

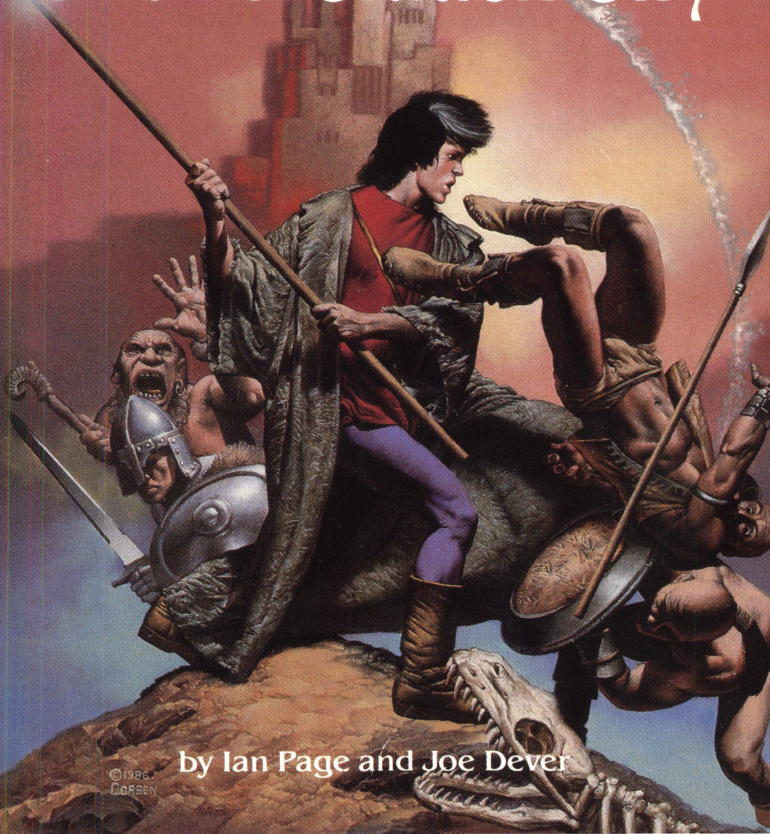
YOU ARE GREY STAR—DETERMINE YOUR DESTINY!

THE WORLD OF LONE WOLF



BOOK 2

The Forbidden City



by Ian Page and Joe Dever

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CORSEN

The Shaddakine

Sadi D



Lake Tilos

Great Lissan Plain

Lake Dolari

Lake Liss

Lissan Mountains

Desolation Valley

Canzi

River Dosar

Andui



Mount Kalam



Sena

Kashima Mountains

Forest of

Fernames

Mountains of Morn

Forbidden City

Suhni River



Selzar River

Sunlu Marshes

Key.

Scale 100 miles



mountains.



hill country.



jungle.



barren wasteland.



stone desert.



cliff face.



Deciduous forest.



Swamp.



Evergreen forest.



desert.

Empire

ert

is of Para

Kidow

Shadaki

Karwu

Tiklu

Jager

Rune of the
Wytch
King

Gulf of
Jagerlan

Jager Strait

Sea of
Winds

Cerlu

Dagonlan
Point

Abbaki

Korli

Zhanis

Gulf of
Zhanis

Forlu

Shuri Mountains

wenat

Sea of
Dreams

Rune of the
Shiari

Chansi Hills

Port of
Suhn

gan River

Azagad
Gorge

Lake
Shenmu

Isle of Lorn

Wall of Azakawa

The Azanam

Kazan
Isles





he bearer of
this scroll,
namely,

is a wizard
of the Shianti



THE WORLD *of* LONE WOLF

PAGE AND DEVER

The Author

IAN PAGE was born in London in 1960. Since the age of sixteen he has pursued a successful career as a singer/songwriter. With the band *Secret Affair*, he had a string of chart hits to his credit including 'Time for Action' and 'My World'. His interest in the fantastic worlds of 'Sword and Sorcery' dates back to his early teens, and to his love of the novels of J. R. R. Tolkien and Michael Moorcock. It was in 1979, when Joe Dever introduced him to role-playing games, that his involvement in the world of Magnamund began. He has since contributed greatly to the development of the southern reaches of this fantastic world, and has worked closely with Joe on several other role-playing games projects that include TV and radio appearances.

The Editor

JOE DEVER was born in 1956 at Woodford Bridge in Essex. His involvement with role-playing games dates back to 1977 when, on a trip to Los Angeles, he discovered 'Dungeons and Dragons'. In 1982 he won the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Championships in America, where he was the only British competitor. His bestselling Lone Wolf adventures (available in Beaver Books) are the culmination of many years of developing the world of Magnamund. Printed in several languages and sold throughout the world, they have earned both him and co-author Gary Chalk recognition as masters of the gamebook craft. Joe Dever also writes for modelling journals, is a contributing editor to *White Dwarf* – Britain's leading role-playing games magazine, adapts the Lone Wolf adventures for computer play and is noted for his model photography. Together with Gary Chalk, he produces the Lone Wolf Club Newsletter and enjoys answering letters from readers all over the world.

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THE WORLD OF LONE WOLF
BOOK 2

The Forbidden City

Written by Ian Page
Edited by Joe Dever
Illustrated by Paul Bonner

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For Julie

ACTION CHART

MAGICAL POWERS

1	SOULRY
2	elementalism
3	alchemy
4	evocation
5	prophecy
6	enchantment
If completed Book 1	

BACKPACK

1	Torch
2	Torch
3	3Lamps per - + 2 EP, + 4 EP
4	Torch
5	Rest of mot
6	Rendarm - + 6 EP
7	ROPC
8	Shanter Book
Can be discarded when not in combat	

HERB POUCH (Maximum 6 articles)

1	empty vial
2	empty vial
3	salt petre
4	sulphur
5	sealed Calaca
6	3 AZA wood
Only carried if you possess Magical Power of Alchemy	

MEALS

1	W. 0026
(Carried in Backpack) - 3 EP if no Meals available when instructed to eat	
BELT POUCH containing Nobles (50 maximum)	

**COMBAT
SKILL**

19

WILLPOWER

39

May go above
Initial Score**ENDURANCE
POINTS**

29

Can never go above
Initial Score 0 = dead**COMBAT RECORD****ENDURANCE
POINTS****WILLPOWER
POINTS****ENDURANCE
POINTS**

GREY STAR

COMBAT
RATIO

ENEMY

GREY STAR

COMBAT
RATIO

ENEMY

GREY STAR

COMBAT
RATIO

ENEMY

GREY STAR

COMBAT
RATIO

ENEMY

GREY STAR

COMBAT
RATIO

ENEMY

GREY STAR

COMBAT
RATIO

ENEMY

SPECIAL ITEMS AND WEAPONS LIST

DESCRIPTION	KNOWN EFFECTS
Amulet Magic Tally + 2 W.P. Keys Mind Gem Chakras Pipe Diamond Ring Gold tooth	

WEAPONS (maximum 2 Weapons, Wizard's Staff counts as 1 Weapon)

1

Wizard Staff

2

Short sword w/ sheath

If combat entered without Wizard's Staff - 6 CS.

If combat entered without a Weapon - 8 CS.

