's softer, more vulnerable head.

The monster twitches once, then lies still. Looking down, you realize that your arm is bleeding freely.

"Sulex!" you hear Flip call. "Fix his arm!"

Roll one die for damage and subtract the result from your hit point total. Then turn to **33**.

200

A look of terror spreads over the giant's face, and he starts down the platform toward the cleric. Suddenly he shakes his head, stops, then steps backward.

"Sulex!" you hiss. "Try 'Freeze'!" (**238**) If Sulex has already used his Freeze spell, turn to **116**.

201

Suddenly an idea hits you, one that might get you all safely across this room without taking any more damage. The thrill of discovery racing through your veins, you decide to test your idea.

"I think I've got it!" you say excitedly. "All we have to do to test it is move one square apiece, and then I'll know for sure."

Sulex and Flip groan but look interested nevertheless as you continue: "Flip and Sulex, both of you move forward one square apiece, while I move diagonally one square." (**247**)

"Flip, you move diagonally one square. Sulex, you leap forward two squares, and I'll walk straight ahead to the gray square." (**326**)

202

Impatiently you reach under the rock and flip the latch. A thin white cloud wafts out of the opening, and you begin to feel dizzy as you inhale some of the vapor. You quickly move away from the rock, and the remainder of the vapor dissipates into the air.

“See?” says Flip smugly. “There was a trap! You’re lucky most of the poison gas had already leaked out.”

Since you were the only one who inhaled the gas, deduct 1 point of damage from your hit points.

Together, the three of you push on the rock. Suddenly the rock pivots up on a hinge, revealing a metal box underneath it. Turn to 234.

203

The white light strikes you, and you feel excruciating pain. A long, thin scream escapes from your throat. The last thing you are aware of is a great wrenching inside you as your soul is drawn from your body into the unspeakably evil gem that awaits it.

204

The bugbear looms over you, eager to draw blood. It raises its ax over its head, exposing its chest to your sword. Quickly, before it can bring the ax crashing down, you slash at the beast with your sword.

Your blade draws a long, thin line of blood across the creature’s ugly yellow chest. But the enraged bugbear brings its ax down hard. The handle catches your sword arm, sending your weapon spinning away out of sight and bruising your arm badly. Suddenly your dagger looks completely inadequate against this seven-foot-tall monster. Roll one die for damage and deduct the total from your hit points.

Do you want to call Sulex and Flip to see if they can help (287) or try to retrieve your sword (38)?

205

“Look out!” Sulex shouts. “There’s a monstrous fish coming—huge, with wings and horrible teeth!”

Do you want to try to fight (256) or attempt to reach the hatch in the coral reef (127)?

"I don't think this weird room likes anyone to take shortcuts!" exclaims Flip. So saying, she steps confidently from the blue square to the gray square in the middle of the room, turns to the right, and marches straight across the room to the statue. Turn to 55.

What is Sulex doing? You take one step toward the cleric . . . and your foot never returns to the floor.

"I'm sorry I had to use my Hold Person spell on you, Carsten," he says sadly. "But we were told when we started the quest that you would kill us when you got the gem. Well, poor Flip is already dead, and I don't want to join her."

You hear every word he says, and every muscle in you screams to deny them, but your muscles cannot move.

The cleric reaches inside your tunic and pulls out the amulet. As he removes the chain from around your neck, he says, "Thank you for this, Carsten. I don't know how you'll get out of this awful place when the spell wears off, but . . . well, that's your problem."

And then you are alone, with no means of getting out of the evil Ghost Tower of Castle Parcesstar.

The smoke, the giant, and the flame all combine to make you feel it would be safer if the three of you stayed together. "It's not as if we can tiptoe up and take the giant by surprise," observes Flip. "Why don't we just charge him and get it over with?" She bends down to pick up Sulex's staff and hand it to him.

You look from the giant to the four-foot halfling and

smile. "Maybe you're right . . ." you say slowly.

With a rare feeling of camaraderie, the three of you link arms and start up the platform toward the giant. Over the crackle of the flame, you hear a deep, thunderous chuckle from the giant. He lowers the rock he holds and watches as you approach him. You're wondering what he thinks is so funny when suddenly your feet fly out from under you, and the next thing you know, you're flying straight toward the ceiling! You try frantically to fight the invisible pressure, but there doesn't seem to be anything you can do!

You hear a roar of laughter from the giant as you study the rapidly approaching ceiling. You see a large hole straight above you, and you're being pulled right toward it! But where does it lead?

If you want to try to grab the edge of the hole and keep yourself from being pulled through it, turn to **22**. If you're willing to just let yourself be pulled through, turn to **12**.

209

You see the light flash out over the ghostly bodies of the halfling and the cleric. *Well, you think, at least they can't be killed again.* Then you breathe a sigh of relief that once again the fatal beam has missed you. Turn to **56**.

210

Struggling to keep afloat, you wrestle the wet robes from Sulex's body. He lies limp in the water, gasping, but he's okay. Then you remove your own armor and watch it sink to the bottom. Deciding to take a look around, you inspect the new chamber. The island is low and small, probably not more than forty feet long. Two stunted palm trees grow near the middle of the island, but you see no other sign of life.

And there's something else you don't see, something terribly important: You see no sign of a way out of this chamber! Surely the Soul-Gem can't be here!

The coral reef, which appears to underlie a large portion of the water, is only a few feet beneath the surface. Dotting the reef are patches of glowing reds and vivid blues and greens. Sparkling little fish dart in and out among the coral and occasionally swim across something that seems to shine under the water.

"What could that be?" you wonder aloud.

"Where?" asks Sulex, speaking for the first time since you arrived in this chamber.

"There, in the coral—something shiny."

"Look over there, Carsten!" Flip says urgently.

You turn and see a huge fishlike creature swimming toward you. It's big enough to swallow a man whole . . . and it has a hungry look in its eyes. Thinking quickly, you realize you can stay and fight (222) or try to swim for the island (104).

211

Flip leaps onto the giant's back, grabbing him around the neck with her free arm as she does, and plunges her dagger into his back. The giant throws himself backward in an effort to shake her off, forcing the dagger deeper into his back. As the giant screams and writhes, you have time to retrieve your sword. As you pick it up, you see Flip leap from the giant's back.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If you have the sword from the chess room of the west tower, add 3 more points—it is a Giant Slayer Sword. Since the giant is already wounded, you only need a total of 11 to defeat him (228). If it is less than 11, turn to 5.



212

"So far, so good," the halfling says as she steps diagonally onto another blue square.

But this time Flip immediately falls to the floor in intense pain. Then the pain stops and the square blinks white. "I'm not going anywhere but straight ahead," she says determinedly. Deduct 1 point of damage from Flip's hit points.

If you want to let Flip go straight ahead, turn to 87. If you'd rather have her stay where she is for now, turn to 55 and start to move Sulex across the floor. However, if you think you have figured out how to move safely in this room, turn to 201—but make a note of this section's number in case you have to come back to it.

213

The ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll one die to make a saving throw. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to 20. If it is higher, turn to 203.

214

Planning your next move carefully, you wait until the two pteranodons are directly overhead. Then you leap up, trying at the same time to swing your blade arm with as much power as you can. But just as you start your swing, the evil prehistoric monsters change direction, and your blade slices past them harmlessly. You turn to see that the monsters have attacked Sulex, who is swinging his staff in brave, angry flourishes.

Roll two dice and add the roll to Sulex's fighting skill score. If the total is 9 or more, turn to 82. If it is less, turn to 144.

Sulex concentrates with all his might as he makes a sweeping gesture with his hands and murmurs some strange-sounding words. When you turn back toward the curtain, you see that it looks different somehow.

Once again you thrust your sword into the bead curtain. This time it goes in easily, and you sweep aside the beads to make an opening. You hear the cleric whisper, "Thank you," as you step toward the opening. Quickly the halfling ducks ahead of you and hurries on through.

"Oh, no!" you hear her gasp in horror. Turn to **50**.

The agile thief keeps moving, dancing this way and that as the firebat swoops at her. You are about to go help her when another firebat emerges from the flaming sea and attacks you. Through the heat that surrounds you, you see that Flip is moving deliberately, testing the bat's own speed and agility. Finally, just when you feel the burns she is receiving must surely overwhelm her, the little thief stabs with one sure thrust at the firebat, then drops to the stone, gasping, as the firebat disappears in a ball of flame.

Finally you must acknowledge the pain from burns all over your body, burns inflicted by the vicious firebat trying even now to sink its fangs into you. Roll two dice and add them to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **276**. If the total is less than 11, turn to **337**.

"One . . . two . . . three, PUSH!" you call, and the three of you heave your weight against the heavy statue. Nothing happens.

"Boy, that thing is heavy!" exclaims Sulex. As he inspects the statue, he begins to knock on it absent-mindedly with his knuckles. "Solidly made, too."

Suddenly, as Sulex continues to knock, you notice something strange. "Do it again, Sulex!" As the cleric repeats the series of knocks, you realize that the sound it makes on the statue's chest is different from the sound it makes on its shoulder.

"There's empty space in there somewhere," you say.

"But how do we get at it?" asks Flip.

The three of you begin to press and pound all over the statue, but nothing happens. You begin to doubt that you heard a difference in the sounds.

"Let me try it up higher!" Flip says. She leaps up to catch the statue's arm. Immediately she starts to slip and grabs hold of the statue's hand. Suddenly the hand turns, sending her sprawling to the floor.

"Look!" says Sulex. "Flip found it!"

A small drawer has sprung out of the statue's chest. Inside is a curved, metal bar, with a circle at one end.

If this is your first time at the statue, turn to **261**. If you've been here before, enter the tunnel and turn to **255**.

218

"It's pretty unlikely that the Soul-Gem would be in this smelly lair. Let's head for the stairs," you say.

At the bottom of the stairs, you look up to see that the top is lost in the mists above. "Wait here until I check out the stairs," you order. Holding your sword at the ready, you start up. You haven't even rounded the first curve before you hear a loud whoosh, then a shrill cry, and two great winged creatures swoop down the stairs straight toward you.

Startled, you miss a step and fall backward, rolling

down the stairs. To see if you are injured, add your dexterity skill score to the roll of one die. If the total is less than 8, you suffer 1 point of damage. Subtract it from your total hit points. If your total is 8 or above, you tuck yourself into a roll and suffer no damage whatsoever in the fall.

