

SEVEN CHALLENGES OF KARTEJAN



BY KEN ST. ANDRE

FB10091 A gamemaster adventure intended for Tunnels & Trolls™

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Seven Challenges of Kartejan

**WRITTEN FROM THE MIND AND HAND OF
KEN ST. ANDRE
GRAPHIC BLANDISHMENT BY
DAVID A. ULLERY**



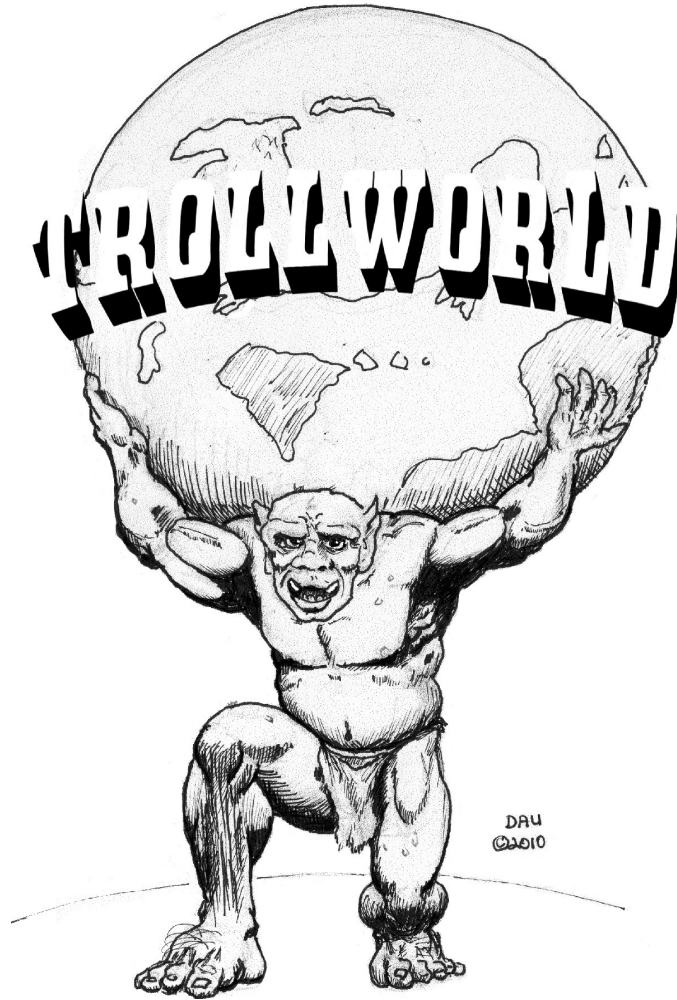
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Seven Challenges of Kartejan

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Introduction

Kartejan is a human city-state of some 50,000 people that lies south of the Empire of the Goddess. It has everything a city needs to thrive: plentiful water from rivers and streams, good farm land, good grazing land for the herds of cattle and horses that give the city its greatest wealth, forests not too far away to provide wood, and alliances with other human city-states on that part of the continent. The human population does not get along well with other non-human races, and non-humans are not allowed within the city walls. Not even the traditional friends of humanity, the Elves and the Dwarves are allowed in Kartejan. The city maintains a fairly large standing army to protect themselves from “monsters”.

Oddly enough, however, the patron deity of Kartejan is the Trollgod. Legend has it that the earliest pioneers who founded the city were led to the spot by a strange man who turned into a troll and saved the people from defeat during a fight with uruks. When the people were in danger after that first fight, the man, Khenn Arrth, would transform into a troll, and rescue them. Khenn Arrth remained with the people for many years, but one day his home was empty and he was gone, but the people of Kartejan always remembered him and called him the Trollgod. Some say that the Trollgod still watches over and protects the city.



The city is ruled by a figurehead Duke and a Council of 8 well-respected citizens. Every year the old Duke is dismissed and a new Duke is anointed. This Duke is the winner of the Kartejan Games Challenge. Every year on Longest Day the city hosts an athletic competition to choose a new Duke. City Wizards watch the action through scrying stones and rebroadcast it on the arena walls for the entertainment of the citizens.

Getting Started

This is an adventure for newly created human characters only. You, the player, have 80 character points to be spread as you wish among your 8 attributes. The physical attributes are: Strength, Constitution, Dexterity, and Speed. The mental attributes are Intelligence, Luck, Wizardry, and Charisma. Any point greater than 12 on Strength, Dexterity, Speed, or Luck will generate a combat add.