CS = Combat Skill

EP = Endurance

OF THE COMING OF GREY STAR

Ancient days they were when first the Shianti set foot upon the land that men call Magnamund. Long had they journeyed through the void, homeless wanderers in search of a place to call their own. And so it was that when the Shianti first looked upon the face of the land, their hearts were raised in wonder. They saw a world of nameless mountains, untamed forests and lands both wild and free. Here they chose to cease their wanderings and to devote themselves to the study and appreciation of this new found land.

To the delight of the Shianti, the race of man first emerged at this time and they watched his early struggle towards civilization with eager concern. Like gods, the Shianti seemed to the minds of primitive men. Tall and proud, shining with a radiance that spoke of magic and arcane mystery, the Shianti moved among them and with their powers of wizardry, aided man in his development.

As the centuries passed, man fell to worship of the magical Shianti and the power of these wizards grew even stronger. With hungry hearts they sought to unlock the mysteries of knowledge, sending their minds into other planes of existence and strange worlds beyond the sphere of the material plane. Their foresight was now unmatched and the power of their thought was mighty indeed. It was at this time that

they created the Moonstone. Woven of the very fabric of the astral plane of Daziarn, this translucent gem was the greatest achievement of Shianti wisdom. It was the binding force of all Shianti magic, containing the combined might of all their wizardry, the sum of all their knowledge. The Golden Age of the Shianti had come and the Moonstone was the instrument of their dominion throughout all Magnamund. Man stood as little more than a shadow, blinded by the shining white light of Shianti glory. But, in creating the Moonstone, the unwritten laws of nature had been transgressed. For the Moonstone, like the Shianti themselves, was something outside of man's own world; it defied the natural order laid down by the creators of the Earth and disrupted the balance that the gods had designed.

The Goddess Ishir, High Priestess of the Moon and mother of all men, showed herself to the Shianti and spoke to them of the destiny of man: 'The children of this world must claim their inheritance. Their time has come and they must learn to stand alone. They are lost in their worship of you and the day draws ever nearer when they will covet the power of the Moonstone.'

And the Shianti said: 'Forgive us, Great Goddess, for we intended no harm. We love mankind even as you do. We have sought to do good and protect your children from harm.'

But Ishir replied, 'Of this there can be no doubt, but this world is not your realm. Man must be free to pursue his destiny alone, and you must leave, for you trespass on his domain.'

The Shianti were filled with sorrow. They feared a return to the void and to their lonely wandering, and pleaded with Ishir that she might allow them to remain. Ishir was filled with pity for them. She spoke again, saying, 'If you are to remain you must obey my command. You must take a vow never to interfere with mankind's fate. As a token of good faith you must lay aside the Moonstone, and return it to the plane where it belongs.'

Solemnly, the Shianti agreed. The vow was sworn before Ishir, and the Moonstone was returned to the Daziarn. The Shianti then moved south to the Isle of Lorn. They encircled their new home with a web of enchantments, magical mists and mage winds to prevent man from ever finding their place of refuge in the Sea of Dreams. Knowledge of the Shianti faded with time, save in southern Magnamund where it became enshrined in legend, and the worship of them endured. Priests of the Shianti religion preserved their teachings and patiently awaited the day when the 'ancient ones' would return, bringing with them lasting peace and the blessing of a new golden age.

Two thousand years strode by and man advanced as Ishir had foretold. He built great cities and cultivated the land; his kingdoms rose and fell; he made war and loved and laughed and became master of his fate. But a new power was emerging in the province of Shadaki. There Shasarak the evil Wytch-king ruled. The black necromancer commanded an army of brutal soldiers and had a devoted following of men who upheld his religion of demonic worship and sacrificial rites. Devotees of the Shianti and other

religious cults were persecuted in a merciless purge. Ruthlessly, the Wytch-king destroyed all his opponents and began a terrible war with the peoples of the neighbouring provinces. From the ruins of war Shasarak shaped the Shadakine Empire, subjugating whole nations to his evil rule. And as the provinces fell to his might, the Shianti looked on helplessly, bound by their vow to the Goddess Ishir never to interfere in the affairs of man.

On the night of the crowning of Shasarak as Overlord of the Shadakine Empire, a great storm broke upon the Sea of Dreams, a storm that raged with unnatural intensity. Lashed by wind and rain, illuminated by wild lightning, the waters heaved and danced in fury to the thundering music of the storm, unchecked by even the enchantments of the Shianti. When finally the tempest died, the Shianti looked out in amazement on the shattered hull of a ship drifting towards their shore. Never before had this occurred, for the enchantments and mage winds had kept them secure from the curiosity of man by forcing him to sail close to his own land.

The Shianti went quickly to the ruined ship where they found only one survivor – a baby. They perceived the sudden arrival of this human child as a sign of great portent, and they conceived a plan by which they might lawfully aid mankind. They named the orphan child Grey Star, because a star is the symbol of hope in the Shianti faith, and because of the silver streak in the child's jet-black hair. In the shadow of the wrath of the Goddess Ishir, they raised the child as one of their own and taught him their secrets. Diligently they set about their instruction, for their aim

was to provide a saviour for mankind. Armed with the might of Shianti wizardry and wisdom, their hope was to create an adversary equal in power to the evil Wytch-king of Shadaki, for they realized that only with the death of Shasarak would man once more be free to determine his destiny.

THE STORY SO FAR . . .

You are Grey Star, trained in the ancient lore of a Shianti Wizard. For sixteen years you dwelt in safety on the Isle of Lorn, the hidden realm of the magical Shianti race, until Acarya, High Wizard of the Shianti sent you upon a dangerous quest to save your own people, the race of man, from Shasarak, the tyrannical Wytch-king of Shadaki. Held by their ancient vow to the goddess Ishir, the Shianti are unable to leave their island and come to the aid of man themselves. As a human, no such promise prohibits you from leaving the island and you have been sent to recover the Moonstone and use its power to throw down the Wytch-king.

The Moonstone, an artefact possessing the combined force of all Shianti power, is hidden on the Daziarn plane, which can only be entered by finding one of its portals. You seek the Shadow Gate, but it never remains in one place for longer than a day and is invisible to human sight. For this reason you began to search for the 'Lost Tribe of Lara,' a race of magical, but primitive creatures called the Kundi. They possess the gift of Astral Vision, enabling them to see magic portals and gateways to other planes and dimensions. Once, the Kundi inhabited the forests of the Mountains of Lara. When Shasarak's Shadakine army first invaded the free provinces of the south,

they came by way of the Mountains of Lara, through the Morn Pass. The Shadakine armies were constantly ambushed and delayed by the Kundi as they made their way south, and the Kundi always eluded them, disappearing into the dense forest before the Shadakine could retaliate. Finally, in desperation, the Wytch-king burnt down the mountain's forests and the Kundi were forced to flee from his wrath and disappeared. Only the vision and the guidance of a Kundi man will enable you to enter the Daziarn plane and find the Moonstone, and less than a month ago you began your search.

Voyaging across the Sea of Dreams, you came first to the city of Suhm, the largest port in the Shadakine Empire. There you befriended a cheerful merchant named Shan Li, a widely travelled man with a wry sense of humour. Your questions about the Lost Tribe, enemies of the Shadakine Empire, aroused much suspicion. You were taken to the dungeons of the House of Correction, the Shadakine prison of Suhm and subjected to the truthsay of Mother Magri, Shadakine Wytch and Law-giver. With the power of the Kazim Stone, she attempted to read your mind, but you were able to preserve the secret of your quest.