You leap to your feet just in time to keep from being gouged by the razor-sharp beaks of the flying monsters as they swoop past you.

If Sulex still has a Flamestrike spell, you can have him use it against the creatures (57). If he has already used it, prepare to fight (112).

219

"I don't trust the wizard who built this place to have made things easy for uninvited guests," you say. "Flip, better check for traps."

The halfling moves slowly around the circular room, looking carefully up and down the walls. Once she bends down and runs her hand along the edge of a stone but says, "Nope," and stands back up. Finally she says, "Nothing here. I thought for a moment there was a trap in the floor, but it seems to be okay."

"Good," you reply, but secretly you wonder just how much you can trust the halfling. "Then let's move on," and you turn toward the opening in the wall.

If you're in the east tower, turn to 295. If you're in the west tower, turn to 300.

220

You move through the searing heat to the cleric's side. A slash of your blade distracts the firebat from him, but before it can turn to attack you, you deliver a savage thrust of your blade into its leathery body. Suddenly the creature erupts into a ball of flame that quickly dissipates into the superheated air. At that

instant, you hear a piercing scream. While you've been helping Sulex, you forgot about Flip. Turn to 137.

221

With an agility that surprises even you, you manage to catch yourself and turn all in the same motion.

"Hold on to me!" you shout to Sulex, and you grab his hand, bend down, and reach out into the flames. Straining your reach to the utmost, you grab the halfling and pull her quickly back to the stone causeway. Because of your quick action, she has suffered only 2 points of damage. Deduct them from her hit points and turn to 319.

222

"We've got to get that creature before it gets us!" you say determinedly, drawing your dagger.

In the water, you'll need dexterity more than fighting skill. Add the dexterity skills of you, Flip, and Sulex together and then add the roll of two dice. If the total is 14 or more, turn to 60. If the total is less than 14, turn to 157.

223

You see the brilliant light flash just to the left of where Sulex and Flip stand, awestruck. You breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that if the beam ever struck one of you, you probably wouldn't live to tell the tale.

If this is the second flash you've seen, turn to 31. If it is the third, turn to 284.

224

As you knife through the bead curtain into darkness, you look up to see a large, statuelike figure directly in your path! Turn to 50.

"I don't trust anyone or anything that we find in this evil place," you say firmly.

"Nor I," agrees Sulex from behind you.

"Wait here," you order. Moving quietly, you slither across the clearing. When you are only a few feet from the unsuspecting figure, you rise to your feet and thrust your sword savagely at the figure. Roll one die and add the result to your dexterity skill score. If the total is 5 or more, turn to **297**. If it is less than 5, turn to **271**.

"One . . . two . . . three, PUSH!" you cry, and the three of you strain with all your might against the heavy stone statue. But nothing happens.

"So much for that idea," says Flip.

"Let's try one more time," you say, ignoring her.

"One . . . two . . . three, PUSH!" And again nothing happens—except that one of your hands, slippery with sweat, slides along the statue's arm. Just as you stop it by catching the statue's hand, a small drawer pops out of the statue's chest.

"Hey!" shouts Flip. She tries to leap up to see inside, but the drawer is well over her head.

You look inside and find a curved piece of flat metal, with a circle on one end of the curve.

If this is your first time at the statue, turn to **261**. If you've been here before, enter the tunnel and turn to **255**.

And so another su-monster lies dead at your feet. Suddenly fatigue begins to overwhelm you, but you force yourself to head down the path. Soon you see a clearing ahead of you. Turn to **142**.

228

Surprised, the giant seems uncertain how to react. You dart inside the range of his sword, making a deep thrust and leaping back before he can move. Sulex and Flip rain blows on the giant's backside.

Finally Flip plunges her dagger into the giant's back to the hilt, and he falls to the ground with a great, thundering thud. Turn to **29**.

229

You are in sector 4, almost opposite the ladder you came up. Suddenly a dazzling ray of light flashes out. Roll a single die. If you roll a 1, turn to **129**; 2, **298**; 3, **197**; 4, **327**; 5, **105**; 6, **223**.

230

The massively muscled, monkeylike su-monster lands heavily on your shoulders. Fighting desperately to keep its vicious claws out of your neck, you feel its long prehensile tail start to wrap around your neck. You clutch at it with your free hand while you jab your dagger at the monster with the other.

Roll two dice and add the result to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **169**. If it is less than 11, turn to **100**.

231

"There's no point in all of us losing our lives!" you insist flatly, starting to walk back down the tunnel.

"What if we could rescue Flip?" asks Sulex. Then he adds urgently, "Or what if the Soul-Gem is right on the other side of that strange wall?"

What if Sulex is right? you think. That and the thought that the count's men may still be waiting for you on the hillside make you pause and then turn back. Turn to **173**.

The wings of the firebat attacking Flip are almost the same size as Flip. The halfling tries to keep moving so that the vicious creature can't wrap its flaming wings around her and smother her, but she seems to be blinded by the flame and smoke.

"Help!" she shrieks, and you know that the brave thief is in great pain. Turn to 137.



At last you stand on the central platform, facing the giant. There's a wide stone walkway in front of you. The giant could easily charge down it toward you, but he seems content to glare angrily instead. You would rather not tangle with him, but he's blocking what seems to be the only exit from this evil place.

"We've got to get by him," you say, mostly to yourself.

"Why not go back out the way we came in?" asks Flip.

"Are you serious?" exclaims Sulex. "What about Count Lasson? If we don't return with the Soul-Gem, he'll track us down if it takes the rest of his life. And it would *certainly* take the rest of ours!" To punctu-

ate his point, Sulex stamps his staff down hard on the stone floor, and it slips out of his hand.

As Sulex reaches down to grab the staff, you realize that once more you have the choice of going together (208) or splitting up the group in some way—if you dare (67).

234

The box has no lock and opens easily. Inside, it is nearly empty, except for a few coins and jewels lying on the bottom, around a small glass vial. Flip grabs the jewels and Sulex eagerly picks up the vial.

“What is it?” you ask Sulex.

“Something magic, no doubt,” Sulex murmurs as he studies the vial. He pulls off the wax seal and cautiously holds the vial to his nose. “Hmm . . . it smells vaguely familiar.” Then, prepared for anything, you watch as he tips a little of the silvery blue liquid onto his finger and tentatively touches it to his tongue.

A smile comes to the cleric’s face. “What luck! I never thought I’d live to see—”

“What *is* it, anyway?” shouts Flip, her impatience getting the better of her.

“It’s a potion of water breathing,” the cleric replies. “If we drink it, we can breathe underwater.”

“Hey! Now we can explore that coral reef!” you say, excited at the prospect of possibly finding some way out of this place. Turn to 19.

235

Your ultimate goal is a tower, so perhaps it makes sense to go upward. The tower you’re in seems to be nothing special, but maybe. . . .

You have climbed only a few steps through the spider webs when your way is blocked by rubble. The top of the tower must have fallen in.

You can try to remove the rubble (167), go down to the lower level (155), or go out into the courtyard to the other tower (172 if you're in the east tower or 266 if you're in the west).

236

As you near the path, you notice the remarkably even edge of the growth on each side and realize that the path must be kept clear magically.

"I guess we have no choice of where to go," you say. The three of you walk side by side along the clear path. Travel is easy, but the thick growth on either side of you makes you feel hemmed in. Each time the path turns, you can only hope that nothing horrible awaits you around the next bend.

Finally the path turns to the east, then branches to the north and south.

As you hesitate, suddenly a fury of claws and fur drops from a tree branch above you. It is a vicious monkeylike beast that you recognize as a summonster! Only luck will determine which one of you it lands on. Roll one die. If you get a 1 or 2, turn to 259; a 3 or 4, 41; a 5 or 6, 230.

237

You could tell when the blow hit that it was solid, but it was a chance you shouldn't have taken—it did more damage to you than your body could take.

In unspeakably intense pain, you collapse to the floor. The pain clears momentarily, enough so that an odd, stray thought passes through your mind: No one will ever know where you died.

238

Holding his head bowed, the cleric concentrates on his pleas to his gods. Then he points directly at the

giant and says in a loud, firm voice, "Freeze!"

To see if Sulex's gods honor the request, roll one die. If you roll an even number, turn to **293**. If you roll an odd number, turn to **267**.



239

The three of you stand, unmoving, before the count. In silence, he eyes you one by one. Then he looks straight at you again and says, "Carsten Soldar, as you know, you are accused of stealing."

You raise a hand in protest, but the count continues without interruption. "However, I can find the magnanimity to pardon you and let you go on your way if you prove your worth by undertaking a task for me." He pauses as if waiting for your reply.

Now you know that the whole thing has been a trap, one you probably couldn't have avoided. You are in some play that must be acted out. You say through clenched teeth, "I'll do whatever your lordship asks."

Turning from one figure to the other at your sides, the count says, "Now you, Filippa, and you, Sulex. You two have already been found guilty and have agreed to accompany the fighter to the castle."

The halfling looks down at the floor and runs her toe over a pattern in the rug. Finally she says grudgingly, "Yeah . . . I guess so."

The man, Sulex, adds, a quaver in his voice, "Me too." You look at him and realize with a shock that the bent figure is probably not much older than you are.

"You will be given an hour to prepare yourselves. Then you will be taken to Castle Parcesstar," the count says and turns back to the table as if he's already forgotten you. Turn to 61.

240

"I've got to go diagonally," you murmur aloud.

"And I had to stick to walking straight," Flip chimes in. There's both wonder and anger in her voice.

"And I—" a look of discovery spreads over the cleric's face—"I could go either way, but only one square at a time."

The three of you pause as the thrill of discovery flashes across each of your faces. All together you shout, "CHESS!"

"The colors of the squares didn't matter!" you exclaim excitedly. "They just represented the black and white squares of a chessboard!"

Add 1 experience point to your experience point total, then turn to 177.

241

"Gray to gray doesn't seem to work. Neither does moving diagonally," observes Flip. "All right, this time *I* choose, and I'm going all the way to the statue!"

The halfling marches to the green square in the center of the room, then abruptly turns right and heads for the wall. As she marches straight ahead, nothing happens, except that each square in turn blinks white.