You may, if you wish, roll 3D6 for any of your attributes, in hopes of rolling a triple allowing you to add and roll again. If you do this, you may generate a Specialist character for the attribute on which you rolled the triple. However, the attribute value is still subtracted from your general pool of 80 points. Example: Khayd decides to roll 3D6 for his INT, thinking that if he gets a high value, he will make the character a wizard. He rolls 5, 5, 5 and then 4, 2, 2 for a total of 23. $80 - 23$ is 57. Khayd's player only has 57 points for all his other attributes. He will want a high Wizardry and Dexterity—let us say he puts 12 points into each of those. $57 - 24$ is 33. There are only 33 points left for the other 5 attributes. Khayd will be a good wizard but quite weak in almost everything else.

No attribute may be lower than 4.

The adventure is set up this way to force the players to make some hard choices right at the beginning. Do you as player want a character that is average in everything, or would you prefer one with strengths and weaknesses? That is up to you.

Do not worry about equipment, weapons, armor, food. At the beginning of this adventure, you have none of that stuff. You will find what you need during the game.

The Games Begin

The contestants (players) are gathered at the starting line, clad only in loin-cloths and sandals. They have neither weapons nor equipment. Mahrundl, a large and imposing wizard and member of the Council is Master of Ceremonies this day. His acolytes, Tromm and Naharaht flank him, each carrying a tray. Tromm carries the Constitution potions—glass bottles in the shape of horseheads full of an amber fluid. Each bottle contains a magical liquid that will temporarily boost a human's



Constitution, improving their health, healing injuries, curing disease. Naharaht holds a tray with a number of large electrum keys lying on it, one for each contestant.

Mahrundl is speaking: “Courageous Ones, we salute you for your bravery. You are about to face what may be the greatest test of your life, and if you win, you shall be Duke of Kartejan for a year, with all the privilege and power that entails. This post is not easily won. You may die in the attempt. If that happens you will be given honorable burial. But if you finish the Gauntlet, you shall be greatly honored, even if you are not the winner. I urge you all to be brave and resourceful.”

“Naharaht, give each contestant a key.” The large attendant moves toward the contestants and offers each a key from his tray. “These are the keys to the city. Do not lose them. In order to be considered a winner, you must emerge from the Testing Grounds with a key in your possession. It does not have to be the same key you started with.”



Mahrundl turns and indicates the bottles of magical fluids. “The tests you will face are difficult and dangerous. You may be injured. This essence is magical healing in a bottle—drink it when you need a boost. (Each bottle contains enough potion to heal 10 points of damage, or to raise the CON by 10 points.) The contestants now have a large bottle in one hand, and a large key in the other.

The red-robed wizard gestures to his right. “Your trials begin here on the Hill of Hope. He indicates a small hill about 100 feet high. “And they will end when you exit through this door.” He points to a heavy black door set into a large cube of basalt off to his left. “The next part of the path you must travel will be obvious to you as you complete each stage of the journey.”

Mahrundl waits until everyone is quiet and waiting for his next remark. “There are no rules of fair play in this competition. You may cooperate with each other, or battle each other, or ignore each other, but there will only be one winner—only one of you can be the next Duke of Kartejan. (Game Master, at this point you may answer the player’s questions. Do not tell them anything about what they will face except what they can see.)

Challenge 1: The Hill of Hope

The contestants see a rugged slope of barren stone and dirt that is about 100 feet high. Two walls of stone, each ten feet high run up the slope marking the path they must travel. The slope is steep, about 45 degrees, and fairly smooth. There are no notable

obstacles or obstructions on it. At the top of the slope are eight short columns, and balanced atop each column is a large roughly spherical boulder.

The contestants need to reach the top of the hill. They may run, walk, crawl or whatever they wish to do, but the first goal is the top of the hill.

For contestants who say they are running up the hill, let them each make a L1SR on DEX. If they make it, there is no problem. If they fail, they fall against stone and hurt themselves, taking as many hits of damage as they failed the saving roll by. This is stun damage and not fatal, but it will not heal without magical help during this adventure. Those who are walking do not have to make a DEX saving roll.

About 25 feet up the hill is a dyke of stone about 4 feet high. It is easy enough to climb over. About 50 feet up the hill is a kind of ditch about 3 feet deep with a rising lip of stone on the uphill side. When players reach that point ask for a L1SR on INT. If they make the saving roll, describe the ditch.