It was with the help of Tanith, a young, beautiful girl, learning the ways of wytchcraft in the service of Mother Magri, that you made your escape from the House of Correction. Her courage and intelligence were invaluable as you escaped the pursuit of the Shadakine. With Shan as your guide you eventually turned south and headed toward the region known as the Azanam, for it seemed likely that the Lost Tribe

might be found there. But the vengeance of Mother Magri was not so easily avoided. Using the power of the Kazim Stone, she summoned a Kleasá, a demon shadow that feeds upon the soul and will of others, since it has no soul of its own. Neither your Magical Powers, nor the might of your Wizard's Staff seemed able to defeat the Kleasá and it had almost destroyed you when Tanith cast a spell and called the demon against her. She was totally consumed by the Kleasá and both disappeared in flame. Her brave sacrifice saved your life.

With a heavy heart, you and Shan continued south, entering the arid desert of the Azagad Gorge. Here, Shan fell, poisoned and consumed by a Quoku, the flying amphibian indigenous to those parts. After a desperate chase through the tunnels of a Cave Mantiz nest (giant insects that lair within the cliff) you eventually reached the jungles of the Azanam, and there, high in their towering treetop home, you found the Lost Tribe of Lara. But your arrival was met with great suspicion: the Kundi did not believe that you had been sent by the Shianti. In the house of Okosa, the Kundi King, Urik the wise, their strange, eccentric shaman and elder of their tribe, challenged you to prove you were truly sent by the Shianti by answering a strange riddle:

*Wise Shianti and Kundi man
Look eye to eye in tree,
Shianti man see Kundi man,
But what does Kundi see?*

To discover the answer to the riddle and to continue your search for the Moonstone and the Shadow Gate that leads there, turn to section 1.

THE GAME RULES

If you have already completed GREY STAR THE WIZARD (Book 1 of the World of Lone Wolf series), you already have your COMBAT SKILL, ENDURANCE and WILLPOWER points and your magical powers. In the course of your adventure your powers of wizardry have grown and so you may add 10 to your WILLPOWER total and choose one more magical power. All weapons and Special Items that you held at the end of Book 1 should be entered on a fresh Action Chart. You are now ready to begin this adventure.

If this is your first adventure, read on . . .

To keep a record of your adventure, use the *Action Chart* at the front of this book. If you run out of space, you can copy out the chart or have it photocopied.

Before you set off on your adventure, you must discover how well your Shianti masters have prepared you for your quest by determining your fighting prowess—COMBAT SKILL—your state of mind—WILLPOWER—and your physical stamina—ENDURANCE. To do this take a pencil and, with eyes closed, point with the blunt end of it on to the *Random Number Table* on the last page of this book. If you pick 0 it counts as zero.

The first number that you pick from the *Random*

Number Table in this way represents your COMBAT SKILL. Add 10 to the number you picked and write the total in the COMBAT SKILL section of your *Action Chart*. (eg, if your pencil fell on the number 4 in the *Random Number Table* you would write in a COMBAT SKILL of 14.) When you fight, your COMBAT SKILL will be pitted against that of your enemy. A high score in this section is therefore very desirable.

The second number that you pick from the *Random Number Table* represents your WILLPOWER. Add 20 to this number and write the total in the WILLPOWER section of your *Action Chart* (eg, if your pencil fell on the number 6 in the *Random Number Table* you would have a WILLPOWER of 26). If you decide to use a spell or utilize the power of your Wizard's Staff, then you will lose WILLPOWER points. If at any time your WILLPOWER falls to zero, you may not use any of your spells or your Wizard's Staff. Lost WILLPOWER points can be regained during the course of the adventure and it is possible for your WILLPOWER points to rise above the total with which you start your adventure.

The third number that you pick from the *Random Number Table* represents your powers of ENDURANCE. Add 20 to this number and write the total in the ENDURANCE section of your *Action Chart* (eg, if your pencil fell on the number 6 on the *Random Number Table* you would have 26 ENDURANCE points.) If you are wounded in combat, you will lose ENDURANCE points. If at any time your ENDURANCE points fall to zero, you are dead and the adventure is over. Lost ENDURANCE points can be regained during the course of the adventure but can never rise above the number with which you start your adventure.

MAGICAL POWERS

When you start your adventure, your education in the ways of wizardry is incomplete. You have mastered only *five* of the seven magical powers that the Shianti call the *lesser magicks*. The choice of which five powers these are, is up to you. All of the lesser magicks will be of use to you at some point on your quest, so choose them with care. Your survival may depend on the correct use of a magical power at the right time.

The seven magical powers available to you are listed below. When you have chosen your five powers, enter them in the Magical Powers section of your *Action Chart*.



This power allows a wizard to transform his thoughts or desires into magical energy. By concentration of the will it is possible to create magical shields of force to bar doors or move objects. Sorcery drains more WILLPOWER points than any other Magical Power, and is most effective when your WILLPOWER points are high.

If you choose this power, write 'Sorcery' on your *Action Chart*.



The power of Enchantment enables a wizard to charm or beguile other creatures, and create illusions in the minds of others. He will be able to extract information from others, place thoughts and compulsions into another's mind or cause them to believe that imaginary events are actually taking place. Some magical or highly intelligent beings may be immune to the powers of Enchantment.

If you choose this power, write 'Enchantment' on your *Action Chart*.



The Power of elemental magic allows a wizard some control over the natural elements of Air, Fire, Earth, and Water. By entering a trance and chanting incan-

tations, you may summon aid from the spirits of the Elemental Plane. Elementals have very little understanding of man, and for this reason a wizard can never be sure of the nature of the aid the Elementals may send.

If you choose this power, write 'Elementalism' on your *Action Chart*.



A wizard who possesses the power of Alchemy is able, through the mixing of various substances, to create magical potions. Given the correct ingredients, a potion may restore lost energy (ie, ENDURANCE points, WILLPOWER), or temporarily improve various abilities (eg, COMBAT SKILL). The use of alchemy may also allow a wizard to alter the nature of substances (eg, change lead into gold), but the necessary ingredients and the correct equipment (eg, a pestle and mortar) must be at hand. The use of the power of Alchemy drains no WILLPOWER.

If you choose this power write 'Alchemy' on your *Action Chart*.



The power of prophecy allows a wizard to foretell the future through meditation. A meditative state will allow a wizard to make the correct decision when facing conflicting choices or difficult actions; to discover the whereabouts of a person he has once met, or an object he has once seen. It may also allow him to determine the true nature of a stranger or a strange object. Magical beings or objects are sometimes hidden from the power of divination.

If you choose this power, write 'Prophecy' on your *Action Chart*.



This power bestows upon a wizard the ability to deduce facts about events by touching objects connected to them. Through deep concentration, a wizard may lay his hands upon any inanimate object

and visualize scenes that have affected it. Visions brought about through the use of Psychomancy are often cryptic, taking the form of a riddle or puzzle. Some magic items are resistant to the use of Psychomancy and may, sometimes, impart misleading information.

