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MISTAKEN IDENTITY:
AN ADVENTURE FOR
ROLEMASTER

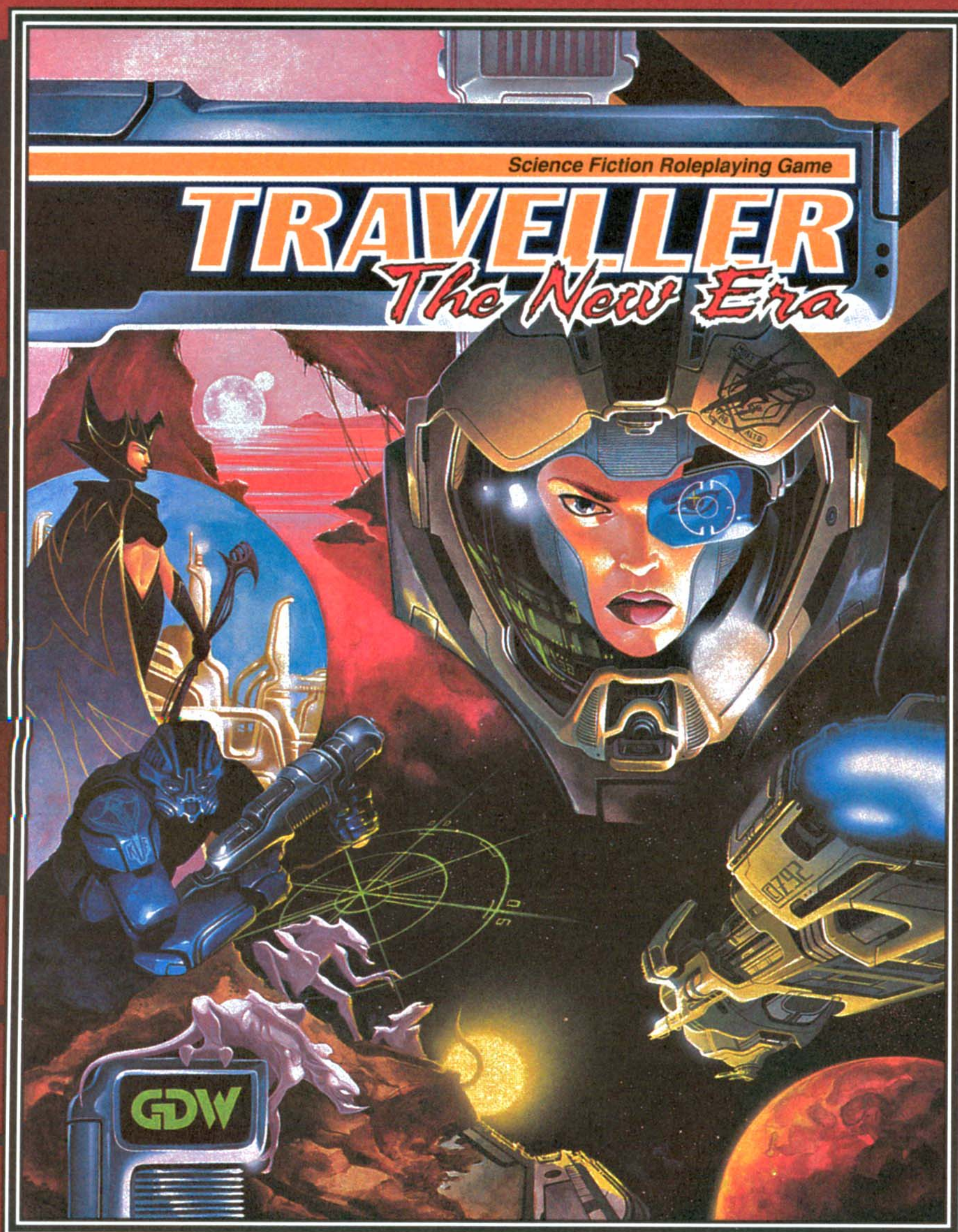
RAMMING RULES
FOR
SILENT DEATH

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OF
ILLUSIONS

CHANNELING:
GODS, CULTS &
PRIESTHOODS

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CHECK OUT NEW RULES FOR
SILENT DEATH: NIGHT BROOD
THIS ISSUE!

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VERBAGE LAWS

OPINIONS

PROPER CHANNELS

A new edition of *Rolemaster* will begin construction soon. It will probably take a solid year, maybe two, to finish. It has been 10+ years since *Rolemaster* entered the market, and it has remained virtually unchanged in that time. This is both good and bad.

It is good because *Rolemaster* has demonstrated longevity as a product. It has proved a solid contender against giants like *AD&D*®. However, it is also a bad. Because it has remained virtually unchanged, it has stagnated. I.C.E. has released many *Companions* to satiate those in need of new rules. The popularity of these products and the amount of material that is used from them is a clear signal that it is time for a change. And a change is coming.

For all of you who have wished for a real, new edition (not just a make-over), it is time to submit your criticisms, praise, and most importantly, your ideas. The revisionist movement within I.C.E. is strong, but it could be stronger. *Rolemaster* players everywhere have the opportunity to be a part of this movement.

Rolemaster is a dinosaur that needs to be re-awakened into our century. It needs to be a reincarnation that no one ever expected, yet will be largely embraced. And you, the *Rolemaster* player, have the power to make this happen.

Frankly, it is beyond the abilities of the original designers to make this happen by themselves. They do not have the roleplaying hours necessary to completely and effectively accomplish such a monumental task. But you (we) do. We have played the game for 10+ years. Collectively, that translates into millions of hours of playtesting! We know what we would like changed. We know what problems have brought our games to a grinding halt. We can change the future of *Rolemaster*.

Iron Crown Enterprises needs our help like never before to make this project a success. To me, *Rolemaster* is a large investment of my time and energy. My time is not cheap and it is not abundant. My roleplaying time has become a commodity that I don't like to waste. As I get older, I find it more and more difficult to even find the time necessary to sit

down and play. Sadly, I now talk about playing more than I actually do it. But when I do get the chance, *Rolemaster* is my choice.

Grey Worlds is my dream. It is shared by my partners. You are holding in your hands my dream come true. It is a goal I have achieved with the help of others. I thank them all. But I now have another dream. I dream that the new edition of *Rolemaster* will be a game written by the thousands of players who have made it the success that it is today. It is my dream that the original designers of *Rolemaster* need not do anything but sift through the ideas and suggestions that we are going to inundate them with. It will be their job to incorporate and assemble these contributions into the most realistic and elegant roleplaying system in the industry.

Future issues of *Grey Worlds* will contain updates as to the progress of the new edition. These pieces will describe the current sections that are under review and what aspects are being scrutinized. It will then be your job to immediately send your ideas to *Grey Worlds* for an open discussion of those aspects. We will organize the ideas that we receive and present them in subsequent issues so that you can see what others are thinking. At the same time, I.C.E. will see it as well and can then use it to create the greatest roleplaying system of all.

Help us realize *our* dream.

Lem Richards

IN OTHER WOR{L}DS

Have you ever seen one of those cool video arcade game constructor programs? They let you build your own arcade game from the ground up. You decide what needs to be done, points gained, screen visuals, and basically everything else. When finished, you've created exactly what you want; your vision of the ultimate video game. A lot of shareware games are crafted using these arcade constructor programs. They are great and powerful tools.

But if you were looking for an awesome video game which you could immediately play and picked up a constructor program, you'd be very disappointed. There is no game to play—yet. You have to do it all yourself, and many computer buffs are not up to this task. So in this situation you'd probably curse the program for being “useless,” “needlessly complex,” “stupid,” “something only a Ph.D. can comprehend,” and other epithets which cannot be printed here. Clearly, a video game constructor program is not for the Nintendo crowd; its use requires patience, intelligence, creativity, tenacity, and a certain degree of obsessive/compulsive behavior (some would call this madness).

I'm sure many of you see this coming, but it has to be said. You see, I don't think **Rolemaster** is a roleplaying game! I believe that it is far more analogous to the video game constructor program mentioned above. **Rolemaster** is really a roleplaying game constructor kit and thus has more in common with the original **D&D**® than the current **AD&D2**®. Greybeards and other cognoscenti will recall these three small books (with the worst art on the face of the earth) as a set of vague guidelines on how a roleplaying game might be derived from existing miniatures campaigns: no specifics, just suggestions. Compare this to the current incarnation which specifies incredibly minute details of play (like what kind of slime is affected by a which sort of spell). Obviously, **Rolemaster** is more involved than anything made in 1974, but conceptually they are alike.

Using **Rolemaster**, you can construct your own world from the ground up, individualizing major systems mechanics, religions, races, and even physical (scientific) principles. No two worlds can ever be the same (unless designed by siamese twins of course). This recently came home to me in a big way. A friend invited a veteran **Rolemaster** gamer to join our group for a few sessions. Since he was an old hand, I told him to draw up a character while we continued play. In about 20 minutes he said he was finished and gave me the sheet to okay. We were utterly amazed! This character was drawn up using just about every option I don't use and none that I actually do! For example,

I use stat bonuses in increments of “5” and he uses the smoothed stats method, I use the “old-fashioned” character classes while he created his own unique PC development costs, I use the old skills and he uses the new USS rules, I say “poe-tah-toe” and he says “poe-tay-toe,” etc. This disparity was evident in every aspect of his character! If he had created a character using **GURPS**®, **HERO**®, or **Runequest**®, it could not have been any more different from the systems I use. And we were supposedly playing the same game! What now seems clear is that we each developed unique (and mutually exclusive) roleplaying game systems using the **Rolemaster** RPG constructor set. I now understand some of the grumbling and criticisms I've heard regarding **Rolemaster**. These disappointed folks bought **Rolemaster** thinking they could immediately start play and were put off by the fact that they had to choose their own rules. No wonder they were pissed!

This revelation has altered my perceptions of the upcoming **Rolemaster** revision. I think that it might be useful to designate “Basic Game” rules systems and place them in their own booklet for people who want to play immediately. I still love the “option-overdose” **Rolemaster** gives me, so these should still be included. However, these options should not be a barrier to newcomers interested in **Rolemaster's** combat or spell system.

If including a Basic Game is deemed unfeasible, I.C.E. should present **Rolemaster** as what it is—a roleplaying game constructor kit. They should stop treating it as a roleplaying game in and of itself.

Tim Taylor



*“I don't think **Rolemaster** is a roleplaying game...”*

***Rolemaster** is really a roleplaying game constructor kit.”*



RULEMASTER

As far as I know, illusions in *Rolemaster* are treated differently than just about any other fantasy game. They are not images implanted into someone's mind. "Disbelieving" in them will do you no good. An illusion is "real" in the sense that a movie is real—it is there for you to see, hear and experience, but it was created by someone else to make you think that it is real.

Before I go any further, however, let me state that many of the rules interpretations below are not necessarily "official." You, as a GM, can run illusions in any way you wish. My interpretation will limit the power of Illusionists, to be sure, as I feel their magic should be relegated to the realm of trickery and deception. More generous GMs will find that Illusionists become powerful "creators," rather than tricksters. I have seen people run games in which an illusionary bridge (with a "feel" sense to it) was used to cross a chasm, an illusionary fire provided light, and illusionary food was eaten and digested. I don't think any of that should be possible. That's not what illusions are.

So what is an illusion? It is an immobile "scene" which is magically projected over an area. Since the basic area of effect listed for the spell is 10' R, the scene can be three-dimensional. Already some interesting facets of illusions can be seen—they can be used to cover up or hide something real. If there is a treasure chest in the corner of the room, an illusion of the corner of the room without the chest can be created "on top" of the real chest, hiding it. It is interesting to note that while the illusion lasts, there is no way to *visually* detect that anything is amiss. Even if a character goes up to the chest and touches it, he will see his hand pass right through the area, even though he will feel the chest with his hand and hear his fingers run along its surface. Obviously, the same is true of any illusionary object. An illusionary wooden door cast upon a stone wall will look real, but characters examining it will feel the stone wall with their hands (though they will see their hands touch a wooden door). And they certainly won't be able to open it.

This is where the other senses that can be added to higher level illusions come in handy. That same wooden door will look, feel and even sound and smell real if the appropriate senses are added. The "feel" sense can be dispelled (unlike the others) by striking it. Lightly touching, rubbing, or examining will *not* dispel the sense. It is handy nonetheless to add a couple of "feel" senses to an illusion in case it gets struck. Since illusions are immobile, though, they still won't be able to open it.

Phantasms are illusions that can move. However, they can only be a single object or creature. Therefore, if a caster wanted the above door to open and reveal a pretty garden beyond, the door would have to be a Phantasm, while the garden beyond would be a separate illusion.

Sometimes it is useful to think of an illusion, even a moving phantasm, as a picture—no matter how realistic it looks, and no matter how much you believe it to be real, it is not real. A picture of food is not nutritious, a picture of a door will not really lead to the other side of a wall, and a picture of a fire will not light up the room.

It is important to remember that an illusion (or phantasm) is three dimensional, and hides anything "real" that it is cast over. An illusion of a boulder will hide anything real that occupies the same space as the illusionary boulder. Why is this obvious point important to keep in mind? Consider an illusionary torch (actually, it would have to be a phantasm—lets just accept the term illusion as a catch-all for illusions and phantasm for now). It can easily be created by a low-level spell, and a "feel" sense added will allow it to be gripped (although concentration on the original caster's part would be necessary for it to be moved). But does it give off any light? No. Any light that it created would have to be illusionary light. The caster could create such light, within the radius of the spell, but such light would *cover up anything real in the radius*. Instead of illuminating an area, it would be covering that area up.

Now, a caster could create an illusionary torch, with an illusionary radius of light, and include illusionary objects illuminated by the illusionary light (if the torch-flame was to be believed, i.e., so that it flickered, it would have to be a separate phantasm while everything else could be an illusion).

In other words, an illusion spell cannot substitute for a light spell. Nor is it an effective method of attack. A phantasm of a dragon will be really scary (and may effectively scare someone away—which should be the caster's intent), but even with a bunch of "feel" senses on it, it isn't going to do much damage. Anytime an illusion with a "feel" sense strikes someone, it attacks on the Bare Fist table. Not a lot of potential for damage.

Likewise, an illusion cannot pick up something real—the illusionary dragon mentioned above cannot pick up the caster and fly him to the next city. The "feel" sense is not an excuse for an illusionist to be able to create any object or creature he feels like and have it effectively interact with the real world. A character attempting to climb an illusionary ladder with a "feel" illusion might look and feel like he has

"Illusions can be used to trick, to hide, to frighten, or to intimidate. That's what they are for, and that is all that they are for."

climbed it, but he will find that once he is at the “top,” he has actually not gone anywhere. Illusions are tricks played on the senses—nothing more.

A character falling into an illusionary pit (with a “feel” sense) will take damage from the Bare Fist table, and will appear (to himself and others) as though he is down in the pit (which, obviously, can only be as deep as the illusion’s area of effect). If he just takes a few steps, however (even though it will appear and feel like he has run into the side of the pit), he will find himself back on the surface next to the illusionary pit.

Lets forget about the “feel” sense for a minute. What happens if a character throws a ball through an illusionary wall? The spell description states that the only way to discover that a visual illusion is through use of a detection spell or another sense. That means that no matter what, visually, our illusion is a wall. That would mean that while the real ball flies right through the wall, it will appear to have bounced off the wall and will land on the floor. Of course, that ball cannot actually be picked up as its not real. Players investigating the other side of the illusionary wall will find the real ball.

Illusions, as a general rule, cannot affect other things. They can only be affected. One exception to this is the fact that they can cause damage to real things. A phantasm cast to look like a sword with a “feel” sense will really wound someone (using the Bare Fist table), or will really parry another’s blow, until it expends all of its “feel” senses. Since the caster will have to concentrate on its motion with the wielder’s hand, it is wielded the caster’s directed spell bonus, not the user’s sword OB. Not very effective, but better than nothing.

Another exception is that illusions are not automatically governed by the laws of physics as we know them. An illusionary wall without a “feel” sense will not protect you from the wind or rain, nor will it cast a shadow. Illusions are not affected by gravity, so a phantasm of the aforementioned sword will not fall to the ground if dropped, unless the caster is concentrating. An interesting note here is that a phantasm can move as fast as the caster wishes, as long as it stays within his range. Therefore, it is easy to make an illusion mimic an object falling or flying through the air. Illusions are not affected by the medium in which they exist (air, water, etc.), nor are they affected by spells which would affect the object that they appear to be. So, a *Portal* spell will not work on an illusionary door, and an illusionary sword cannot be heated by *Heat Solid*. A caster can, of course, alter a phantasm to make it look like the object is affected, if he is concentrating.

Illusions are very good at deception, though. Since a visual illusion cannot be detected as an illusion visually, we must assume that they automatically react (at least visually) to stimuli. So an illusionary warrior will appear to bleed if cut, an illusionary piece of cloth can appear to be torn, and an illusionary sponge will appear to absorb water. The same, obviously, is true of illusions with “sound,” “smell,” “taste,” and “feel” senses as well. Without a *Detect Illusion* spell, or the willingness to strike everything you see a few times to dispel the “feel” sense, high-level illusions with all the senses are nearly impossible to detect.

Illusions can be used to trick, to hide, to frighten, or to intimidate. That’s what they are for, and that is all that they are for.

Monte Cook





ROLEMASTER BASICS

“Get Back, Get Back, Back to
Where You Once Belonged.”

or

“Everyone Smiles as You Drift Past Companions
that Grow So Incredibly High.”

In my column this issue, I discuss the need to present basic rules for *Rolemaster*; something which can get people into the game immediately. This concept of a basic set of rules is vastly different from what is commonly referred to as “the Core Rules” (one of the most complex and convoluted set of RPG rules in existence). Basic rules should introduce new players and GMs to key elements of the *Rolemaster* system. In my opinion, these parts of *Rolemaster* are the keys: Weapon tables, Critical Strikes tables, Maneuver table, Static Action table(s), and the Spell List structure. A basic game would introduce folks to these concepts without them having to read 300 pages of rules. Actually, six pages of rules is about the maximum neophytes can handle. Now, you know I wouldn’t be writing this if I didn’t have my own ideas on the nature of these basic rules, so here goes.

First, everything which is not essential must be jettisoned. This means everything. Ditch classes, development points, stats, and so on. Basically, only Skills remain. Skill bonuses add to die rolls yielding a total which is then referenced on the appropriate table. That’s it. Let players allocate a certain number of bonus points to the skills they favor - these bonuses are the totality of their characters. For example, players might have 100 points worth of bonuses to assign amongst about two dozen skills. A person could put all 100 points into one skill, but would be so specialized as to be useless in 90% of all situations. More likely, players would choose a handful of skills upon which to concentrate. Here are some suggestions for which skills should exist in the basic rules:

- **Academics:** Learned in separate areas, like Alchemy, Demon Lore, Herb Lore, Math Lore, etc.
- **Agility-based Maneuvers:** This is like Acrobatics, Tumbling, original Maneuvers and so on.
- **Ambush:** Just like the current skill, plus Spell Ambush and Sniping if desired.
- **Armor Type:** Each bonus point raises a PC’s AT by 1. Certain ATs are not available (i.e., ATs 3,4,11, and 12).
- **Attunement:** Covers Staves & Wands, Divination, Runes, Symbol Lore, Channeling, etc.
- **Body Development:** Hit Points are acquired one hit per bonus point allocated. A PC suffering more hits than his total hit points would go unconscious, while more than double this total kills the character.

- **Brawling:** Used only if the Brawling Attack table is available.
- **Climbing:** Maybe this should be subsumed under Agility-based Maneuvers. I think it should remain separate.
- **Directed Spells:** Learned in separate areas, like *Firebolt*, *Shock Bolt*, etc.
- **Entertainment:** This includes playing instruments and writing music as well as dancing etc.
- **First Aid:** Subsumes all medical skills.
- **Foraging:** Includes all survival skills.
- **Leadership & Influence:** Covers many skills, like Duping, Hypnosis, Public Speaking, Propaganda, Diplomacy, Seduction, etc.
- **Martial Arts:** Two separate areas, Sweeps & Throws and Strikes. Rank distinctions are ignored.
- **Meditation:** Allows renewal of used Power Points.
- **Perception:** Subsumes all types of Perception skills.
- **Pick Locks & Disarm Traps:** Also allows for building traps.
- **Pick Pockets:** Includes all Trickery, Sleight of Hand, Stage Magic, etc.
- **Power Points:** These are acquired one PP per bonus point allocated. Required to use spells.
- **Riding:** Different animals should be treated separately.
- **Spell Acquisition:** One bonus point buys one spell. When getting spells from a list, remember that first level spells must be bought before second level ones, and so on. Any other restrictions are up to the GM.
- **Stalk & Hide:** Includes other Subterfuge skills as well.
- **Strength-based Maneuvers:** This is like Adrenal Moves Strength, original Maneuvering in Armor, and so on.
- **Swimming:** Maybe this should be subsumed under Agility-based Maneuvers. I think it should remain separate.
- **Tracking:** Includes all related skills.
- **Weapon Skills:** Bought separately for each different weapon table.

The only thing left to explain to a novice is attack & critical table results and how to apply them. That’s all there is to my vision of a *Rolemaster* basic game. Whenever a GM wanted, he could move up to the Standard (or Core) rules with a confidence born from experience using this system. If he wanted, he could remain playing the basic version forever—by augmenting a PC’s skill bonus with a few extra points whenever they were successfully employed. Such a system will open up *Rolemaster* to the vast ranks of roleplayers who don’t have the patience (or madness) to plunge headfirst into this games’ complex system. And that’s what I.C.E. needs, more young *Rolemaster* players, to si-phon off some of TSR’s market stranglehold.

Tim Taylor (with apologies to the Beatles)

*“First, every-
thing which is
not essential
must be
jettisoned.
This means
everything.
Ditch classes,
development
points, stats,
and so on.”*

GREY AREAS

MAILBOX



Wow! The first ever professional edition of *Grey Worlds* was a resounding success. I think this magazine just keeps getting better and better. One request, though. Please bring the old Grey-credo back, "Because Life Is Not Always Black And White..." I really miss it.

Hats off to Leslie and Jeanette Roth for two fabulous spell lists: Mirror Magic and Bubble Magic. I'd been looking for these lists for some time, but of course they didn't exist until now. Great! I look forward to seeing more of your work.

Good luck to all the *Grey Worlds* family!

Tim Taylor

Thanks, Tim. You've probably noticed by now that the 'Grey-credo' is back. This was only the second time in our history that it failed to appear, and it looks like it's here to stay. RH.

Congratulations on an outstanding beginning of a new era for *Grey Worlds*. The new format is great! Mr. McBride's art is always stunning (though I might have consider using the other half of the picture to match rather than duplicate *Arms Companion*).

Monte's *Rulemaster* article had some much needed suggestions for Runes, Glyphs, etc. My quibble is this: there are one-shot Runes (created by an *Imbed* spell and the target spell only) and then there are Scrolls (created by the Rune Mastery list—should be Scroll Mastery). Runes activate by command word (determined by Runes skill or spell), but Scrolls are spells that are read/cast by reading (and a Read Runes roll). My players are always confused by the difference. Rune/Scroll paper probably should be more expensive than 1 GP per sheet. Perhaps 1 GP per spell level or even 10 GP per spell level. Since the paper has levels, it should have a cost per level as well (as it requires a higher level spell to make). I also think it should become worn out or de-magicked and require re-charging as Staves and Wands do. One day per level of Rune/Scroll, for example. The rest of the article makes a lot of sense and common sense as written.

Pandora's Box is probably my favorite regular feature since it usually has one or two common items that I've never considered giving a price (for example, fishing poles and lodestones). *Pandora's Box* and *Shades of Essence* provide very useful campaign

style material that any Gamemaster can use. Is there a typo in the *Create Mirror* spell description (6 inch by 6 inch perhaps). I'd consider a duration on the spell (perhaps 1-10 min/level).

Looking at the future, since I.C.E. is pondering a 1994 release for a revised version of *Rolemaster* (to follow the *MERP* 2nd edition this year), I'd like to see some proposals and discussions for how *Rolemaster* might be made better, stronger, faster, etc. To put my foot in the door (or perhaps my mouth), I've always thought *Character Law* needed to be reorganized to promote character development. Here, as food for thought, is a quick outline for a new *Character Law*.

First, all the *Campaign Law* material is moved to the back or another book (it is excellent material in its own right).

Introduction: System standards, dice used, types of rolls, etc.

Statistics: Types/descriptions, how to roll stats, stat bonuses (normal, *RMCI*, other), determining temp/potentials, statistic gains, replacing stats with 90s, etc.

Classes: Descriptions, table of such, prime stats.

Races: Descriptions, table of stat bonuses, secondary bonuses, heights and weights.

Background Options: Number available, the tables from *ChL* and *RMCI*, selected background options (*RMCI* IV, *GW* Vol. 1, #6[pre-commercial release—Ed.] or *Arms Companion*).

Skills: Determining DPs, primary skills, secondary skills, skill systems (*ChL*, *RMCI* II, *RMCI* VI), skill descriptions & costs.

Skill Purchasing: Adolescence, Apprenticeship, Hobby skills, other skills.

Levels: Definition, XP tables (variations thereof), non XP variants.

Character Finish/Gloss: Starting moneys, languages, items, background, etc.

Following these chapters in order, perhaps with examples along the sidebar, would be more conducive to development of PCs for the first time player. Core rules could be in *Character Law* and optional rules (culled from *RMCI* VII, *Grey Worlds* and other sources) could be in *Character Companion*. Any comments, stones or tomatoes?

Andrew C. Durston



Rolemaster

PANDORA'S BOX

QUALITY EQUIPMENT FOR THE DISCERNING ADVENTURER

Your entrance to "The Box" is heralded by a handful of loud bells on a horse harness tacked to the door. Looking around the foyer, you notice Mayk dusting shelves towards the back of the main hall.

"Comin', I'm comin'", he declares. He eyes you suspiciously for a moment, smiles broadly, then grabs your hand in a strong grip and pumps your arm in welcome.

"Come in, come in!" he says enthusiastically. "Going to enter the Archer's Tourney, I see."