When at least 3 players have crossed the ditch, have the soldiers on top of the hill push the boulders off the pedestals and start the avalanche. 200 pound boulders come careening down the hill toward the players, bouncing off the side walls, off the stony ground, and off each other. There is no way to predict exactly where a boulder will be rolling. To avoid being hit, players must do one of two things: make a L1SR on Luck, or throw themselves into the ditch at the 50 foot mark. (20 a.p. to those who think of hiding in the ditch when the avalanche starts.)

Boulder damage: anyone hit by a boulder will take 2D6 CON damage plus however much they missed the saving roll by.

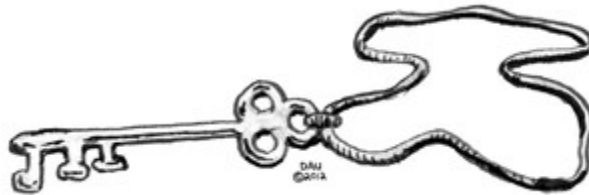
If any players attempt to go up the hill on the outside of the stone walls, dissuade them by having armed soldiers attempt to turn them back. There are 4 guards at the bottom of the hill, two on each side by the walls. They are armed with short swords that get 3D6 in combat and each has 6 Adds. They wear ceremonial leather armor that provides 6 points of protection. It is unlikely that one or two players could beat them, but if players co-operated they might overwhelm the guards and



climb the hill outside the walls where they would be perfectly safe.

The top of the slope: there will be one pedestal for each player, and if the players search the pedestal they will find an amulet hidden on each one. A successful search will require a L1SR on either Luck or INT. Each amulet consists of a silver medallion with a hole in it through which a stout loop of twine passes, making a crude necklace. Roll 1D6 for each amulet to see which attribute it enhances when worn. Each amulet adds 3 points to the wearer's attribute.

- 1—STR
- 2—CON
- 3—Luck
- 4—DEX
- 5—SPD
- 6—CHR



It would be easy enough to tie the key onto the twine, thus freeing one hand. One could tie the bottle on, too, but a heavy bottle bouncing on the neck would be awkward and likely to hamper the player and/or get broken. If any player thinks of tying the key to an amulet, give the first one to think of it 50 points.

There is no reason why one player is limited to one amulet, but there is meant to be one for each player.

Challenge 2: The Pit of Points

The boulders are launched by city soldiers, but once they get their rocks off (grin), they exit to the sides and are not there when the adventurers reach the top.

The first thing the players will see at the top is the mighty Pit of Points, and the 4 coils of rope. The rope is not a thin cord of any kind, but a sturdy rope made of twisted strands of hemp about an inch thick. Each coil of rope is some 60 feet long.

The pit completely blocks the way forward. It is 20 feet deep, 50 feet wide, and 50 feet across. On the far side of the pit is a dressed stone wall that forms a cliff face 80 feet high. The wall has carvings on it of a man kneeling and praying to what looks like a great Rock Troll. At the bottom of the pit are rows of spears set with the points facing upwards. A man could walk between the spears without much difficulty, but if one fell into the pit, one would probably be impaled. Falling onto a spear would do considerable damage to the victim's CON attribute. If a character falls into the pit, let them make a L2SR on Luck to avoid being impaled. If the saving roll is missed have a spear do as many D6 worth of damage as the roll was missed by. (Example: Duffe is climbing down into the pit, loses his grip and falls. He makes a L2SR on LK. His Luck attribute is 12 so he needs to roll a 13 to make it. He rolls a 9, missing the saving roll by 4 points. Adding his level will not be enough to make the saving roll.

The GM then rolls 4D6 to see how much damage falling onto a spear point did, getting a 4, 3, 1, 1. Duffe takes 9 points of damage to his CON. The maximum damage the GM should ever inflict from such a fall is 6D6 no matter how badly the player misses the saving roll.)

On the far side of the pit are four stout wooden posts that seem to have been set into the stone somehow. (An easy enough trick for wizards who know the slush-yuck spell) and there are also 4 such posts on the climbers' side. A lucky or skillful person could make a slipknot in the rope, throw it across the pit, and lasso a post, then tie it to a post on the near side and make a rope line across. Or, such a person could tie it to a post on the near side and descend into the pit.

L1SR on INT to make a slip knot

L2SR on STR to be able to throw the heavy rope across the pit

L1SR on DEX to lasso a post (from side or bottom)

L2SR on Luck to lasso a post (from side or bottom)

L3SR on DEX to walk the tight rope from one side of pit to the other

L1SR on Luck to catch the rope if one falls off.