If you choose this power, write 'Psychomancy' on your *Action Chart*.



Mastery of this power permits contact with the spirit realm. A wizard wishing to speak with the dead, or to call up a form from the spirit world, must draw a magic pentacle and enter a trance, when the use of the correct spell-chant will reach out to the Spiritual Plane. Standing within the protection of a magic pentacle, a wizard may consider himself to be relatively safe from harm. If he wishes to speak with a corpse, especially one whose former life was good and righteous, then a wizard can expect help and advice. However, contact with those whose former lives were evil or selfish can be a perilous, and often fatal, experience. Evil spirits are reluctant to return to the realm of the dead and may try to trick a wizard into freeing them into the world of the living. All spirits, good and evil, will require some service of the

wizard in return for their aid. Any failure to perform this task, however difficult, may result in the wizard losing his life.

If you choose this power, write 'Evocation' on your *Action Chart*.



Your Staff is your most valuable possession. It looks and feels like an ordinary quarterstaff yet it is stronger than any known metal. This is your only combat weapon, for you are untrained in the use of any other form of armed combat. It contains a potent force that is unleashed at will by the power of your mind, and causes a beam of destructive power to hurtle from its tip. Every time you unleash this power you must deduct 1 WILLPOWER point.

In the event that your enemy survives such an attack or should you fall victim to a surprise attack, you will be forced to engage in close combat and must attempt to strike your enemy with the Staff. If your attack is successful, a bolt of energy will be released from the Staff that is capable of inflicting great physical harm. If you wish to increase the amount of damage that you inflict in this way, you must use more WILLPOWER points and multiply the number of

ENDURANCE points lost by the enemy, accordingly. For example, if you chose to expend 3 WILLPOWER points on your attack, all enemy ENDURANCE point losses would be multiplied by three.

If you enter combat without your Staff, deduct 6 points from your COMBAT SKILL. If you have no weapon at all, you must deduct 8 points from your COMBAT SKILL.

EQUIPMENT

You wear the grey robe and hooded cloak of a Shianti Wizard. Your only weapon is your Wizard's Staff (note this on your *Action Chart* under Weapons). You wear a Backpack containing 4 Meals (note under Meals on your *Action Chart*), and you have been given a map of the Shadakine Empire (note under Special Items on your *Action Chart*) which you place inside your robe.

If you have chosen Alchemy as one of your Magical Powers, then you will have a leather pouch for herbs and potions hanging from your belt. The Herb Pouch contains the following:

- 2 empty vials for carrying potions
- 1 vial containing saltpetre
- 1 vial containing sulphur

Mark these 4 items on your *Action Chart*.

Your Herb Pouch will carry a maximum of eight items.

How to carry equipment

Now that you have your equipment, the following list shows you how it is carried. You do not need to make notes but you can refer back to this list in the course of your adventure.

WIZARD'S STAFF – carried in the hand.

BACKPACK – slung over the shoulder.

MEALS – carried in the Backpack.

How much can you carry?

Weapons

The maximum number of weapons that you may carry is *two*. Your Wizard's Staff counts as one weapon.

Backpack Items

These must be stored in your Backpack. Because space is limited, you may only keep a maximum of eight articles, including Meals, in your Backpack at any one time.

Special Items

Special Items are not carried in the Backpack. When you discover a Special Item, you will be told how to carry it.

Nobles (Shadakine currency)

These are carried in the pocket of your robe.

Food

Food is carried in your Backpack. Each Meal counts as one item.

Any item that may be of use and can be picked up on your adventure and entered on your *Action Chart* is given Capital letters in the text. Unless you are told it is a Special Item, carry it in your Backpack.

How to use your equipment

Weapons

Your COMBAT SKILL depends on your Wizard's Staff. If you do not possess your Staff when you enter combat you must deduct 6 points from your COMBAT SKILL. If you enter a combat without a weapon, deduct 8 points from your COMBAT SKILL and fight with your bare hands. If you find a weapon during the adventure, you may pick it up and use it. (Remember that you can only carry *two* weapons at once.)

Backpack Items

During your travels you will discover various useful items which you may wish to keep. (Remember that you can only carry a maximum of eight items in your Backpack at any one time.) You may exchange or discard them at any point when you are not involved in combat.

Special Items

Each Special Item has a particular purpose or effect. You may be told this when the item is discovered, or it may be revealed to you as the adventure progresses.

Currency

The currency of the Shakadine Empire is the Noble, which is a small jade stone. The system of money is alien to the Shianti and for this reason you begin your

adventure with no money. Whenever you kill an enemy, you may take any Nobles belonging to him and keep them in the pocket of your robe.

Food

You will need to eat regularly during your adventure. If you do not have any food when you are instructed to eat a Meal, you will lose 3 ENDURANCE points.

RULES FOR COMBAT

There will be occasions during your adventure when you have to fight an enemy. The enemy's COMBAT SKILL and ENDURANCE points are given in the text. Grey Star's aim during the combat is to kill the enemy by reducing his ENDURANCE points to zero while at the same time losing as few ENDURANCE points as possible himself.

At the start of a combat, enter Grey Star's ENDURANCE and WILLPOWER points and the enemy's ENDURANCE points in the appropriate boxes on the Combat Record section of your *Action Chart*.

The sequence for combat is as follows:

1. Calculate your current COMBAT SKILL total, based on the weapon you are using. (Remember, if you enter combat without your Staff, you must deduct 6 points from your COMBAT SKILL. If you have no weapon at all, you must deduct 8 points.)
2. Subtract the COMBAT SKILL of your enemy from this total. The result is your *Combat Ratio*. Enter it on the *Action Chart*.

3. If you are using your Wizard's Staff, decide how many WILLPOWER points you wish to use. (Remember, you must expend at least 1 point.) Enter this number on your Combat Record in the box marked WILLPOWER.

Example

Grey Star (COMBAT SKILL 15, WILLPOWER 23) is ambushed by a Deathgaunt (COMBAT SKILL 20). He is not given the opportunity to evade combat, but he can use his Wizard's Staff against the creature as it swoops down on him. He subtracts the Deathgaunt's COMBAT SKILL from his own, giving a *Combat Ratio* of -5. ($15 - 20 = -5$). -5 is noted on the *Action Chart* as the *Combat Ratio*. Grey Star decides to use 2 WILLPOWER points, which is noted on the WILLPOWER box of the Combat Record.

4. When you have decided upon the number of WILLPOWER points you wish to use, and you have your *Combat Ratio*, pick a number from the *Random Number Table*.
5. Turn to the *Combat Results Table* on the inside back cover of the book. Along the top of the chart are shown the *Combat Ratio* numbers. Find the number that is the same as your *Combat Ratio* and cross-reference it with the random number that you have picked. (The random numbers appear on the side of the chart.) You now have the number of ENDURANCE points lost by Grey Star. To calculate the number lost by the enemy, multiply this by the number of WILLPOWER points

that Grey Star elected to use. Now you have the final number of ENDURANCE points lost by both Grey Star and his enemy in this round of combat. (E represents points lost by the enemy; GS represents points lost by Grey Star.)