If Sulex has already moved, turn to **269**. If he hasn't and you aren't sure how he should, turn to **55**. However, if you think you know why Flip got across safely and how Sulex can, turn to **201**.

242

"Sulex!" you shout. "Use one of your spells!"

"I—I don't have any spells powerful enough for that creature," the cleric wails, shrinking back.

"You've got to try anyway!" you command as the lion-bird dives toward you. You drop quickly to the ground, and the beast's beak narrowly misses you as it zooms past.

Sulex recovers enough to bow his head and quickly ask his gods for help. Calculating the monster's path as it swoops back toward you again, he utters the words of his Flamestrike spell. Suddenly a column of flame explodes from his fingers toward the creature.

"Whoopee!" Flip shouts. "You got it! Nice shooting, Sulex!" Cross off the Flamestrike spell from Sulex's list of spells and turn to **249**.

243

"Maybe it has something to do with weight," you say. "Flip, I'm afraid you'd better try it first."

"I always knew you were my buddy," she replies sarcastically. "Which way should I go?"

You can have Flip walk straight ahead to a green square (**292**), diagonally toward the statue onto a gray square (**6**), or toward you—straight left—to a blue square (**323**).

244

The north path turns east again almost immediately, and you realize that, having started out on the far west side of the chamber and gone north from

there, you couldn't go north for very long. Indeed, the path turns south again right away . . . into a dead end. You realize you must turn around and go back to the southbound path (132).

245

"Walk straight ahead again," you say to Flip.

"All right, but as long as nothing awful is happening, I'd really rather head for that door."

She steps ahead onto the gray square. Again nothing happens, except that the square turns white. You consider her request about going toward the door and say, "All right, go diagonally to the gray square." (125).



246

The ray flashes into the sector where Flip and Sulex are standing, striking them both. All you can do is stand, horrified, and listen to the long, drawn-out screams that are forced from them. When your vision clears, you see their images, mere wisps of transparent color, stream out of their bodies toward the Soul-Gem. As you watch, the images reach the gem, and a burst of radiance floods the chamber.

When the light fades, the bodies of the halfling thief and the human cleric lie motionless on the mar-

ble floor. Their bodies and clothing have turned completely white. Even the halfling's morning star has taken on the hue of alabaster.

Your worry about who might try to kill you is over—both Flip and Sulex are dead. But now you are alone—with the Soul-Gem. Turn to 163.

247

With Flip and Sulex looking as apprehensive as you feel, you each move according to your plan. White lights flash from each square and no one suffers any damage! "That's it!" you shout. "It's a chess board!"

Simultaneous expressions of understanding cross the halfling's and cleric's faces.

"We each had to move the same way as the chess piece that normally occupies the square where we entered the room. The colors just represented the black and white squares of the chessboard!" Add 2 extra experience points to your experience point total for figuring out the chess board. Then turn to 177.

248

A mass of emotions swirls inside you—exhilaration at finding yourself being released, concern at being responsible for the lives of two other people, anger at a situation that you are now certain was engineered. But underlying them all is a deep dread of your destination. No one who has entered the fabled Ghost Tower of Castle Parcesstar has ever returned alive!

You feel a hand at your back. "This way!" says the guard gruffly. You turn and head toward the door he indicated. The halfling and cleric fall in behind you, making you feel as if you are already their leader.

The guard opens the door and you walk through.

You inhale deeply as you emerge into the open air, the first fresh air you have smelled since being captured and accused of being a thief.

Ahead of you is a door to what looks like a small armory, but right now you are between buildings. Off to your right you see some woods. Perhaps a dash for freedom now would be better than taking a chance on ever returning alive from the Ghost Tower.

"Get a move on," says the guard as he walks around you to open the door to the armory. Now's the time if you're going to run for it.

Will you go on into the armory to pick up your supplies (290), or are you going to seize the opportunity to make a dash for freedom(133)?

249

With Flip and Sulex following, you head west, where Flip thought she saw something. You soon discover a large mound of earth and stone. Feathers, hair, and a horrible odor tell you that this was the lair of the creature you just killed.

"Look!" says Flip. You turn from the lair to see her pointing at a spiral staircase going upward into the mists. "There's our way out!"

You can go directly to the stairs (218) or, if you prefer, explore the lair first (175).

250

Mumbling something about refusing to share a square with Sulex, Flip turns right and steps onto the blue square. Nothing happens, except that the square turns white. Turn to 206.

251

"Maybe you're right, Sulex. Let's try to turn the statue," you say.

Flip shoves on the statue's leg, Sulex on the shoulder, and you against the outstretched arm.

Add your strength skill score and Flip's strength skill score to the roll of one die. Sulex's strength is inconsequential. If the total is 7 or more, turn to **226**. If it is less than 7, turn to **217**.

252

Suddenly your attention is drawn from the Soul-Gem you hold in your hands to Flip.

"I'm sorry about Sulex," you say quietly.

"Are you?" You hear both skepticism and wariness in the halfling's voice, and you realize that she is fingering her dagger.

"Yes, I am," you reply firmly. You try to appear relaxed as you put the Soul-Gem into your pouch. "Now let's try to get out of here."

"Both of us?" she asks, as if she already knows the answer. She backs away from you slightly, her hand still on her dagger.

If you answer, "Yes, of course," and reach out to take her hand, turn to **305**. But if you say, "No, Flip, I'm afraid I can't trust you," turn to **156**.

253

You are in sector 5, ready to try to break the invisible sphere, when the unbearably dazzling light flashes out again. Roll a single die. If you get a 1, turn to **209**; 2, **315**; 3, **181**; 4, **78**; 5, **64**; 6, **23**.

254

Sulex leaps over the gray square to the blue one and immediately falls to his knees in pain. As the square turns white, the light makes the cleric look even more pale. Deduct 1 point of damage from Sulex's hit points, then turn to **317**. However, if you

think you know now how to move safely across the room, turn to **201**—but make a note of this section's number in case you have to come back to it.

255

Ahead of you, the tunnel comes to an abrupt end at a gleaming wall. You walk toward it.

If you have been to such a gleaming wall before, turn to **274**. If this is your first time at the wall, turn to **291**.

256

"It's only a big fish!" you exclaim. "We can handle it!" As the creature zooms toward you, looming ever larger, you wonder if you were too confident.

Add Sulex's, Flip's, and your fighting skill scores to the roll of two dice. If the total is 14 or more, turn to **321**. If it is less, turn to **185**.

257

As you see the signal from Flip, you prepare to attack. The giant, though not very intelligent, senses that someone is behind him. He spins around, his huge sword flashing. You rush at him, but your blows merely glance off him. You watch in horror as one, by one, by one, he finishes off you and your quest.

258

You can hardly believe that you have all managed to survive. Suddenly, after what seems like forever, the air around you in the fiery cavern is clear of flaming creatures.

But you still have to go around one of the loops to reach the central platform. The three of you can stay together (**307**) or you can split up and send Flip and Sulex down one side while you go down the other (**15**).



259

The shrieking monkeylike creature lands on top of Sulex. Roll two dice and add the total to his fighting skill score. If the result is 9 or more, turn to **95**. If it is less, turn to **124**.

260

The ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll one die to make a saving throw. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **20**. If it is higher, turn to **203**.

261

"I don't know what this is," you say, holding the strange metal bar, "but there must be some reason why it was hidden inside the statue."

You slide the bar into your pouch and study the statue for a long moment. For the first time, you

notice that, unlike everything else about the stone statue, the sword is real. It has an elaborately carved handle and a finely tempered steel blade. Examining it closely, you see pictures of an armored fighter surrounded by giants etched into the blade.

You may take the sword if you want to, but you will have to leave your other one behind—and you don't know what this sword will do.

Having made your decision, you head for the tunnel behind the statue. Turn to **255**.

262

"Are you sure you want to try to crash through it, Flip?" you ask. "You could get hurt."

She shrugs and says, "Sure. Why not?" She moves back up the passage, turns, and starts to run, looking very small as she charges, her head lowered as if to use it as a battering ram.

To your amazement, it works! The halfling's small body pushes through the bead curtain like a spoon falling through thick gravy.

"Are you all right?" you call, but there's no answer.

Moving up next to the curtain, you call again, but still there is no reply.

"Do you suppose something is in there?" Sulex asks in a hushed whisper. "Do you think it got Flip?"

"I don't know . . ." you say slowly, marveling at the strange series of events of the past several hours.

If you decide to try to follow the halfling, turn to **25**. But if you think you'd better leave this evil place while you're still in one piece, turn to **316**.

263

Remembering who created this tower, you ask Sulex to check for the presence of magic.

The cleric quickly pulls his holy symbol out and

concentrates for a moment, asking his gods to help him, and then says, after several more moments, "I detect something magical here, but it doesn't seem to come from under the rock. It must be something inside it."

"Is it safe to open it?" you ask impatiently.

"I . . . I can't tell." Sulex's face falls.

"As I've said before, some help you are!" Flip's comment leaves everyone silent. Cross out Sulex's Detect Magic spell and turn to **202**.

264

You set your jaw determinedly, hoping that this will be the final blow that breaks the sphere. As you strike the invisible surface, you feel your sword ring resoundingly on the sphere. Suddenly the force of the blow pulses excruciating pain through your body.

No words, not even ones of regret, come from your mouth as you realize that you have indeed struck your final blow—but the sphere remains intact. Your last thought is age-old: "It's not fair!"

265

Flip steps forward from the white square onto the gray. Nothing happens, except that the gray square turns white. "So far so good," the halfling says.

Now the tiny thief can either go straight ahead onto a yellow square (**149**), diagonally onto another gray square (**165**), or sideways toward you onto a blue one (**301**).

266

You turn toward the east tower. The setting sun makes a brilliant glare on the tower that prevents you from making out any details of it. It just looks large, old, black . . . and dangerous.

As you approach the heavy iron door leading into the tower, you take a deep breath to give yourself a lasting memory of fresh air. You expect to have trouble opening the ancient door, but instead it squeaks open easily on its hinges.

Turn to **9**.

267

The giant looks puzzled, then shakes his head and begins to raise the rock up high over his head to throw it.

“Sulex!” you hiss in a loud whisper. “It’s not working! Try something else!”

The cleric starts to pray again, but he is too late—the giant hurls the rock. Absorbed in communion with his gods, Sulex is struck a glancing blow by the rock and takes 2 points of damage.