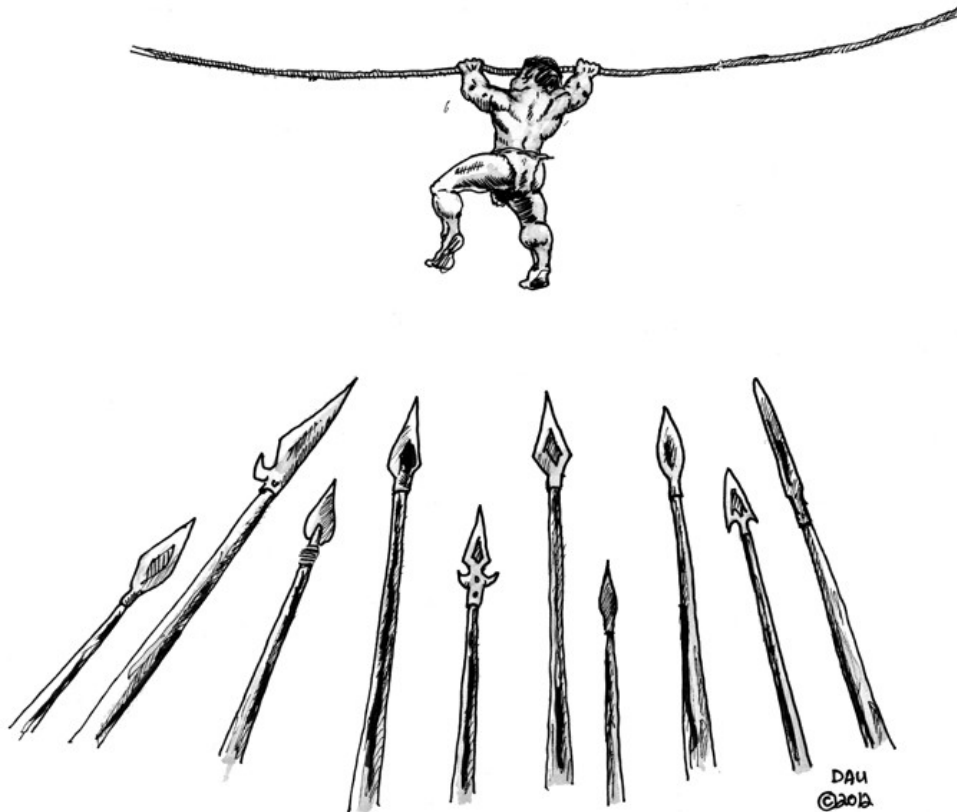
L2SR on STR to hold onto rope if one catches it.

L1SR on STR to cross pit on rope sloth style hanging beneath it.

L1SR on STR and DEX to climb down a rope into the pit

L2SR on STR to climb down just using the pegs in the walls.

Falling into the pit: If a player falls into the pit, bad things will probably happen.



L2SR on Luck not to be impaled on a spear. (Spear damage is 6D6 and it is Kill damage. If a spear is taken as a weapon, it becomes a 3D6 weapon in the player's hands.)

L1SR on Luck not to break the bottle of healing potion.

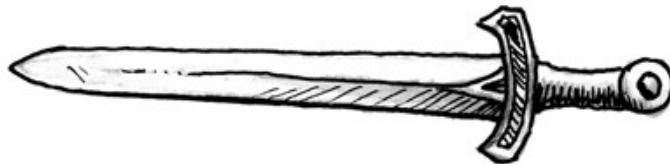
If players are crossing the pit on the bottom, they can easily avoid being hurt by the spears there. Anyone who thinks of it may take a spear (a 3D6 weapon) by simply pulling one out of the ground. (L1SR on STR).