Looking down at your nondescript dress and wondering just how he could know that, you start to inquire, "But how..." Mayk cuts off your question, shouting from down the hall, "Then come along, come along, time's a-wasting, we've got to get you set up for the Tourney tomorrow!"

You follow him down a long hallway and enter a little-used room. Stirring dust at every step, you hack and cough as you follow Mayk back and around between the shelves until you notice a dusty pile in the back corner...

Taras—A large shield fitted with a spike or spikes. The spikes are used to affix the shield to a solid surface in an upright position. A small notch is located upon one corner of the shield. The most common use for the Taras is to protect archers from missile attacks. The Taras grants the user the benefit of a shield bonus (wall shield) vs. missile weapons if the shield is properly assembled. Shield bonus only applies to frontal missile attacks made against the user. May also be used as an ordinary wall shield. Cost 10 sp. Weight 35-55 lbs.

Pavise—A large rectangular shield, worn on the back and held in place by two leather straps. The Pavise is commonly worn by archers while stringing and loading their bows. The typical method employed is to expose the shield (strapped on the back), reload/string the weapon, turn and fire. Adds +40 to DB during reload/string operations vs. missile weapons if the shield is facing the opponent. May be used as an ordinary wall shield. Cost 95 bp. Weight 30-50 lbs.

Atlatl—A 2 to 3 foot long piece of wood, with a gently curved handle on one end and a haft cup on the other. The Atlatl is a spear thrower which extends the distance and force which a spear may be thrown by extending the arch and speed of release. Adds half again as much range to the spear being thrown (as per spear type) and adds +10 to the attack made. Skill must be developed with the Atlatl per each individual spear type. Cost 5 cp. Weight 2-5 lbs.

Arming Doublet—A padded leather vest-like garment worn underneath heavy armor to cushion blows and prevent chafing. Adds +10 to DB when worn with armor. Acts as AT/3 when worn singly. May only be worn under AT/13 or higher. Double preparation time for armor when the doublet is desired. Cost 1 sp. Weight 5-10 lbs.

Gaffe—A wooden rod fitted with a side bar pivoted towards the center. The Gaffe was used to easily cock and lock into place the string of a crossbow. The Gaffe reduced the required strength and time needed to operate a crossbow. When the Gaffe is used, all crossbow loading and preparation rounds are halved. Cost 2 sp. Weight 2-4 lbs.

Sharpening Sheath—Ordinary blade sheath fitted with molded sharpening stones. Automatically sharpens blade when inserted or removed. Sheath must be individually made for each weapon. Adds +5 to attack rolls. Belt version: Cost 40 bp. Weight 1.5 lbs. Shoulder version: Cost 47 bp. Weight 2 lbs.

Push Lever—A crossbow cocking mechanism. Consists of a lever with a hinged limb three-fourths of the way down its length. The lever is hooked into the front of the bow while the limb pushes the string back until it is in the cocked position. A small hook/stirrup placed on the front of the crossbow is required for use of the push lever. Use effectively halves all crossbow reloading times. Cost 3 sp. Weight 2-4 lbs.

Joseph B. Daugherty and Daniel A. Whiteside

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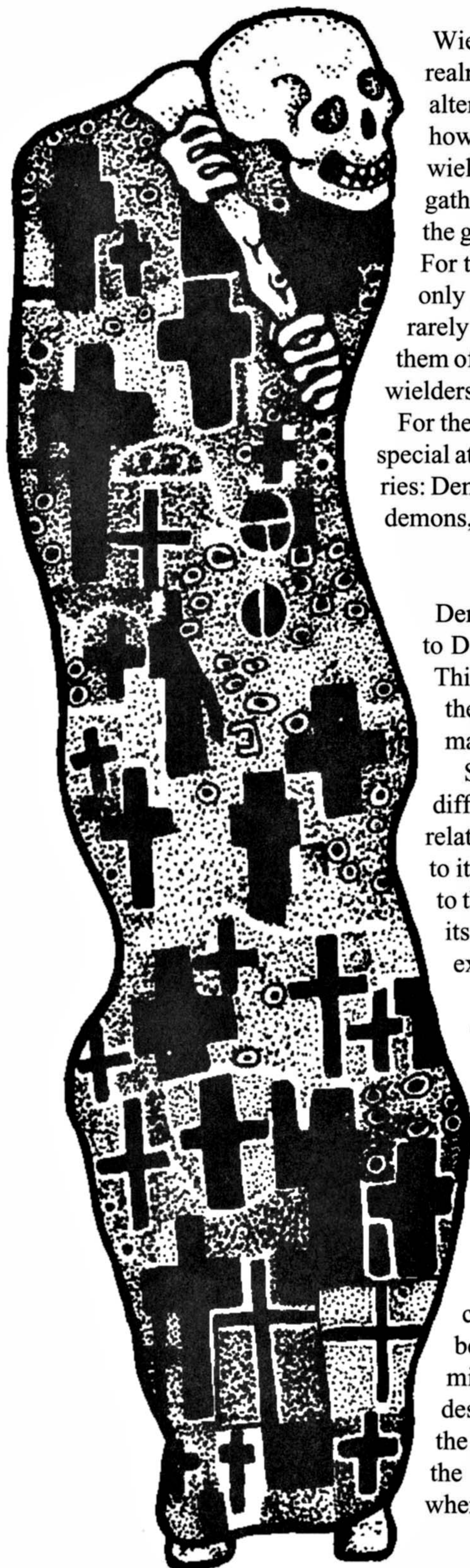


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Shadow World™

CHANNELERS OF THE UNESSÆNCE



Wielders of the Unessænce are represented by practitioners of all realms of magic. The transformation into a wielder of the Unessænce alters mages of the different realms in a unique fashion. Channelers, however, differ in a significant way from the rest because, unlike wielders of essence, mentalism, and the Essænce, channelers do not gather or wield power by their own will and craft. Rather it is through the grace and blessing of an external source—be it god or nature itself. For this reason, there are few dabblers of the Unessænce—those who only partially draw from the Unessænce—among channelers as it is rarely long before their source discovers their transgression and cuts them off from the flow of power, forcing them to become full Unessænce wielders.

For these reasons, and others, those who channel the Unessænce require special attention. First, Unessænce channelers fall into two general categories: Demonoloters, those who gain their Unessænce power from powerful demons, and priests of the Unlife.

DEMONOLOTERS

Demonoloters are those who serve and worship demons, as opposed to Demonologists who cohort with demons or have demon servants. This relationship is much like that between deity and priest. Indeed, the demon lord serves much the same function, and some evil deities may really be powerful demons mistaken for divinity.

Since the Demon Lord originates within this universe, albeit a different dimension of this universe, its views and motivations are relatively easy to comprehend. It may have some goals that are alien to its mortal servants, but the bulk of its goals will be understandable to them. Like most divine cults, the demonic cult will seek to expand its congregation, offering power (both temporal and magical) in exchange for servitude.

The motivations of the Demonoloter will, of course, vary from cult to cult. His actions will frequently be evil and vile; torture, human sacrifice, and the like. These actions will usually be with some purpose in mind—rarely destruction for destruction's sake. The property, lives, and souls of others, even those within the cult, will be viewed as utterly expendable towards the desired ends of the Demonic Cult, or Demon Lord.

PRIESTS OF THE UNLIFE

Even less common than Demonoloters are those channelers who choose to serve the greatest of shadows, the Unlife. These accursed beings have given up their humanity to become vessels of the unholy might of their dark patron. Like the Unlife, they exist only for destruction, delighting in the torment and misery they inflict. Unlike the Demonoloters, priests of the Unlife do not restrain themselves for the “good of the cause.” Their cause is death and they pursue it whenever possible.

This is not to say that they do not make plans or erect grand schemes—only that these plans are colored by the will of the master. They will, on very rare occasions, allow the one or the few to slip through their fingers so that the many may be caught at a later time. More common, however, is to take the quick kill rather than allow their target to escape, only drawing out the torment when victory is assured.

This is one of the most terrifying things about these foul people—despite the words of the scholars, it is difficult to comprehend the actions of something that only desires destruction and death. The Unlife is an alien force from without the universe; its actions and motivations are totally foreign to what mortals would consider “normal.” This is reflected in the actions of its servants, rarely influenced by their previous mortality.

As the goals of the Unlife require overt actions, it is necessary that its servants be mighty—the weak are consumed or destroyed. Thus, those who serve the Unlife are frequently given much power in exchange for their souls, and Demons of Might or Heralds of the Night are commonly sent to assist in any campaign.

David Mullin



1/2/93 A



DIVINE CULTS

I knelt before the altar in the Fane and a voice echoed from the nave. "This has been your last lesson. And you have learned well." How much in my mind that voice now rings with all the glee of my fallen ignorance. "But there is one thing yet you should know. The Gods are many, though they are mere shadows, as you have been instructed. But remember: however each pours his power into the hollow vessels that are his servants, it always emerges differently. And the one who calls himself Lord of Darkness will be your enemy. For he fears what you have become the most, and his power will be your undoing.

"Go now. And never forget that you are mine!" And from the darkness, the hand of the Sceptre of the Unlife emerged and landed on my forehead like a blast of ice. And what he said was true.

— From the journals of Remlan Cardigan, Chaos Lord.



Every deity is unique in the universe. Each has a peculiar aspect which belongs to that deity alone that is its essential nature. Thus, like the created beings who serve them, and the sentient races who worship them, each god holds a unique perspective on the cosmos, and channels vast personal and official powers from his unique point of view.

It seems unlikely—even impossible in this light—that the followers of all deities would have identical powers. The fact that this is so in the core rules depicts a certain lack of flavor in the priestly professions. Rather, each divine cult should possess a specialized set of powers with a region of overlap for all priests. Thus, each cult would have a unique characteristic flavor separating them from cults of other deities, even ones with similar spheres of influence.

It has already been suggested (Cleric's Law, *RMCI*, Sec. 4.19) that cults of different deities should have access to special religious lists and skills, but this still leaves the impression of a basic Clerical role with a smidgen of extra powers thrown in. However, taken one step further, a more unique and flavorful cult would develop with a selection of spell lists molded to that cult's practices (admittedly favoring the six base Cleric lists). Certain skills would be more easily accessible to them, and they would exhibit manifestations of their deity's anger as unique versions of *Absolutions*, *Dark Absolutions*, and *Dark Channels*.

In the *Rolemaster* core rules, *Absolution* sends the target's soul to another place while leaving the body intact. *Dark Absolution* totally destroys the soul. For some deities, these effects make sense, but why would Shalaar, Goddess of Knowledge, have any influence over the soul of her enemy? Would she not take actions against the mind instead?

Presented here are a number of examples of religious cults utilizing these proposals.

AERANON, GOD OF BALANCE

Base Lists: Repulsions (Cleric Base), Communal Ways (Cleric Base), Dark Channels (Evil Cleric Base), Protection (Cleric Base), Life Mastery (Cleric Base), Undead Mastery (Necromancer Base), Dark Law (Necromancer Base), Light Law (Magician Base)

Absolution: Forces the target to confront his dual nature. The target is submitted to a Trait Inversion: All of his personality characteristics are inverted—positive for negative and negative for positive. Both *Absolution* and *Absolution Pure* do this, with the later lasting three times as long. His *Dark Absolution* creates a split personality, each the opposite of the other, and each aware of the other's actions.

TAKINA, GOD OF LIGHT

Base Lists: Repulsions (Cleric Base), Communal Ways (Cleric Base), Channels (Cleric Base), Summons (Cleric Base), Protection (Cleric Base), Inspirations (Paladin Base), Exorcism (Paladin Base), Light Law (Magician Base).

Absolution: The soul of the target is sent away; truly evil creatures or wielders of the Unessænce are destroyed totally.

GRISNA, GOD OF DARKNESS

Base Lists: Summons (Cleric Base), Communal Ways (Cleric Base), Summons (Cleric Base), Protections (Cleric Base), Dark Channels (Evil Cleric Base), Curses (Evil Cleric Base), Disease (Evil Cleric Base), Dark Law (Necromancer Base), Undead Master (Necromancer Base)

Absolution: Damages or destroys the soul of the target. *Absolution* is treated as *Life Stealing VII* (Necromancer Base list: Death Mastery), *Absolution Pure* as *Lord Life Stealing*, and *Dark Absolution* destroys the soul.

Black Channels: I—Thrayn's Touch; II—Womaw Finger; III—Death's Wave.

KER, GODDESS OF FATE

Base Lists: Channels (Cleric Base), Life Mastery (Cleric Base), Summons (Cleric Base), Protection (Cleric Base), Communal Ways (Cleric Base), Repulsions (Cleric Base), Visions (Shaman Base), Past Visions (Seer Base), Guarded Sight (Seer Base)

Absolution: Deprives the target of his free will. For the duration of the *Absolution*, he will follow the dictates of Ker in every way, totally controlled by the whims of Fate.

AHALAH, GODDESS OF WISDOM

Base Lists: Channels (Cleric Base), Communal Ways (Cleric Base), Protection (Cleric Base), Repulsions (Cleric Base), Calming Spirits (Closed Channeling), Inspirations (Paladin Base).

Absolution: Strips the target of all wisdom. He is totally unable to make any non-obvious choice. If attacked, he will defend himself with his most used defensive action, but will be unable to determine an offensive route unless it is a totally obvious choice (i.e., the target has a weapon and fire spells, and his adversary is immune to fire). Both *Absolution* and *Absolution Pure* do this, with the latter lasting three times as long.

BELG, LORD OF DEMONS

Base Lists: Dark Channels (Evil Cleric Base), Summons (Cleric Base), Communal Ways (Cleric Base), Repulsions (Cleric Base), Demon Mastery (Conjurer Base, *RMCI*), Ethereal Mastery (Arcane, *RMCI*). Changeling (Warlock Base, *RMCI*).

Absolutions: Banishes the target's soul or destroys it (as indicated in *Spell Law*). For as long as there is no soul in the body, it will be inhabited by a demon as *Demonic Possession* (Evil Mentalist Base) as follows: Type II for *Absolution*, Type III for *Absolution Pure*, or Greater Demon for *Dark Absolution*.

Black Channels: I—Londarin's Hand; II—Umli's Breeze

Gary Anastasio



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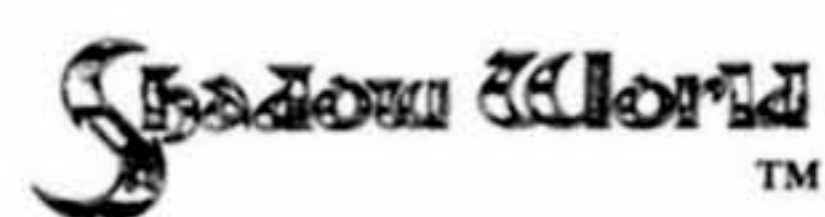
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RELIGIONS OF ORHAN

THE GODS OF *Shadow World*™



The Lords of Orhan play an intricate part in the lives of the inhabitants of Kulthea. Their worshipers play out the Lords' battles and schemes on a daily basis. The following groups are presented to more fully bring the religions of Orhan to life. All use the Lords of Orhan as a focus for the greater power of good, and as a defense against the horrors of the Unlife.



THE MOON SOCIETY OF REANN

Focus: Reann/The Moon of Orhan

Culture (Temple Locations): Varies. Temples are mostly in remote regions, but always under the open sky. There are a few in the larger cities of Kulthea, but they are very obscure and hard to find.

Membership: Humans and Elves make up the majority of the society. All members have a strong urge to fight the Unlife.

Benefits: Members are welcomed into any temple of the society and may seek sanctuary or guidance from its Elders. All members will aid each other in time of need, no matter what the cost.

Restrictions: Only those born under the half moon of Orhan are eligible for membership. All members must be Moon Mages of the Grey Cult.

Symbol: A half moon with the visage of Reann riding on his great steed. Holy symbols are made out of a rare grey silver.

Dress: Members are required to wear long grey hooded cloaks. Elders wear grey and black robes along with the cloak.

Structure: The Elders are the chief priests and priestesses of the society. Some of the more gifted of the society are born with the ability to shapeshift into large grey wolves. To be born a shapeshifter is to be considered one of the chosen, and is a high honor among the society.

Philosophy/Purpose: The society's main goal is to seek out the worshipers of Scalu and destroy them. They also are fervent fighters of the Unlife. They consider themselves to be the 'eyes' of Reann.

Activities: Mostly a militant group, they perform seek-and-destroy missions against temples of Scalu. They also perform covert surveillance of areas said to be infected by the Unlife. They report their findings to the Elders of the society. The majority of this group spend most of their time traveling abroad combating evil wherever they find it.

THE ORDER OF KUOR

Focus: Kuor, King of Gods.

Culture (Temple Locations): Varies. Temples exist in most major cities including Sel Kai and Kaitaine.

Membership: This order is comprised of the most wealthy and influential Clerics of all the Pantheon of Orhan. Its Paladins are always Knighted. Males dominate this order. Humans and nonhumans alike are members of this sacred order.

Benefits: Members are always treated with respect by other orders of Orhan. Its members always have the finest weapons and armor.

Restrictions: Only those of noble or royal blood may serve as Clerics and Paladins. All must be the epitome of what is noble and good in a person. All are chivalrous champions of Orhan.

Symbol: A stylized crown with a ornate scepter running through its center.

Dress: Muted grey robes trimmed with gold. When armor is worn it is polished to a high shine. Paladins wear polished black armor, muted grey tunics trimmed in gold with the symbol of Kour on the front.

Structure: The Order has an intricate hierarchy with a High Cleric at the top and Clerics serving below him as priests. Paladins serve as the fighting arm of the church as well as the peace-keepers and missionaries.

Philosophy/Purpose: To promote the religion of Kuor and to stand as the symbol for leadership, justice and the power of Orhan. To smite all opposed to the gods of Orhan and to champion the followers of truth.

Activities: Clerics of Kuor usually stay in the temples where they can do the most good, politically and religiously. The Paladins are the ones sent out into the world to herald the Order of Kuor and to destroy his foes in his name with their holy wrath.



Shadow World™

THE WARRIOR- PRIESTS OF CAY

Focus: Cay, lord of physical strength and athletic prowess.

Culture (Temple Locations): These priests are exclusively members of the Rhiani Tribesmen. Like the tribesmen the priests are semi-nomadic, and their temples travel with the tribes. Temples are elaborately decorated tents.

Membership: The priesthood is composed entirely of Rhiani (male and female). The warrior-priests are Dervishes that focus on physical prowess and combat. The priests are true fanatics that would give their lives for Cay and their people.

Benefits: Members are treated with respect by all the tribes and are looked upon as symbols of strength and wisdom.

Restrictions: Only chosen young Rhiani may join the priesthood. The selection process is very discriminatory. Youths must pass extremely difficult tests of physical and athletic prowess before they are accepted into the priesthood. All are trained as Dervishes. They may never marry.

Symbol: Two crossed fists in a circle.

Dress: They wear the traditional clothing of the Rhiani with a long blue scarf that has the symbol of Cay elaborately embroidered on it. During ceremonies they wear long flowing blue robes trimmed with silver.

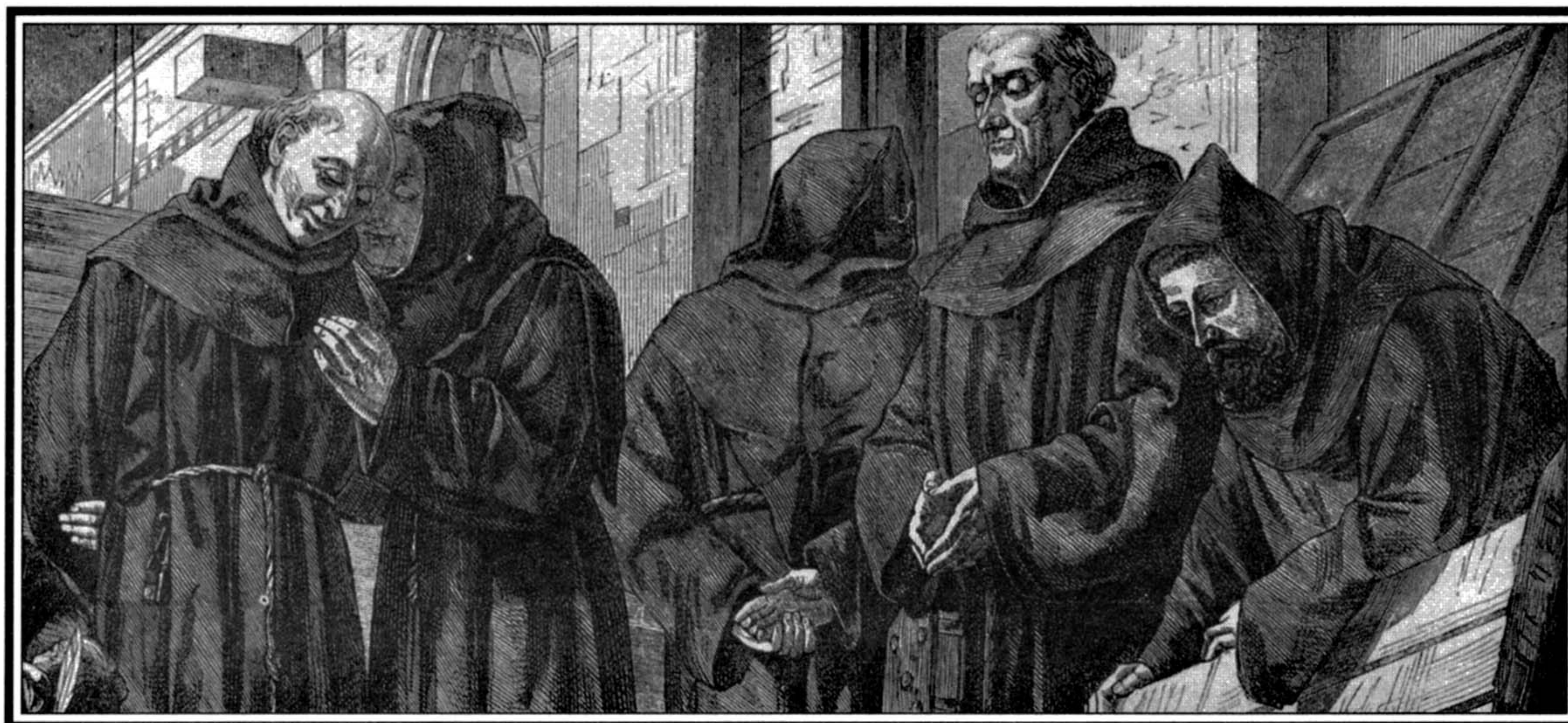
Structure: The warrior-priests' structure is modeled after a concentric circle. As the priests move around and through the circles, they gain power in the priesthood. At the center is the High Priest (or Priestess) whose word is unchallenged by those of lesser station. Priests are recognized by which circle they belong to.

Philosophy/Purpose: Being a warrior culture, the priests lead the Rhiani in their religious thinking. They also protect the tribes from the Dark Gods' influences. The purity of the body and spirit is the most important aspect of a priests life.

Activities: The Dervishes are trained in a unique form of martial arts that incorporates their dances. The Warrior-Priests of Cay are a tight-knit group, but there are a few who are allowed to leave their homeland to pursue the will of Cay in distant lands.



Gary Anastasio



PRIESTHOODS

The Base lists indicated are in addition to normal Cleric Base lists. Also, note that it is recommended that priests should only have 9 base lists total. Absolutions, even seemingly minor ones, should not be thrown lightly, and should be used as a last resort by priests unless facing a most dire enemy. Finally, note that Paladins of a deity may choose one additional base list from those given to the priests of that deity.

OSSE

"THE VOICE", "THE EYE" GOD OF PROPHECY

Symbol: A mask as described below; a man with hands in a triangle before his forehead; two hands in a triangle with a pentacle between them.

Base Lists: Future Visions, Past Visions (Seer Base).

Customary Garb: All priests of Osse wear full length, all concealing robes of some drab color. Above them is worn a fully concealing mask which features a calm, almost beatific face whose eyes are closed peacefully, but whose mouth is an open 'o', as though it were about to speak.

Special Requirements: At least one rank of two different forms of divination must be bought to level. Additionally, unless the priest desires to bumble about as a blind man, he must purchase the Spatial Location Awareness skill.

Absolution: With outstretched fingers, the priest gestures toward his victim's eyes. The orbs of the recipient are filled with a burning pain, stunning him for 1 round 5% failure. In addition, the victim is

permanently struck blind, his eyes covered with white cataracts for the rest of his days. This incantation is resisted at a -20 penalty.

The priests of Osse are each completely blind (rumor has it that they are blinded by the *Absolution* of a higher priest of the order during their initiation). The priests of this enigmatic order seldom, if ever, leave their temples, though they seem to have holdings everywhere when one needs their advice. It is common to enter a temple of Osse, intent on seeking advice and either be completely ignored by the priests, or be set upon immediately by an inimical Cleric, identical in appearance to all the others, and given a cryptic and often indecipherable warning.

Priests of Osse do not preach: neither do they actively recruit followers. It seems that those who serve the Lord of Prophecy do so from some deep calling.

Occasionally, a priest of Osse will be sent on a quest by his deity, when he will gather allies from those who he has helped in the past, and removing his mask, will set across lands and even time to accomplish the goal his Lord set for him. In general, such quest-inspiring and gathering is left to the priests of Celebtin, the Silver Spark. Finally, priests of Osse



abstain from political affairs, leaving that to the more active priesthoods. The main temple of Osse lies hidden in mountain wastes and those who have found it describe it only as an immense edifice of grey stone without mark or adornment, almost as if it were grown from the earth rather than built. Some say it is the abandoned outpost of some lost race of stone masters. Perhaps it is the secrets within its walls that drive Osse's priests to live their lives in darkness: for though they do not venture out. It is said that all of his Clerics have been there.

OROS

"DREAMWEAVER"

DEMIGOD OF DREAMS

Symbol: A silver or gold oval mirror; a cracked hourglass with the sands spilling from it. Rarely, an image of a weaver at the loom (note that this image often has feminine overtones).

Oros has no Clerics nor priesthood at all. He needs only those who aid him weave the dreams of men. In this respect, all Dream Lords serve Oros. He often guides them with a subtle hand in their wanderings, for it is only they who have some 'true' reality in dreams and therefore a great potential to disturb the unending fabric of the Weaver.