“Sulex!” you hiss. “Try ‘Flee!’” (308). If Sulex has already used his Flee command, turn to **116**.

268

You are in sector 3, almost opposite the ladder you came up. Suddenly a dazzling ray of light flashes out. Roll a single die. If you roll a 1, turn to **129**; 2, **298**; 3, **273**; 4, **166**; 5, **105**; 6, **223**. If Sulex and Flip have moved into sector 4 and you roll a 4, turn to **246**.

269

You know that you must cross the room, but the ghost of the searing pain you felt before returns to haunt you. Reluctantly you study the layout of the floor, wishing you could somehow avoid moving. But you know you can’t go back, only forward.

You seem to have only two logical choices—you can go straight ahead to the blue square (**79**) or diagonally to the gray square (**158**).

270

The halfling slides past you just as a giant black spider drops within striking distance of your face. She flings her morning star violently in front of you, protecting you from its bite, but in doing so, she accidentally lets the weapon slide out of her hand, and the spider's bite sinks into her arm.

"Oh, blast!" she exclaims, both at the pain of the bite and at finding herself weaponless.

Suddenly you realize that you are holding the last rock you had removed from the rubble. You push Flip aside and bring it smashing left, right, up, down, on the spiders until no more appear.

"I'm glad I'm not a spider!" exclaims Flip, clutching her arm to her chest.

"Fix up that bite, Sulex," you say to the cleric who has been standing at the bottom of the stairs watching the action.

Roll one die for the spider's damage to Flip and deduct it from her hit points, then turn to 33.

271

The brown-robed figure turns just as your sword is about to enter its body. Something must have warned it! You find yourself face-to-face with a grinning medusa! Her evil face is surrounded by writhing poisonous snakes, and her red eyes . . . it's her eyes that are dangerous! Turn to 4.

272

You crouch, ready to spring, as you watch the huge sword blade begin to swing toward you in a great arc. Timing the swing carefully, you leap over the mighty blade. You land lightly on the other side and turn swiftly, backing away from the giant. The enraged giant lumbers after you, his back to Flip and Sulex,

who are approaching stealthily from behind.

Trying to keep your face from revealing their presence, you keep dancing out of the giant's reach. At a signal from Flip, you attack with your sword, Flip with her dagger, and Sulex with Flip's morning star.

Add your three fighting scores to the roll of two dice. If you have the sword from the chess room in the west tower, add 3 additional points—you have a Giant Slayer Sword. If the total is 12 or more, turn to **228**. If it is less, turn to **257**.

273

The ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll one die to make a saving throw. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **20**. If it is higher, turn to **203**.

274

You breathe a sigh when you see the gleaming metal wall again. You have survived to return here with the second section of the oval key that you need to get into the central tower of Castle Parcesstar. Slowly you pull both metal bars from your pouch.

"Hurry up, Carsten!" urges Flip. "What are you waiting for?"

"You needn't be in such a hurry," says Sulex. "There's no telling what we'll find beyond, inside the Ghost Tower—perhaps even death itself."

Suddenly the stable hand's warning flashes inside your head: "*Someone is supposed to kill you. . . .*"

You know that you must go on, so you shake your head, as if to drive away the unpleasant thought. Then you place the metal bars into the indented oval. As the second one slides into place and both circles fit firmly against the curved metal bars, the oval begins

to glow with a feverish blue light. As you stare, dumbfounded, the key begins to melt right into the metal of the door, leaving not so much as a hairline crack behind.

Suddenly you hear a gasp behind you as Flip steps backward quickly. The entire metal wall has begun to glow with an eerie blue light. Then you see an opening appear and expand even as you watch. When the opening is about six feet wide, the glow dies and the way before you is clear. But where does it go?

You look into a room that is some forty feet square and made of the same smooth, blue-gray metal. You see several comfortable-looking chairs, the first you've seen anywhere in this cursed dungeon. You step inside the room, and as you do, the opening by which you entered disappears behind you!

"We're trapped!" Sulex's voice rings with panic.

In horror, you turn around and stare at the wall behind you. You see no sign of any opening. You know now that you have no choice but to go on.

"We're trapped inside the Ghost Tower!" breathes Sulex fearfully. He drops into a chair, despair written on his thin face.

You can sink into another chair and try to calm Sulex (2). Or, if you feel you ought to keep looking for a way out, turn to 141.

275

In one swift motion, you grab Sulex's arm and pull the amulet from your tunic. Something forces your eyes closed, and you hear an angry "Hey, where—" from Flip, and the rush of wind across your face. Then there's a painful change of pressure, as when you entered the strange upside-down water world.

Then the sound in your ears becomes that of a disturbed bird. You drop the amulet and open your eyes

as you feel the cleric pulling away from you.

You are in a wooded area. Far in the distance, you can see the hill with the ominous shape of Castle Parcesstar outlined against the sky.

Sulex backs away from you, a look of horror on his thin face. "Murderer! You left Flip behind to die!" You see him close his eyes, striving for the concentration necessary to ask his gods to help him cast a spell. And you know the spell will be directed at you!

"No, Sulex!" you shout hurriedly. "The tower killed Flip! Besides, she was planning to kill me!" You see a brief puzzled look cross the cleric's face, but his prayer goes on.

Not knowing what else to do against a spell, you draw your sword and, reluctantly, prepare to use it against the cleric. But then you realize that he is already making sweeping motions with his hands. You're too late!

Roll two dice and add the roll to Sulex's wisdom skill score. If the total is 8 or more, turn to **58**. If it is less than 8, turn to **73**.

276

You feel as if you are being rained on by flame. You want to just cover your head with your hands and try to protect yourself, but you know that will lead to certain death. You keep stabbing, thrusting, slashing, hoping that one of your efforts will finally put an end to the burning pain that threatens to overwhelm you.

Suddenly the firebat backs off for a moment, and you feel relative coolness wash over you.

Revived, you are ready this time when the firebat swoops at you. As it tries to wrap its fiery wings around your neck, you make one quick thrust upward . . . and it hits home! The bat falls back, then disappears in a sudden puff of flame. Turn to **258**.

You're the fighter, you think, and you're the one who should be up here fighting. Surely between them Flip and Sulex can get the hatch open.

"Flip! Sulex!" you shout. "Dive down and open the hatch. I'll keep this creature busy until it's open!"

"Keep that monster from touching you, Carsten," cautions Sulex as he dives.

Your dagger in your hand, you swim off to one side. As you hoped, your motion draws the fearsome ixitx-achitl after you. Add your fighting skill score to the roll of two dice. If the total is 12 or more, turn to **288**. If it is less, turn to **53**.

278

You doubt very much that the count will ever leave you alone if you fail to bring him the Soul-Gem. You walk slowly around the chamber, studying the fabulous Soul-Gem, the goal of your quest. You are tempted to just grab it and use the amulet to escape from the tower. But you're certain the evil wizard who created Parcesstar would not have made things so simple.

Drawing your sword, you hold it high, so that it moves over the top of the gem. But there is no invisible string holding it suspended from the ceiling. You lower the sword, and it stops about a foot above the Soul-Gem. Something invisible is blocking it.

Moving the sword up and down, then around the gem, you gradually trace in midair the shape of an invisible sphere protecting the Soul-Gem. But you find no trace of anything holding the invisible sphere in place.

Roll a single die to find out what sector of the chamber you have stopped in after your inspection. You didn't stop in sector 1, because that's where Flip and

Sulex's ghostlike bodies lie. If you roll a 1, roll again. If you roll a 2, turn to **329**; 3, **324**; 4, **153**; 5, **253**; 6, **107**.

279

In the dim light, you see a faint gleam that might be your sword. You race through the shadows toward the sword. You're taken by surprise when you bump one of the shadows, lose your balance, and fall heavily against another. But they aren't shadows. They are more bugbears, and when you touch them, they spring to life, ready to kill.

One of them steps on your sword just as you are about to reach out for it. You thrust at the bugbear with your dagger, but the horrible yellow-hided beast just seems to laugh as it holds up an old battered shield to fend off your efforts. You sense another beast behind you just before you feel its weapon bash into your head. As darkness fills your mind, you know that Flip and Sulex don't stand any more chance of getting out alive than you do.

280

"Nothing seems to be holding the gem, so maybe there's nothing to stop me from grabbing it!" you say.

Your legs seem reluctant to move, but finally you lean forward as far as you can and thrust your hand out to grab the huge opaque diamond . . .

And your hand hits an invisible shield that seems to cover the gem about a foot from its surface. You jump back in surprise, expecting something terrible to happen, but nothing does.

You are still in the same sector you were in previously, and Flip and Sulex have not moved away from the ladder in sector 1. If you are in sector 2, turn to **336**; 3, **268**; 4, **229**; 5, **39**; 6, **115**.

You stand rooted to the spot, watching the rock float toward you as if in slow motion. As soon as you can judge that it is heading straight toward you, you shout to the others, "Hold still!" then move quickly forward a few paces.

The rock zooms between you and Flip and splashes into the flaming sea below. Quickly, before the giant can pick up another boulder, you lead the others around the loop and onto the central platform. The flames that continually lick at your feet seem to die slightly as you stop onto the platform.

Turn to 233.

As you take out the amulet, you realize you have no idea where the thing will take you! However, the unknown of the real world is a lot better than the unknown in this evil magical tower.

You grab the small stone, and suddenly a powerful force snaps your eyes closed. You feel a rush of air and a sudden massive pressure on your body. . . . Then there is peace, the song of a small bird, and a wonderful waft of fresh air across your face.

"I've been waiting for you, Carsten."

You open your eyes. You are in a garden, outside a small castle, and before you stands Count Lasson, his hand outstretched . . . in demand, not greeting.

"Where's the Soul-Gem?"

You move as if to reach in your pouch, but instead you draw your sword and say, "It killed the thief and the cleric, but I refused to let it kill me."

"Then I will have to!" exclaims the count, drawing his own sword.

You see a horse grazing nearby and know that you can probably escape if you want to (159). If you want



to fight, roll two dice and add the roll to your fighting skill score. If the result is 12 or above, turn to **179**. If it is less than 12, turn to **333**.

283

Sulex lifts the vial to his lips, then tosses the vial down in the sand and says, "All right, there was some left for me. Let's get going." Turn to **24**.