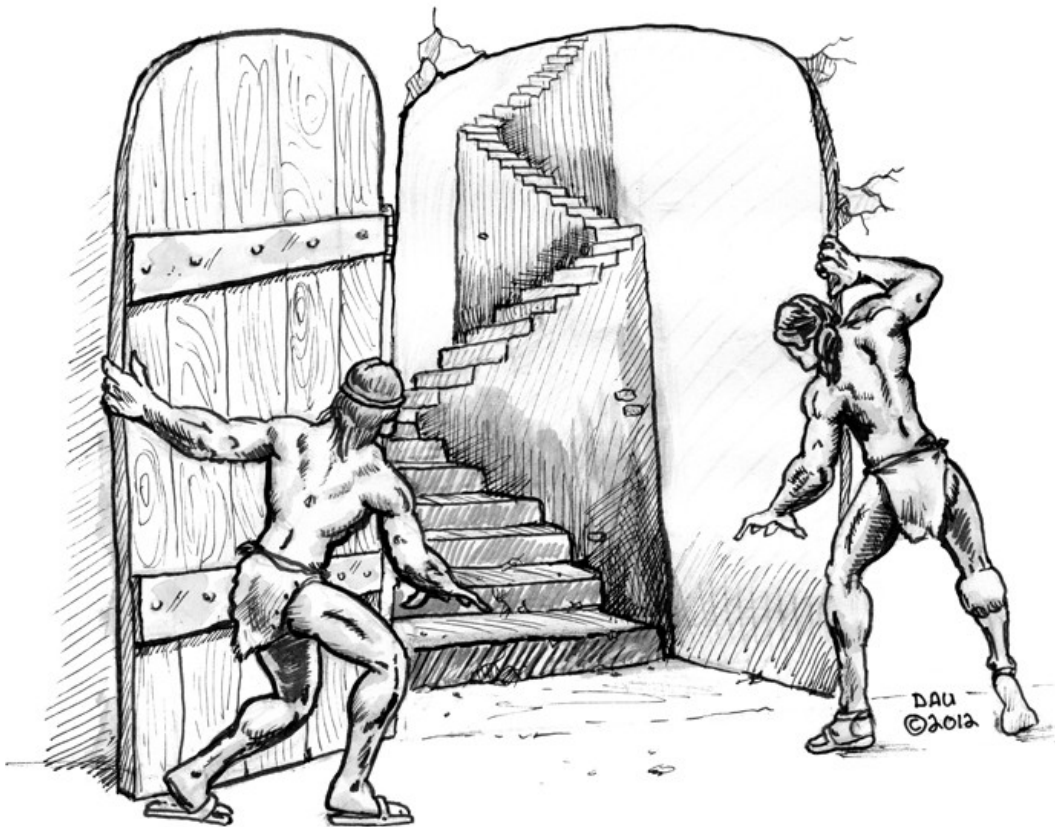
Climbing out of the pit on the other side will require both hands and a L2SR on STR, which means carrying a spear or healing potion might be difficult. Make the players find a way to do it.

Challenge 3: Finding the Path

The true continuation of the path is through a secret door in a side wall of the pit, but the players have to find it. That will mean searching the bottom of the pit, and they probably won't be thinking to look there.

There is no obvious way to proceed once they reach the opposite side of the pit either, but they will probably think to look for secret passages there. An **Oh There It Is** spell will find a hidden door behind the rock troll carving. So will a careful search and a L1SR on INT or a L2SR on Luck. **Knock Knock** or L1SR on INT will find a way to open it. Behind the hidden door is an alcove in the stone, and lying there is a short sword worth $3D6 + 2$ in combat. Inside is a narrow stairway that twists its way upward in a tight back and forth zigzag. At the top of the stairs will be a heavy stone trapdoor requiring a L2SR on STR to open. Beyond the trapdoor is a stone platform with empty space around it on all sides. Carved into the stone are the words: WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN. Lying on top of the platform is a crossbow with 4 bolts. The crossbow is a 4D6 weapon. (No STR or DEX requirement to use this weapon.)





Searching for secret doors at the bottom of the pit is the same as searching at the top, except that there really isn't anything down there to give the door away. It is in the corner of the cliff wall on the goal side of the pit. Opening it requires solving a simple puzzle. Behind the first door is a small alcove in which the players will find packs, flint and steel in the form of 2D6 dirks, and torches.

Leading out of the alcove is a second door. It is locked, and a **Knock Knock** will not open this one. There will be a sign in Common on the door saying "Speak the name of the master." The name some player must say in order to open this door is the first name of whoever is running the game. For me, it's Ken. Give whoever comes up with the answer 50 a.p. If no one can figure that out, then have players make a L1SR on CHR. Ask the one who has the best roll to tell you what your name is. Give the person who actually figures out the master name a falchion worth 4D6 in combat.

Challenge 4: Dancing in the Dark

Once the door is open the players will see a long dark corridor sloping downwards into the mountain. It is barely wide enough for a single person, so only one player can be in front. The traps always hit whoever is in front.

After 100 feet, whoever is in front will see a human skull and a few shattered bones lying in the tunnel ahead. The bones look like they have been chewed on. Make a L1SR on CHR to check morale. If saving roll is failed, then fear seizes the player, and lowers his INT by 1D6. The loss is temporary, but will not come back on this adventure. If they think to search, have the searcher make a L1SR on Luck. A successful search through the bones will reveal an old leather target shield that would provide 3 points of armor protection.