Note that night is the time of Oros. He shares it with Azamor, Power of the Dark. It is also the time of the Ruler of Unessance, whom Oros has sworn to destroy. Azamor cares little of the plight caused by the Master of Unessance.

Oros is the representation of the Lord of Orhan, Reann. On Dhiran, his power is only that of a Demigod.

BAAL

LORD OF HEALING

Symbol: An open green palm.

Prime Stats: Co and In.

Base Lists: All Healer Base lists except Surface Ways; Life Mastery (Cleric Base), Laying on Hands (Paladin Base, *RMCI*), Life Essence Healing (Healer Base, *RMCI*); Prohibited: Summons.

Special Requirements: For the elite Order of the Healing Hand, "natural healing ability" is required.

Customary Garb: White Robes with a green hand or green robe with white medallion.

Absolution: Traditional (as presented in *Spell Law*).

This order has no single home temple, operating throughout the lands with impunity. These priests serve their Deity's cause in three important ways.



Their first and most important function is the circuit of traveling healers, which covers the lands outside the cities to heal and spread Baal's word. These priests are given one of two items by their order. The first is a magic robe which functions as both minor protection and locator for the bearer. The second is an amulet which is a beacon and communication device as well as an augments of the wearer's power. The latter are generally only given to more powerful priests, as the amulets are even rarer than the enchanted robes.

Secondly, the priests set up centers of healing in cities, granting refuge and solace to the wounded and the desolate. In this way, they relate to the kinder aspects of Daedin's (God of Shadows and the Homeless) priesthood.

Their final and perhaps most subtle function is as an arbiter to those in conflict. Where the priest of Baal passes, fighting ceases. As part of their presence in every nation their lives are respected without hesitation by men of all allegiances. To kill a priest of Baal is often to invite one's own death—even among one's own companions. In fact, many priests can call upon

OUT TIME DAYS

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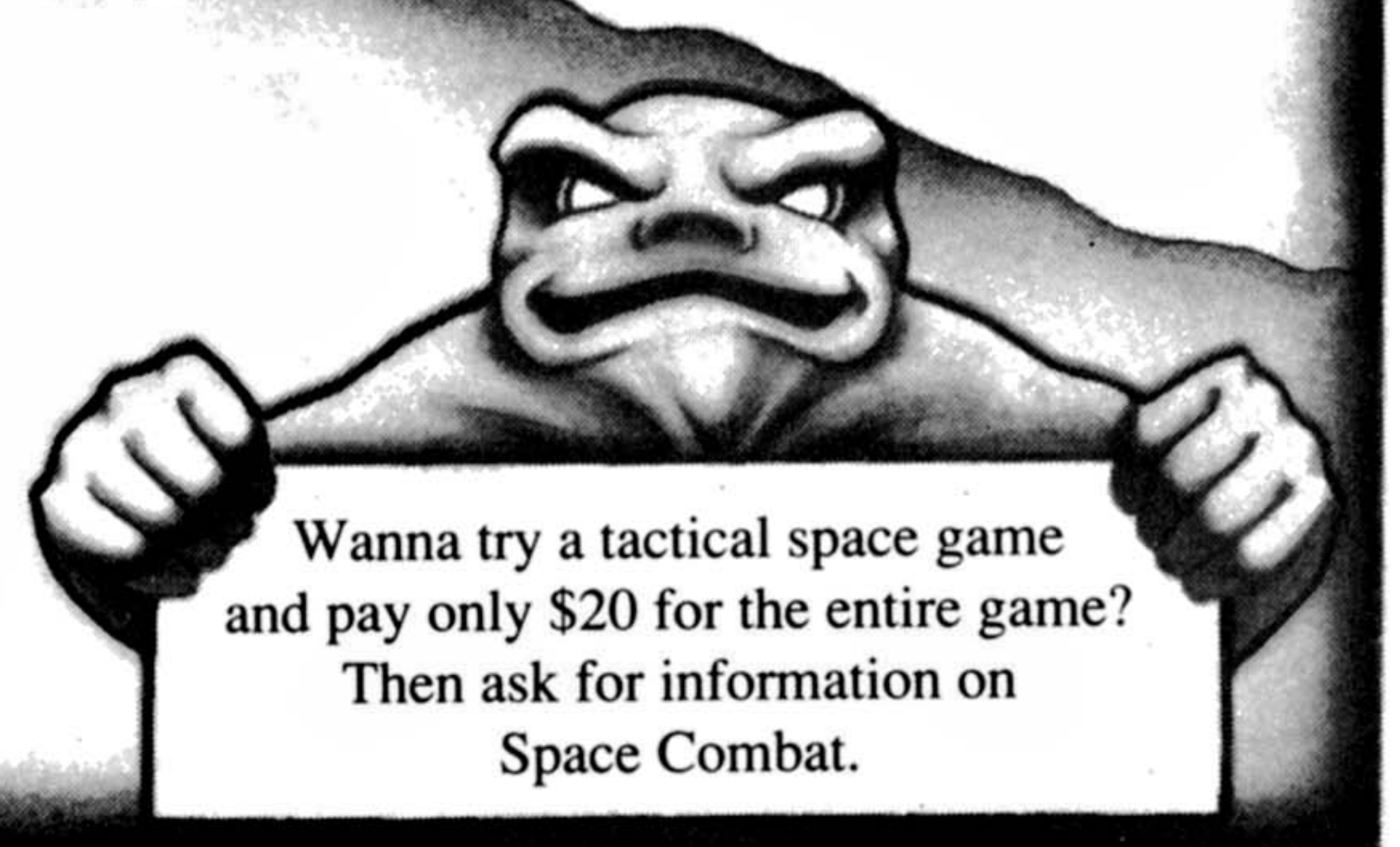
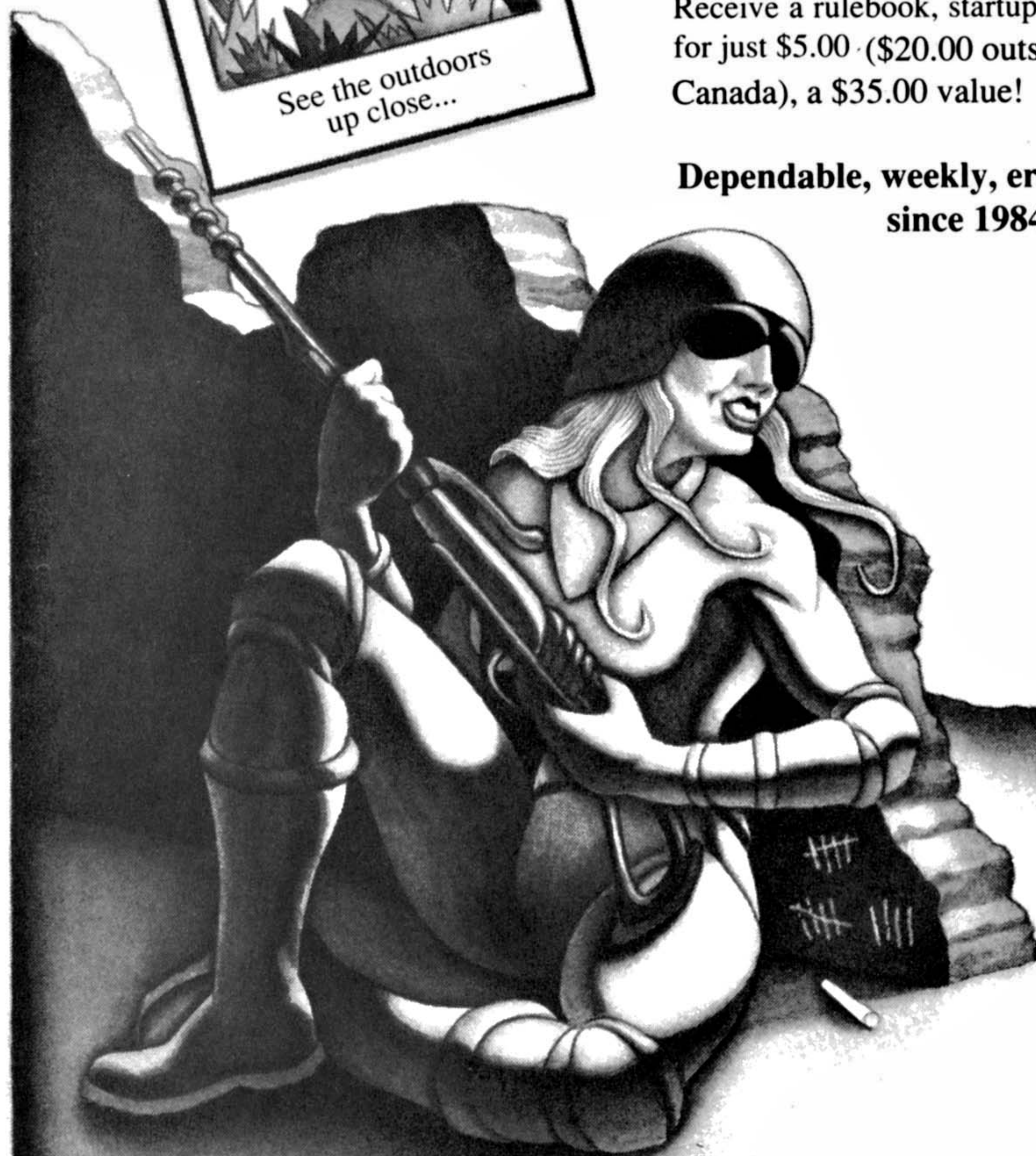
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a first level enchantment on the Closed Channeling list Ceremonies, to place a black hand upon the forehead of their assailants, marking them for unquestioned execution in many lands.

It is said that a great war between 2 powerful kingdoms was once halted by a band of 50 priests who simply walked onto the battlefield and stood between the two armies, arm in arm, demanding that a council be called under a banner of truce; however, the power of this influence is seldom abused, so it retains its strength.

Within the priesthood of Baal, there is an elite order of Clerics known as The Healing Hand. They are a corps of powerful healers chosen by Baal directly to work his will in the lands of men. They are guarded closely by him, often forbidden to adventure and always kept from greatest peril by the Green-Handed God.

One strange note about the Order of the Healing Hand is that to be eligible for membership, the candidate must have some sort of natural magical disposition toward healing. This gift is thought to be similar to the ability of true Healers to empathically heal. In practice, this power allows Baal's Clerics to use any Healer Base Lists they may know directly on others, without employing Transferring Ways to take the wound (although they may do this if they so desire). Many Healer and Lay Healer organizations work in close proximity with the Temple of Baal.

An example of Baalan items from Dhiran:

Robes: +10 DB, +5 RR; for purposes of *Location* spells cast by priests of Baal, the wearer is considered to be at half actual range.

Amulet: +3 Spell Adder; regardless of the range, the bearer will always be located by detection spells cast by a priest of Baal in one of Baal's temples; at any time the bearer of the amulet may Open a Channel (cf. *Channel Opening*) with the High Priest (or acting High Priest) of his temple and *Mind Speak* with him. The *Channel Opening* spell must be cast by the priest. The amulet provides the *Mind Speech*.

VOLLIN

"TUNER OF THE SPHERES", "THE HARMONIZER" GOD OF MUSIC

Symbol: Crystal Sphere, tuning triangle or fork, or golden harp.

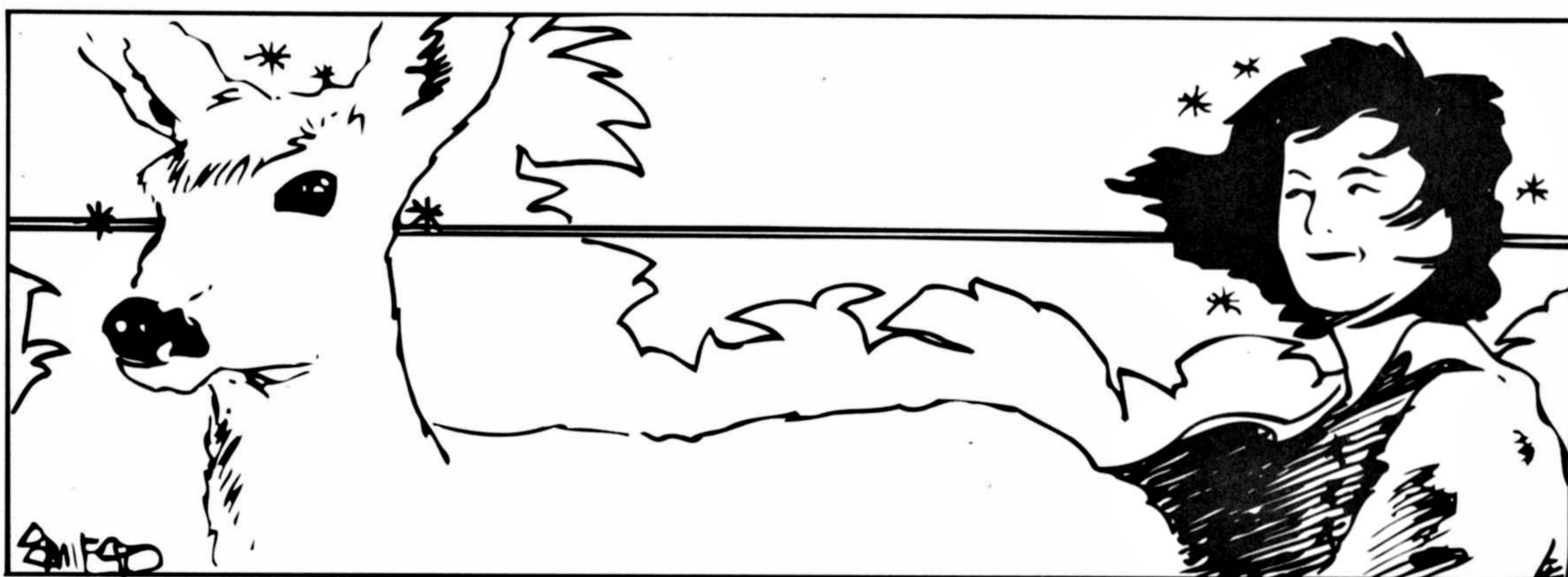
Base Lists: Controlling Songs, Sound Control and Sound Projection (Bard base).

Special Requirements: The priest must play at least 2 instruments at 1 rank level (to 10th level). They must also have at least as many ranks of other musical skills equal to double their level. Skill costs for musical skills are the same as for the Bard profession.

Customary Garb: Generally: bright, colorful clothing with a crystal sphere pendant, tuning fork or triangle in some form represented in plain view.

Absolution: With an utterly penetrating note, this spell will subdue any opponent it is directed at, making him docile and submissive for 1 hour 10% failure. This control does not include acts which would normally be contrary to the being's nature (i.e., a wizard destroying his treasured Staff of *Firebolts*). The power of Vollin truly tames the savage beast.

The priests of Vollin are usually nomads, owing faint allegiance to a particular temple, but spending most of their time spreading the faith of their God through music and song abroad. The temples of Vollin are centers of the arts: drama, painting, music, dance and theater. As such, these temples are only found in larger cities of civilized kingdoms, though the patronage of merchant princes often attracts them as well. The largest temple of Vollin is on the Avenue of the Gods in Thallanon, the capital of Varia, on the island of Dhiran. Bards are often closely connected with a Church of Vollin.



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PRIMUS

"LORD OF KNOWLEDGE"

"THE SEEKER"

GOD OF MAGIC

Symbol: A pentacle, heptacle, or circle encapsulating five rays from its center to the points of a pentacle; or, as god of knowledge a stylized gold cross or a triangle containing an eye.

Prime Stats: In and Em.

Base Lists: Communal Ways (Cleric Base), Water Law and Wind Law (Magician Base), Delving Law (Delver Base, *RMCI*), Earthblood's Ways (Arcane, *RMCI*), Rune Law (Runemaster, *RMCI*), Absorb Knowledge (Sage Base). In addition, priests of Primus may choose two additional base lists from any realm as their area of specialty.

Customary Garb: Usually a grey or black robe with a hood. Also, some orders require their members to wear a headband with a silver (sometimes Platinum) pentagram at the forehead.

Special Requirements: For every level a Cleric of Primus has attained, he must possess one rank of Basic and one rank of Advanced Math (Basic Math costs 1/4; Advanced Math costs 2/5). In addition, in order to attain a level above tenth, the priest must possess at least 7 levels of a "science" skill.

The priests of this group are not true spellcasters of Channeling. More than any other user of this realm, they tap the Essence almost directly.

Their Deity is the God of Magic, but he is also the God of Knowledge. As such, his Clerics have pursued many pseudo-magical courses of knowledge, including basic mathematics, calculus (which a particularly brilliant member of their order, Phaeon of Oedum, invented), elementary Newtonian Physics, Astronomy, and several other "Natural Philosophies."

This order is very secretive, keeping to itself, its Clerics generally only venturing about when seeking knowledge, information or items of interest to the Church. It is they among the clergy who support Wizard Colleges, and they who keep magic alive in areas where it is forsaken or forbidden. It is rumored by some that the Church of Primus has been responsible for the fall of more than one Arcane Society.

MYRMIDIA

GODDESS OF RIGHTEOUS
COMBAT & JUSTICE

Symbol: An upright silver sword, a balanced scale.

Prime Stats: In and St.

Base Lists: Arm's Way, Shielding Ways (Paladin Base, *RMCI*). Prohibited: Summons.

Customary Garb: Of all the orders, Myrmidian Priests are one of the few who wear metal armor; chain at lower levels and plate mail for the greater priests.

Special Requirements: All Myrmidian priests must swear a vow of obedience to the mother church, to obey its dictates unless justice demands otherwise. Also, each priest must swear upon the code of chivalry or a similar code of their own or the specific church's devising. Combat costs and Transcend Armor costs are as the Paladin class. Myrmidian clergy are forbidden the use of missile weapons and poison.

These priests seem to have the extraordinary Paladin-like ability to transcend the negative effects of metallic armor on Channeling spell wielding.

Absolution: The victim of Myrmidian *Absolution* is bound in glowing, silver manacles, binding his hands, neck, and feet. In addition, if the victim is a worshiper of Zaax, or has ever used his skill in arms to kill an innocent out of evil intent, the manacles will burn the tendons in his wrists sufficiently that he may never wield a weapon again. Such is the justice of Myrmidia.

The great majority of the Myrmidian clergy is made up of female fighting priests, with a small group of males who generally occupy themselves with the more purely physical aspects of Myrmidia's work.

The Myrmidian priests not only follow but epitomize the rules of chivalry. Above all, they believe that win or lose, a battle should be fought fairly and with honor. This explains why barbarians are scorned by the priests of the Warrior Goddess and Priests of Zaax are their hated enemies. Should any foe sincerely surrender to this order, he will be spared and often freed once he has been chastised for his misdeeds. Few temples to Myrmidia exist in the east, the domain of Zaax. Similarly, few exist in the Central Province because war is so scorned there. However, there are a few firmly established Churches in south and western Oedum who keep Myrmidia's message alive there.

ZAAX

"THE HARBINGER" GOD OF WAR, CONFLICT, AND BLOODSHED

Symbol: A bloody, upended sword; a scale, tipped by a booted foot.

Prime Requisites: St and In.

Base Lists: Dark Channels (Evil Cleric Base), Shielding Ways, Arm's Way (Paladin Base, *RMCI*).

Customary Garb: Heavy Chain or Plate Mail.

Special Requirements: The weapons, Maneuver in Armor, and Transcend Armor costs of Zaax's priesthood are identical to a Paladin's, and their deadly skills costs are equal to a Thief's. Unlike Myrmidia's priesthood, Zaax's clergy make full use of missile weapons and poison. In fact, these priests must learn at least one rank level in a missile weapon and in Use/Remove Poison.

Absolution: The victim of Zaax's *Absolution* will immediately be overcome with despair and surrender to the priest of the blood god. In addition (at the caster's option), he must resist a poison of the caster's choice whose level is equal to or less than the caster's.

Zaax's clergy is founded in the southern portion of the Eastern Dominion, in the capital city of Nadat Ty. Similarly, they have temples in all major cities of the East. In the West, their temples are few and far between. In the Central Province, the worship of the God of Battle and Bloodshed is proscribed.

It is this Church which keeps the war between the East and Middle Lands going. The High Priest of Zaax is first advisor to the Ruler of Nadat Ty, who primarily funds the war. There are also priests of Zaax in key positions with the rulers of Nadat Vaar, Ordye and Resiv Faal.

This priesthood seeks conflict and battle-glory in all its dealings and feels that should the East dominate the Middle Lands, then there could be a truly great battle between the Eastern Dominion and the Western Kingdom.

The high holy days of this cult are on the feasts of great battles and great victories in battle over other nations.

The priests of Zaax, unlike Myrmidia, fight to win using whatever means are necessary.

AR-ANNON

"THE ONE BESIDE THE GATE" GUIDE OF THE DEAD THE KEEPER OF GODSPACE

Symbol: A road ending in a door ajar; a doorway or arch; a staff leaning in a doorway; a staff carved with a map.

Base Lists: Lofty Bridge (Closed Essence), Conveying Ways (Magician Base, *RMCI*), Earthblood's Ways (Arcane, *RMCI*), Ethereal Mastery (Arcane, *RMCI*), Unbarring Ways (Open Essence).

Customary Garb: Being one of the more utilitarian orders, priests of Ar-Annon generally dress in ordinary traveling clothes. On occasions of High Feasts, they don stately, but functional, robes.

Special Requirements: Priests of Ar-Annon must travel, engaging in quests, mapping or other such activities for four-fifths of the year. In addition, these priests must possess at least 5 ranks level of traveling skills (e.g. Mapping, Navigation, Riding, Long-Distance Running, Rowing, etc.).

Absolution: For every 5% failure, the target is paralyzed (0% action) for 1 round. In addition, for 1 day 1% failure, any and all modes of travel taken by this person will be at his normal walking pace. A horse he rides can go no faster than his walking speed, and should he try to run, it will feel as if the earth itself grabs at his legs to keep him from progressing. Even teleportation will be affected, so while the grey blur of transportation will seem instantaneous to him, in the outside world, time will have passed proportionate to the time it would have taken the victim to move in a straight line between the two points at constant walking rate (regardless of terrain, etc.). Additionally, the victim will be bound to his current plane of existence, unable to leave because all Ar-Annon's doors have been closed to him. This last effect has no power over demons, devils, elementals, angels, or other powerful beings originating in alternate planes, whose true existence is not actually on the plane where this curse is invoked.

The priests of Ar-Annon are everywhere, seen and unseen. They travel the roads, wrapped in their own purposes, or those directed by their enigmatic deity; however, they are never too busy to help a traveler in need or share news of the roads with passers-by. Often they are engaged in mapping operations, and frequently carry extensive maps with them (on occasion to the exclusion of other "necessities of travel").

These Clerics can also be found on the Ethereal plane, often interacting with the Archmages who venture there. It is they who tend the signposts set in the swirling mists of the ether.





Rolemaster

CELEBTIN

"THE RUNNER"

GOD OF MOTION AND INSPIRATION

Symbol: A pair of winged boots; a stylized arrow; as the Inspirer, an upright, gleaming silver arrow.

Prime Statistics: In and Pr.

Base Lists: Inspirations (Paladin Base, *RMCII*), Material Transport (Delver Base, *RMCI*), Rapid Ways (Closed Essence), Conveying Ways (Magician Base, *RMCII*).

Customary Garb: Priests of Celebtin tend to wear clothing of white or other bright colors, but always dress appropriately to whatever region they are currently occupying. They wear their priestly robes only during holy times, while performing a ceremony, or when making speeches before crowds.

Special Requirements: A minimum Appearance of 80 is required to join this order. Priests of Celebtin must have at least thrice their experience level in skill ranks of social skills. They must also spend at least a quarter of the year traveling in whatever method they choose, preaching and aiding those in need when the desire takes them: priests above level 15 or those with a permanent personal base are exempt from this requirement.

Absolution: The subject of Celebtin's absolution is indeed worthy of pity. The victim's mind is enshrouded in a dark haze, slowing his mind and body. For 1 round/5% failure, the victim functions at -50 to all actions, is incapable of throwing non-instantaneous spells and is limited to 25% action (50 initiative points). In addition, for 1 day/10% failure, the victim is shrouded in a negative aura and any Presence-based skills or spells will function at -50 due to the displeasure of Celebtin.

Of all the priesthoods, Celebtin's is the most concerned with outward appearance. His priests are invariably charming in character if not also in look and deed. As noted above, priests of Celebtin travel the countryside a fourth of the year, preaching, doing good and inspiring people to action, whether it be a holy quest or a madcap festival. Living this highly public existence, filled with Celebtin's vigor, his priests can hardly help but recruit others.

Celebtin (Q. Silver Spark) is the bright twin of his darker brother. Ar-Annon. Where Ar-Annon is the god of travel, guardian of what lies beyond man's world. Celebtin is keeper of the spark that keeps men's spirits alight. Thus he is the deity of rapid motion and quick movement, of higher thought and the kindled fire of hope and inspiration. To this end, Celebtin's priests seek to raise man above the toils and troubles of his everyday world to see the divine light.