284

With a renewed sense of urgency, you turn your attention back to the invisible sphere protecting the Soul-Gem. Magic won't work here, so apparently you must use brute force to try to break the sphere.

"I'll take a whack at it and see if anything happens," you say, rather hoping that Flip or Sulex will volunteer. But they remain silent.

You hold your sword high and bring it crashing down on where you hope the sphere is. You feel the sword crash into the sphere with a satisfying thud. Roll one die for damage to the sphere and subtract the number from the sphere's total of 20 hit points. But as you observe the damage the sphere has taken, you feel an increasing pain in your own body.

"Oh, no!" you moan as you realize the truth: Whatever damage the sphere takes, you will take an equal amount to your own body. Subtract the same number of hit points from your total.

“Listen, Sulex, Flip,” you say. “Let’s take turns hitting it from different sides.” What you don’t say aloud is that you are through protecting Sulex and Flip from taking fatal damage. From now on, they will have to take whatever damage comes to them and may, in fact, lose all their hit points and die.

It is possible for one of you to miss the invisible sphere, because it is moving all the time. In the order that follows, roll two dice in turn.

Sulex, using his staff, requires 9 or more to hit; Flip, using her small morning star, requires 8 or more to hit; and you, using your sword, require 7 or more to hit. Do *not* add any skill points to your roll.

Each time one of you succeeds in hitting the Soul-Gem’s shield, you must then roll one die for damage. The person causing damage to the sphere also takes identical damage and loses identical hit points. None of you may stop until either all your hit points are gone or the shield is broken, whichever comes first. The three of you need to cause a total of 20 hit points of damage to the sphere to make it break.

If Sulex loses all his hit points, turn to **128**. If Flip loses all her hit points, turn to **66**. If you lose all your hit points, turn to **264**. If you cause a total of 20 hit points of damage to the sphere, turn to **89**.

285

“All right, straight ahead it is,” Sulex agrees reluctantly. He steps forward one row onto the gray square—and almost collapses. At first you think it’s from pain, but then you see the relief on Sulex’s face as the square turns white. Turn to **317**.

286

The deadly light ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll two dice. If the number you

roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to 11. If the number you roll is higher, turn to 32.

287

A quick glance at your companions shows you that they have their hands full with the other bugbear. Sulex is fending it off with his staff while Flip darts from side to side, trying unsuccessfully to land a blow with her morning star.

"Try to maneuver it over this way! I'll do the same thing," you shout. "Then all of us can fight both of them together!"

"We'll try!" Flip shouts back.

You taunt the bugbear into following your steady retreat toward the cleric and the thief. Somehow you manage to avoid being hit by the creature's repeated blows with its ax.

Suddenly Flip jumps between the two bugbears as they near each other, swinging her morning star first at one, then at the other. The bugbear that followed you turns its attention toward the halfling, forgetting about you momentarily. As it raises its arms in rage, ready to bring its ax down on your brave companion, you take advantage of its inattention to you and thrust your dagger deep into its chest, time and time again.

"Look out!" you shout, and Flip bounds backward as the bugbear's ax crashes to the floor in the monster's death throes.

The two of you dash to Sulex's side and quickly finish off the second bugbear. Turn to 184.

288

Turning to fight the creature, you consider drawing your sword, but you decide against it. You may

need to have a free hand for swimming.

As the beast rushes in, all you see are its great teeth. You feel the pain from the magical wounds increase as the creature approaches. A voice inside your mind seems to be telling you, "Let it pass over you while you attack from below."

You dive downward, watching the shadow of the beast pass above you. Almost of its own accord, one pain-wracked arm slices upward with the dagger, right into the fish's belly. The water darkens with blood around you as the beast thrashes in its death throes.

Suddenly you realize that you feel no additional pains. The beast's magic is gone!

You dive down toward the hatch, just as Flip and Sulex succeed in opening it. Turn to 28.

289

With Flip in the lead and Sulex behind you, you work your way up the shaft. After climbing about forty feet, you hear a puzzled grunt from above you.

"What's wrong?" you ask.

"I'm not sure," Flip answers. "The shaft seems to end only a few feet above me, but all I can see is swirling mist."

Suddenly a loud shriek, like that of an enraged, wounded beast, pierces your ears and echoes through the shaft, sending a shiver up your spine.

"What was *that*?" whispers Sulex fearfully.

"I don't know," you reply, "but I think we're going to find out soon."

"Do we have to?"

"Do you know any other way out of the room we just left?" you ask harshly.

The cleric sighs heavily and admits, "No. Well, let's go on, then. I can't hang here forever."

"Okay," says Flip, "but you may not like it up here. I can tell with my infravision that there's some sort of life nearby."

"I can tell *that* with my ears," Sulex says.

"Just ignore him, Flip," you say. "Let's get out of this shaft."

Once more the shrill shriek echoes in your ears. The thief pulls herself up out of the shaft, and you raise your head into the swirling mist. Through the haze, you can make out only rough ground and scattered rocks. You climb out, followed quickly by Sulex.

"Where to next?" Flip asks plaintively. "Everything looks just about the same."

"Where did you spot that heat source?"

"Over that way." Flip waves her hand toward the west. "But if it's something alive, it's probably something we wouldn't want to meet."

"Maybe it can lead us out of here," you suggest.

You can head toward the heat source (140) or away from it (154).

290

The guard opens the door and pushes you on into a small armory.

You hear Flip let out a gasp. The walls are lined with racks holding a seemingly endless array of swords, poleaxes, and other weapons. Quickly Flip explores the room, examining everything, even the lances, which are nearly three times her height.

Finally she selects a small morning star and swings it through the air. It moves like a natural extension of her small arm. "There!" she exclaims.

"Better take a dagger, too," you say, pointing to a rack of daggers. She quickly grabs one in a leather sheath and slips it onto her belt.

Sulex has been walking slowly around the room,

peering at the various weapons with interest but touching nothing. Finally he spots an ancient-looking wooden staff leaning in a far corner. A contented look sweeps over his face as he caresses the smooth old oak. "This will do for me," he announces firmly. "I need only this and my spells to see us through."

Wondering what's so special about the staff, you begin to search for your own weapons. You pick up sword after sword, testing their heft in your hand. Finally one sword, plainer than most, almost springs into your hand and seems to mold itself to fit your grip. Almost as if it were speaking to you, a small shield seems to draw you straight toward it. The moment you grasp the handle with your left hand, it seems to become a part of you. You also select a dagger.

You and Flip choose leather armor. The cleric disdains armor, preferring to keep his half-robe free so he can reach the pockets sewn into it.

You resist the urge to take all the weapons you can carry, knowing that if you can't make it through Castle Parcesstar with what you have, you probably won't make it at all.

"I think we're ready," you say to the guard finally. Turn to 188.

291

"Look out!" shouts Flip. "Someone's there!"

You draw your sword and watch the figure draw his sword, too. . . . Suddenly you burst out laughing.

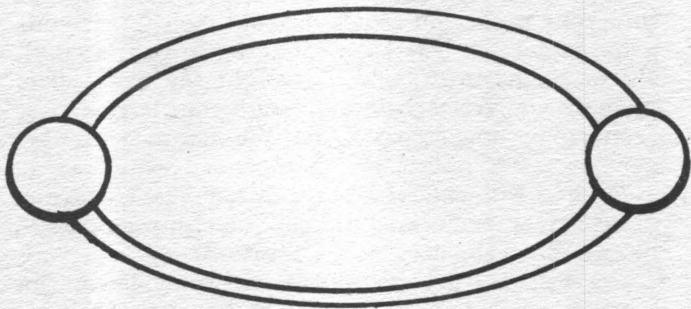
"It's my reflection!" you cry, trying to stifle your laughter. The wall you face is a blue-gray, smooth, shiny metallic substance. Even in the faint light of the tunnel, you can see the corridor behind you repeated in the reflecting surface.

"Not another dead end!" you exclaim.

"Do you expect an evil wizard to make things easy for us?" scoffs Flip, looking harshly at you.

Quickly you run your hands over the wall. The only break in its smooth surface is an oval indentation about waist high. Each long curved side of the oval is about eight inches long and perhaps an inch wide. At each end of the oval is a circle.

"What do you suppose that is?" asks Flip, pointing.



"I don't know," you reply, "but it must be important. There's no sign of any door here."

"Try a spell, Sulex," suggests Flip.

Sulex approaches the wall and places his hand on the indented oval figure. You watch as he traces the shape with his fingers. "No spell will work here," he murmurs absently, then suddenly adds in a whisper you can barely hear, "A lock! My gods say it's a lock, and there are two pieces to the key! We must have them both in order to unlock the door. Beyond it is the tower, where the Soul-Gem lies!" Suddenly your task seems much larger than it had before.

If you have picked up something along the way that you think might be a key, turn to **335**. If you haven't, you must make the journey to this point again. If you are in the east tower, go to **304** ; west tower, **300**.

292

Cautiously, stepping on her toes as if she could make her small body weigh even less, Flip moves straight forward onto the green square. Nothing happens except that the square turns white.

"Whew!" she exclaims in relief. "What now?"

You can ask Flip to move straight ahead again to a gray square (**245**), diagonally to a yellow one (**143**), or toward you to a gray square (**91**).

293

The giant looks puzzled for a moment, but then he starts to raise the rock he's holding over his head to throw it. At the instant his arms are fully extended above his head, the giant freezes in place.

"It worked!" Flip shouts, and the two of you hurry around the narrow causeway. As she passes the inanimate giant, she slaps him familiarly on the rear.

"Flip!" says Sulex sternly. "There's no need to be disrespectful to someone the gods have frowned on!"

Shaking your head in silent laughter, you look to the stone sarcophagus and the waiting column of stairs. Cross out Sulex's Command (Freeze) spell and turn to **29**.

294

The statue stands almost twice Flip's height and is of a handsome man dressed in a robe and crown. He stands with his left hand on the hilt of a large, ornate sword and his right hand outstretched toward the door where you entered this chamber of pain. His

hand is angled so that he might be beckoning you to come closer . . . or he could be warning you to stay back.

"Do you suppose the statue moves?" asks Sulex.

"What makes you think that?" you ask.

"Well, I've heard of statues that had to be turned somehow in order for a secret door to open. Maybe this statue will open the door to the Ghost Tower."