Mention that beyond the skull the footing grows treacherous, with lots of jagged-edged, broken rock under foot. Players only have sandals. Let everyone make a L1SR on DEX. Those who fail take 1D6 damage to a foot. On a fumble, cause a stumble that breaks the healing potion.

After another 100 feet an eerie howl startles the players. Make a L1SR on CHR again to check morale. On failure then fear and reduce INT by 1D6. Let there be a whole jumble of bones here, and searching through them requires a L2SR on Luck. A successful search reveals an old wire whip, a kind of a flail designed to cut open any flesh it hits worth 4D6 + 4. Using it successfully requires a L1SR on DEX, Failure results in self injury of 1D6 hits of damage.

After another 100 feet have the ground beneath the lead adventurer crumble beneath his feet and drop him on a sliding path about 20 feet. Make a L1SR on CON. On failure take the difference in damage. Those who follow must also make the CON roll unless they state they are crawling or scooting on their butt down through the rubble.

After another 100 feet have the path divide into two passages, one sloping up and one sloping down. The one sloping upwards travels for several hundred feet, twisting and turning, and getting lower and narrower and finally dead-ends. In the dead-end chamber at the top, place two battleaxes, each worth 5D6 in combat and requiring STR of 15 and DEX of 10 to use. Have everyone who went



that way make a L1SR on CHR to see if fear lowers their INT rating.

The path leading downward continues for a long way and finally comes out into a grotto.

Challenge 5: Praying or Preying

The grotto is a chamber large enough for everyone to stand erect, and move around inside it. There is a pool in the center, deep and wide, and icy cold. Swimming or wading across the pool requires a L1SR on CON. On failure, reduce the CON of the one who failed by the failure amount. (Example: needed to roll a 9 to succeed, only rolled a 6, lose 3 points of CON.) In the center of the pool is an island, and on the island is a large malachite statue of a sitting troll. There is a faint aura of magic about the place if anyone can sense it. In front of the troll is a large shallow stone bowl, and in the bowl are several hundred coins. There are quite a few broken human bones lying on the island, and many look like they have been chewed on.



If players take any coins from the bowl, the statue proves to not be a statue after all, and it comes to life, and attacks. The statue has a monster rating of 100 (11D6 + 50). If the coins are put back in the bowl, the troll stops its attack and sits down again, but in a different place, revealing that there is a tunnel leading down into the stone

beneath where it was sitting. This is the way out. The troll is living stone. No weapon the players have will harm it, but if they beat its combat totals, they can defend themselves. If they don't figure out that they shouldn't steal from the Trollgod, they will probably all die here. But if they don't make it change position by touching coins, they won't find the exit.

If players think to search the grotto, let them make L2SRs on Luck. A successful search will find a hidden chest in a far corner of the grotto, and inside the chest a complete set of chainmail armor that will take 10 hits in combat.

At this point, players may pray to the Trollgod, and cash in adventure points for attribute points.

The tunnel leading down from the troll's position is very slick and rapidly turns into a slide. Explain the problem and see what the players do, but ultimately they will all go sliding down into the dark.

Challenge 6: What's the Magic Word?

The slide deposits whoever has gotten this far into what looks like a large square vault. The chamber has dressed stone walls with many sunstones set into them that light it up. Walls of transparent crystal divide the vault into three sections. Section 1 is where the players come out of the chute and land (L1SR on CON to see if they hurt themselves then L1SR on Luck to see if they broke the bottle full of healing potion during the slide or the landing. No luck roll if the player has a pack and put the bottle into it.)

Section 2 is an open rectangular area with a doorway leading into section 1, and a big basalt throne in the center. A mighty warrior is sitting on the throne when the players arrive, but gets up immediately and blocks the doorway leading into his section. He immediately says, "YOU SHALL NOT PASS!"

The warrior is Grail, the Champion of Kartejan. He wields a 2-handed flamberge



that gets 7D6 in combat, wears plate armor that takes 10 hits (and he can double that if he wishes), and has a CON of 40. He gets 50 adds in combat. He has a WIZ rating of 20 for purposes of defense.