Paul Stafford

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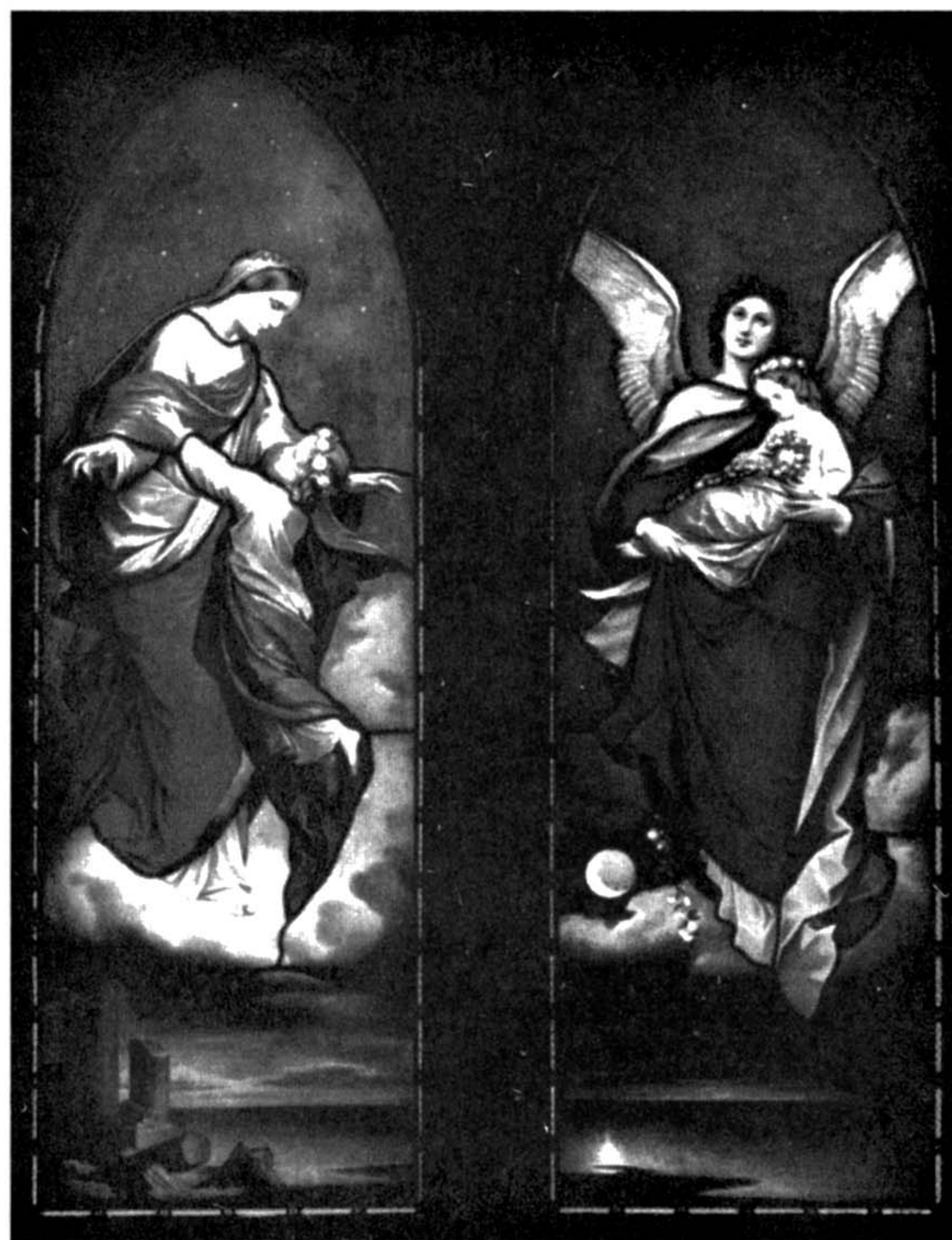
CLERIC'S LAW

DIVINE PROFESSIONS IN MIDDLE-EARTH



The path a Cleric or Paladin must travel is highly influenced by his god and many patterns in his life are formed by his religious training. The difference between the Cleric of a war god and one of a god of love should be readily apparent. Not only should the two behave differently, reflecting the tenets of their respective orders, but they should have greatly divergent skills, as well. This is achieved easily through the use of secondary skills and spell list choices. Yet both Clerics will have the same base lists apart from their "specialty," as well as the same ease or difficulty in learning new skills, apart from the specific skills determined to be special for each order/god.

The spell lists and secondary skills listed below are those which are most "attuned" to their respective god. Only Clerics, Paladins, or other religious professions (perhaps some orders of Monks) should be allowed access to this highly specialized form of adaptation to a gods influence (or, arguably, the influence of the religious order), as this specialization reflects a fascination or interest by the affected character from early on in his development. Remember, it is GM preference whether to use the listed skills and spell lists, and there are a number of combinations which can be used alternately.



Option 1: The spell lists can be simply added to the repertoire of the character's base spell lists.

Option 2: Costs for obtaining the training for the spell lists in question may be lowered (i.e., local chapters of the order may have libraries including the spell lists in question for open use by the members).

Option 3: Development point costs for the spell list may be lowered to accommodate certain professions.

Option 4: Costs for the secondary skills may be lowered to as much as 1/2.

Option 5: Profession bonuses may be given to the character as incentive to learn the skills.

VALAR	THEME	SPELL LISTS	SKILLS
Manwe	light, stars	Light Law	Star Gazing
Ulmo	water, sea, rain	Water Law	Sailing
Aule	earth, crafts	Earth Law	Smithing
Yavanna	earth, plants	Plant Mastery	Flora Lore
Namo	spirits, death	Spirit Mastery	Meditation
Nienna	conscience, grief	Mind Merge	Sanity Healing Lore
Orome	nature, hunting	Path Mastery	Fauna Lore
Vana	youth, animals	Animal Mastery	Animal Handling
Tulkas	valor, friendship	Arms Way	Athletic Games
Nessa	joy, celebration	Fascination Dances	Dancing
Irmo	dreams, desires	Dream Lore	Symbol Lore
Este	healing, peace	Surface Ways	First Aid
Vaire	time, fate, memory	Past/Future Vision	Divination
Morgoth	cold, dark	Dark Law	Demon/Devil Lore



Worship of lesser beings (spirits, Maiar, demons, etc.) is treated as worship of that being's principle theme or the theme of their dominant god figure (e.g. worship of Sauron is akin to worshipping Morgoth). This type of worship, however, may alter the outlook of the character drastically from worship of the principle figures involved.

By worship is meant to give honor to, or the practice of honoring. In the case of organized religion, it often involves sacrifice and outright worship. More informal religions tend to take gods as patrons of their art and livelihood. Generally there are three types of gods - those who demand constant and total worship, those that don't really *have* to have it, but like it, and those who don't really pay any attention. This outlook should have some bearing on the religions involved, and thus the skills and spell lists availability for specialization.

Another aspect of the religious organization of a character is the actual order/religion involved. Many games do not have these in place, and the GM must create them as he goes. This many time results in spotty and generic-sounding orders of Clerics, Paladins, Monks, and the like. However, a strong religious system is necessary to bring these professions the fullness of their names.

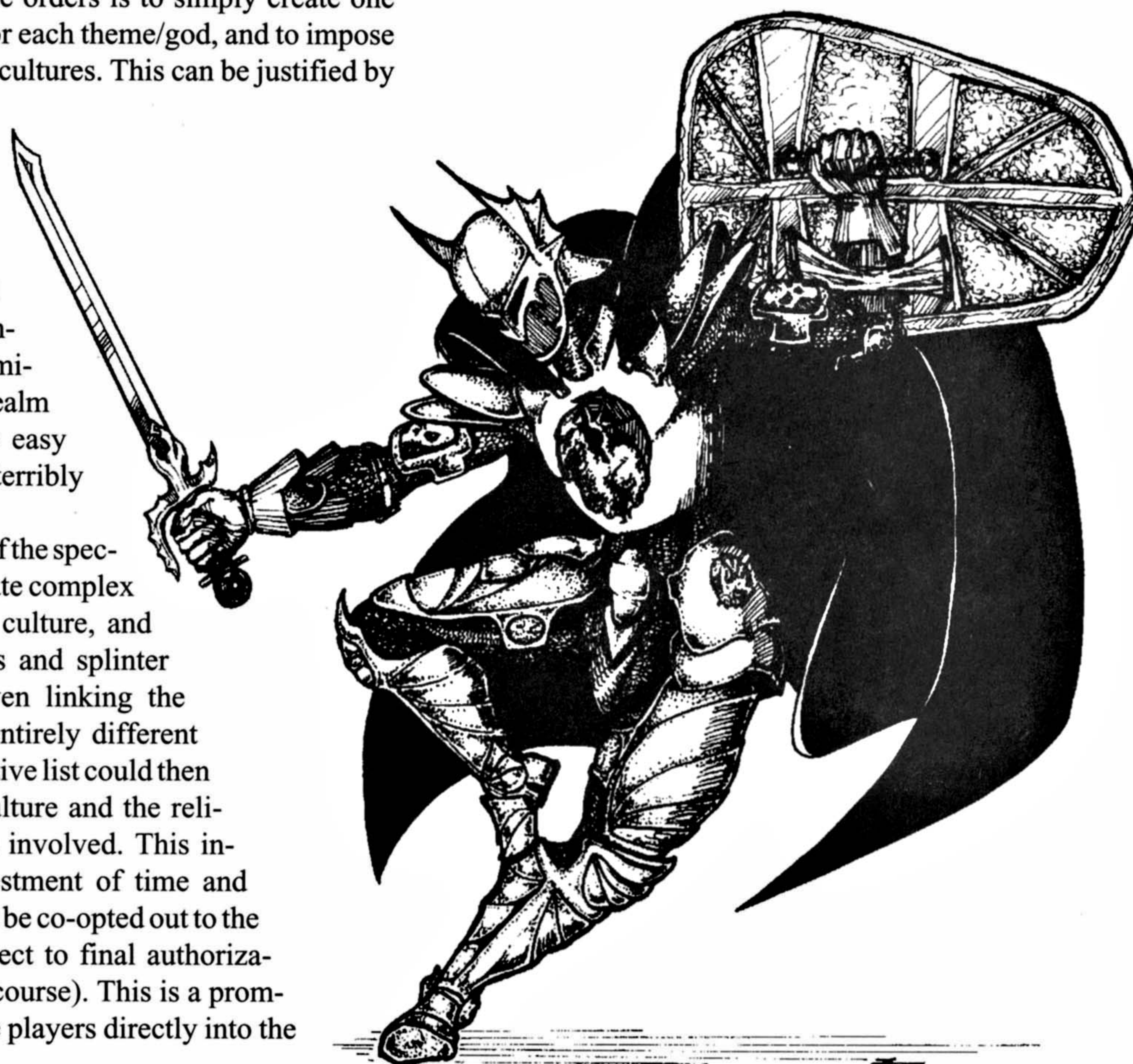
One way to create orders is to simply create one world-wide order for each theme/god, and to impose it universally on all cultures. This can be justified by saying that by the nature of organized religion itself, evangelism will bring the orders across cultural boundaries, and eventually one will be dominant within its own realm of worship. This is easy and quick, but not terribly plausible.

On the other end of the spectrum, one could create complex orders within each culture, and set up counter-cults and splinter groups, perhaps even linking the latter to orders in entirely different cultures. An exhaustive list could then be made of each culture and the religious organizations involved. This involves a huge investment of time and energy, which could be co-opted out to the GM's players (subject to final authorization by the GM, of course). This is a promising way to involve players directly into the

general formation of the world they will be gaming in, and gives them a deeper understanding of the world. It does, however, involve a lot of time.

A third way would be to create orders as-you-go, and list them continuously. When a player wishes to create a cleric, have him specify his deity and culture. Then simply create an order to place his character into based on these two criteria, and keep a running list cross-referenced handy. It will grow and eventually you will have a fair list of religious orders fleshed out. You might even create a rival order or two as you proceed. This is a median path, and has its advantages (not *too* much work) and disadvantages (too little detail). However, for most GMs, this may be the practical course of action. Remember, always keep the players involved, and this small level of detail gives a huge amount of credibility to a world system.

Joe Mandala



POWERS OF VARDA

DIETY-GRANTED LIST

	Area of Effect	Duration	Range
1—Starlights	10'R/lvl	10 min/lvl	touch
2—Revelation of the Starry Sky	10' sq/lvl	10 min/lvl	30'
3—Light's Sense	5'R/lvl	1 min (C)	self
4—Starbolt	1 target	-	100'
5—Varda's Truth I	5'R/lvl	1 min/lvl	self
6—Star Burst	5'R	-	100'
7—Aura of the High Elf	self	1 min/lvl	self
8—Varda's Lance	1 target	-	100'
9—Varda's Truth II	5'R/lvl	1 min/lvl	self
10—Star Fires	5'R	3 rds	100'
11—Light Armor	self	1 min/lvl	self
12—Aura of the Elven Lord	self	1 min/lvl	self
13—Silver Light	30'R	2 rds/lvl	100'
14—Star Blades	V	1 rnd/lvl	100'
15—Utterlight			
16—Night's Sense	10'/lvl	1 min/lvl	self
17—True Aura	self	1 min/lvl	self
18—Star Strike	30'R	-	200'
19—Star Armor	self	1 min/lvl	self
20—True Vision	10'R/lvl	5 min/lvl	self
30—Star Warrior	self	1 min/lvl	self
50—Star Mastery	V	1 min/lvl	V

1—Starlights (F) The object touched will glow with the light of the stars, shedding a very dim silvery radiance in the area of effect. Humans will be able to make out only shadows, but elves may see normally.

2—Revelation of the Starry Sky (F) Generates an actual image of the starry sky on any surface in range. Can be used underground and during the day to produce an image of the sunless sky. Any light brighter than a lantern will subdue the effect.

3—Light's Sense (I) The caster can sense if any creature of evil is within the area of effect.

4—Starbolt (E) A sparkling beam is fired from the caster's hand. It attacks on the *Shock Bolt* table delivering Shock criticals, doing half damage. Against creatures of darkness, all concussion hits are doubled, and additional Holy criticals are delivered.

5—Varda's Truth I (I) Gives the caster a 10% chance to detect traps, wards, illusions, etc., within the radius or gives a caster +20 to find such with mundane means.

6—Star Burst (F) Creates a burst of intense light, stunning all in its area for 1 round/10% failure.

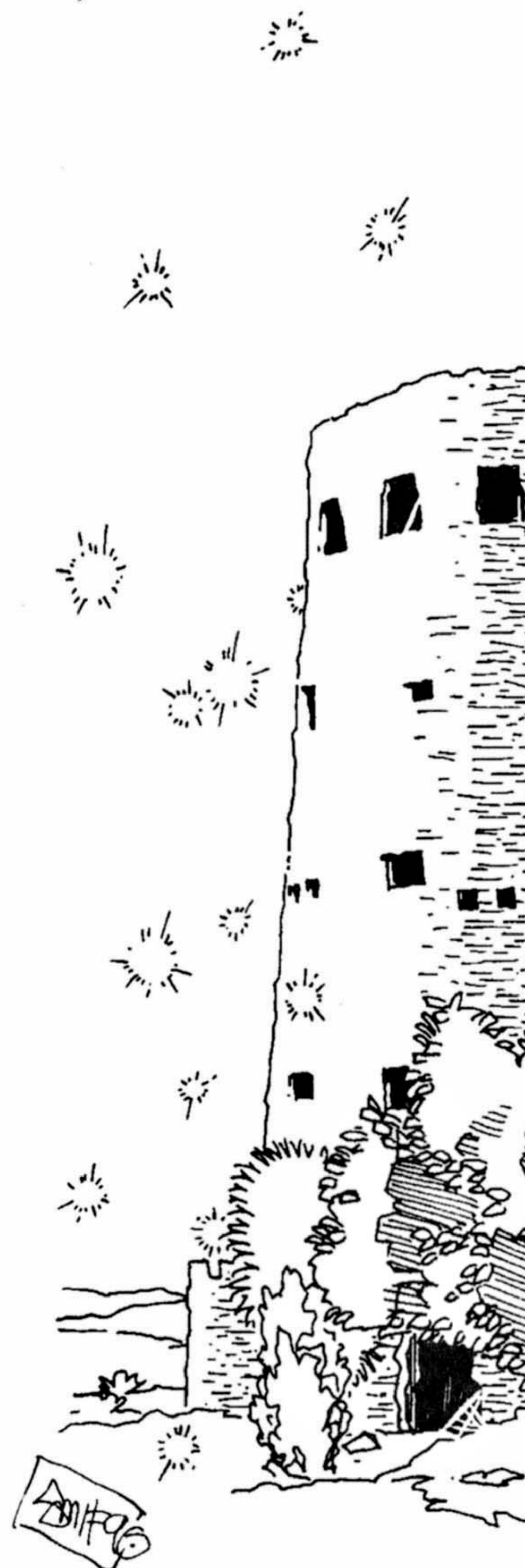
7—Aura of the High Elf (D) Surrounds the caster with a visible aura akin to that of a great elf, giving +10 Defensive Bonus, +5 Pr.

8—Varda's Lance (E) Fires a lance-like bolt of sparkling energy at the target. This spell attacks on the *Firebolt* table, delivering Stun criticals. Against creatures of darkness, the spell does additional Holy criticals.

9—Varda's Truth II (I) As *Varda's Truth I*, except the chances are 20% or +30.

10—Star Fires (E) A brilliant column of silvery-white flames is created by this spell. All creatures within 10' of the flame must make a RR or be stunned for 1 rd/10% failure. Those within the flames take a 'C', then 'B', then 'A' Heat (or Holy if applicable) critical on successive rounds.

11—Light Armor (ED) The caster is sheathed in a shimmering armor-like aura giving him a +5 DB, and protecting as *Lightarmor* (Open Essence list: Elemental Shields).





12—Aura of the Elven Lord (D) As *Aura of the High Elf*, except the Defensive Bonus is +15 and the Pr bonus is +10.

13—Silver Light (E) This spell creates a sphere of brilliant silver-blue radiance. Any creatures with in it who are vulnerable to silver (devils, wraiths, lycanthropes, etc.) will suffer an 'A' Electricity (or other appropriate) critical each round they are in the radius. In addition, all such beings operate at -10 inside the light. If the spell is instead targeted on a single being, it is class (F) and the being will be stunned 1 rd/10% failure. Creatures vulnerable to silver will suffer a -30 penalty to all actions and a 'C' critical each round.

14—Star Blades (E) This spell creates one magical star-bladed weapon for every 3 levels of the caster. Each attacks as a *Star Bolt* with an additional +10 bonus. The blade is insubstantial and cannot be used to parry. It will dissipate if struck against a large metallic object.

15—Utterlight (E) As *Utterlight* on the Magician Base list: Light Law.

16—Night's Sense (I) Except as noted, this spell functions exactly as *Light's Sense*, above.

17—True Aura (D) Gives the caster a gleaming, demigod-like aura which grants a +20 DB and +20 Pr bonus.

18—Star Strike (E) This incantation calls into being a burning, star-like object which hurls out of the heavens to fall upon the target. It attacks all in its radius on the *Nether Ball* table (use *Fire Ball* if Nether is unavailable), delivering Electricity (primary) and Impact (secondary) criticals.

19—Star Armor (DE) Creates a field just above the caster's skin which is a correct image of the night-time sky. It acts as a *Reverse Spells* (Closed Essence list: Spell Reins) against any light- or dark-based attacks directed at the caster. If such spells are not reversed, the *Armor* then protects as both *Light* and *Dark Armor* (concussion damage is reduced by half, and criticals delivered are shifted downward by one degree less severity). Under the starry sky, the caster may see as an elf, and the armor's absorption of stellar radiation regenerates the caster at 1 hp/rnd.

20—True Vision (IU) This spell functions as *Varda's Truth I* with a 50% or +50 chance. This spell also reveals illusions and the true form of creatures of evil in non-mundane disguise.

30—Star Warrior (V) Calling on the stellar powers, the caster temporarily transforms into a minor Champion of Light. The caster is given a *Greater Star Blade* to wield (as *Star Blades* above, except it is +30 and has a solid form which can parry and does not dissipate) and *Star Armor* for protection. In addition, if the caster is in good standing with a Star- or Light-based



deity, he may call upon one of the lesser of the deity's powers at the deity's discretion.

50—Star Mastery (V) Caster may utilize one of the lower level spells on this list each round for the duration of the spell.

Paul Stafford

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AT RAPIER'S POINT

THE SWASHBUCKLING SIDE OF ROLEMASTER

We shall never sheathe the sword which we have not lightly drawn until Belgium receives in full measure all and more than all that she has sacrificed, until France is adequately secured against the menace of aggression, until the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe are placed upon an unassailable foundation, and until the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed.

—H. H. Asquith

At Rapier's Point is an all-new genre book for **Rolemaster** and/or **Space Master** that allows players and GMs to play in a swashbuckling campaign. The focus of the book is on 17th century France and the fiction that surrounds it (e.g., *The Three Musketeers*), but it encompasses swashbuckling in all of its forms, from Robin Hood to Luke Skywalker, and it also discusses at length how to work such elements, characters and settings into an existing fantasy campaign.

Although professions like the Duelist from **RMCI** and the Free Thinker from **RMCI** are extremely appropriate for such a genre, *At Rapier's Point* includes some new professions that are also appropriate. Note that each of these professions has three extra weapon development point costs for 1-h Firearm, 2-h Firearm, and Support Firearm skills. In *At Rapier's Point*, characters have access to muskets, pistols, rifles and even cannons.



THE DIPLOMAT

Diplomats represent their sovereigns before the monarchs of foreign lands. In addition to lobbying and negotiating, they keep an eye out for changes in attitude and public opinion that could signal a shift in foreign policy. A diplomat is closely watched by his hosts because he's suspected of being a spy (he is). The diplomat is monitored less closely by his own government only because distances involved make constant supervision difficult. He's pretty shifty; no tactic is too dirty to use in the name of national security, as long as he doesn't get caught. Diplomats mix with high society, attending all the fancy parties and state functions in order to gather information and develop contacts. They frequently smuggle documents and people in and out of their host nations and are always up to their ears in political intrigue. Unlike other spies, however, a diplomat can't run home once his dirty duty is done; he has to live in foreign territory for years. Often he and his hosts develop a love/hate relationship, trying to outcharm each other while engaging in a long-term battle of wits.



Weapon Skills: 2/6, 3/7, 4, 6, 6, 9, 9, 9, 9	
Maneuvering in Armor:	Magical Skills:
Soft Leather 2/*	Spell Lists 15
Rigid Leather 2/*	Runes 5
Chain 4/*	Staves & Wands 4
Plate 8/*	Channeling 4
	Directed Spells 10
Special Skills:	General Skills:
Ambush 2	Climbing 3
Linguistics 1/*	Swimming 2
Adrenal Moves 3/7	Riding 2/5
Adrenal Defense 10	Disarming Traps 4
Martial Arts 4/7	Picking Locks 3/9
Body Development 2/5	Stalk & Hide 2/5
	Perception 1/3
Other Skills: Refer to Development Point Costs given below for those skills unique to the Diplomat Profession. All other skill costs are identical to the Bard's development point costs.	
Prime Requisites: Pr/Re.	
Academic Skills:	Subterfuge Skills:
Astronomy 2/5	Acting 1/3
Demon/Devil Lore 5	Bribery 1/3
Dragon Lore 5	Falsification 2/5
Social Skills:	General Skills:
Diplomacy 1/2	Play Instrument 2/5
Seduction 1/3	
Level Bonuses:	
Arms Law Combat +1	General Skills +1
Subterfuge Skills +3	Social Skills +3



THE NOBLE DE ROBE

A member of the rising middle class. The wealth and influence of these businessmen and professionals makes them almost a second aristocracy, hence the nickname “nobles of the robe.” (Traditional aristocrats are known as “nobles of the sword.”) Nobles of the robe are often members of Parliament, the Estates General, or the judiciary. They also have a tendency to be Calvinists. At the GM’s discretion, players may take Special Status such as local judicial powers or wealth.

Civil servants are often on the take. In fact, their greed is proverbial. They aren’t paid that much for their official duties, which take time away from their farms or businesses. Meanwhile, they’re under social pressure to keep up with the aristocracy in fashion, housing and entertainment. Even relatively honest officials supplement their incomes with myriad fees and slush funds. It is an expected and accepted way of doing business.

Weapon Skills: 2/4, 3/8, 6, 6, 8, 11, 11, 11, 11	
Maneuvering in Armor:	Magical Skills:
Soft Leather 1/*	Spell Lists 15
Rigid Leather 1/*	Runes 4
Chain 2/*	Staves & Wands 6
Plate 4/*	Channeling 4
	Directed Spells 10
Special Skills:	General Skills:
Ambush 6	Climbing 3
Linguistics 2/*	Swimming 3
Adrenal Moves 3/7	Riding 2/4
Adrenal Defense 18	Disarming Traps 6
Martial Arts 4/6	Picking Locks 4
Body Development 2/5	Stalk & Hide 3/8
	Perception 2/4
Other Skills: Refer to Development Point Costs given below for those skills unique to the Noble De Robe Profession. All other skill costs are identical to the Rogue’s development point cost.	
Prime Requisites: Pr/In.	
Academic Skills:	Social Skills:
Heraldry 1/4	Diplomacy 1/4
Basic Math 1/3	Seduction 1/3
Administration 1/3	Leadership 1/3
Subterfuge Skills:	Linguistic Skills:
Acting 2/6	Trading 1/4
Bribery 1/3	Propaganda 1/4
Level Bonuses:	
Academic Skills +1	Linguistic Skills +3
Subterfuge Skills +1	Social Skills +3



THE POET/ACTOR

Wandering entertainers live by their wits, literally singing (reciting, juggling, performing, etc.) for their supper. They are regarded with a strange mixture of admiration and disdain; people may enjoy the work or performance but consider the artist himself a low-class panhandler. This is true no matter how wealthy or famous a character becomes, and the fact that he spends an inordinate amount of time pub crawling and sometimes supplements his income with petty crime doesn't help. Poets dedicate poems and plays to wealthy nobles, hoping to get their attention and patronage. Unfortunately, dirty ditties and political parodies sometimes attract the wrong kind of attention, and the poet/actor will occasionally find himself a hunted man. Actors perform their own or others' plays several times a week; careers can be based in a particular city or the actor may wander from place to place. Either way, the pickings are slim, and he'll have to juggle his creative pursuits with a second or third career (adventuring). Female poets frequently write under a masculine pseudonym.