"Did you *have* to say that, Sulex?" complains Flip.

"I've been trying to forget that's what this place is called." She walks around the statue, inspecting it.

"Hey, look at that sword! It's longer than I am! Maybe that's the key to the Ghost Tower!"

To try to turn the statue, turn to **251**.

295

Suddenly you realize that Sulex has been standing as if rooted to the floor. He stares into the opening, seemingly oblivious to both you and Flip.

"What do you see?" you ask.

The cleric shakes himself as if his mind had been far away. "Nothing," he whispers. "But it feels . . ."

"Feels what?" you prompt.

"Strange . . . just strange."

You hesitate and then ask, "You do have a Detect Evil spell available, don't you?"

"Yes," Sulex replies quickly, "but it won't last long, and then it won't be available again for some time. But . . . if that's your choice."

If you want Sulex to use his Detect Evil spell now, turn to **341**. If you'd rather save it for later, turn to **304**.

296

You stumble slightly occasionally but have no real trouble keeping to your feet on the rocks. Soon the

light from overhead shows that you are about to reach the outer wall of the tower. You and the others turn back toward the west just as a loud shriek echoes through the mist and a huge, hawk-headed creature like a winged lion swoops toward you.

The mere sight of the evil monster makes you shudder. Maybe you should have the cleric use his magic against it (242). But it looks so fierce that perhaps you should all try to fight it together (164).

297

You feel the sword enter the figure's robed body. It falls at your feet with an expiring sigh, then turns toward you in its death throes. It's a medusa!

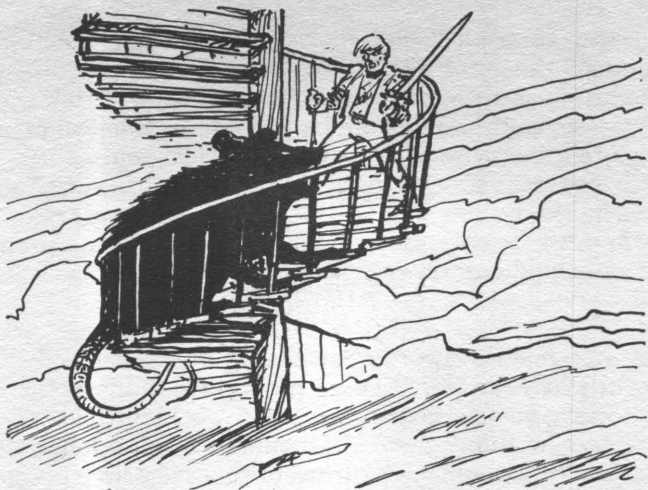
"We wouldn't have had a chance against her," you say. "She would have turned us to stone with a glance if we hadn't killed her first, or else those snakes on her head would have poisoned us!" Turn to 343.



298

You see the brilliant light flash in another sector of the chamber and breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that if the beam ever struck you, you probably would not live to tell the tale.

If this is the second flash you've seen, turn to 31. If it is the third, turn to 284.



299

You're still holding a rock from the rubble in your hands. You raise it high over your head and smash it down on the first rat as it scurries through the opening, its fanglike teeth bared. With a dying squeal, it rolls down the stairs. But then the second monster is almost upon you. You draw your dagger just as the loathsome creature leaps for your leg.

You kick out with one booted foot and follow up with a lightning slash with your dagger. The rat impales itself on your blade, twitches once, and then is still. In disgust, you hurl its foul carcass down the stairs after its companion.

You turn swiftly back to the hole, but no more rats appear. Turn to 51.

300

The three of you enter the stone tunnel and follow it for some distance, pausing at each turn to listen for

noises or search for traps. But you find nothing, until suddenly . . .

"The tunnel just stops dead!" you exclaim.

"Not a good choice of words, Carsten," says Sulex, "considering those things on the wall ahead of us look like coffins."

Straight ahead, you see what appear to be stone mummy cases, or sarcophagi, sunk right into a vertical wall that blocks the tunnel. Each depression is the size and shape of a man.

"What are they?" whispers Flip, wide-eyed.

"Have you ever seen anything like them, Sulex?" you ask. You notice that he has removed his holy symbol from his robe and holds it out before him.

"No-o-o-o," he says slowly. "And they don't seem to be evil, either, except that everything in this accursed place seems to be tainted with evil."

You stand and stare at the strange, man-shaped indentations, wondering if you've run into some unusual kind of graveyard.

"Could it be a trap of some kind?" you ask Flip.

The halfling goes over and inspects the stonework carefully. She runs her sensitive thief's hands over the stone near the floor, then a couple of feet higher. Finally she turns, looking puzzled, and says, "Well, they certainly aren't any kind of trap that I've ever seen. Frankly, I don't know what they are."

Once more you have the feeling the halfling may not be telling you the whole truth. You approach the wall and tap all around the body-shaped indentations, but you hear no difference in the sound. You push here and there, but nothing moves.

"Maybe we should crawl inside those depressions and see what happens," Flip suggests.

"Or maybe we should get out of here just as quickly as we can!" interjects Sulex.

For a moment, you give Sulex's suggestion serious thought, but then you look again at the mummylike indentations and your curiosity gets the better of you.

"There *must* be a way through!" you exclaim.

"Well, let's give it a try," says Flip. Quickly she wriggles into one of the indentations. Her head comes only as high as the lower chest area of the depression.

As Flip leans back into the depression, metal bands suddenly spring from the stonework on each side of the halfling and clamp around her wrists and ankles. You leap to try to protect her, but as you do, the whole slab of stone in which she is now embedded swings around on a pivot and Flip disappears!

You and Sulex dash to the wall where the halfling was only moments earlier, but try as you might, you can discover no way to swing the stone back around. You see only solid, seamless rock.

"Flip! FLIP!" the cleric pounds his fists on the wall where you last saw the halfling, but there is no response. A look of determination crosses his thin face. "We've got to follow her!"

"Wait a minute, Sulex," you reply, surprised at his vehemence. You're not very thrilled about the idea of following the halfling into the unknown.

"Carsten, it was Flip who insisted we follow you down that slide! At least we can follow her now!"

If you agree with Sulex, turn to 173. If you don't, turn to 231.

301

"I don't think I like this much," Flip says, but she steps lightly toward you onto the blue square. Nothing happens, and she breathes a sigh of relief as the square under her feet blinks white.

“Okay,” you say. “It hurt going from gray to gray and diagonally, but it didn’t hurt going straight ahead from one color to another color.”

“Which do you think is the key—the color or the direction?” she asks.

When you admit you don’t really know, she says, “Well, since I’m the one getting hurt, I choose to go straight.” If you want to let her go straight ahead to a gray square, turn to **87**. If you’d rather have her stay right where she is, turn to **55** and start moving Sulex across the floor.

302

As the evil creature zooms toward you, you hold your dagger ready. Suddenly the monster crashes into something invisible and swerves away.

“What happened?” asks Flip, wide-eyed.

“I used a Protection from Evil spell,” replies Sulex. “Thank heavens it worked! That thing is not only a ferocious fighter, but it’s also an evil magic-user!”

“Will it stay away now?” you ask fearfully.

“If it’s as smart as I think it is, it will.”

Cross out Sulex’s Protection From Evil spell and turn to **313**.

303

The deadly light ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll two dice. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **11**. If the number you roll is higher, turn to **32**.

304

You step carefully into the opening, walking between Sulex, the reluctant cleric, and Flip, the thief. Once again you have that same trapped feeling

that you felt in the count's study, standing between the two. You realize there's no point in thinking about it now. You are committed to this quest.

"Keep your eyes peeled for traps, Flip," you say.

"You keep yours peeled for monsters," she replies, tension obvious in even her voice. "And keep that sword handy," she adds fiercely.

The feeble light reveals a corridor some twenty feet wide and made of beautifully worked, smooth, dry stone. The floor is coated with thick dust, but you see no footprints.

"Why is it so quiet and still all of a sudden?" whispers Sulex.

"Isn't that better than having some creature roaring at us?" replies Flip.

"Yes, of course, but I think I'm getting some signs of magic up ahead. Anyway, it certainly doesn't seem natural in here."

"So what's natural about a disappearing tower created by a wizard?" She pauses for a moment. "It is kind of strange. My infravision doesn't pick up any sign of warmth. There doesn't seem to be any life in here at all."

As a human, you of course see nothing beyond the circle of pale light from Sulex's staff. You walk on, following the passage now to the left, now to the right. You try to be prepared for anything, but what you find is completely unexpected.

"Would you take a look at that?" exclaims Flip. "It looks like something from some sleazy tavern!"

Before you, blocking the entire tunnel, is a curtain made of large beads of many shapes and colors.

"It's really quite beautiful—" the cleric starts to say, awe in his voice.

The halfling interrupts scornfully, "You've got the taste of an orc!"

"I sense that it's magical!" Sulex continues, ignoring Flip's remark.

"But is it evil?" you ask, moving closer.

"No . . ." he replies. "Just magical."

"I suppose you want me to check it out," Flip says slowly, hoping you'll say no.

She walks toward the curtain. As she nears it, she calls back in a whisper, "I can't see anything through it. That's strange!" She studies it thoroughly and then finally leans forward, putting her ear against it.

In a minute, you see the halfling try to part the curtain, but nothing happens. Then she scurries back to you. "I don't see or hear anything on the other side of it. But the oddest thing is that the curtain doesn't move. I thought this kind of a curtain was meant to be walked through, but we sure can't walk through that one."

You go forward and push against the beads. Sure enough, it resists the pressure of your hand.

"Maybe we could cut our way through it," you muse. Drawing your sword, you plunge it into the beads, but when you push on the sword, you cannot push it through. You turn back to the others to see that Flip has been inspecting the tunnel walls very closely.

"Anything?" you ask.

"Nothing. We've either got to get through that curtain some way (26) or go back the way we came and try the other tower." (172)

305

"But—but—" The halfling's face is a study in distrust as she ignores your outstretched hand.

"But what?"

Flip shuffles one foot a moment and stares at it. "Never mind," she says quietly.

Then, as she looks up, a new determination in her face, you grab her hand with one of yours and the amulet with the other.

“What are—” The halfling’s question is silenced by a rush of wind. Your eyes close, and your stomach churns with the same strange pressure you felt when you entered the upside-down water world. Turn to **322**.