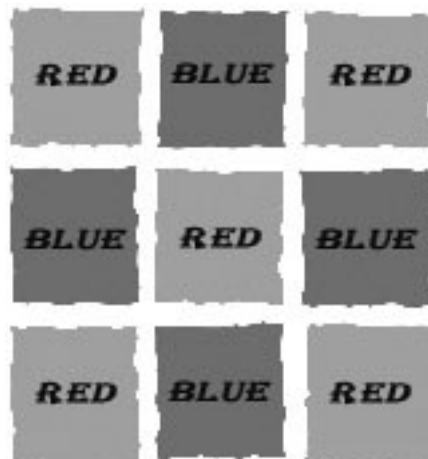
Players must either fight their way past him, or persuade him to let them go through his room. He won't tell them what he wants, but if they talk to him, simply saying "Please let me go through," will cause Grail to let them pass. This has to be a test of courtesy for each player. Explain that the crystal walls are soundproof, and Grail will only allow a single player into his room at a time. Send the other players out of the room while talking with the champion, and swear them to secrecy. As you deal with each player, send them out to admit the next challenger.

Players trapped in this room may search the walls and find a secret exit with either an **Oh There It Is** or a L2SR on Luck. This exit will cause them to come out of a small side door on the basalt cube that Mahrundl showed them at the beginning. They are out, but they did not come through the right door, and so did not win.

If anyone gets past Grail, continue with them to the final challenge.

Challenge 7: Winning the Game

The third section of the vault is a tic-tac-toe board with squares of alternating red and blue that looks like this:



Do not tell the players what it takes to get through the exit door. Let them figure it out.

There is no space on the sides and each square is 10 feet by 10 feet. Standing in each square is a person. They are all prisoners and criminals who have volunteered for this job, because they have been promised that if they can take a key from a contestant, they will be set free. They are all armed. In the lowest row they have simply daggers worth $2D6 + 4$ in combat. In the second row they have broadswords worth $3D6 + 3$ in combat. In the third row they have great axes worth $5D6$ in combat. They have no armor, and they have CONs of 10 in the first row, 14 in the second row, and 18 in the third row. The ones on the blue squares are male, and the ones on the red are female, and they don't like each other. Once past the guard pattern the player may easily walk another few feet to the exit door, but it will only open if he has walked a straight



path across the board. (A straight path from side to side would also unlock the exit door, but the player would not be able to reach it without going through the guards in the ranks in front of the door.)

Players may attempt to fight their way through, or they may attempt to talk their way through, but to win the game, the player must travel in a straight line. (tic-tac-toe) Or they can do both, fight in one place and persuade in another. The people in the squares can only fight others in the squares adjacent to them, and cannot leave their own square unless they hold a key.

Note that a player who held 2 keys could offer 1 key to a guard to persuade the guard to help fight for him. Or the player could offer something else. Whether the guard

will take the offer of anything but a key to help out depends of a Charisma saving roll. L1 on the low rank, L2 on the mid rank, L3 on the top rank.

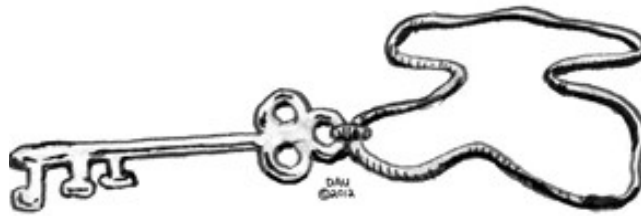
In the event that a player makes it across the board, but did not walk a straight line, he will feel queasy for a second and find himself teleported back to the low side of the board. The guards will all shimmer and disappear to be replaced by a completely new crew.