Weapon Skills: 2/4, 4/7, 6, 6, 6, 9, 9, 9, 9	
Maneuvering in Armor: Soft Leather 1/* Rigid Leather 1/* Chain 3/* Plate 6/*	Magical Skills: Spell Lists 20 Runes 5 Staves & Wands 7 Channeling 5 Directed Spells 12
Special Skills: Ambush 3 Linguistics 1/* Adrenal Moves 2/7 Adrenal Defense 9 Martial Arts 3/6 Body Development 2/5	General Skills: Climbing 2/5 Swimming 2/5 Riding 4 Disarming Traps 6 Picking Locks 4 Stalk & Hide 2/5 Perception 2/4
Other Skills: Refer to Development Point Costs given below for those skills unique to the Poet/Actor Profession. All other skill costs are identical to the Bard's development point cost. Prime Requisites: Me/Pr.	
Gymnastic Skills: Acrobatics 1/4 Juggling 1/3 Stilt Walking 1/4 Tightrope Walking 1/5	Subterfuge Skills: Acting 1/2 Begging 1/3 Disguise 1/2 Mimery 1/3
Social Skills: Duping 1/3 Seduction 1/3 Leadership 4	Linguistic Skills: Mimicry 1/2 Ventriloquism 1/3
Level Bonuses: Acrobatic Skills +1 Linguistic Skills +2 Subterfuge Skills +2 Social Skills +3	



THE RELIGIOUS DISSIDENT

The religious dissident believes the state church is flawed, if not outright heretical, and that only he and his friends can correct that error. To promote reform and win converts, he is willing to risk his wealth, his career, even his life.

Dissidents need a good Presence to influence people and a high Self Discipline to keep up the fight in the face of opposition. Because their faith is unpopular—if not illegal—they're adept at passing information quickly and quietly, hiding documents or hunted clergymen, and familiar with the location of safe houses. Faith doesn't preclude fighting ability; dissidents are often fanatical warriors.

A dissident typically adopts a strict moral code to set a good example for the "apostates" he lives among and consequently tends to be, puritanical. He avoids the amusements of his companions (drinking, gambling, wenching, theater) but makes up for it by being generally trustworthy and stalwart. He can also generate a lot of excitement for himself and his fellow adventurers: refusing to take off his hat as the king's carriage passes, correcting a tavern full of drunks for swearing, hiding forbidden literature in his companions' luggage, etc.

Weapon Skills: 2/4, 3/6, 4/8, 6, 6, 9, 9, 9, 9	
Maneuvering in Armor:	Magical Skills:
Soft Leather 1/*	Spell Lists 12
Rigid Leather 1/*	Runes 9
Chain 4/*	Staves & Wands 9
Plate 8/*	Channeling 3
	Directed Spells 15
Special Skills:	General Skills:
Ambush 3	Climbing 4
Linguistics 2/*	Swimming 3
Adrenal Moves 3/8	Riding 2/7
Adrenal Defense 14	Disarming Traps 4
Martial Arts 3/6	Picking Locks 5
Body Development 2/4	Stalk & Hide 3/8
	Perception 1/4
Other Skills: Refer to Development Point Costs given below for those skills unique to the Religious Dissident Profession. All other skill costs are identical to the Fighter's development point cost.	
Prime Requisites: SD/Pr	
Academic Skills:	Subterfuge Skills:
Demon/Devil Lore 2/5	Camouflage 1/4
Phil./Religious Doc. 1/3	Hide Item 1/5
Tactics 1/4	Trickery 1/5
Social Skills:	Linguistic Skills:
Leadership 2/4	Propaganda 1/2
Seduction 6	Public Speaking 1/4
Level Bonuses:	
Academic Skills +1	Linguistic Skills +2
Arms Law Combat +1	General Skills +1
Subterfuge Skills +1	Social Skills +2



THE SCIENTIST

The 17th Century scientist, unlike his modern counterpart, is a generalist. He dabbles in several different fields but lacks specialized expertise in them, basically because the specifics are just now being discovered. He also tends to be something of a tinkerer because he has to make or even invent his own instruments and apparatuses. His curiosity is relentless: if you swing a club at him, he'll duck, but he'll also wonder about the relative densities of wood and the human skull and why objects make that whistling noise when they pass through the air.

Because he asks questions about everything—what is the nature of the universe, where is the soul located in the body, why do people act the way they do—and because he doesn't hesitate to speculate on the ultimate meanings of his discoveries, the scientist makes those in authority very nervous. Some of his conclusions are particularly offensive to church authorities, who as the caretakers of religion and philosophy, have been used to providing all the answers.

Player-character scientists will benefit from a low profile. They'll probably be wise to delay publishing their work, especially if it defies conventional wisdom (if they want to keep their patrons and avoid charges of heresy). They are more likely than other PCs to mingle freely with characters of foreign nationality; scientists are already evolving into an international community, and trips to consult and work with foreign colleagues are not uncommon.



Weapon Skills: 2/4, 4/8, 8, 8, 8, 12, 12, 12, 12	
Maneuvering in Armor:	Magical Skills:
Soft Leather 1/*	Spell Lists 10
Rigid Leather 1/*	Runes 3
Chain 4/*	Staves & Wands 3
Plate 8/*	Channeling 5
	Directed Spells 9
Special Skills:	General Skills:
Ambush 5	Swimming 3
Adrenal Moves 4	Riding 3
Adrenal Defense 14	Disarming Traps 2
Martial Arts 4/8	Picking Locks 3
Body Development 3/6	Stalk & Hide 3
	Perception 1/4
Other Skills: All other skill costs are identical to the Scholar's development point cost.	
Prime Requisites: Re/In.	
Level Bonuses:	
Academic Skills +3	Linguistic Skills +2
Arms Law Combat +1	General Skills +2

Kevin Scrivener



FUTURE VISIONS: 2ND EDITION MIDDLE-EARTH ROLE PLAYING

COMING FALL 1993

15.0 MAGIC AND SPELLS

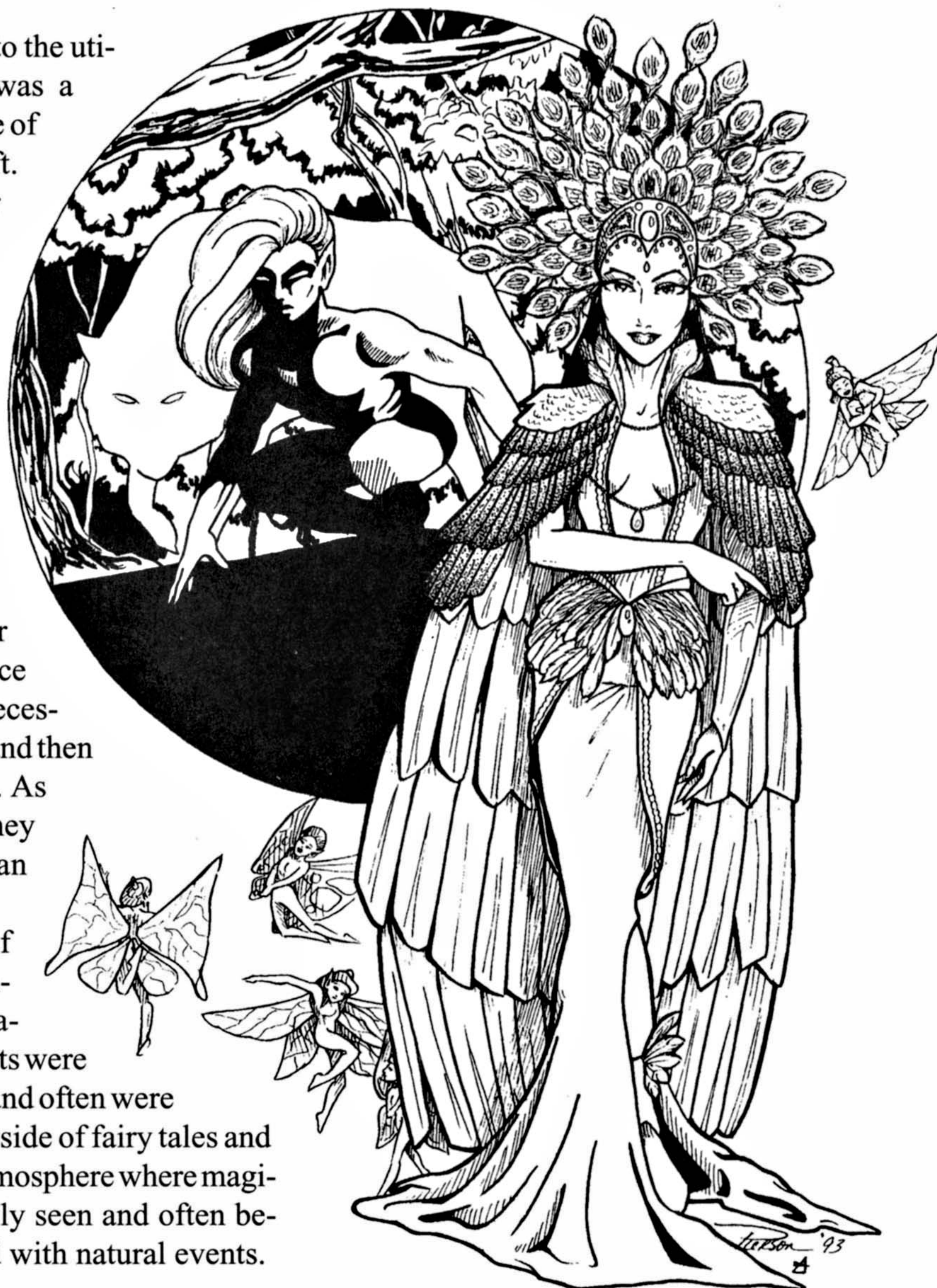
Middle-earth had unique ties to the Undying Lands which created a potential for the appearance and use of significant power (magic). Such power manifested itself on a massive scale in the First Age, and to a lesser, but significant degree in the Second Age. By the time of the late Third Age it was quite subtle—except in the cases of Dragons, the Balrog, Saruman, and (of course) Sauron.

This low-key approach to the utilization of great power was a factor relating to the nature of those possessing the gift. The Valar laid down their direct guardianship of Middle-earth in stages, at the end of the First Age and with the downfall of Númenor. They still kept watch and intervened in the Third Age by sending the Istari (Wizards), beings who themselves had great power. The Istari, like their masters, did not use force unless it was absolutely necessary to combat Darkness, and then only to the degree needed. As a result of this approach, they appeared far weaker than they really were.

The other masters of magic in Middle-earth employed their abilities in relative secret. Men and Hobbits were not great friends of spells and often were unaware of their usage outside of fairy tales and legends. This created an atmosphere where magical occurrences were rarely seen and often became merged or confused with natural events.

USING MAGIC IN MERP

This section deals with magic and the use of spells in *MERP*. Spell usage falls into two separate *realms*, Essence and Channeling, each of which concerns a different source of power required to cast the spell. This spell system is limited to 1st through 10th level spells and two realms of magic. This provides a more usable framework for low level adventures.



For higher level spells and a more detailed framework, ICE's *Spell Law* provides an expanded spell system with three realms of magic, over 2500 spells, and over 150 spell lists.

THE DANGERS OF USING MAGIC

There are two principal dangers that help to restrain the use of magic in the Third Age. The first of these, and the most obvious, is the Shadow of Sauron of Mordor—drawing the attention of the Lidless Eye has led to the downfall of many a spellcaster.

The other danger is the corrupting influence of the use of significant magic for “non-pure” goals. Unless a spell is cast for the purposes of combating Darkness or maintaining the “balance,” there is a chance that the caster will be corrupted, “drawn towards darkness.” This is what happened to Saruman—he used too many powerful spells, too often.

SETTING RESTRAINTS ON MAGIC USE

When constructing the setting for a fantasy roleplaying game based upon Middle-earth, a Gamemaster must take great care to show restraint regarding the use of magic. Although most folk have some “magic” in them, magic-users are relatively rare, and open displays of power are still rarer. Elves certainly employ magic in daily life, and Dwarves use spells for a variety of reasons, even for producing wondrous toys; nonetheless, such enchanting skills are not necessarily the norm. Among Hobbits, magic is considered the stuff of legends. Many Men most often feel the same way; indeed, some have never heard of its use.

15.1 ESSENCE

The Essence realm utilizes the power that exists in everyone and everything of and in Arda, and in particular Middle-earth. Essence in Middle-earth has its source in The Song (The Ainulindalë) which created Arda and the order of things. A character who casts spells of the Essence taps this power, molds it, and diverts it into his spells. Most of the truly powerful Essence spells deal with forces elemental in nature: fire, earth, water, wind, light, cold, etc.

The more inert material that is on the person of someone casting Essence spells, the more difficult it becomes to manipulate the Essence. Thus, when casting or using an Essence spell, no armor, greaves or helmet may be worn.

15.2 CHANNELING

The Valar are the offspring of Eru (God) who came to Arda to fulfill The Song. The Channeling realm utilizes the power of the Valar as channeled through characters casting spells. Since the Valar are not part of The Song (they helped to develop part of The Song, and Morgoth corrupted part of it), Channeling is independent of the Essence.

A character casting Channeling spells draws directly from the power of one or more of the Valar, even though this does not “usually” require the conscious cooperation of the Valar involved. Thus, spells of this realm do not necessarily reflect the nature of the Valar as long as the spells are relatively subtle and low level (e.g., healing, detection, etc.). More powerful and higher level spells not included in *MERP* might require active consent of the Valar—the Valar include Morgoth, so evil Channeling spells may be cast if the power comes from him.

Metal interferes with drawing power from the Valar, so no metal armor, metal helmets, or metal greaves may be worn when casting a Channeling spell.

15.3 RISK FACTORS

One of the primary reasons for the subtle and secret use of magic and spells is the presence of Sauron in Mordor during the Third Age. Sauron is not one to restrain himself when he deems it necessary to act with great authority. He does act cautiously and quietly, especially when nursing himself after a great defeat, but he is capable of unbridled explosions.

Those who live under his eye are particularly careful not to cause attention to be brought upon themselves. This feeling may contribute to the restraint found in those who possess the ability to wield spells. To be sure, some are weary or concerned about upsetting the Balance of Things, but most are doubtlessly afraid of attracting the attention of the Dark Lord or his minions. Still others died at the hands of Sauron or others of power; for the bold and those with power often dare to combat those most dangerous.





The danger that Sauron and his minions present to spellcasters is reflected in *MERP* by “risk factors.” Each spell has a risk factor which reflects the potential of drawing the attention of Sauron or his servants. Each Gamemaster must decide whether or not to use risk factors in his game.

USING RISK FACTORS

Each time a character casts a spell, the Gamemaster should make an open-ended roll and add the Risk Factor for the spell. This roll may also be modified by a factor based upon the time period.

If the modified result is 100 or more, some sort of “Shadow-force” has noticed the casting of the spell. A second open-ended roll must be made on the Spell Use Risk Table ST-12. Otherwise, nothing unusual happens.

The results on Table ST-12 are guidelines to help a Gamemaster determine the consequences of the spell being noticed. The GM should modify the results to reflect the specific area and circumstances.

15.4 CORRUPTION

Whenever a spell failure occurs there is a chance that the spellcaster will be partially corrupted and “drawn towards the darkness.” Certain results that the spellcaster receives Corruption Points. When this happens, the spellcaster is allowed make a Resistance Roll against Essence. If this RR is successful, only half (round down) of the CPs are received; otherwise, all of the CPs are received.

A Gamemaster should not apply Corruption Points (CPs) if an *appropriate* spell was cast for “pure” goals (i.e., directly working against or fighting evil, protecting the weak and helpless, healing the sick and injured, etc.). The key word here is appropriate; for example, a *Fire Bolt* is not appropriate to use on a bully or a thief, but a *Sleep* spell is.

Note: A Gamemaster who wants a game with magic used very freely may ignore Corruption Points altogether.

The Gamemaster should keep track of each character’s CP total as play progresses. Each character’s CP total normally starts at zero, and increases through spell failure and the associa-

tion with certain magic items (e.g., the One Ring corrupted its wearer very quickly). A GM may also want to assign CPs for particularly evil acts by characters. A GM may wish to allow certain rituals at certain places to “cleanse” (i.e., remove) CPs from characters. A GM may also want to assign CPs for particularly evil acts by characters.

In general, a character’s CPs reflect his tendency towards evil. On this scale, a total of zero indicates an “innocent” and a 100+ indicates a totally evil being. The effects of Corruption Points is up to the GM and the player of the corrupt character, but we suggest the following:

- If the character is faced with temptation, the GM may make an open-ended roll and add the character’s CP total, and Pr stat bonus. A result of 100+ means that the character must give in to the temptation.
- If the character is in the presence of an “evil being” who commands the character to do something, the character must make an Essence RR modified by subtracting his CP total (use the evil being’s level for the attack level). Failure means that the character must follow the evil being’s command.

SPELL USE RISK TABLE

Each time a character casts a spell, the Gamemaster should make an open-ended roll and add the Risk Factor for the spell and the Period Modifier:

Spell Use Risk Roll = open-ended roll + Risk Factor + Period Modifier

PERIOD MODIFIER TABLE

Early Third Age	-25
Middle Third Age	+0
Late Third Age	+25
Fourth Age	-50

If the modified result is 100 or more, some sort of “shadow force” has noticed the casting of the spell. A second open-ended roll must be made on the chart below. Otherwise, nothing unusual happens.

The results below are guidelines to help a Gamemaster determine the consequences of the spell being noticed. The GM should modify the results to reflect the specific area and circumstances; for example, the implementation of these results can be delayed for days.

ST-12 SPELL USE RISK TABLE

Roll	AREA TYPE							
	Haven	Civilized/ Urban	Civilized/ Rural	Border/ Urban	Border/ Rural	Wilds	Shadow- lands	Shadow- Holds
≤ 05	nothing	nothing	nothing	nothing	nothing	nothing	nothing	Sighting
06–20	nothing	nothing	nothing	Sighting	nothing	nothing	Sighting	Spotting
21–30	nothing	Sighting	nothing	Sighting	Sighting	nothing	Spotting	Creature
31–40	nothing	Sighting	Sighting	Spotting	Sighting	Sighting	Spotting	Creature
41–50	nothing	Sighting	Sighting	Spotting	Spotting	Spotting	Creature	Patrol
51–60	nothing	Spotting	Spotting	Spotting	Spotting	Creature	Creature	Patrol
61–70	nothing	Spotting	Spotting	Ambush	Creature	Creature	Patrol	Ambush
71–80	Sighting	Ambush	Creature	Kidnapping	Creature	Creature	Patrol	Army Unit
81–90	Sighting	Kidnapping	Ambush	Kidnapping	Ambush	Creature	Ambush	Army Unit
91–100	Spotting	Assassin	Assassin	Assassin	Patrol	Ambush	Army Unit	Special
101–150	Spotting	Kidnapping	Kidnapping	Kidnapping	Assassin	Patrol	Special	Special
151–200	Kidnapping	Assassin	Assassin	Assassin	Special	Special	Special	Special
201+	Assassin	Special	Special	Special	Special	Special	Special	Special

AREA TYPE — Examples are from Late Third Age.

Haven: An area completely clear of any overt Shadow-forces (e.g., Rivendell, Lorien, the Grey Havens, Edhellond, etc.). Hidden agents and traitors may still be present.

Civilized/Urban: A city or town in a region relatively free of Shadow-forces (e.g., Minas Tirith, Dol Amroth, Pelargir, etc.).

Civilized/Rural: The countryside in a region relatively free of Shadow-forces (e.g., the Shire, Southern Gondor, etc.).

Border/Urban: A city or town in a less civilized region on the border of the wild or the border of Sauronic territory (e.g., Tharbad, Lake-town, Bree, Edoras, etc.).

Border/Rural: The countryside in a less civilized region on the border of the wild or the border of Sauronic territory (e.g., Rohan, Western Gondor, the Iron Hills, Northeastern Mirkwood, etc.).

Wilds: Sparsely populated, uncivilized regions that cover most of Northwestern Middle-earth in the Third Age (e.g., Old Pukel-land).

Shadow-lands: A region with some active Shadow-forces and settlements (e.g., Moria, Southern Mordor, Southern Mirkwood, Near Harad, etc.).

Shadow-holds: A region with heavy concentration of Shadow-forces and settlements (e.g., Angmar, Dol Guldur, Gorgoroth, etc.).

RESULTS —

Sighting: Any Shadow-forces in the area are aware that a spell has been cast and the general direction to the spell caster. This can lead to a “pursuit” situation (or “hue and cry” in areas of Sauronic Activity or Sauronic Garrison).

Spotting: Includes the effects of a “Sighting” **plus** at least one Shadow-force knows the exact direction and approximate distance to the spell caster.

Creature: An Shadow-creature (see Appendix A-3) in the vicinity senses the spell and begins to pursue, stalk, attack, or ambush the spell caster.

Patrol: Includes the effects of a “Spotting” **plus** at least one organized Sauronic patrol begins to pursue, stalk, attack or ambush the spell caster.

Ambush: Includes the effects of a “Spotting” **plus** at least one force is in position to attempt to set up an ambush.

Army Unit: Includes the effects of a “Patrol” **plus** at least one large, organized Sauronic force is in position to directly attack the spell caster.

Kidnapping: Includes the effects of a “Spotting” **plus** at least one of the Shadow-forces sensing the spell will attempt to kidnap the spell caster.

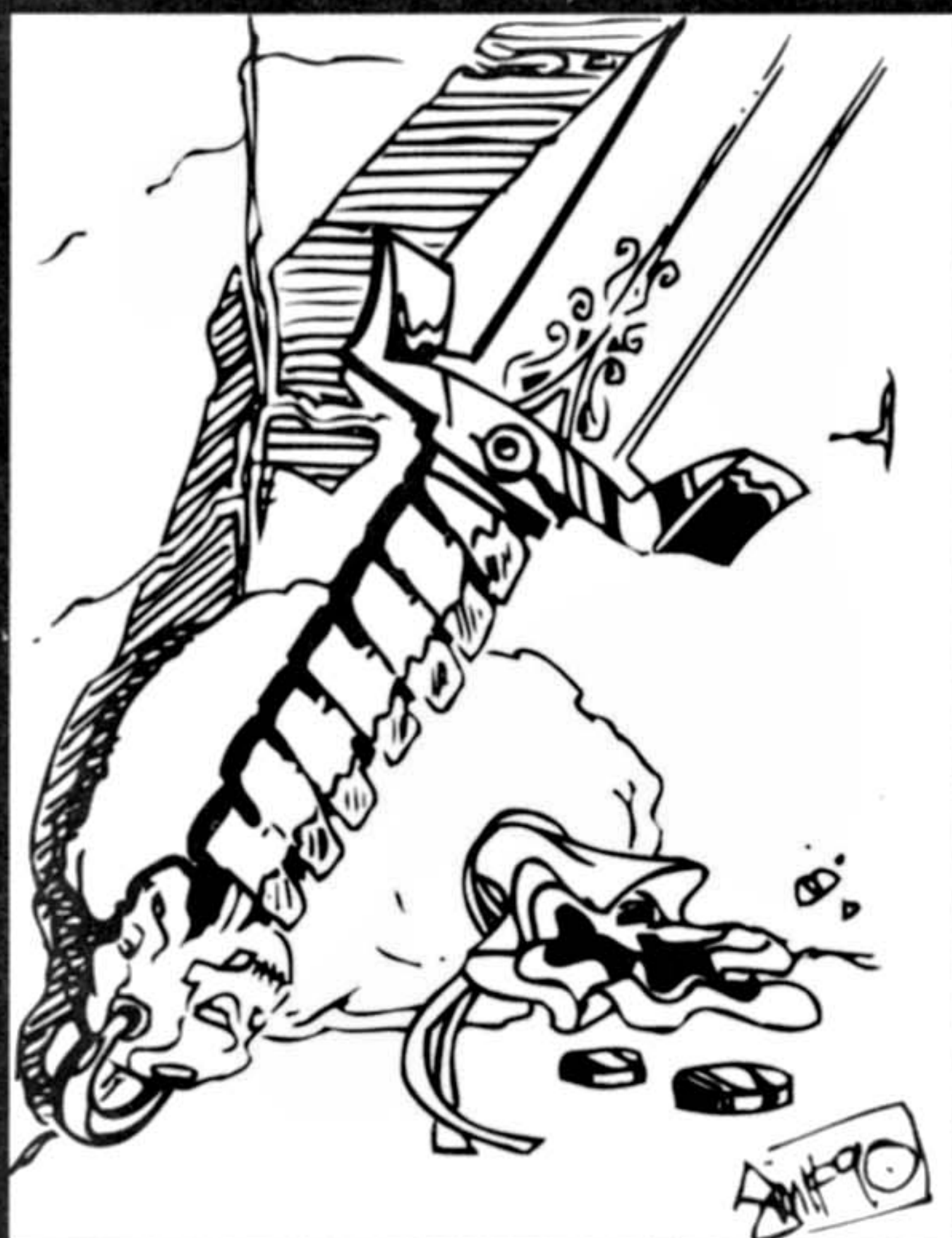
Assassin: Includes the effects of a “Spotting” **plus** at least one of the Shadow-forces sensing the spell is a Sauronic assassin, who will attempt to assassinate the spell caster.

Special: Includes the effects of a “Spotting” **plus** at least one of the nearby Shadow-forces sensing the spell is a very powerful Sauronic agent or lieutenant; perhaps even a Nazgûl or some other powerful spell caster and his retinue.





B



IS FOR BURGLAR

BY JAMES REYNOLDS

Lying on his bed, staring up at the ceiling, Jenmar felt lonely. Today was his fourteenth birthday. While he found himself in his room, his father, the Baron Jelin, conducted emergency business. It was difficult being an only child. In Jenmar's opinion, it really couldn't get much worse than this.

It was dusk when Jenmar's door opened, and his father stepped in. The years were beginning to show in his father's hair and weary dark brown eyes. He began to pace the small, dreary chamber. This could mean one of two things: either Jenmar had done something wrong (which he could not recall), or there was going to be bad news.

"Son," his father started off hesitantly, in a deep baritone voice.

Accept it, Jenmar thought, as his father would say, you're royalty, and royalty must endure. This was the same tone his father used when he had told him his mother had been killed by assassins. It was a tone Jenmar had come to dislike.

"Son, I have to leave immediately. There is trouble to the north that involves some of my land." His father always said "my land" or "my tower", never "our land" or "our tower". "I will be leaving within the hour. When I get back, I will take you down to the weapon master's shop and buy you your own sword." Even at the age of fourteen his father would try to 'buy' his way out of another problem with his son. Jenmar, however, did not want a sword... or to be a warrior.

The baron left, shutting the door quietly behind him. Jenmar stood by the window. *I really should consider what profession I would like to follow, Jenmar thought. I do not want to be a mere warrior; that much I am sure of.* Gazing into the courtyard, he saw his father rode from the tower, taking a dozen guards with him. They left with no fanfare, just shadows in the night.