Example

The *Combat Ratio* between Grey Star and the Deathgaunt has been established as -5, and Grey Star's WILLPOWER points used as 2. If the number taken from the *Random Number Table* is a 6, then the result of the first round of combat is:

Grey Star loses 4 ENDURANCE points.

Deathgaunt loses 5 ENDURANCE points, multiplied by 2 WILLPOWER points, giving a total of 10 ENDURANCE points lost in all.

6. On the *Action Chart*, mark the changes in ENDURANCE points to the participants in the combat, and Grey Star's amended WILLPOWER points total.
7. Unless otherwise instructed, or unless you have an option to evade, the next round of combat now starts.
8. Repeat the sequence from Stage 3.

This process of combat continues until the ENDURANCE points of either the enemy or Grey Star are reduced to zero, at which point the one with the zero score is declared dead. If Grey Star is dead, the adventure is over. If the enemy is dead, Grey Star proceeds but with his ENDURANCE and WILLPOWER points reduced.

A summary of Combat Rules appears on the page after the *Random Number Table*.

Evasion of combat

During your adventure you may be given the chance to evade combat. If you have already engaged in a round of combat and decide to evade, calculate the combat for that round in the usual manner. All points lost by the enemy as a result of that round are ignored, and you make your escape. Only Grey Star may lose ENDURANCE points during that round, but then that is the risk of running away! You may only evade if the text of the particular section allows you to do so.

SAGE ADVICE

You are about to embark on a quest of great peril, for your journey will take you to an unknown land that is dominated by evil. Refer to the map at the front of this book and make notes as you progress through the story: they are sure to be of great help to you in future adventures.

You will discover items that could be of help to you on your quest. Some Special Items may aid you in future Grey Star adventures, others may be red herrings of no real use at all, so be selective in what you decide to keep.

Be cautious in your use of WILLPOWER points, as your WILLPOWER is the energy source for your Magical Powers and your Wizard's Staff. A score of zero WILLPOWER points will leave you weak and vulnerable to attack, unable to offer effective resistance.

Follow the path of wisdom, Wizard Grey Star. The way of fools is the road to destruction.

Good luck.

1 – *Illustration I (overleaf)*

The room is silent. Okosa, the Kundi king, his servants, and Urik, the old Shaman of the Kundi tribe, look on intently as you concentrate on the strange riddle. Suddenly, the solution crystallizes in your mind.

*Wise Shianti and Kundi man,
Look eye to eye . . .*

Of course! The eyes of the Shianti race have pupils like mirrored glass. Anyone looking into the eyes of a Shianti would see themselves reflected there.

*Shianti man see Kundi man
But what does Kundi see?*

The Kundi man would see *himself*!

You give your answer. At once, the tension in the atmosphere evaporates. The expressions on the faces of the assembled Kundi men change to a mixture of awe and respect, and Urik bows low. 'Welcome friend,' he says, simply.

King Okosa steps forward and grips your hand firmly. 'Forgive us,' he says. 'These troubled times . . . Shadakine wear many disguises. Evil have many faces. We give all help to Shianti child now we know he speak truth.'

You breathe a great sigh of relief, for without the aid

of the Kundi your quest is doomed to failure. Only the eyes of a Kundi man are able to see the magical Shadow Gate, the door you must open before entering the realm of the Daziarn Plane where the Moonstone of the Shianti is hidden.

The exhaustion and fatigue of your adventure on your way to the cloud forest floods through you like a great wave that washes through your tired limbs. Before you can speak your thanks, you fall into a faint.

Through the haze of a dream, your senses pass from sleep to waking. Opening your eyes, you see the wrinkled face of Urik, gazing intently into your own. 'How . . . how long?' you falter.

'Three days. Three nights. Deep sleep have healing ways – is true?' Urik replies. You sit up in the hammock that has been your resting place these past three days and look around. Bright sunlight streams in through the window of the wooden chamber. The events of the past weeks rush through your mind. With some surprise, you note that your body is unmarked after the horrors of your ordeal. Even the Mantiz bite on your leg has disappeared.

'Kundi magic,' Urik explains, mysteriously. Your tattered, grey robes, washed and repaired, are laid out for you, and when you have breakfasted on fresh rain-water and honey cakes, you are led out to meet King Okosa once more. You marvel at the breathtaking beauty of the cloud forest that is the home of the Kundi people. Urik leads, shambling along with his comical, bow-legged walk and toothless smile and you cross the wooden walkways that connect the tree



I. The wooden turrets of a forest castle, surrounded by an ocean of cloud

houses of the Kundi. They nestle amongst the highest branches of giant Azawood trees, whose towering heights and leafy peaks draw moisture from the clouds themselves: the wooden turrets of a forest castle surrounded by an ocean of cloud.

You are brought before the Kundi king once more. He and his advisers are gathered in the largest of the tree houses and old Urik ushers you in. 'You are well?' the king asks. You nod your head and thank him and his people for treating you with such kindness.

'Long ago,' the king continues, 'before Wytch-king, Shasarak, rose in the north, the Shianti and Kundi tribes – great friends. Shianti need magical sight of Kundi to look into other worlds, see other planes. Only Shianti can go there. Only Kundi can see there . . . We help each other. Learn many things. But when Shianti leave, Wytch-king lead Shadakine peoples against us, burning the forests of our home in Mountains of Lara. Now, Shianti send great wizard to destroy evil Wytch-king, throw down Shadakine. Kundi men give all their help, in honour of our friendship. How we aid you?'

'I must travel to the Daziarn plane and reclaim the Moonstone of old,' you reply. 'My masters tell me that I must seek out the Shadow Gate, the doorway that is invisible to all but the eyes of the noble Kundi. I ask you for a guide to take me there.'

The king creases his brow. 'Shadow Gate come and go; never in one place for long,' says King Okosa. 'Kundi eyes must see far; make prophecy for next place Shadow Gate appear. Only the keenest eyes

among us can help you. I will name your guide.' You search amongst the faces of those present, wondering which of the brave Kundi men will be chosen. 'Grey Star, I give you Urik the Wise,' says the king, with a gesture of the hand.

You look with some surprise at Okosa's choice. Urik smiles back, a great toothless grin, and bows humbly. The Shaman looks far too old and frail to be able to face the likely dangers ahead, but without the 'sight' of the ageing Shaman, your quest is hopeless. Perhaps, you think doubtfully, he has other talents?

'Waste no time. Start now,' Urik says. 'Urik find Shadow Gate. Wizard see some *Kundi* magic now!' He flashes you a sly smile. Not for the first time, you get the feeling that Urik is mocking you with his jibes about magic and wizards, as if he knows some great secret that others do not.

'I work a great spell,' he announces to everyone, like an actor addressing an audience. 'Stand back! Give me room! I must find the Shadow Gate.' A large circle forms and you watch Urik stride to the centre, his tail lashing and eyes glaring. You watch with some curiosity as he turns around and around, slowly at first, gradually increasing speed. He breathes deeply and often, hissing as he expels each breath from his lungs. Rags and feathers flutter and the tiny bells that he is wearing ring furiously. Soon, he is shouting and gibbering like a lunatic, arms waving in the air. You are barely able to suppress a snort of laughter but quickly check yourself, noticing that the Kundi look on with sombre expressions. Suddenly, Urik gives an ear-piercing scream, ceases his crazed, whirling

dance and spins to the floor, where he collapses in a heap. Startled, you go to help him but feel a restraining hand on your arm. 'No,' a young Kundi man whispers. 'It is the trance. The rite is over – the visions come.'