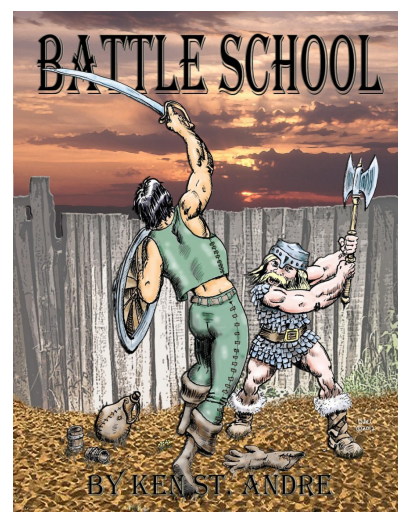
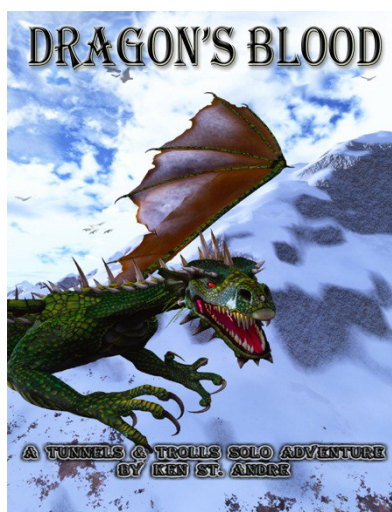
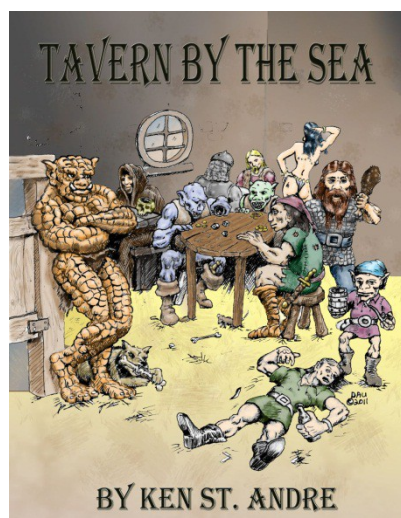
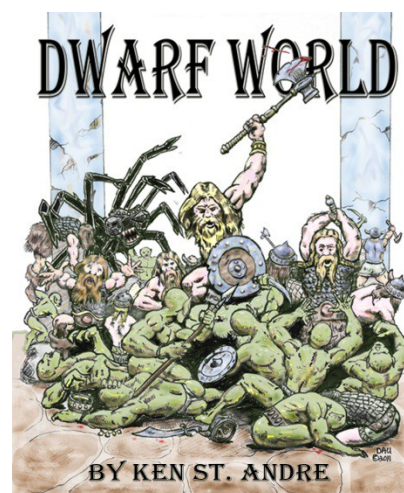
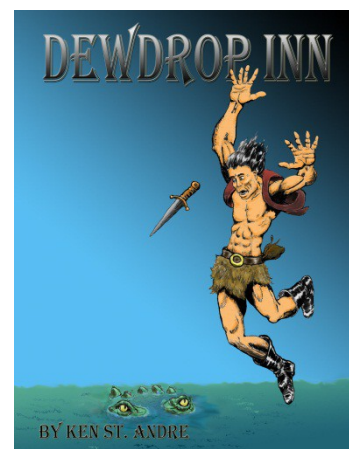
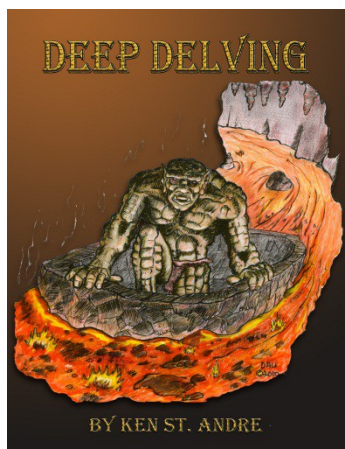
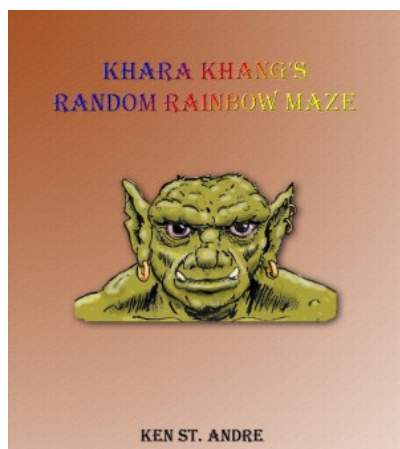
Players may team up to cross the board at the same time, ganging up on their opponents, but if that happens, opponents of the same gender will also gang up on the players.

Conclusion

The first player to get out through the exit door with a key to the city is the grand winner and becomes the next Duke of Kartejan for a year. If no one makes it, the old Duke gets to reign for another year. Other players who get out through the exit door with a key, get 1000 gold pieces and the favor of the city for a week (i.e. businesses give them discounts, citizens buy them free drinks, etc.) Anyone else who gets out is given 500 gold and a thanks for playing speech.

End.





Check out these other Tunnels & Trolls™ Adventures written by the Troll God, Ken St. Andre, and Illustrated by David A. Ullery¹⁹



Wealth, power, dancing girls--all these are yours for the winning
if you can master the seven challenges of Kartejan.

In order to do so, you will have to dare the tunnels and defeat a troll.
Compete or cooperate, there is only one true winner to the Seven Challenges

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