Alone in the darkness, Jenmar felt whole. He did not fear the darkness like the other boys his age. *Let the DarkShadow come for me, he thought. It would be better than living this dismal life.*



It was very late when Jenmar was startled from his sleep. Sitting on the edge of his bed, Jenmar slipped his nightshirt over his head and went to the window, only to come face to face with the Dark Shadow.

Before Jenmar could scream, the shadow was beside him pulling his body into his. *Please don't kill me!* Jenmar thought, aware of a hand over his mouth, not allowing him to scream.

"Silence, boy," a hushed voice said in his ear. "I don't want to hurt you, but if you try to scream I'll gag you and hang you outside your window by your toes. And naked, too, for all the ladies to see come morning."

This probably was not the “DarkShadow”! Why would the DarkShadow hang him outside the window, when legend had it that the creature could engulf you in darkness and suck the life out of your body before it hit the ground? The grip loosened around Jenmar’s mouth, and turning around, Jenmar could barely make out the features of the man who stood before him.

The man was only slightly taller than Jenmar, slim with eyes like two small dark coals. That was all Jenmar could distinguish in the dim light, for his body was the color of darkest night. “What do you want?” Jenmar asked.

Lighting the lamp beside the bed, the man turned and smiled. Jenmar noticed a few gaps between his teeth, and that the man’s entire body was covered in what appeared as the softest black dyed leather Jenmar had ever seen.

“Well, laddie,” the man said in a low, merry voice. “I’ve come to have a look around, being that the baron is out on business.”

“Who are you?” Jenmar demanded.

“Now laddie, if I told you that, you would know my name, then the captain of the *guard* would know, then *everybody* would know, and I’d get no privacy.”

Pulling a three-pronged hook and fifty foot of rope from the window ledge, the man, whose eyes never left Jenmar, stood and laid the bundle of rope and hook on a nearby chair. “You can call me ‘Vor’. Short for Voraque. Don’t you think that name’s got a certain flair to it?”

“Are you an assassin?” Jenmar asked, as he backed towards the door, fear hanging on the edge of his voice.

“Now laddie, why would I have let you live, when I could have easily slit your throat from ear to ear? It sure wasn’t to save my clothes.” Vor extended his hand. “Well, I told you my name; what’s yours?”

Jenmar didn’t know if he should lie to this man, afraid that he might change his mind about the ear to ear cut. Ignoring his extended hand, he said, “I am called Jenmar.”

At the sound of his name, Vor reached out and gripped his arm tightly. “You’re the baron’s son,” Vor said squinting one eye.

“Are you just realizing that?” Jenmar said with a hint of sarcasm.

“Why aren’t you screaming for the guards?”

Looking down, Jenmar said, “Why do I need the guards? You said you could have killed me, so I don’t think you will kill me now.”

Looking around, Vor started for the door. Stopping at the door, he listened as if he were able to hear everything that moved on the other side. “You don’t have some magic alarm in here, do ya, laddie?”

“No. My father probably wouldn’t miss me anyway,” Jenmar stated. He moved over to the door and put his ear to it. “What are we listening for?” he whispered.

Stepping back, Vor looked closely at Jenmar. “You’re a very peculiar boy.”

Jenmar sighed. “And very bored with this grand life I live.”

Well, boy,” Vor said smiling that toothy grin. “How would you like to put a small bit of excitement in your life tonight?”

Jenmar looked up into the face of Vor. “What kind of excitement do you have in mind?”

Standing his full height Vor said with pride, “I laddie happen to be the best burglar in town.”

“I haven’t heard of burglars in this town. Don’t you mean *thief*?”

Looking slightly hurt, Vor said, “No! I’m not a thief or a rogue. I’m a burglar.”

“What’s the difference?” Jenmar asked.

“The difference is that burglars strive for challenges. To break in, kill someone and steal all they own is easy. But to sneak in, take a few things, and get away without being seen or caught...now, *that’s* a challenge.”

Walking over by the bed, Vor extinguished the lamp. “But the number one rule to being a burglar is this, my friend: a burglar would rather fail his mission than to kill a living person.”

“Then that’s the reason I’m still alive?”

“The *only* reason,” Vor said smiling. Finding some dark clothing, Jenmar changed, making sure all his clothing fit tight against his body.

“What did you plan to steal tonight?” Jenmar asked.

“I’ve heard your father keeps a rare jewel or two down in the lower halls.”

“He does have a room that I am not allowed in,” Jenmar said, walking towards the door.

“Then come, laddie boy, let’s go get them jewels!” Vor said, reaching for the latch on the door.

Jenmar grabbed his sleeve. “My name is *Jenmar*. I would appreciate you *calling* me by my name. I am fourteen today, and *not* a boy.”

Bowing with a flourish, Vor said in an attempted regal voice. “Forgive me, my lord Jenmar, please allow your loyal subject to live.”

“Yes, you may live. *Until* you provoke my wrath.”

At this remark, they both laughed, but not so loud as to let any guards passing by hear them. Opening the door, Jenmar looked both ways. “Father took most of the guards with him. There will only be a few left.” Stepping out into the corridor, Jenmar moved to the stairs at the far end of the hall. Vor followed closely behind.





Looking over the balcony at the bottom of the stairs, they noticed one guard standing with his back to them. Vor moved around Jenmar. "Let me go first; then if you draw attention to yourself I'll have already passed by." Jenmar watched as Vor made his way down the steps, moving slowly, hugging the wall.

Then a strange thing happened. Right before Jenmar's eyes, Vor's clothing became the same color as the stone he was moving against, making him nearly invisible. Jenmar was fascinated by this display of stealth as Vor slipped around the corner. Standing slowly, Jenmar moved over to the far wall, trying to emulate Vor's movements. Watching the guard as he moved, Jenmar miscalculated a step and nearly fell.

As he rounded the corner, Vor motioned him to the far end of the corridor. "You're very loud in your movements, Jenmar. If that guard had been alert, you would have been caught. Blend in, become one with your surroundings. If a guard ever turns to look in your direction, freeze. The human eye has a way of passing over non-moving objects."

Jenmar was at a loss for words. He had thought that he was quiet. Leading the way, he quietly moved down to the lower levels of the tower. Stopping before a door, Jenmar turned towards Vor.

"This is the door. I have heard my father has trapped the door with..."

"Quiet!" Vor snapped. "You're making this too easy for me already. How can I keep my skills up when I know what to expect?"

The door, which was made of solid oak, had no visible doorknob, only a keyhole. Jenmar watched as Vor moved his fingers around the entire door and along the walls surrounding the entrance. "Very nice, very nice indeed." Vor mumbled to himself. "Jenmar, put your hand along this part of the door, very carefully." Jenmar put his hand along the spot Vor had indicated, which was very close to the lock.

"I do not feel anything," Jenmar stated.

"Close your eyes, concentrate, feel with your mind. Don't fool yourself into believing this is a normal door or it might be the last one you try to get through."

Jenmar closed his eyes, and pictured the door as an open page in a book waiting to be read by the next person to pick it up. Then he felt something he had almost missed. Tiny holes no bigger than a pinhead were set around the lock. Stepping back Jenmar almost shouted, "*I felt them!* Small holes around the lock!"

"Quiet! Jenmar, you'll have the guards breathing down our backs." Jenmar was pleased with himself. He had actually done it!

Vor crouched and looked into the keyhole. He pulled a small, round metal cylinder from a hiding place somewhere on his person. Opening the top of the cylinder, Vor pulled out two thin pieces of metal.

"Step to the side, Jenmar, this is going to be a little tricky." Stepping back, Jenmar saw the ends of the pieces of metal begin to glow with a dim light, then Vor moved them up to the keyhole and inserted them. "The trap is not too difficult to disarm. It's the lock that controls it; someone trying to unlock the door without the proper key would more than likely be eating a half a dozen darts or so, *but...*"

Vor moved his right hand slowly around in circles, holding his left in place. "Sometimes the lock can be tricked into thinking the right key is being used by a skilled locksmith such as myself." Jenmar heard a low 'click' as Vor pushed the door forward, opening the room to them. Motioning Jenmar to follow Vor entered the room.

As the door shut behind him, Jenmar felt a wave of vertigo steal over him as the room became pitch black. Suddenly a glow came from the metal cylinder in Vor's hand. "A handy thing to have around for these kind of adventures," Vor said as he moved the cylinder back and forth in front of him. In the light Jenmar could see piles of silver and gold, with three chests along the back wall of the room.

"They are probably locked in those chests," Vor said as he stopped the light on the largest of the three chests.

"Are you going to open them?" Jenmar asked.

"No, your father would notice them missing sooner or later, since they're not piled up like everything else. Then he'd start asking questions which might get you in trouble." Standing Vor looked at the piles around his feet. "I'll just take a few gold pieces, maybe a few silver." Pocketing the coins in various places in his clothing Vor walked to the door.

Jenmar stood there baffled. Vor was protecting him by not taking what he came for. "Why do you take these chances of being killed or worse only to steal enough to live on a few weeks?" Jenmar asked.

Vor stopped and turned towards Jenmar. "If I only have enough to live on a few weeks, then I'll need to find a new challenge to survive. Otherwise I'd just get sloppy and fat. Then the ladies wouldn't want me anymore, and I can't let that happen."

Holding the cylinder up before him Vor mumbled something and the light extinguished. Checking the corridor, Jenmar saw no one.

"Should I go first this time?" Jenmar asked. "Go ahead, but be careful," Vor said, resetting the lock behind them.

Jenmar moved down the hall, trying to be silent. As he was nearing the last stairway to his chambers, the guard turned and looked right at him. Jenmar froze, many emotions trying to control his body all at once—fear, excitement, and anger, for being caught.

“My lord, you’re up late,” the guard said.

► ► ►

Jenmar’s throat became dry as he looked behind him. Vor was no where to be seen.

“My lord, is there a problem?” the guard asked, reaching for the hilt of his sword.

Jenmar turned to the guard. What did he have to fear? “Nothing,, er, nothing is wrong,” Jenmar said trying to swallow. “I was just taking a walk, couldn’t sleep.”

“Don’t wander too far, my lord. There are many dangerous people out there who would like to see your father hurt, and would gladly hurt you to get to him.”

Turning, the guard resumed his post. Going up the steps two at a time, Jenmar entered his room, shutting the door he leaned against it.

Exhilarating! Jenmar thought. *I have never had so much fun!*

“Well, my lord,” Jenmar heard from the far side of the room. “Tonight you have learned skills many royal persons never get the chance to learn,” Vor said as he stepped into the moonlight shining through the window. “I hope I have brightened your birthday.”

“Hey!” Jenmar said, looking back at the door. “How did you get up here ahead of me?”

“While you were talking to the guard, whom, I might add, you did a fine job of duping.”

“You went by while the guard was looking in your direction?”

“Jenmar,” Vor said in all seriousness. “I have been doing this for over twenty-five years. I lived on the streets, and nearly starved to death before I decided it was better to steal than to die. My profession is an *art*, which I have perfected. Sometimes I take contracts to steal things, but only if no killing is involved. I may seem to be carefree about life, and have no goals, but someday I’ll retire, settle down, marry a nice bar-wench, and have a half dozen kids. And until that day comes, I’ll continue to do what I love the most on calm dark nights, visiting the treasuries of all the town’s patrons, trying to find that ultimate challenge.”

Jenmar did not realize that the man before him might truly believe in anything, and yet he could see the truth in Vor’s eyes. “So you are just going to leave and I will not see you again?” Jenmar asked.

“Watch out your window late at night. You *might* see me.”

“I doubt that. I can not see you even when you’re standing right in front of me. How do you do that?”

Reaching for his rope and grapple, Vor hooked the end of the grapple to the window ledge. “In my profession, there are some things that make the job easier,” Vor said as he let the rope fall.

It suddenly dawned on Jenmar what he wanted to do with his life. “I’ll make a deal with you,” he said.

Vor stopped on the ledge, hanging out the window. “What kind of deal?”

Even through the darkness, Jenmar knew Vor was staring at him. “You’re planning on retiring.” This was more of a statement than a question. “My father thinks that it’s time I decided what I want to do with my life. I have.”

Vor stepped back into the room, walking towards Jenmar. “What are you trying to say, laddie?”

“I’m saying I want you to teach me your trade. I want to be a burglar, and travel the night.”

Vor’s eyes opened wide. “You can’t be serious. You’re royalty, boy. Your father would hang me up by my toenails if he found out.”

“Then he won’t find out.” Jenmar said smugly.

“I’ve never had an apprentice, and I don’t want to start now. Just forget I came and go on with your easy living.”

“Voraque,” Jenmar said, stepping up to look in his face. “I would *rather* have you teach me of your own free will.”

“What are you saying?” Voraque asked, his voice growing cold.

The look on Vor’s face was a dangerous one. Jenmar tried to decide if he should back down, when he heard a memory of his father’s voice. *Son, you never finish anything! To be a man you must finish what you start.*

“If you do not teach me, in the morning I’ll go to the captain of the guard and tell him all I know. Or, you could just break your own law and kill me.”

Jenmar was afraid to breathe. As Vor stepped to the window ledge, Jenmar thought he would leave without saying anything.

“You got guts, Jenmar. Be here tomorrow night at midnight. Buy some dark, soft leather clothing. But don’t tell anyone what it’s for.

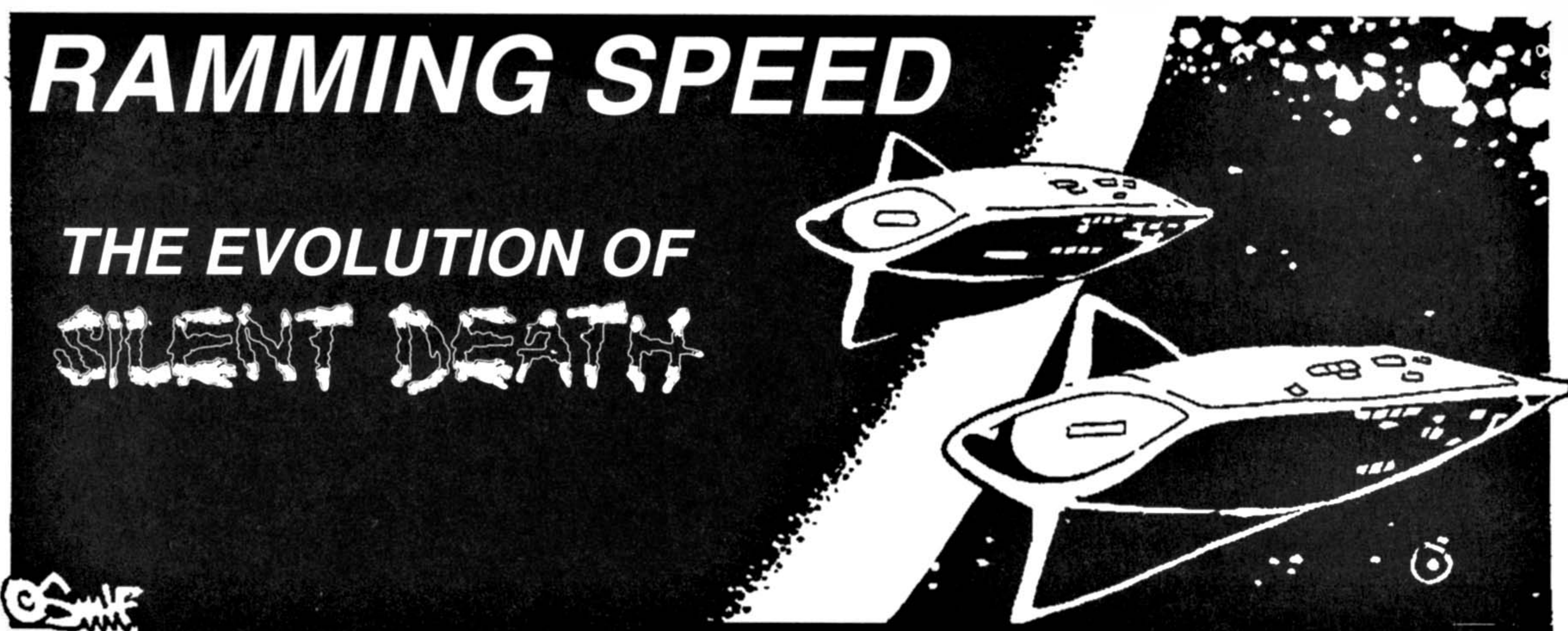
“You really want to learn? I’ll teach you until you want to come back to the easy life you’re used to.”

As quickly as he had entered, Vor was gone. Seconds later, the grapple flipped out into the night. Jenmar took his clothes off and lay down to sleep, reliving the night’s events.

Tomorrow would be a new beginning.

James Reynolds





Hello, *Silent Death* fans everywhere. My name is Matt Forbeck, and I am the new savant for Iron Crown's *Metal Express* line of games, the first and foremost of which is *Silent Death*.

INTRODUCTION

For those of you not yet familiar with *Silent Death*, allow me to explain. *Silent Death* is Iron Crown Enterprises' game of fighter-to-fighter combat in outer space. It's called *Silent Death* because, as a good friend of mine once noted, "in space, no one can hear you go BOOM!"

Unlike most I.C.E. games, *Silent Death* can be learned quickly, and is easy to play. The rules can literally be taught in under five minutes, and most games take less than two hours to play—sometimes much less.

While simple to play, there's a lot going on underneath *Silent Death*'s slick surface. The game is played on a set of hex maps upon which the players maneuver their ships into the best positions from which to blow their foes to kingdom come. Games are centered around the player's ship's starcraft displays. There's one for each type of ship, and they each describe each ship's unique abilities, as well as its strengths and weaknesses.

Like I said before, there's a lot going on here, but unlike other games, it is nearly transparent. Almost all the work's been done for you ahead of time. Everything is neat and fairly intuitive, and there's very little in the way of number crunching you have to bother with. The ramming rules described later in this article are definitely the game's most complicated bit of rulage to date.

Silent Death comes in two flavors: *Unleaded* and *Deluxe*. *Silent Death Deluxe* is the original *Silent Death* in the big box. It comes complete with a rulebook, an introductory scenario booklet, six hex maps that form a 42" by 47" playing surface, 180

full-color counters, nine polyhedral dice and 18 ready-to-paint, white metal miniatures with plastic bases for each. It's everything that you need to play (short of a pencil).

Silent Death Unleaded is the exact same game, less the miniatures and their bases. You simply use the counters instead. The *Deluxe* version retails for \$40, while the *Unleaded* one sells for \$20. The *Deluxe* version is a phenomenal deal, when you figure that the miniatures alone would cost \$36 purchased separately. But some people simply don't like to mess with the figs, so the *Unleaded* version is for them.

There are currently three supplements for *Silent Death*: *Overkill* and *Black Guard*, which expand upon the basic rules and add a bunch of new scenarios and ships, and *Night Brood*, which introduces aliens known as the Grubs or the Hatchlings to the *Silent Death* universe. There are also 30 different types of metal ships sold separately.

If you haven't played *Silent Death* yet, I suggest checking it out. It is easily one of the best board games ever released in the adventure gaming market. It's constantly being played at conventions. If I.C.E. is at a show, just stop by the booth and ask us what it's all about. We'd be more than happy to show you.

Barring that, you could always ask your local retailer to set up a demonstration game for you. By the end of this summer, I.C.E. will have released the *Silent Death Demo Kit*, a self-contained, boiled-down version of the original game specifically designed to be shown in stores. It'll be available only to retailers through their normal distribution channels, so get on down to your store and demand that they set up a *Silent Death* demo as soon as possible.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

What happened to Señor Barrett (the designer of *Silent Death* and all of its subsequent supplements), you ask? Well, after several years of hard labor

shackled to an antique Macintosh Plus, Kevin got time off for good behavior. He immediately decided to take a sabbatical to his ancestral home of Toronto, where even at this moment he lays waiting for the hockey season to start up again. We all wish him well while he's gone and hope that his return will be a speedy one.

In the meantime, however, they needed someone to step in and fill Kevin's rather large shoes (he must wear at least a size 12), and I lucked out. Measuring up to Kevin's excellent work on *Silent Death* is a tall order, but with your help, I hope to be able to give it a shot.

THE HOOK

By "your help," I mean that I need to hear from you rabid fans out there about just what you want the future to hold for *Silent Death*. What sorts of products would you like to see I.C.E. produce? What have you enjoyed most about previous *Silent Death* products? The least? Is there anything in the previous products you're unclear about? What does *Silent Death* simply cry out for?

Send your questions, comments, criticisms and suggestions to Iron Crown Enterprises, P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA 22902. They will all be appreciated. In this way, you can have a real effect upon how your game will evolve. I'm really looking forward to seeing them.

WHAT'S ALL THIS MEAN?

As far as other *Metal Express* stuff goes, I.C.E. is currently considering developing a number of products to broaden the line. One of these would be a science fiction, troop-to-troop ground combat game using *Silent Death*-like rules. We're also talking about a Middle Earth miniatures game, as well as possibly revamping the *Bladestorm* rules into something more accessible to the general gamer. Time (and your input) will determine how this all works out.

What about new *Silent Death* stuff, you say? Never fear. There's loads more on the way. The next supplement is currently being written by yours truly. It is tentatively entitled *Desperadoes* and is concerned with a smuggling war taking place in a single system. The product features six new ships and (hopefully) a color counter sheet. It'll contain rules for grappling claws and tractor beams,

plus the long demanded ramming rules, a rough version of which appears below. *Desperadoes* should be out before the end of the year.

The big *Silent Death* release for 1994, however, is called *Space Riggers*. Set in a solar system on the far side of the galaxy, this boxed set introduces magic to *Silent Death*. In it, wooden ships, flying carpets and plasma-spitting dragons traverse interplanetary space within their solar system. Eventually, the empires stumble across this forgotten corner of the universe, and then the sparks really start flying. There will be 12 new creatures and ships—all magical in nature—and some of them will come in the box, along with the rulebook and a sheet of counters.

Of course, all of these plans are just that: plans. Your input will affect the final version of these products, as well as whatever comes after *Desperadoes* and *Space Riggers*.

Right now, we're thinking about a strategic level *Silent Death* game, like the one Kevin mentioned in the designer's notes for *Night Brood*, as well as rules for destroyer or cruiser class ships in *Silent Death*. Plus, the *Silent Death Roleplaying Game* is currently in the works. Who knows? Maybe we'll even do novels. Again, your input is important to us. Drop me a line in care of I.C.E. I'd love to hear from you.



SILENT DEATH
TM



SILENT DEATH™

RAMMING

Ever since the release of *Silent Death*, players have been screaming for something to do with their ships once their weapons were spent. “How can I ram?” they cried. The only answer was “You can’t.”

These cries did not fall on deaf ears, however. After some long soul searching and head beating, we’ve come up with the following rules.

Ramming, or driving your ship directly into an opponent’s, is held to be a last ditch effort, something to be done in only the most dire straits. There’s no such thing as a kamikaze ship in *Silent Death*—yet—but there have been several pilots willing to lay down their lives to cause their enemies’ defeat. When they simply had no other choice, these pilots chose to ram.

To repeat: a ramming attack should only be used when the pilot has exhausted all other measures and defeat seems imminent.

When a pilot decides to ram another ship, it moves into a hex adjacent to the defender’s ship after the target ship has already moved. Otherwise the other ship would simply move out of the way. Only a ship with a Drive of 0 can be rammed before it moves. Additionally, the ramming ship must be directly facing its intended victim. In other words, the ship to be rammed must be in the ramming ship’s first front hex.

The ramming attempt is then resolved as follows.

1. The attacker and the defender each roll 1d10 and add their Piloting skills and their current Drives to their respective rolls.

2. Divide the mass of the larger ship by the mass of the smaller ship and add the result to the smaller ship’s total. The mass of each ship is listed in the *Starcraft Inventory and Nomenclature* section of *Silent Death* and each of its supplements. See the *Mass Table* for a listing of each ship’s mass.

3. The pilot with the highest modified total gets his or her desired result: a ram or a miss.

4. If the ram is successful, each ship takes an amount of damage equal to the difference between the two ships’ totals. The maximum amount of damage inflictible is equal to the total number of boxes (both marked and unmarked) on the smaller ship’s damage track.

5. If the attacker’s or defender’s ship is equipped with a life pod, it can be used normally to escape the conflagration. (See E.0 *Life Pods* in *Overkill*, pages 44 and 45).

A ramming attack is considered to be an attack made by the pilot for purposes of determining where it comes in the course of combat. This means that all eligible gunners get a chance to fire at the ramming

ship first, as well as any eligible pilots with a higher Gunnery skill. A ramming ship can often be destroyed before it gets a chance to complete its ram, thus sparing the ship to be rammed.

Example: *Jorge Khan of the Void Stalker rogue flight wing is flying a Night Hawk that has just lost its last weapon. Jorge is facing down a chewed up Epping that’s getting ready to stencil his Night Hawk’s silhouette on its prow. Determined to laugh last, Jorge throws caution to the wind and decides to ram his foe.*

After the Epping moves, Jorge maneuvers his ship around to the Epping’s nose and rams it head on. He ends up in the Epping’s first front hex with both ships facing each other, nose to nose.

Then Jorge and the Epping’s pilot each roll a D10 and add their piloting skills and their ship’s current Drive. Jorge rolls a 6, then adds his Piloting skill of 8 and his current Drive of 7 to get $(6+8+7=)$ 21. The Epping’s pilot rolls a 2. Her piloting skill is 5, and her ship’s current Drive is 8. This gives her a total of $(2+5+8=)$ 15.

The Epping’s mass is 1000 tons. Divided by the Night Hawk’s mass of 300 tons, this comes out to $(1000\div300=)$ 3.3. This rounds down to 3.

The 3 is added to Jorge’s total for a grand total of $(21+3=)$ 24. Since his total is greater than the Epping pilot’s, the ram succeeds.

The ram does $(24-15=)$ 9 points of damage to each ship. Jorge’s Night Hawk had 13 boxes left on its damage track. The crash reduces him to a Drive of 3, but he’s still alive and kicking, although he’s going nowhere fast.