'You mean there's more!' you exclaim. Indeed, the show is not yet over. Urik has been silent for a short time, save for the panting of his protesting lungs. He sits up, straight-backed and stiff-limbed, his eyes wide and staring.

'I see mountains!' he moans. 'Black mountains! And beyond . . . a wide valley, dead land, ash and dust. Everywhere darkness, darkness and . . . I . . . I see it – the Shadow Gate – beneath the light of a full moon.'

After heated discussion, all are agreed that the black mountains of Urik's vision must be the infamous Mountains of Morn, and the dead lands beyond, Desolation Valley, a wasted plain that lies on the other side of the mountains – the site of an ancient calamity. As Urik saw a full moon shining above the Shadow Gate, the Kundi are sure that it will appear somewhere in Desolation Valley at that time.

'Already it is the time of the new moon,' says King Okosa.

'Two weeks,' you breathe.

'Two weeks, Grey Star,' says the king, 'and two hundred miles of Shadakine country, difficult mountains and unknown wilderness, lie ahead, You have little time.'

'What do you think, Urik?' you say.

Urik's ugly old face breaks into a knowing smile. 'Little time . . . much to do!' he says, jovially. 'Urik have plan – cover many miles in just one day, leave Azanam far behind.'

'But how,' you ask. 'When?'

'Great wizard must learn much patience,' he replies. 'You will see. Be ready to leave tomorrow at first light.' Urik will say no more and quickly leaves. You turn to the Kundi king. He merely shrugs his shoulders.

'Ways of the wise are strange,' he says, 'and who dare question the path of wisdom?' he finishes, cryptically. Like many Kundi sayings, it is one that begs no answer. It seems you have no choice other than to wait until tomorrow's dawn to find out the Shaman's plan.

Turn to **126**.

2

Urik has routed out a supply of Lianor and hands you three of the blue tubers. Each tuber counts as one Meal and you store them in your Backpack. You set off at once, for the success of your quest depends on haste.

You travel for two days, through the swamp forest, clambering over a jumble of twisted roots. It is a tiring journey.

If you have the Magical Power of Alchemy, turn to **45**.

If you do not have this Power, turn to **71**.

3

You draw out the Pipes and blow but no sound emerges. Despite your brave efforts, you are cut down by the brutal Shadakine before the howling mob has reached you.

Your quest has failed and your life is over.

4 – *Illustration II*

A vast, amorphous mass of slime and mud, wreathed with vines and dead vegetation, rises up out of the quagmire you have just passed. It reaches out and grabs you while you remain entranced, and presses you against its filth-encrusted body in a crushing bear hug. (Lose 2 ENDURANCE points.) You are being held by a Swamp Giant and it intends to squeeze the life out of you.

Swamp Giant: COMBAT SKILL 16 ENDURANCE 30

If you win the combat, turn to **65**.

5

Pick a number from the *Random Number Table*.

If you possess the Magic Talisman of the Shianti, add 2 to this score.

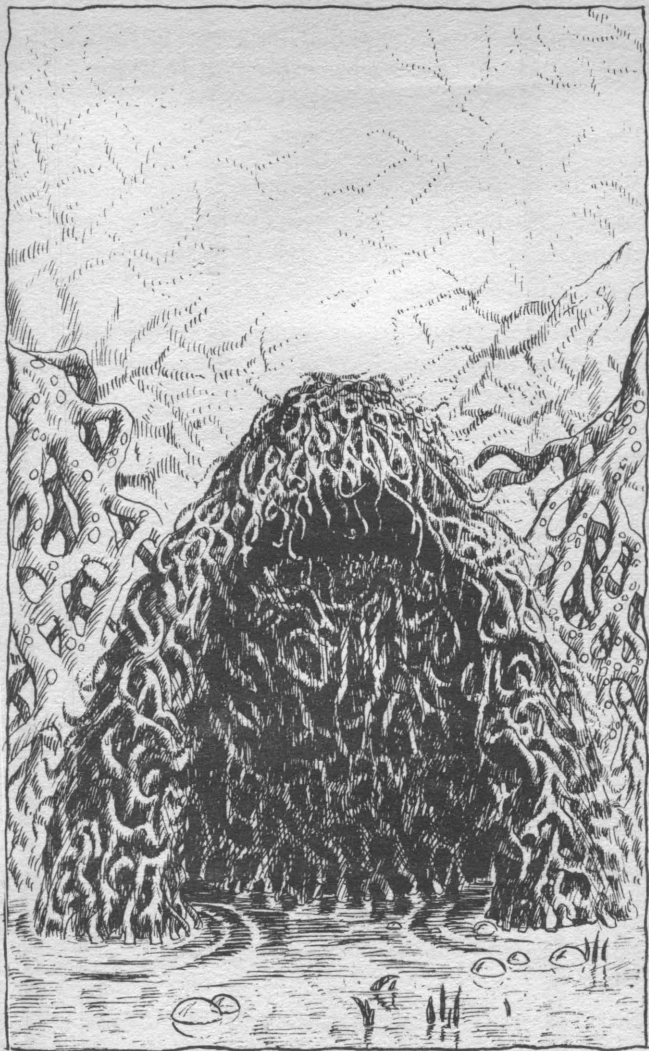
If you possess the Silver Charm of Jnana the Wise, add 1 to this score.

If your total is now 0–7, turn to **236**.

If your total is now 8–12, turn to **74**.

6

A wizard skilled in the use of Sorcery is able to use the power of a Mind Gem.



II. A mass of slime and mud rises up out of the quagmire, it is a Swamp Giant

If you possess this special Item, turn to **238**.

If you do not have a Mind Gem, turn to **55**.

7

Still within the vision, you point towards the Element of Air. It floats towards you and you feel it entering the domain of the Earth. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

When you open your eyes, you see that the Shadakine have already reached the edge of the lake. Their leader shouts commands and they move into position, loading their weapons and preparing to fire. There is no sign of the Air Elementals.

The Shadakine leader gives a shout and the Shadakine warriors release a volley of crossbow bolts in your direction. Instinctively, you and Urik dive to the ground. You are dismayed; it seems that the elementals have failed you. Then suddenly, a burst of astonished cries comes from the Shadakine as a colossal gust of wind tears past you. Looking up, you watch as the volley of quarrels is swept up and away by a whirlwind of dust and debris. The elemental stands, man-high before you, the faint outline of a pair of eyes shining up from within the depths of its form. It is a Whirlghast, and the bolts of the Shadakine are unable to pass through it.

‘Urik,’ you call, ‘can we do anything about the Eijalfish?’ Another volley of bolts flies towards you, but they are spun in all directions by the Whirlghast. Urik produces a small boomerang from his tunic. Its edge is lined with a row of razor-sharp teeth. ‘I try,’ he says.

Taking careful aim, he throws the boomerang towards the eyestalks of the Eijalfish. His aim is true; the boomerang slices an eye from its stalk before returning to land at his feet. Green blood marks the spot where the Eijalfish once lingered. 'We go now?' Urik asks, a mischievous grin on his face as he bends to pick up his weapon.