306

Sensing that the thief and cleric are in desperate trouble, you push to the surface to help them. As you arrive at the top, the creature grazes you with a flick of its wing tip.

“Carsten!” cries Sulex, clearly in pain. “You should have stayed down there!”

“But—” Suddenly you double over in pain, as if you’re being stabbed by a hundred tiny needles.

“We’ve got to get out of here! The hatch is our only hope! Please, Carsten”—Sulex is almost hysterical now—“get back down there right away and open it! That fish is attacking us with a magic spell that causes wounds. Hurry, Carsten!”

Deduct 2 points of damage from each of your hit point totals. If Sulex had a drink of the water-breathing potion earlier, turn to **277**. If only you and Flip drank it, turn to **111**.

307

You are closest to the left-hand loop, so you head that way. You are the first to step out on the narrow stone causeway. Flip follows you, leaving Sulex to come last. The stone path is rough and narrow, sometimes shrinking to only a few inches wide. The flames in the sea seem to reach deliberately for your feet as you move slowly across the sea of fire.

Rounding the outer part of the loop, you relax slightly, knowing that you've passed the point of no return. Or have you?

You look up just in time to see the fire giant come to life. It's not a statue after all! The huge black figure with red hair and beard picks up a boulder from a pile beside it, lifts it high over its head, and throws it straight toward you! You realize you're in a precarious position. Roll one die and add it to your dexterity skill score. If the total is 6 or more, turn to **281**. If it is less than 6, turn to **183**.



308

The cleric stands completely still, head bowed, for several minutes as he asks the aid of his gods in working his magic. The giant looks puzzled at first, then gets ready to hurl a rock at the lone figure. But before he can throw it, Sulex walks firmly over to the left side of the central platform, looks straight at the giant, points back to the stairs where you entered the fire chamber, and commands, "Flee!"

To see if the gods are favorable, roll one die. If you roll an even number, turn to **102**. If you roll an odd number, turn to **200**.

309

In one swift motion, you pull the amulet from your tunic and simultaneously grab Flip's arm, certain that Sulex's slow reactions will keep him from catching you. You feel a swift rush of air moving past you and the kind of strange pressure change that you perceived when you entered the water world. Turn to 322.

310

Flip moves to the door leading out of the chamber and says, "Thank goodness we can finally move without worrying about getting hurt! Let's get out of place. We've still got to find the Soul-Gem!"

You are about to follow the halfling through the door when the cleric asks, "What about that statue? There must be some reason why this floor was so horribly difficult to cross."

"Maybe the reason's through that door," suggests Flip.

Do you want to follow Flip through the door (255) or investigate the statue (294)?

311

"Thieves must pay the penalty for their actions," continues the count. Then his eyes bulge in fright as you leap at him, determined to make him listen to you.

The red of fury in your eyes, you quickly grab the dapper little man by the throat and start to choke him. Unfortunately, you failed to see him pull a cord to summon help. In a matter of seconds, two burly guards are pummeling you to the floor. . . .

When you finally come to, you are dismayed to find yourself in the same small, bleak dungeon cell.

You may begin the game again, with almost the

same character stats, by turning to **40** and making a less rash decision. However, you must deduct 3 hit points from your hit point total.

312

"But we were told that *you* would kill *us* after we got the Soul-Gem."

"So we were supposed to kill each other. The count wanted to be sure that no one would know for sure that he had the powerful Soul-Gem," you reason aloud.

The cleric peers around him. "Then that means he must be waiting until just one of us is left."

"So we've got to get away from here as quickly as possible," you finish.

"Can we try to find a cleric—one much more powerful than I—who can release those poor souls from that dreadful stone?"

"That's the first thing we'll do," you promise.

313

"We've got to get to that hatch in case that fish comes back!" you say urgently.

If all of you drank some of the Potion of Underwater Breathing, turn to **27**. If only Flip and you drank the potion, turn to **74**.

314

"Try the green square, Sulex," you urge.

"I hesitate to try that," says the cleric. "I went from a colored square to a different colored square before, and it *hurt!*"

"But you didn't go diagonally."

Staring daggers at you, Sulex moves onto the green square. Nothing happens, except that the square turns white. A puzzled look crosses the cleric's face.

"I went from colored square to colored square once, moving straight, and it hurt. I went from colored square to colored square a second time, moving diagonally, and it didn't hurt. This floor is just downright capricious!"

"No," you say thoughtfully. "The first time, you moved two squares at once. The second time, you moved only one square. Maybe that's the difference."

"Isn't there some way we can find out for sure without me being the guinea pig?" Sulex pleads.

You can have Sulex move straight ahead one square to a gray one (285), straight ahead two squares to a blue one (254), or diagonally to a different blue one (180).

315

You see the light flash out in the sector to the right of the ghostly bodies of the halfling and the cleric. *Well, you think, at least they can't be killed again . . . but you can if you don't hurry.* Turn to 56.

316

"Let's get out of here," you say abruptly.

"And just leave Flip behind?" the cleric asks, surprised.

"Maybe we'll find some way to meet her from the other side."

"Not with me, you won't!" replies Sulex angrily. "I'm not passing through another strange dungeon with just the two of us!"

"Very well. Then there's nothing left but to leave the castle altogether."

The cleric walks behind you sullenly as you climb the stairs and make your way out of Castle Parcesstar. The only time you see even a hint of a smile from him again is when Count Lasson's men capture

you and return you to the count's dungeon.

This adventure in the Ghost Tower is over. When you decide to adventure again, deduct 1 experience point from your roll because of your cowardice.

317

"No more choices, Carsten," the cleric says firmly. "I know what I'm doing now. I'm going to move only one step at a time." And that's just what he does, leaving a trail of white squares behind him as he moves safely across the room and joins Flip beside the statue. Turn to **269**.

318

The thief impatiently pushes Sulex out of the way and studies the latch, first with her eyes and then with her sensitive fingertips. Finally, bending over the latch to both listen for sounds and sniff for odors, she ever so slowly opens the latch. Swiftly she inserts a small finger in the opening.

"Aha! There was a trap!" She moves her hand quickly. "But I've got it now! Come on, everyone, help me!"

The three of you kneel by the rock and push. The rock suddenly swings back on a hidden hinge, revealing a space with a small metal box inside it.

"Look!" Flip exclaims. She holds out a tiny flask that she has removed from behind the latch. Thin, cloudy vapors swirl inside it. "Poison gas!"

"There's not much of it!" Sulex says scornfully.

"No . . ." Flip admits. "It probably wouldn't have done much damage." Turn to **234**.

319

"Whew!" exclaims Flip as you turn to move on. "That giant is going to be the death of me yet. Do we

really want to keep going toward him?"

"Do you see any alternative?" you call back.

There's silence for a few moments, and then you hear her say, "I guess not."

Moving as quickly as you can without taking unnecessary chances, you hurry around the loop to the central platform. Turn to 233.

320

"Before we get involved with whoever that is," you whisper, "you two go check those other two paths and see what's there in case we have to make a run for it."

Flip dashes off toward the left-hand path and Sulex heads for the right. But you neglected to warn them to be quiet!

The robed figure turns abruptly. You start to call a greeting when you suddenly realize it's a medusa!

The evil female figure with hair of writhing snakes glares malevolently at you, and you feel trapped by



her red-rimmed eyes. You try to look away but you can't! You must make a saving throw or be turned to stone! Roll two dice. If you get 11 or more, turn to **59**. If you roll less than 11, turn to 4.

321

"Spread out!" you shout. "That way it can't attack more than one of us at a time!" You smile grimly, your dagger held ready, knowing that at least the evil creature can't get all three of you with one charge.

As the monstrous raylike creature approaches, it swerves back and forth, as if it can't make up its mind which of you to attack. As it veers toward Flip, you feel one wing tip touch you slightly, and a wave of pain sweeps over you, as if you had been stabbed by a hundred tiny needles. You manage to strike out in a powerful sweeping motion with your dagger, and you feel it enter the rubbery wing.

The creature swerves back toward you. You see Flip stifling her own gasp of sudden pain and stabbing into the monster's other wing.

"It's . . . causing our wounds . . . magically!" you hear Sulex gasp.

Suddenly, to your amazement, the creature swims away to the far wall of the chamber, away from the metal disk in the coral, trailing wisps of blood as it goes. Deduct 2 points of damage from each of you and turn to **313**.

322

When you release the magical amulet and open your eyes, you find yourself standing in a clearing in a wooded area. In the distance, you can see the grim outline of Castle Parcestar, but there is no sign of the tower you have just escaped.

You hear a rustle beside you. The halfling you brought out of the tower with you has her arm pulled back, ready to drive her dagger into your back!

“Whoa!” you shout, jumping aside and pulling your sword at the same time. Apparently you have made the wrong choice. It was the halfling who was supposed to kill you. Now you must fight her. You know it won’t be easy—her size, her enthusiasm, and her agility will all make stopping her difficult. Your own reluctance to kill her will also count against you.

Roll two dice and add them to your fighting skill score. If the total is 11 or more, turn to **161**. If the total is less than 11, turn to **328**.

323

Cautiously, stepping on her toes as if she could make her small body weigh even less, Flip moves one square toward you into the blue square. Nothing happens, except that the square turns white.

“Whew!” she says, relieved. “What now?”

She can move straight toward the statue again onto a gray square (**265**), diagonally onto a blue one (**212**), or toward you onto a gray square (**36**).

324

You are in sector 3, ready to try to break the invisible sphere, when the unbearably dazzling light flashes out again. Roll a single die. If you get a 1, turn to **209**; 2, **315**; 3, **286**; 4, **78**; 5, **131**; 6, **23**.

325

What is Sulex doing? You take one step toward the cleric, and a look of horror comes over his face. He starts to back away from you.

“Don’t touch me!” he pleads.

“Why should I do that?” you reply, puzzled.

"Because you were told to get rid of us, and Flip's already dead."

"I was told one of you was going to kill me, once we got the Soul-Gem." Turn to **73**.

326

With Flip and Sulex looking as apprehensive as you feel, you each move according to your plan.

Cries of pain ring out as you all fall to the floor in pain, clutching your legs. The squares then blink to cold white and the pain subsides.