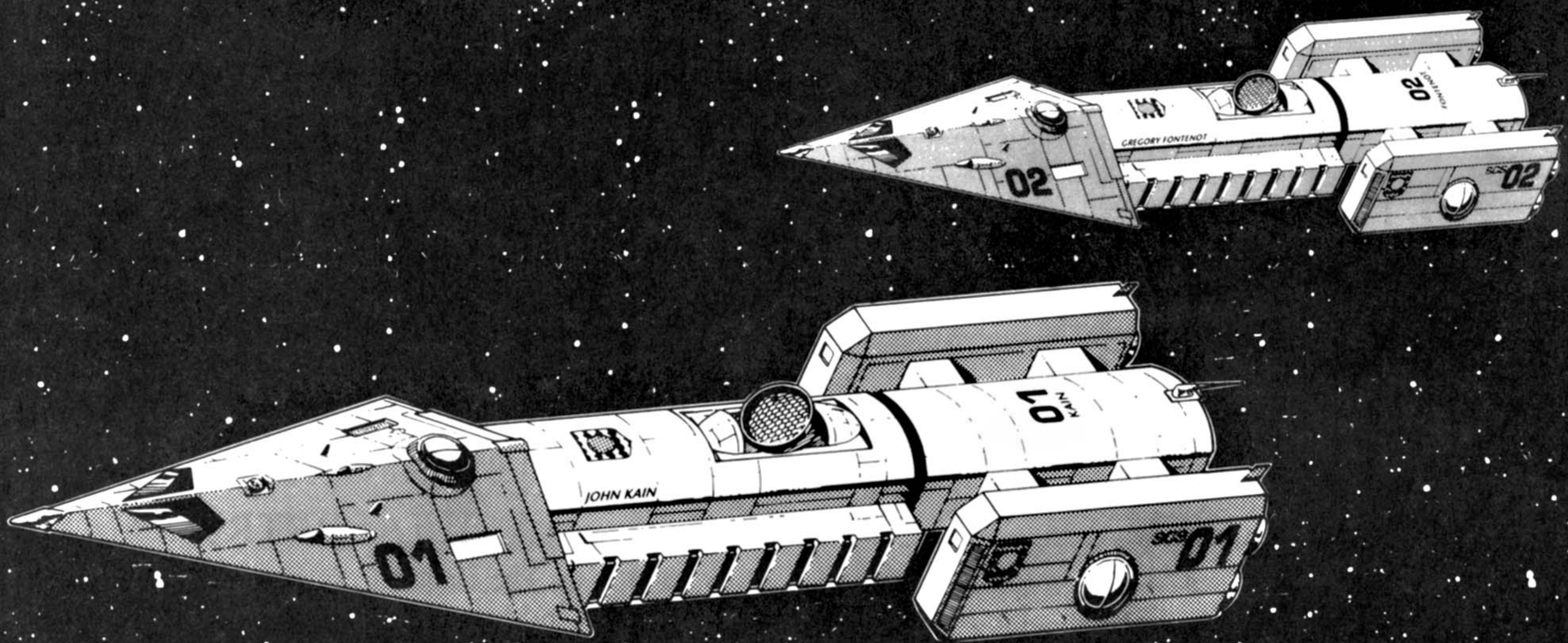
The Epping takes 9 points of damage to its front. It can easily sustain the damage, but Jorge’s attack has inflicted a critical hit. A D6 is rolled and comes up a 6, resulting in a fatal chain reaction explosion that guts the ship.

Jorge shouts for joy and basks in the explosion’s glow for a moment before activating his distress beacon. The wait will be a long one, but he counts his blessings that he’s still alive.

TRAVELLER

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SILENT DEATH™

THE MASS TABLE

Ship	Mass (in tons)
Betafortress	1500
Blizzard	150
Dart	140
Death Wind	400
Drakar	1000
Epping	1000
Glaive	900
Hell Bender	300
Kosmos	250
Lance Electra	420
Night Hawk	300
Pit Viper	90
Pharsii II	900
Revenge	770
Salamander	400
Seraph	800
Sentry	690
Shryak Shuttle	275
Sorenson III	600
Spirit Rider	125
Star Raven	1200
Talon	270
Teal Hawk	300
Thunder Bird	200

THE NIGHT BROOD*

Larva	200
Remora	300
Squidge	350
Lamprey	550
Manta	700
Muskellunge	1500

* Hatchling masses were not listed in *Night Brood*. This is because the ships, being organic, are bound to have a number of small discrepancies in their total masses. The values listed above are estimates based upon the general Grub forces and should work just fine with the ramming rules.

THE MISSILE TORPEDO

I've heard a lot of complaints at conventions about how tough the Grubs from *Night Brood* are, so here's a new Terran weapon designed to help even the odds. I wish I could take credit for this one, but it was originally conceived of by *Grey Worlds*' own David Blank. It's a real doozy.

The missile torp starts out just like any other torp. It is launched during the Missile/Torpedo Launch Phase and moves and acts just like a standard torp (i.e. Drive of 12, Defensive Value of 10, Piloting skill of 5, etc.). Here's the kicker: during any subsequent Missile/Torpedo Launch Phase, the torpedo can try

for a lock on a particular target. The torp has a Gunnery skill of 5 for purposes of the lock-on roll. If successful, the torp can fire its entire payload of missiles at that target.

Missile torps can be exchanged for standard torps on a one-for-one basis without altering the vehicle's Base Point Value. The number of missiles for each category of torpedo is listed on the *Missile Torp Table*.

MISSILE TORP TABLE

Torpedo	Number of Missiles
Mk.10	2
Mk.20	4
Mk.30	6
Mk.40	8
Mk.50	10

If you like, you can even try tossing the missile payloads into any of the different types of nonstandard torps described in *Overkill*. This will only make things even more interesting.

This optional weapon makes ships like the Revenge, which has slots for 10 Mk.50 torpedoes, much better suited to fight the Hatchlings. Keep this in mind when purchasing and outfitting your forces.

BETAFORTRESS BETA AND BETAFORTRESS GAMMA

The Betafortress was introduced in *Black Guard* and met with some success. Players seem to like scudding about in the pricey, yet powerful high end of the *Silent Death Ships*. In the *Starcraft Nomenclature and Inventory* section of *Black Guard*, Kevin referred to the fact that the Betafort's hyperdrive could be removed to make space for an aft-mounted Disruptorgun or twin Splatterguns. Later, in the *Silent Death Questions* section of *Night Brood*, Kevin revealed that the Basic Point Value for such a ship would be 79. The only thing missing then was starcraft displays for the retrofitted ships. So here they are. Enjoy!

Matt Forbeck

- 1 — **Shields damaged.** Reduce Defensive Value by 1.
- 2 — **Maneuver Thrusters hit.** All turns, including tight turns, cost 1 extra movement point to perform.
- 3 — **Energy Cannon power distribution interrupted.** No cannon weapon systems may be fired until after next turn.
- 4 — **One random Gunner killed.** His weapons may not be fired.
- 5 — **Rear bulkhead collapse.** Take 8 more hits on this Damage Track.
- 6 — **Reactor detonates.** The mighty Betafortress disintegrates and passes into the void.

THE TROJAN EPPING: A SCENARIO FOR SILENT DEATH

Beware of Greeks bearing gifts.

—Ancient Terran Proverb.

DISPATCH

Imperial forces engaged and defeated lingering Grub forces in the Djebel Allah system. Dark Wing Coven, using new equipment, surprised and destroyed all Hatchling resistance with surprising ease. Dark Wing pilots predict that the new equipment will be a mainstay in future Hatchling actions.

Date: Imp 476:300

Location: Djebel Allah

Situation: A reconnaissance force from the 2527th Special Forces Fighter Group is sent to check the system for Hatchling activity and to evaluate the combat potential of the new Epping II gunship. The bugs they encountered were surprised by the new incarnation of the Epping, which proved to be very effective against them.

FORCES

Imperial Player. Elements from Wizard and Warlock squadrons, 2527th Special Forces Fighter Group: Enter on Turn 1 along Edge 1.

Epping II A—	Pilot (Plt 7, Gnr 6) Gunner A (Gnr 8) Gunner B (Gnr 6) Gunner C (Gnr 4)
Lance Electra A—	Pilot (Plt 5, Gnr 6) Gunner (Gnr 9)
Blizzard A—	Pilot (Plt 7, Gnr 8)
Blizzard B—	Pilot (Plt 9, Gnr 6)
Blizzard C—	Pilot (Plt 6, Gnr 8)

Hatchling Player. Mixed units from Swarm 317A: Set up along Edge 3.

Squidge A—	Hatchling (Plt 8) Weapon 1 (Gnr 9) Weap 2 (Gnr 8)
Larva A—	Hatchling (Plt 9) Weapon 1 (Gnr 9)
Larva B—	Hatchling (Plt 7) Weapon 1 (Gnr 8)
Larva C—	Hatchling (Plt 8) Weapon 1 (Gnr 6)
Larva D—	Hatchling (Plt 6) Weapon 1 (Gnr 9)

SPECIAL RULES

The Epping II is a retrofit of the Epping. Make modifications to the Epping sheet as follows:

- Replace Gunner B & C pulse lasers with twin splatterguns in each mount.

To Hit: 2D6 + ADB + 1

Damage: Medium +2

- Replace Gunner A pulse laser with quad splatterguns.

To Hit: 2D6 + ADB + 3

Damage: Medium +6

- Increase Defensive Value to 12

- Increase Damage Reduction as follows:

Front: -3

Right Side/Left Side: -2

Rear: -1

Modify Damage Tracks as follows:

- * Front: Add 1 diamond after 1st small "w"

- * Right Side/Left Side: Add 1 diamond after 5th drive reduction box

- * Rear: Add 1 diamond after 2nd drive reduction box

New BPV is 35 • points.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

At the end of turn 10, the scenario is over. Each player totals up the TPVs of enemy vessels destroyed. The player with the higher TPV wins.

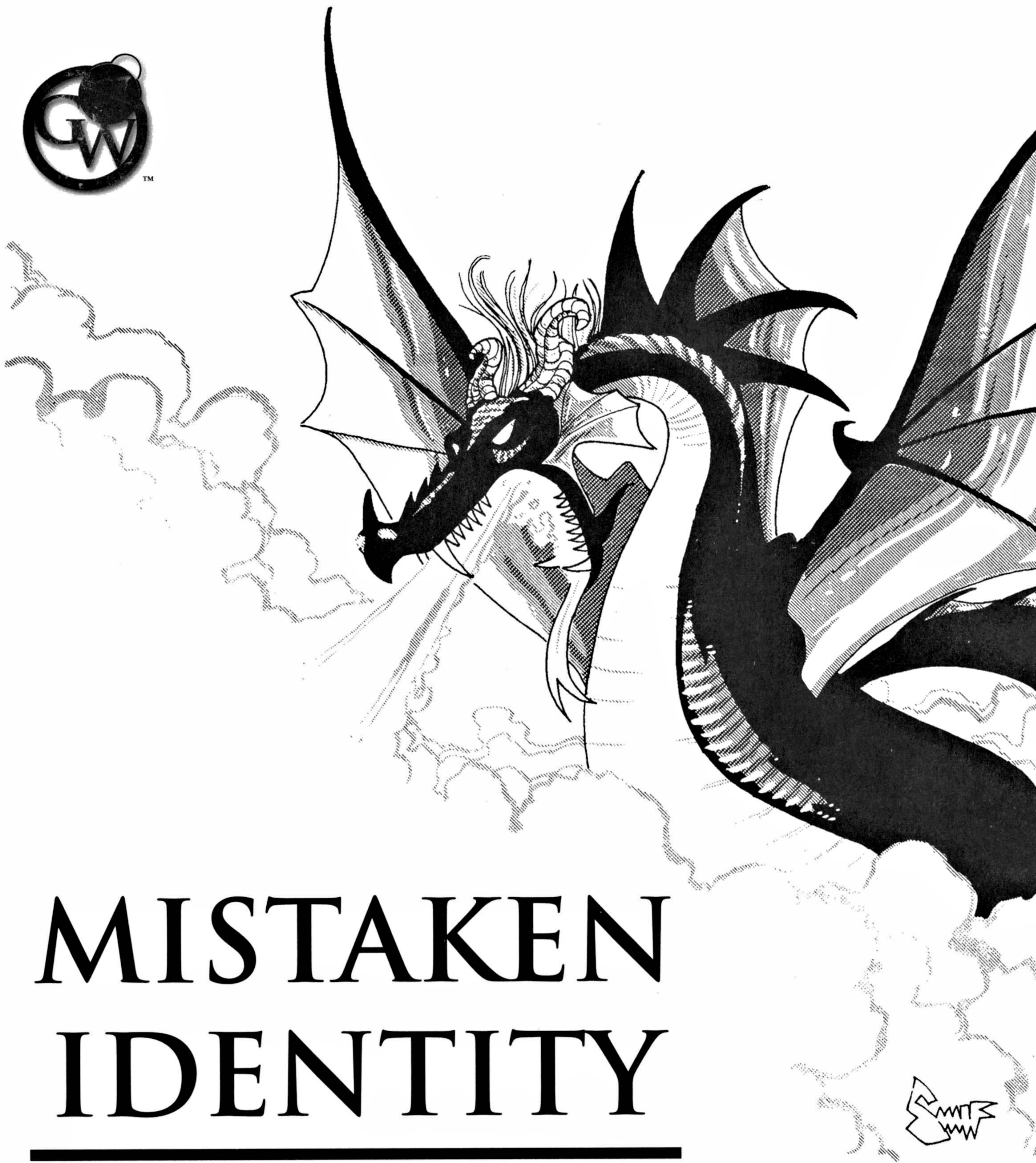
BATTLEFIELD REPORT

The modified Epping II was a great surprise to Hatchlings. Having dealt with the previous incarnation of the Epping, the modified Epping proved to be a stable combat platform in this small engagements and in subsequent engagements.

Matt Burleigh & Frank Crull



SILENT DEATH
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MISTAKEN IDENTITY

A PETRIFYING ADVENTURE FOR ROLEMASTER

INTRODUCTION

This adventure is designed for five to eight characters averaging about 10th level. It can be easily tailored to the expertise of any group. Originally, this scenario was constructed for 10 characters of 15th level.

The antagonist of this scenario is a Greater Basilisk which has been mistaken for a Red Dragon. The confusion is based on actual events as well as superstition. A Greater Basilisk secretes a substance that is highly caustic. When it reacts with metal (even small amounts), it produces a gas that is extremely volatile. Sudden exposure to air can cause small, powerful explosions.

In the course of her attacks, the basilisk has razed barns in order to get at the livestock within. Her caustic excretions reacted with the metal throughout the barn and her beating wings quickly mixed it with air. The resulting explosions looked very much like fireballs and thus 'fire breathing' became a characteristic of the beast. The basilisk resides in a large sinkhole a few miles north of the community on which she feeds. The caverns are filled with large deposits of iron ore. This reddish ore has stained the basilisk's hide a deep reddish-orange not unlike that of a red dragon.

The basilisk has given birth to a large brood of young and must keep a fresh supply of petrified flesh nearby for them to consume. Her normal hunting grounds are deep within the more inaccessible canyons, but because of her unnaturally large brood (36 young) she must hunt much closer to home.

Normally unwilling to deal with large groups of armed humanoids, this basilisk has become quite bold and has attacked up to twenty armed peasants. Most of her early attacks have occurred during the night, but her ravenous young have forced her to hunt in broad daylight.

The Mayor and his administration are becoming very concerned with the growing boldness of the 'dragon'. The mayor has not sent for any professional help for fear that his 'business' might be discovered by the local duke (substitute appropriate higher authority). The mayor and his assistants have been stealing tax money to finance mining expeditions deep into the mineral rich canyons.

In an effort to rid themselves of the dragon, the mayor employed the oldest known method of preventative medicine: the ever-popular virgin sacrifice. He held a lottery (one week before the party arrives) to pick the virgin that would be escorted to the dragon's lair and there presented in exchange for the towns freedom. The plan has obviously failed and the mayor is growing more nervous. He recently learned that

several of the towns more affluent residents have sent word to the local duke concerning the red-winged menace demanding help. Of course when the powerful party arrives, the crafty mayor suddenly concocts a plan!

The scenario begins immediately after the party has experienced a major success, but is really exhausted and drained for their efforts. The adventure is set in a land filled with great canyons and fertile mesas where the local folk make their livings farming and mining. If your campaign already has such a setting, then this may fit very easily into it. Otherwise, insert it wherever it is most convenient.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

KLATO

15th level Animist

Klato possesses the secret of an anti-petrification salve that was handed down to him by his father and his father before him. He tends to the needs of the peasants as he sees fit and accepts the 'dragon' as part of nature. He administers his salve to humanoids and beasts alike whenever they need it. Klato dislikes

politics and seldom visits the town proper. He keeps abreast of events through the peasants (and, of course, nature). Klato also knows all Alchemist base lists.





PEASANTS

1-3rd level Farmers

The peasants tend the fertile fields of the canyon mesas. They are a superstitious lot and would very much like to see the dragon killed or driven away. Canyon peasants are gossipy, and will readily tell all that they know—and even what they do not.

MAYOR DONTELL

12th level Professional (Politician/Thief)

Mayor Dontell arrived in town many years ago as an appointed replacement by the Duke. It was actually a political maneuver to get the ambitious Dontell out of the Duke's immediate political circle, and Dontell was aware of the plan but was unable to stop it. Over the years Dontell hired assassins to kill the Duke but all attempts have subsequently failed. Unable to rid himself of the Duke, Dontell set out to hurt the Duke in other ways. He began skimming money from the Duke's tax coffers and secreting it away.

Later, he overheard an investor in Dillan's Inn discussing mining business and how it was financially easier for a group of businessmen to jointly finance a mining operation than to foot the bill alone. He approached the man as an investor, and as time went on, he invited the business man to join his administration as an aide. Together they opened a major mining investment company, essentially funded by stolen tax money. Many investors, partners, and administrative aides have come and gone since then, but his two present administrative assistants, Connally and Odare have engineered permanent positions.

This triad of extortion has taken steps to protect itself by hiring full time men-at-arms (town guards), assassins, and thieves to work for them locally as well as away in the Duke's own court. If anything should occur that may interrupt business, these men usually know about it in time to take action. Until now, they have controlled all mining operations in the canyon; but a long, winged shadow is beginning to change all that.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT CONNALLY

10th level Professional (Politician/Con Artist/Miner)

Connally came to town to strike it rich like many other seekers of fortune. He didn't have the patience for conventional prospecting but was adept at jumping claims. If he could not successfully steal a mine, he would murder the miner and assume his identity. Unfortunately, without the right equipment and manpower, it was very difficult to reach the inner canyons where the real gold was rumored to be.

Exhausted, Connally returned to town to catch the next wagon out of the canyon. He was sipping some beer in Dillan's Inn when he overheard the mayor and one of his aides discussing business. After the two men had departed, Connally followed the aide home, killed him, and then blackmailed Dontell into letting him in on the action. The unfortunate aide was later found at the foot of great cliff. An 'unfortunate accident', the mayor concluded.



At first, Dontell attempted to rid himself of Connally through a series of 'accidents', but Connally seemed as death-proof as the Duke. Later Dontell discovered that Connally had a real knack for conning miners out of their claims as well as mining fundamentals. So, Dontell resigned to let Connally handle the logistics of the business while he handled the money end. This arrangement has remained in place ever since.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT ODARE

10th level Professional/Alchemist (Politician/Assayer)

Odare came to town at the request of a smaller, independent mining company. He worked in their assay office for almost a year before being approached by Connally and Dontell. Initially, the business they conducted was legitimate. Later, Odare was offered small bribes to change miscellaneous information on various assay reports he conducted. As time went by, the bribes became larger, and the changes more bold. Odare's work was eventually discovered, but not before it had irreparably damaged the small company. Dontell bought the small mining company for a fraction of what it was worth, hired Odare to run it, and arranged for the original owners to mysteriously disappear.

Today Odare is the front man for the triad's legitimate mining business dealings. His skills as an assayer have proven invaluable. Unknown to his partners, Odare still changes the reports for his own ends and uses his alchemy to change ore samples to further substantiate his reports. Many a miner has entered his office with ore that they could have sworn was gold...

GRANITE

6th level Professional (Store Proprietor)

Granite has lived in town for as long as Dillan. The two men were very close at one time but because of Granite's close dealings with Dontell against the miners, Dillan has purposefully distanced himself. Granite suffered an accident at an early age and was never able to produce children. He helped Dillan raise his boys after their mother had died. Whenever the two boys fight and Dillan punishes them, one or both will come running to Granite for consolation. This usually takes the form of hard candy. When there is no work at the inn, Erik spends his time helping Granite in the store.

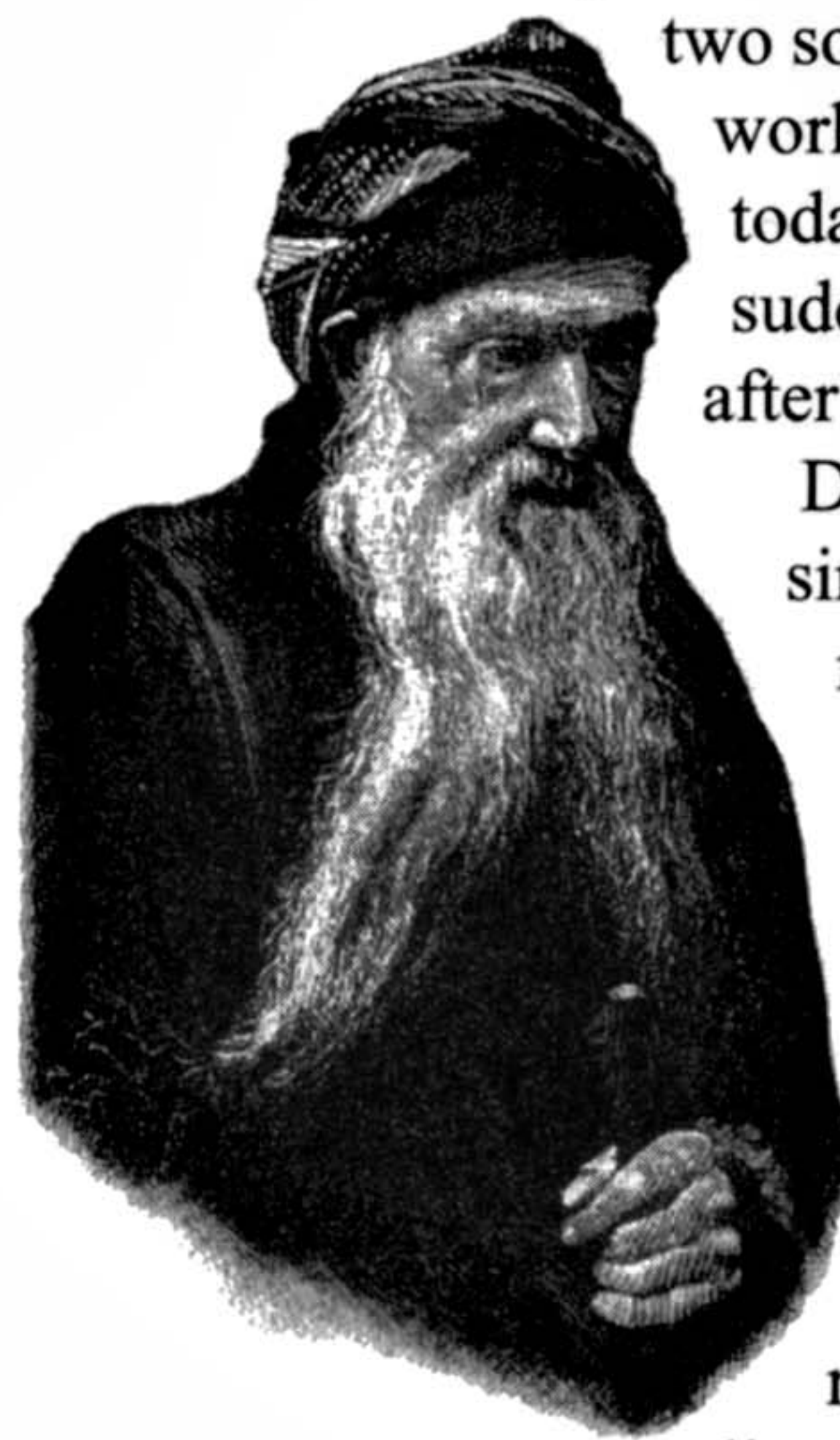
Granite is under the mayor's thumb. This pillar of the community's past is very shady, and it wouldn't do if his sordid were to come under public scrutiny. He sells important supplies to Dontell's men first, and then sells to the other miners of the canyon. However, Granite has instructed his delivery wagons to detour

through a certain pass at certain times and drop off certain items. Granite only does this when he feels comfortable doing it, and under the mayor's constant eye, that is not often.

DILLAN

8th level Professional (Bartender)

Dillan began life in the canyon as a farmer. When he first arrived, the town was just a few lean-tos and tents. He later built the Inn with the money he had saved from working the fields. He married and had



two sons, Erik and Sirkin, that work with him at the Inn today. His wife died of a sudden illness several years after Sirkin was born.

Dillan has seen everything since the town was formally annexed by the Duke. He is fully aware of most of the Mayor's business dealings, but keeps his mouth shut. His oldest son, Erik, suffers from an alcohol problem, and has ruined his body (severe

liver and heart damage) to

the point that he must visit Klato regularly for treatment and medication. Sirkin hates his brother and sometimes locks his frail older brother in the storage shed so that he can't get to his medicine. This behavior is in response to earlier mistreatment by Erik toward him. Dillan keeps the boys as far away from each other as possible.

Dillan runs a large, inviting inn and welcomes all travelers with an infectious smile. Sirkin is usually at his side ready to haul any baggage up to the rooms. Erik takes care of any riding animals, wagons and carriages. The rates are high here, but there is no other lodging available in town and the town guard allows no camping within 10 miles.

MINERS

1-6th level Professional (Miner)

The miners of the canyon are a rowdy bunch. They are all free, indomitable spirits who work and love hard. Most work for the mayor's mining company and are paid a regular wage regardless of what they may remove from the mine. The independent miners are constantly having to guard against mysterious cave-ins and shortages of supplies.