Turn to **74**.

8

When you regain consciousness you find yourself in a bed in the Shadakine fortress. Urik is with you, his eyes full of concern. 'How did I get here?' you ask.

'Samu, he carry you here. Him big man . . . fierce warrior.'

'How did the battle go?' Urik tells you of the victory of the Freedom Guild and the complete rout of all Shadakine forces within the city. A small blow has been struck for freedom against Shasarak, the evil Wytch-king.

Turn to **133**.

9

You slip into a deserted side street, Urik tut-tutting in your ear.

'Such noise! Such fuss! Wizard like to prove himself, eh?'

You give Urik a hard stare but resist the urge to snap back at him. 'How are we going to get out of here?' you mutter.

10-11

'Who knows; start another fire perhaps?' replies Urik, sarcastically. You turn to face Urik and begin to argue until suddenly Urik falls quiet and pales; he points behind you. You turn to see a tall shadow looming towards you out of the darkness, a huge, bloody broadsword in one hand.

Turn to **211**.

10

The great shambling mass moves ponderously towards you. You can discern the outline of arms and legs but no more. It reaches out, seeking to hug you in a deathly embrace.

Swamp Giant: COMBAT SKILL 16 ENDURANCE 30

If you win the combat, turn to **65**.

11

The gap in the undergrowth that leads into the clearing is very narrow and the Shadakine can pass through only a few at a time. Three Shadakine warriors charge towards you, bellowing a savage battle cry. To your surprise, Urik produces a small boomerang edged with razor-sharp teeth. He wields it with great skill and accuracy. With a stunned cry, the first of the Shadakine falls to the ground, his sword arm severed by Urik's deadly weapon. Two Shadakine remain and you must fight them as one enemy.

Shadakine Warriors:

COMBAT SKILL 18 ENDURANCE 24

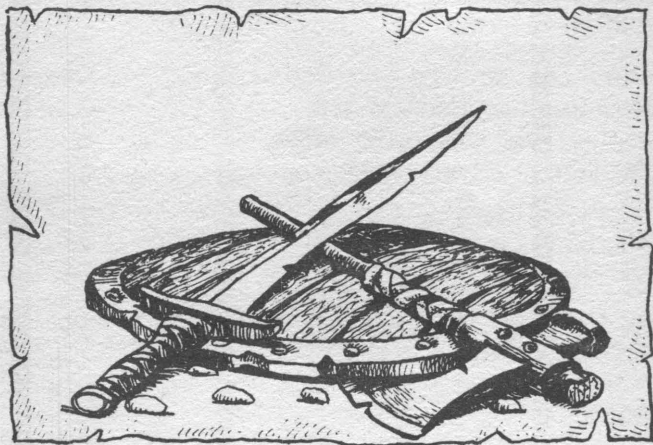
If you win the combat, turn to **82**.

12

Since the swamp region is an infertile place unlikely to yield food, Urik hands you enough Lianor for three Meals. Each tuber counts as one Meal and you store them in your Backpack. As you descend the hill, the air becomes increasingly humid, impairing your breathing. You step on to the mud flat and begin to make your way across. You have travelled no more than a mile when, suddenly, Urik sinks into a bog. With great effort, you manage to pull him free. Another mile or so and it is you who stumbles into a bog. Fortunately, Urik acts quickly and pulls you to safety. Solemnly Urik informs you that the bogs are likely to become more frequent from now on. If you should both become trapped at the same time, there will be no escape.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it to lessen the danger, turn to **67**.

If you do not have this Magical Power or do not wish to use it, turn to **89**.



13-16

13

You leave your state of trance in time to see a large greenish mass of slime and mud rise from the mire. You step back and prepare for combat. The amorphous mass of dead vegetation and trailing creepers is a Swamp Giant and it is hungry for your blood.

Turn to **10**.

14

You locate the glow of the Kazim Stone. There, you encounter the mind of the Shadakine Wytch, intent upon her labours over the Stone – so intent, in fact, that she fails to notice your presence. hovering at the edges of her mind, gauging its power.

Turn to **142**.

15

The answer comes swiftly. A crossbow bolt sings through the air, released by a Shadakine who is hidden by the tall marsh grass. The Ooslo screeches with pain as the bolt penetrates its body.

You, Urik, and the wounded Ooslo drop like a stone towards the murky waters of a shallow lake that is dotted with small sand banks. As you fall, you pray that the water will be deep enough to save you.

Turn to **125**.

16

You are loath to waste time: only ten days remain for you to reach Desolation Valley. Nevertheless, you cannot but wonder just who, or what, could be following you.

The evening draws in and still there is no sign of your pursuer. Urik sights a small grove of trees and suggests that you shelter there for the night.

If you wish to do as Urik suggests, turn to **57**.

If you wish to trap your pursuer before sleeping, turn to **22**.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it to discover the identity of your pursuer, turn to **35**.

17

When you wake, a chill fever grips your body; it is the touch of the Deathgaunt, spreading through your veins like a river of ice. You are too weak to travel any further today and your body is hungry for sleep.

If you possess the Magical Power of Alchemy and have some Azawood leaves in your Herb Pouch, turn to **299**.

If not, turn to **265**.

18

You walk down to the bank of the fast-flowing river. It is not particularly wide, but Samu warns you that its current is swift enough to sweep a man away if due caution is not exercised. He goes first, diving into the river and swimming with long, powerful strokes. Each of you follows in turn.

As you reach the centre of the river, you gasp as the current buffets you and, inadvertently, you swallow some of its brackish water.

19-20

If your ENDURANCE points total is 15 or higher, turn to **62**.

If your ENDURANCE points total is 14 or lower, turn to **70**.

19

The momentum of your attack carries you past the shouting courtiers and through the archway.

If you wish to turn left along the passage outside, turn to **135**.

If you wish to turn right along the same passage, turn to **248**.

20

The path back to the waterway is blocked by the advancing Shadakine and you are forced to enter a dense border of gnarled, lichenous trees, which hamper your movement. Within minutes, the Shadakine are upon you. A large Magdi hound breaks through their ranks and leaps towards you before you are able to unleash an attack with your Staff.

You cannot evade combat with the Magdi and must fight it to the death. Due to the magical powers of their maker, Shasarak, the Magdi have a natural resistance to magic and you must subtract 2 from your COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the combat.

Magdi Hound: COMBAT SKILL 20 ENDURANCE 30

If the combat lasts for more than 4 rounds, turn to **149**.

If you win the combat in less than 4 rounds, turn to **97**.

21

The Shadakine have seen you and are howling into the attack, as you propel the power of your thought towards the Elemental plane. Which Element do you require to aid you?

If you choose Air, turn to **167**.

If you choose Fire, turn to **109**.

If you choose Water, turn to **239**.

If you choose Earth, turn to **244**.

22

'I think we should find out who it is,' you say. 'We'll lay a trap.'