"I'll make my own decisions from now on," exclaims Flip, "and I'm going to stay right here!"

Deduct 1 point of damage from each of your hit point totals. In addition, you deduct 1 experience point from Carsten's experience point total. Then turn back to where you came from when you thought you understood this room and choose again.

327

The ray flashes into the sector where you are standing. Roll one die to make a saving throw. If the number you roll matches the number of experience points you have remaining or is less, turn to **20**. If it is higher, turn to **203**.

328

You look at Flip's little body and her small dagger and know that she doesn't stand a chance against you and your sure sword. But as you hesitate, the determined halfling drops in under your sword and drives her dagger deep into your midsection.

Stunned, you feel your sword fall from your hand as you clutch your middle. "Wh—why, Flip?" you gasp.

Tears leap to her eyes and there's a quaver in her voice as she says, "You—you were going to kill me!"

"No," you say simply as you fall to your knees.

"But the count said you would!" she cries.

The light is fading now, but you feel your lips twist in irony. "They said someone would kill . . ." But the sentence remains forever unfinished.

329

You stop in sector 2, ready to try to break the invisible sphere, when the unbearably dazzling light flashes out again. Roll a single die. If you get a 1, turn to **209**; 2, **303**; 3, **181**; 4, **78**; 5, **131**; 6, **23**.

330

"Nothing!" the cleric says in disgust, throwing the vial down in the sand. He heaves a deep sigh and then says, "All right, I'll stay on the surface. Just don't try going anywhere without me if you find a way out of here." Turn to **24**.

331

Suddenly your attention is drawn from the Soul-Gem in your hand to the cleric. He has dropped to his knees and is talking to his gods. You see him glance at you sharply out of the corner of his eyes.

You wonder, as you place the Soul-Gem in your pouch, just what he is saying. Is he thanking them for getting the gem and remaining in one piece, or is he asking for their aid in something, something that you're not going to like?

If you want to grab Sulex's arm and use the amulet to get out of the tower, turn to **275**. If you would rather wait to see what Sulex is doing, turn to **108**.

332

Flip's morning star whistles by you and hits the summoner's head. With relief, you feel the creature's

claws release their death grip on your neck, and then the creature slides to the ground, dead. If this is the first su-monster you have fought, turn to **35**. If it is the second, turn to **227**.



333

The speed with which the count draws his sword takes you by surprise, especially since he immediately plunges it into your upper arm.

You hunch your right shoulder, as if somehow that will stop the bleeding and pain. But in doing so, your own answering thrust loses its arrow precision and veers to the left, barely nicking the count.

A slight smile crosses his face as he says, "You'll never win that way, young man."

The agile count moves aside just as you lunge again . . . leaving your back unguarded. It is the last mistake you ever make.

334

In frustration, you strike at the invisible sphere again. Why are you having so much trouble hitting it?

For the third time in a row, your blow is unsuccessful. In despair, you wonder if perhaps you're spending too much time here. At that moment, the dreadful white ray of light beams out from the Soul-Gem, and this time it strikes you. Every inch of your

body screams out in excruciating pain. A long, thin scream escapes you.

The last thing you are aware of is a great wrenching inside you as your soul is pulled from your body into the evil gem that awaits it.

335

Eagerly you pull the metal bar out of your pouch and hand it to Flip. She looks at it, turns it around in her hand, and inserts it into one side of the indented oval figure.

"It fits!" the halfling cries. "What about the other side?"

"I don't have it," you reply.

"Does that mean we have to go back and hunt for it?" asks Sulex nervously.

"I'm afraid so," you reply. "Remember, there are two towers in this castle, and we've only explored one of them so far. We've got to go back the way we came and enter the other tower."

"Hey, that must be the answer!" exclaims Flip suddenly. "Look at this indentation. The oval represents the courtyard of Castle Parcesstar, and the round things at the end are the towers. We've only got half of the key."

Carefully you remove the metal bar from the indentation and return it to your pouch. If you are in the west tower, turn to **266**. If you're in the east tower, turn to **172**.

336

You are in sector 2, not far from the ladder you came up. Suddenly a dazzling ray of light flashes out. Roll a single die. If you roll a 1, turn to **129**; 2, **213**; 3, **197**; 4, **166**; 5, **105**; 6, **223**. If Sulex and Flip have moved into sector 4 and you roll a 4, turn to **246**.



Fire swirls all around you as the bat swoops and dives and claws at you. You begin to despair that you can ever escape with your life. Can it be that you are less able to fight than Flip and Sulex? You see them watching you, surprise showing on their faces.

Finally you feel the batlike creature clamp its tiny jaws into your arm. In horror, you see the creature begin to swell with your own blood!

Panic-stricken, you slap at it with your hands. Then suddenly you hear, "Hold still, Carsten!"

Almost unconsciously, your body obeys the thief's command, and you feel the reverberations of a blow and a thrust as the thief and the cleric attack the creature. It releases its hold and then disappears in a burst of flame, back to the hell it came from.

You sink to your knees—relieved, embarrassed, and very tired. Roll one die for damage and deduct the result from your hit points, then turn to 134.



"Do you have any spells that might be useful?" you ask Sulex.

"Hmmm . . ." The cleric pauses. "I have a Command spell I can use to give the giant a simple order."

"Like 'die'?" asks Flip.

"I couldn't do that," replies Sulex.

"Will he really do anything you command?" you ask.

"If my gods are in agreement that it is a good thing," Sulex replies.

"What command do you think you should use?"

"Well, I could try 'flee' (308), or perhaps 'freeze.' "

(238)

You and Flip step out onto the narrow causeway. You hesitate and look back at Sulex. "Go on!" he hisses.

You don't think you've ever seen such a huge slab of stone. You look at the tiny halfling and the thin cleric and suddenly you feel the task is hopeless. But you know you've got to try.

The three of you stand on one side of the overhanging end of the top slab and push with all your strength. The slab doesn't move an inch.

Finally, muscles quivering from the strain, you say, "It's no use. Let's move on." Turn to 170.

"My mind's made up, Carsten. I'm going to the gray!" Flip declares, and before you can object, she heads straight toward you to the gray square. It promptly turns white without harming her.

"I'm on a roll now," she says, "and headed for home." She turns to her right and heads straight for

the statue at the far side of the room. As she reaches the statue, she lets out a shout of triumph.

If Sulex is already at the statue, turn to **269**. If he is not, turn to **55**.

341

"Use your Detect Evil spell, Sulex. We'll have to deal with later problems when we come to them."

"You're the leader," Sulex says and withdraws a holy symbol from his robe and holds it in front of him. Raising the lighted staff with his other hand, he steps to the opening. You follow and stand beside him.

"There is unquestionably some powerful evil presence in this place, Carsten," he says, "but whether it is something here right now or just the remnants of the evil sorcerer's presence, I can't say."

"That's not much help," you say.

"That's probably the best you're ever going to get from him," remarks Flip caustically.

"Would you rather go ahead without my spell?" Sulex demands angrily.

"No, of course not, Sulex," you say, trying to salve things over before they go too far. "We need your help." You pause and take a long look at the halfling and cleric, wondering whether they will be a help or a hindrance to your quest.

"Well, is everyone ready? Let's go." Cross the Detect Evil spell from Sulex's list of spells and turn to **304**.

342

Flip gasps as she watches you holding the gem.

"What's the matter?" you ask. "Did you expect something to happen to me?"

"No . . ." she replies slowly. Then, abruptly chang-

ing the subject, she asks, "How are we going to get out of here? Did the count tell you that?"

You finger the amulet, which still hangs safely beneath your tunic. Now that the time has come to use it, you are reluctant to step off into the unknown with someone you don't trust.

But which one can't you trust? You look at the little halfling, who, giving up hearing your answer, merely shrugs her shoulders and begins searching through her pouch for something. She has carried a large share of the load on this quest, accomplishing tasks that would be difficult for someone twice her size.

Then your eyes turn to Sulex, who, as usual, is waiting patiently for someone other than himself to decide something. He has always done as you asked, even when he clearly didn't agree with you. You really have no idea how real his relationship to his gods is. Perhaps he could have done a great more during the quest but held back. Perhaps he wanted you to fail.

Thinking back on your death-defying journey through this accursed place, you decide that you can trust only . . . Flip; turn to **309**. Sulex; turn to **275**. Yourself; turn to **156**.



343

You wish you could quit this quest. You're tired of fighting, and you seem to be getting nowhere. But, of course, it isn't possible to stop . . . not yet.

You cross the clearing and start up the right-hand path, trying to stay alert despite your weariness. After about thirty feet, the path turns to the right, then makes a half right again.

"Look!" shouts Flip, pointing to some stairs ahead. "Maybe we can finally get out of this jungle!"

"Don't forget the last stairs we climbed—we were greeted on the way up by a pair of hungry pteranodons," observes Sulex.

Flip's eagerness immediately subsides somewhat.

"Well, we're going to have to climb them anyway," you say. "All we can do is be as ready as possible for whatever dangers we meet."

Flip goes up the stairs first, her morning star held ready. Sulex follows, while you bring up the rear, alert for any sign of danger. Turn to 187.

344

You can do nothing to keep from being pulled upward, but you certainly don't want to zoom straight on through the hole without a chance to see where you're going. As you near the edge of the hole, you reach out and grab it. You can feel the muscles in your shoulders tear as you try to hang on against the powerful force dragging you through. Finally you know you have to let go and let the force take you wherever it's going to. Roll one die for damage and deduct the roll from your hit points, then turn to 12.

345

"Guards!" you hear the count call out behind you. You land safely on a grassy surface, and there to your

right, where you saw him just before you left on the quest, a stable hand is just beginning to unsaddle a sleek black horse. You push the startled groom out of the way and leap into the saddle. In moments, you're into the woods and away.

The sound of pursuers follows you for several hours, but you're back in country you know well, and you have little trouble evading them.

As night falls, you enter a strange town, knowing that you now have a new quest—to find someone who can release the souls imprisoned in the terrible Soul-Gem of the Ghost Tower of Parcesstar.

The next time you dare to enter the Ghost Tower, give yourself 1 extra experience point for surviving the evil tower and returning with the Soul-Gem. You only wish that Flip and Sulex had survived with you.

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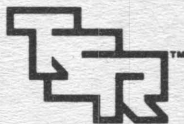
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