A few of the miners know what is happening in town and have secretly banded together to help each other. There are twenty-three mule-headed individu-





als who have been a constant irritant to Dontell. Their unwillingness to join Dontell does have its price. Their gold is practically useless in town. Shortages of badly needed supplies always seem to suddenly hit the general store whenever they make the long journey there to purchase them.

Today, this small group is trying to form a miner's guild in order to force the mayor's company to gain more profit for the miners. This theme has struck a chord among Dontell's miners, and he has had to raise their wages several times to avoid a strike. His pressure on the upstart miners is gradually increasing... they now number only sixteen.

TIL'TON

6th level Healer

Til'ton takes care of the town shrine. Since the miners bring so many different deities with them (not a deeply religious lot), he has made the shrine multi-denominational. This maneuver was suggested by the mayor as a way to increase tithing. He allowed Til'ton to use his idea for a small percentage of the 'profits'.

Til'ton despises the mayor and his aides. He supports the renegade miners and makes sure that they get what they need one way or another. He is the conscience of Granite and a confidante to Dillan's two sons. Dontell has gone through exactly eight priests since his installment as mayor. Rumor has it that he is about to greet his ninth.



BENEVOLA

23rd level Greater Basilisk (*C&TII*)

Benevola is a good, hardworking mother who is trying to feed her family on her own. Her mate took off for another and left her alone with 26 hungry mouths to feed. She is raising her young to hate their father so that when they mature they will help her hunt him down. Meanwhile, she risks her life each night in search of food.

RUDE AWAKENING

The only road into town leads along the rim of the great canyon. At some points, it comes within several meters of the brim. Many unwary travelers have traveled the road and fallen thousands of feet to their deaths. Away from the brim and across the main road are fertile mesas, constantly worked by the local peasants. These fields are lush and filled with the mouth-watering smells of fresh vegetables.

As the party rides along this road, it is important for the GM to give them a feeling of serenity and beauty. He should use a relaxing tone to make the group feel at ease and safe.

Occasionally, a group of field workers can be seen near the road shoring up irrigation ditches or performing other tasks important to the maintenance of the crops. As the party passes, these workers stop briefly to take in the passers-by. A few among them will give various genuflections of greeting. All of these peasant groups have an easily identified foreman who seems more of an organizer than a slave driver. If the party decides to engage in conversation with the workers, they seem very willing to halt what they are doing and converse in kind. Conversations which seem to be leading nowhere in particular will prompt the foreman to herd the peasants back to the fields to continue their work.

In the midst of this beautiful day, a hunter is on wing through the lowest reaches of the canyon. She is a sleek and powerful beast searching for some easy prey; but there seems to be none today. So she once again must take to the mesas and pluck a straggling, puny farmer from his fields to satisfy her young ones' voracious appetites. She gains altitude in a lazy circular climb until she can just see over the brim of the mesas. Once at this height, she can use her excellent vision to spot unwary prey. On this particular day she is on for a delight, for on the road into town, some beasts of burden are spied with some very healthy looking riders as well.

She slowly dips her head and then her neck and the rest of her sinewy body follows into a powerful dive deep into the canyon. Gaining unbelievable speed she then begins her powerful climb toward the edge of the mesa where she glimpsed her prey...

Benevola will (unknown to her) attack the animal or the character (and animal) that just happens to be carrying the greatest amount of money. Her attack will be frighteningly quick and efficient. This attack will also occur while the party is either passing or conversing with a group of field workers. As she crests the rim of the canyon, the workers who are looking at the party will raise their arms in a gesture of warning and then freeze (Benevola's gaze). At this time Benevola will have already used her huge, powerful talons to pick up her target and begin flying away with it (rider included if there is one).

Additionally, because of her caustic secretions, the entire area will fill with a noxious vapor that must be resisted in order for the party to see and act. This resistance roll is based on each character's constitution and the attack is resolved at 15th level. Any party member failing his RR will be considered blinded and unable to breathe. Party members who succeed may act at -30 for the round.

If the animal Benevola attacks has a rider he must make an Extremely Hard maneuver roll to remain mounted. Also, any goods (especially money), that the animal and/or rider may have been carrying will be scattered all over the fields. As it falls, those peasants that did not run begin collecting the loot and making off into the dense foliage with their treasure!

Benevola will take the beast to her lair north of town and petrify it for consumption by her brood. The GM must endeavor to dislodge any rider long before Benevola gets to her lair.

KLATO ARRIVES

The animist arrives on the scene almost immediately after Benevola flies away. He first attends to the peasants that were initially paralyzed by the beast. He will then help any party members who are still suffering from the noxious vapors. If the party inquires about his salve, he expressly states that he cannot sell it or divulge its formula. He will however help any who are in need of its power. If asked about the winged beast, he tells them that he is not sure exactly what it is but that it doesn't matter... after all, it is just another of nature's wonderful creatures.

If they persist in their questions, Klato will direct them to seek out Mayor Dontell. He believes that the mayor will have the answers to their questions. He also recommends Dillan's Tavern as a quality establishment where the party can rest their obviously weary souls. While having this conversation, a peas-

ant will bring a petrified rabbit to the animist. Klato applies the salve to the tiny creature and it immediately returns to normal. Klato returns the rabbit to the peasant who then holds it up, apparently to his family, and yells, "Rabbit stew tonight!"

The party may decide to chase those peasants that scooped up their money and ran off with it into the fields. The GM should keep in mind that the peasants know this area very well and will use the terrain to their advantage, including deep irrigation ditches hidden sink holes and caves. The GM should make it very difficult to catch these new aristocrats!

STOP AT DILLAN'S

Erik notices the travelers as they approach the Inn, and hurries in to tell his father. They both step outside to greet the group with warm inviting smiles. Any party member who is an experienced healer should be given the opportunity at this point to notice Erik's poor pallor. Dillan greets the party with his name and offers to supply them lodging while they stay in town (at the going rate plus 20%).

There is no shortage of rooms since Benevola started her rampage. The party can easily have the rooms of their choice. The meals at Dillan's are fresh and nutritious. All meals are prepared promptly and the Inn's menu is displayed over the bar in several languages. The GM should stress that a finer meal would be hard to remember. Sirkin makes his appearance in order to help the group with their belongings. Sirkin is being paid by the mayor to casually inspect the property of any outsiders that visit his father's inn.





IT'S THE HORSES

While enjoying the hospitality of the town, a large explosion rocks the peaceful evening. As the characters rush to investigate, they see the red beast engulfed in fire as it busily scrambles to remove two horses from the burning livery. Just as the would be rescuers approach, another violent explosion erupts within the burning barn and launches the beast into the air, where it levels off and flies away with but one horse clutched in its talons. The other horse falls helplessly to the ground where it lands with a splattering thud.

The town reacts with a quickly formed fire line between the barn and one of the town's many open cisterns. The buckets come rapidly from the general store and the flames are brought quickly under control.

Inspection of the buildings charred interior reveals no survivors. All the animals are dead as well as the two stable hands. Outside, an authoritative voice begins a booming speech of rebuilding the barn with promised free lumber and the replacement of the lost livestock. The crowd mumbles silently and then breaks up.

If the mayor is approached, he will introduce himself as if preoccupied and in a hurry to start the rebuilding of the barn. The mayor will not want to discuss anything at this time and invites the party to meet with him in his office after they have enjoyed one of Dillan's wonderful meals. If the party asks how he knows they are staying at Dillan's, he simply tells them that he is the mayor and it is his job to know such things. He will definitely not answer any questions about the dragon at this time. If pressed he will summon the guards to enforce his presence and reassure the group that he will discuss it with them that evening. He will even replace their lost horses with equal or better steeds.

MAYOR'S OFFICE

The mayor's office is located in the center of town. Its architecture is strikingly different from the rest of the town's buildings. It is a two story construction with a large balcony completely surrounding the upper story. There are large double doors at the front of the structure with two guards on duty at all times. The sides and rear of the building are surrounded by a twelve foot high plastered wall. There is an entrance within this wall at the rear.

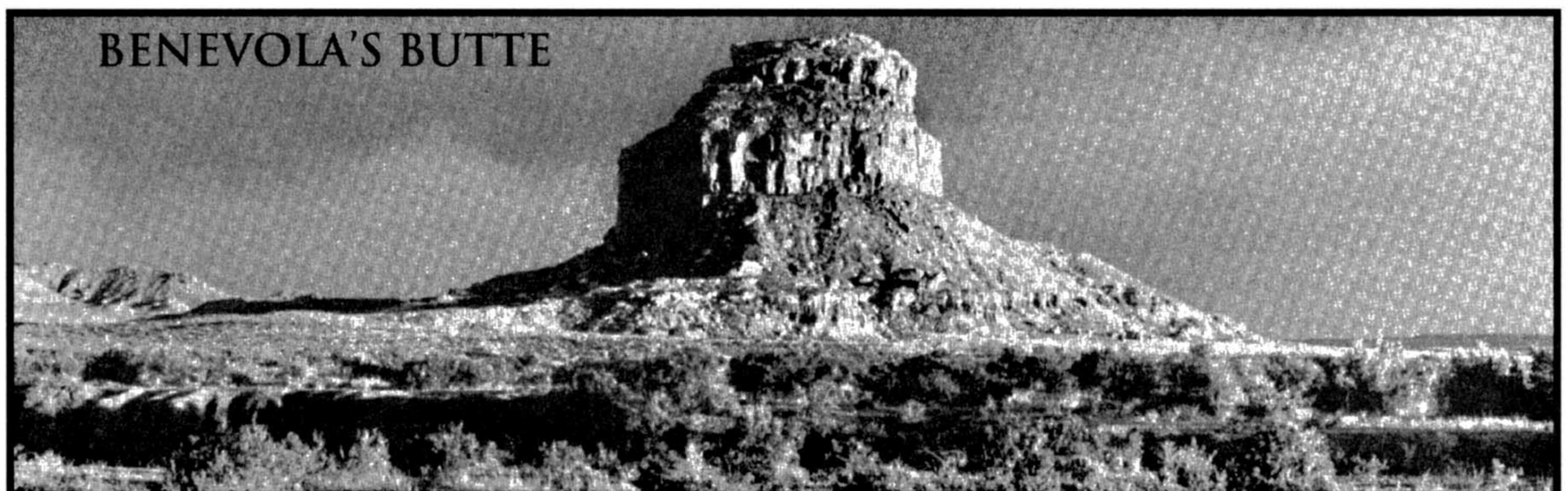
When the group approaches the office that evening, the guards have been instructed to allow then entrance into the foyer. The party will immediately be overwhelmed by a gruesome multi-colored statue of a man in terrible pain. This statue rests upon a large slab of uncut granite in the center of a beautiful pool and garden. The garden is situated in the center of a huge courtyard. The building apparently houses numerous offices that are part of the administration. There are doors with signs upon them that read *Land Office, Assayers Office, Mineral Library, Ore Library*, etc.

The mayor enters with two men. He introduces the first as Connally, his Chief Mining Authority and Administrative Assistant, and the other as Odare, Chief Assayer and Administrative Assistant. Both men greet the party with subdued enthusiasm and quickly step back to allow the mayor to lead the conversation.

The mayor leads them into the garden and gives them a brief tour. He then summons a servant, who is carrying a large tray with crystal goblets filled with sparkling wine. He offers a glass to all who wish to drink. After several sips he beckons them all to sit and invites the conversation to begin.

It is assumed that the group will primarily question the mayor about the dragon and what he has done to take care of the situation. If the questions stray into other areas, the GM will of course have to improvise, keeping in mind the need to tie everything possible to the necessity of slaying the beast.

BENEVOLA'S BUTTE



The mayor will easily reveal:

- The beast has been known to exist in the canyon for many years.
- It has never attacked a human to his knowledge.
- The current attacks on the local populace are a recent development.
- He firmly believes that it is a dragon because of its red skin and the fires that sometimes accompany its attacks.
- He attributes the petrified peasants and rabbit to "the many mysterious powers of dragonkind".

The mayor will *not* easily reveal:

- That there is a certain anonymity between himself and the duke and that is why he has not summoned any help from him.
- That he has hired small bands of adventurers in the past to slay the beast and that none have returned.
- That he has recently held a town lottery to chose a virgin from the populace to barter for the towns protection. They departed for the dragon's lair a week ago, and have not returned.

The mayor will eventually turn the conversation into a proposition to the characters to seek out the beast and kill it. If the group seems reluctant, the mayor promises each member a high-production gold mine in the canyon. Connally and Odare seem to object to this, but will be quickly silenced by a gesture from the mayor. It should be stressed to the players that mines in this area are rumored to be very good producers of the purest ore and that gold is only one commodity that the mines could produce.

If the mines are not enough to persuade them, then the mayor calls upon their heroic spirits. He tells of the exploits of other adventuring parties that have come to help the town whose services he has refused because he did not think that they could complete the perilous journey. But the group before him now truly impresses him, and he believes that they could succeed. Odare and Connally confirm the mayors speech with nodding heads and mumbled words of agreement.

Upon acceptance of the deal, the mayor thanks each of them profusely and bids them good night. He tells them that he will meet with them in the morning at Dillan's with their new horses and fresh supplies.

THE STATUE

The statue in the mayor's courtyard is actually a petrified man who was sent years ago to slay the dragon. The administration offices were built around the actual place where he suffered the attack. The mayor knows nothing of the secret of the statue, except that it is very old and that the statue represents some forgotten local hero. He will not discuss the statue unless asked.

The statue can be brought to life by Klato's salve. If returned to flesh the man will need a few hours to recover but can then give a very good description of the beast. From his description, the party should be able to determine that the beast is not a dragon, but instead, a basilisk. He will then develop severe health complications and quickly die. Lifegiving will not work.

THE HUNT

The location of the "dragon's" lair is well known by the locals. A very accurate map is presented to the party in the morning, along with the fresh horses and supplies. The horses are slightly better than average. Wishes for success are given to the party by all present and they are left to their journey.

The party may travel by different means such as flying or teleportation. This is fine and presents no difficulty for the scenario. The lair is two days ride through a winding, washed out canyon (approximately 60 miles).

Along the way the party will find money, furniture, antiques, bones, wagon parts, mining gear, etc. The frequency of these encounters will increase as the party gets closer to the lair. The random valuables should be another clue to the party that their target may not be a dragon after all.

THE LAIR

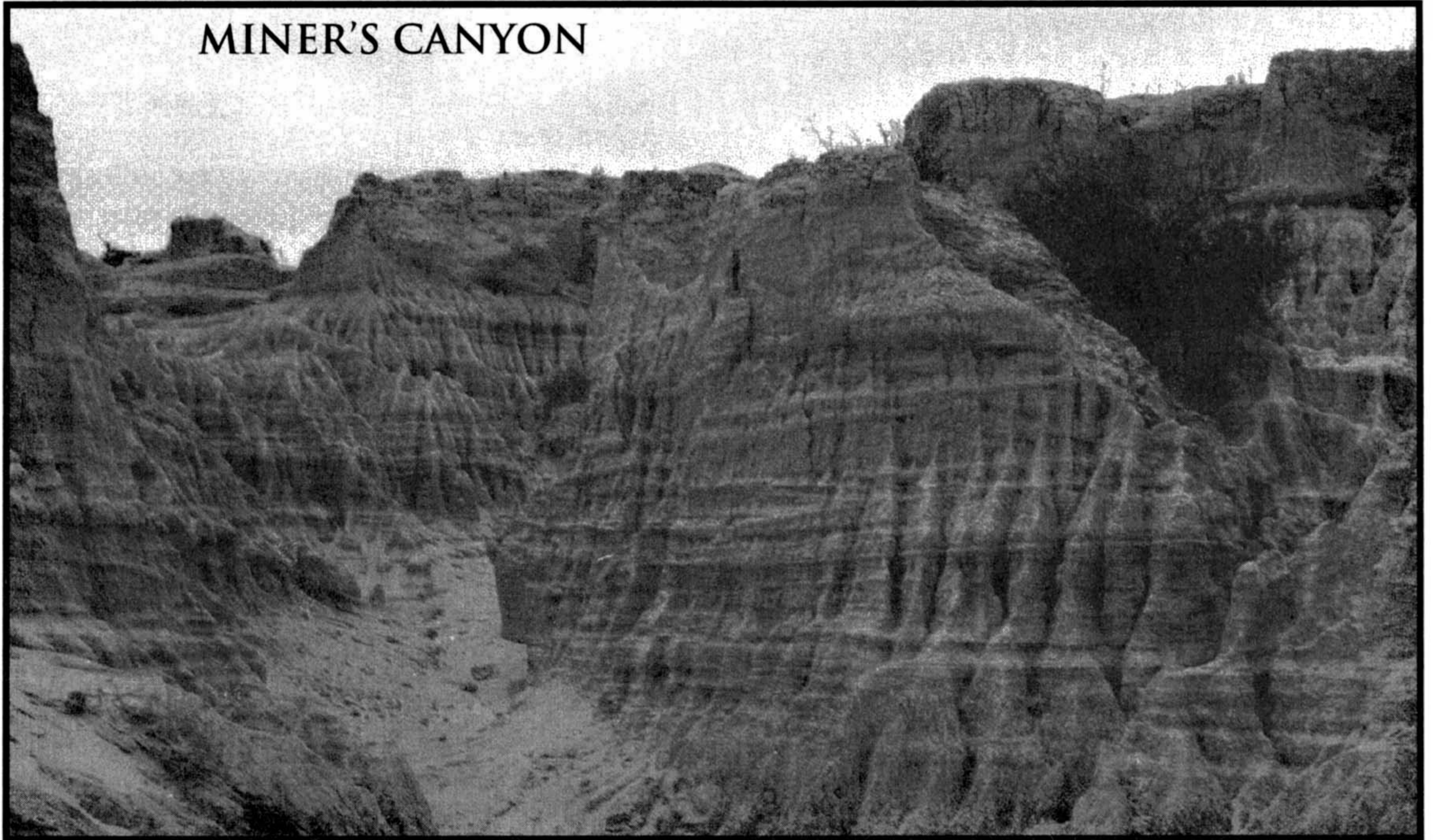
Benevola's lair is a series of sink holes in a small butte. The party will have to stop at its base and climb for about 180 feet before arriving at a surface where all of the party can begin moving without the aid of ropes. The butte face is covered with ropes from previous climbs. The ascent to the top should not be considered too difficult.

Once at the top, the characters will be able to easily see the sinkhole. Scattered all around it are numerous appendages of creatures native to the canyon...all petrified. At the edge of the sinkhole, more ropes can be seen dangling from the edge and extending deep into the sink hole. Experienced climbers may guess the drop to the bottom of the sink hole to be about 90 feet.





MINER'S CANYON



Occasional pockets of noxious vapor will billow up from the sink hole and temporarily force the party to resist vs. the vapor as they did in their first encounter with Benevola. These pockets are not as strong and should be treated as a 8th level attack. They are encountered randomly, and should be rolled for once every five turns. There is a 30% chance that the party will be engulfed in one. These pockets travel with the thermal currents in the sink hole and only last for 1-5 rounds.

The party can use the existing ropes or their own to lower themselves into the sink hole. They may also fly of course. When the first party member sets foot on the lair floor, a roll should be made to see if he falls through. There is a 20% chance for every 50' traveled along the center of the cave that the character will fall through the sink hole floor and into a pool of acid. A typical encounter would be as follows:

The character moves 50' and a roll is made. If the result is 20% or less the character immediately falls through the floor of the cave and into an acid pool below. The surface of the acid pool will be 1d10x10' deep and the acid pool itself will be 1-10' deep. The chance to fall through the cavern floor is reduced to 10% if the characters remain close to the walls. Characters and all that they are wearing will receive one 'A' Acid critical each round they are within the acid pool.

Within these pools of acid live creatures resembling jellyfish. They will take 1-5 rounds to reach any creature that falls into the pool. These creatures have

small tentacles that inject acid into the victim. Treat as a +30 Small Grapple attack, delivering Acid criticals.

In addition to the crumbling floor of the sink hole, the gaseous vapor pockets can become trapped in small recesses. These pockets are ten times stronger than those that flow through the cavern. The cavern is rich in iron ore, and reddish-brown streaks of ore can be seen in the walls. The concentrated gas pockets react with this ore to produce very volatile areas of gas. As the party travels deeper into the lair they will need some form of light. If they choose torches or other flames to light their way, they risk igniting one of these pockets of gas.

A volatile pocket of gas should be checked for only after the party has ignited a flame. Then, once a round, there is a 5% chance that flame will ignite a pocket of gas. The explosion should be treated as a *Fireball* with the following parameters:

The *Fireball* will have a base +30 bonus plus 1d10 x 5 additional bonus. A roll is made and added to the base bonus to determine the damage. The individual with the flame is considered to be in the center of effect, and receives an additional +20 to the attack roll for determining his damage. If there is more than one party member with a flame, roll randomly to determine the center of effect. Additionally, if an unmodified roll is achieved, a secondary explosion occurs. This second explosion is resolved at half the base bonus of the first, but no center of effect should

be determined. Note that a tertiary explosion could also occur if the secondary explosion yields an unmodified result.

Beyond the inherent dangers of the cave, the GM should not forget the greater basilisk and her young. Benevola is always found in her lair resting when she is not hunting for her brood. As the party travels deeper into the lair they will encounter the young basilisks (all 26 of them) feeding on the many petrified creatures their mother has brought into the lair. These creatures will include a number of peasants and townsfolk, as well as the virgin and her entourage. The smaller basilisks have the gaze attack of their mother, but to a greatly reduced effect. If a young basilisk catches the eyes of a character, and that character fails a RR vs. a 5th level attack, then he will suffer a short term petrification lasting 1-10 rounds.

BENEVOLA

If any explosion has occurred, or any of her young are killed and the party allows the creatures to cry out in pain, she will come to investigate.

In an encounter with Benevola, the GM must keep many things in mind about this awesome creature. It is recommended that the GM review the characteristics and abilities of Benevola before attempting to pit her against the party. She is devastating. Here is a synopsis of her general attack themes: Benevola breathes out a poison gas naturally, in addition to her offensive breath weapon. Because of this, everyone in the lair must make a RR vs. an 8th level respiratory poison every 10 minutes they are in the lair! Failure can result into anything from mild euphoria (-20) to complete respiratory failure.

Benevola also secretes a nasty nerve poison that travels along and engulfs anything that touches her skin (such as weapons, gloves, etc.). If the unfortunate victim fails a RR vs. a 16th level attack, then the target can begin losing thought and motor control (-30) all the way up to total destruction of the nervous system!

Benevola can also cast spells from the Sorcerer base lists at 23rd level of ability. Here are just a few of her favorite attacks against large groups:

- Soul Destruction (*Transferral* and then many *Words of Panic*).
- Solid Destruction (to amuse herself, *Shatter* against various weapons, later *Unearth* directly below targets so that they will fall into the acid pools below. Benevola keeps at least several talons dug into the cavern walls so that she will not fall in.
- Mind Destruction (*Word of Pain*, *Unminding*, *Mass Confusion*, *Mind Break*, and *Mass Pain*).
- Flesh Destruction—one of her personal favorites (*Black Channel I*).

- Gas Destruction (*Vacuum True*).

Benevola is no slouch when it comes to physical combat, either. With 300 concussion hits, AT/12 and a defensive bonus of 50, she will send the most courageous of fighters into the next world. All of her attacks deliver the respiratory poison, with or without a critical; and with a critical, the nerve poison is delivered as well.

The party can avoid some of the pitfalls if they do their homework. This means questioning everyone they can who has seen the dragon. Careful inspection of sites that the beast has attacked will yield subtle clues as to the nature of their quarry (such as the corrosive effect she seems to have on metal, and the fact that the barn in town seemed to explode from within rather than from without). Eyewitnesses will also report that the beast didn't seem to like the fire and actually attempted to get away from it — not the characteristics of a die-hard red dragon. Careful attention to the petrified rabbit and its correlation to the appearance of the statue in the mayor's garden will reveal a big clue.

The party can navigate the lair better if they fly and use a non-ignitable light source such as a *Light* spell. They can avoid the gas if they can use spells that allow the target to breathe poisonous gases. A clever and prepared party can reduce almost every advantage she has to the point where they should actually have the edge.

EPILOGUE

If the party is successful, the mayor will indeed give each of the characters a mine of their own. He and his associates will then attempt to acquire it back from them through whatever means are at hand.

The independent miners, Dillan and his sons, and the store proprietor are all added to give the scenario some depth. They also supply a platform for future adventures if the characters decide to stay.

Dontell has no interest in the agricultural side of the town. The GM may wish to develop a wealthy and powerful land owner to generate a power struggle between the miners and the farmers.

Lem Richards/Monte Cook





GREY LAWS

WRITER'S AND ARTIST'S GUIDELINES

Submissions must deal with product lines published by Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc. (excluding the Hero line). All articles should be no more than 4,000 words in length unless previously approved by the editor. All articles are subject to editing. Unsolicited manuscripts and art become the property of *Grey Worlds* and cannot be returned unless accompanied by a large SASE. *GW* is not responsible for articles lost in the mail. Please be sure not to send in your only copy of an article, diagram, or illustration.

Style & Format: The format of *GW* magazine generally adheres to the standards already set by the *Rolemaster Companions*. All submissions will be considered for publication provided they are neither obscene nor vulgar. No slanderous comments or abuse will be printed. Mature arguments, in the interest of constructive debate, will be the rule.

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Format: All submissions should be sent as Microsoft Word documents, RTF, or ASCII text files on a 3.5" floppy disk, formatted for the Apple Macintosh (these can be double density or high density disks). For MS-DOS or PC-DOS machines, 5.25" or 3.5" diskettes are acceptable. Send disks in a suitable mailer, along with a printed copy of the submission. If you don't have access to a word processing program or cannot submit it on disk, then it must be typed, double-spaced, on standard-sized white or off-white paper. Send it to us in a letter sized, brown manila envelope unfolded, unstapled, and on only one side of the paper. Also include in this envelope a stiff piece of cardboard to keep

the envelope rigid. Staple each article separately. The first page (or disk label) should include the author's name, address, and social security number, as well as the title of the article, and a word count. Each page should be numbered and contain the author's name. Fax and modem submissions are also possible to arrange.

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