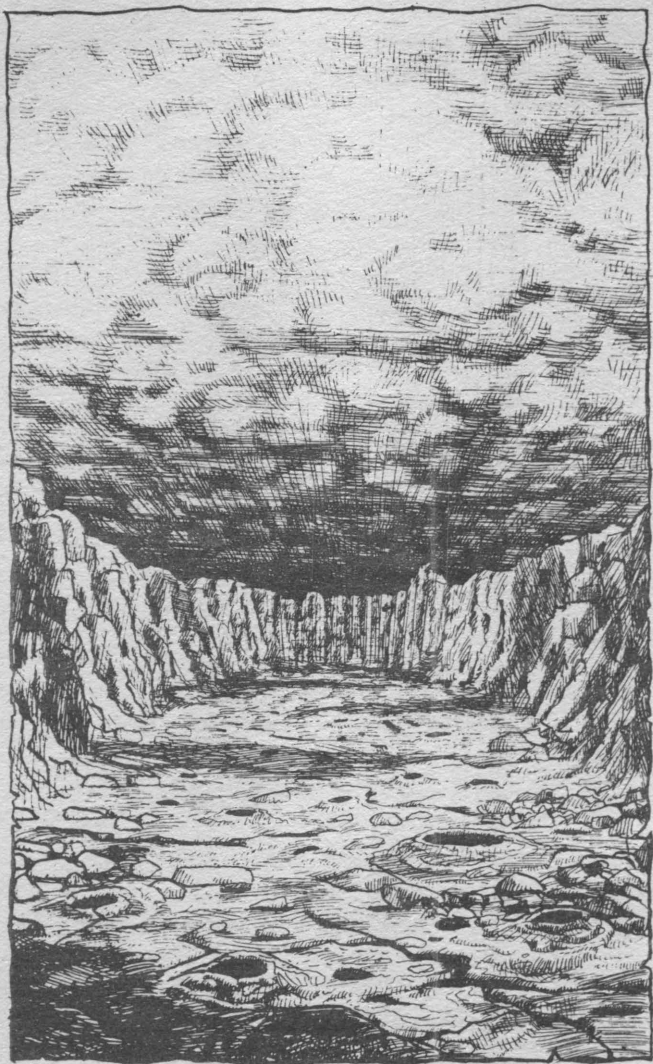
'I am a warrior of the plains,' says Samu. 'This is an easy matter.' You make camp and build a huge fire. As soon as you have done this, Samu leaves, telling you not to move from the grove until he returns.

Dusk gives way to dark, and you and Urik grow more and more apprehensive. Suddenly you hear a strangled cry.

Turn to **60**.

23 — *Illustration III (overleaf)*

The passage eventually opens on to the Mountains of Morn. It is night and a full moon shines brightly in the sky. Below is the barren expanse of Desolation Valley: a vast wasteland of melted rock and craters. The plain is covered with pot-holes, and, as the wind blows across them, they sigh like a tortured soul moaning at the mountains. 'How long has the full moon shone?' you ask Urik.



III. The barren expanse of Desolation Valley. A vast wasteland of melted rock and craters

'I know not,' he says. 'but Shadow Gate very near. Down below ground.' Without hesitation, you begin to sprint across the plain and Urik follows. Gone is all your weariness and fatigue now that you are near your goal. The pot-holes lead downwards but there are hundreds of them; which way should you go?

Suddenly, a gruesome sight slithers from one of these holes. Its long, snaking body is bone white and skeletal; but its pale eyes, without pupils, reveal a deadly malice, a blind evil. It is a Scree Wym and it is slithering towards you.

If you wish to fight the Scree Wym, turn to **273**.

If you wish to evade combat, turn to **243**.

24

Your Sorcery has no effect on the Deathgaunt. The creature's body is formed in the spirit world and is invulnerable to your attacks.

Turn to **169**.

25

Cautiously, you follow the winding course of the waterway. Your nerves are racked with tension as you hear the Shadakine beating at the tall marsh grass. The Magdi hounds have been unable to pick up your scent and Urik's animal cunning ensures that you remain hidden from them. The terrain lends itself to easy concealment and soon the frustrated cries of the Shadakine fade into the distance.

Turn to **252**.

26

Samu throws the door shut and Hugi, with his vast knowledge of locks, triggers the door lock with one of the many strange tools he carries for that purpose. The passage winds on for many miles and soon you have lost all sense of direction, and can no longer tell whether you are travelling towards the Mountains of Morn or away from them. Finally, the passage ends and a secret hatch opens on to the balcony of an ornate building. The balcony overlooks a vast hall where you witness a strange sight.

An old man in tattered ermine robes sits upon a broken throne, surrounded by a bizarre gathering of people. Two guards in rusty armour stand either side of him as the ragged assembly of mad courtiers dances a stately pavane without music. Two stairways lead from either side of the balcony into the hall and these are the only exits; it is impossible to walk down these stairs without being seen.

If you wish to walk down the stairs, turn to **284**.

If you wish to charge through the strange court and try to fight your way out, turn to **87**.

27

You are weak with exhaustion, your strength is waning, and you have taken a number of small but painful wounds all over your body. You stumble but Samu bears you up, and you are rushed through the archway and into the passage beyond.

If you wish to turn left along the passage, turn to **135**.

If you wish to turn right, turn to **248**.

28

The shrill sound of exotic bird song rouses you from your light, uncomfortable slumber, and the red stain of the morning sun regards you balefully. Your body is a mass of insect bites and you have lost 2 ENDURANCE points due to the assault of vampiric Blood Nymphs. Urik has also suffered and, for the first time since you have known him, displays an ill-tempered frown.

You continue your journey and, by late afternoon, you have left the peril of the swamplands behind. You now stand at the northern edge of the Gurlu Marshes. Gleaming in the distance you glimpse the faint outline of the city of Karnali, overlooking the sparkling waters of the Suhni River.

Turn to **204**.

29

Sustaining your staff's energy against the Kazim light costs you 1 WILLPOWER point. You must attempt to master the Kazim light through the force of your will to prevent its owner from exerting her will over the Shadakine.

If you wish to use 2 WILLPOWER points, expending a total of 3 WILLPOWER points this turn, turn to **112**.

If you wish to use 3 WILLPOWER points, expending a total of 4 WILLPOWER points this turn, turn to **136**.

If you wish to use 4 WILLPOWER points, expending a total of 5 WILLPOWER points this turn, turn to **219**.

You turn and run in the opposite direction, following Urik, who takes great care to skirt the edges of the bog that held you so recently. Unaware of the lurking peril, the Shadakine swordsman blunders forward and immediately sinks in the bog. You hear him shouting frantically for help as you press on anxiously.

Urik leads as you trace the winding course of a shallow waterway that cuts through the tall grass. An unnatural howl sounds from somewhere behind you; it is the chilling call of the Magdi, the monstrous two-headed hounds created by the Wytch-king Shasarak. You keep to the line of the waterway in the hope that it will disguise your scent from the Magdi hunting dogs, and try to put as much distance between them and yourself as possible.

Turn to **156**.

31 – *Illustration IV*

The Warward's mind is already weak with fear and it is a simple matter to exert your power over his brain and grip it with a murderous compulsion. Suddenly, the Warward walks towards the Shadakine Wytch, unable to resist the desire to slay that you have placed in his mind.

Before the Wytch can resist, the Warward strangles her to death. Immediately the light of the Kazim Stone is extinguished and the Shadakine warriors before the fortress falter. With a jubilant cry, the soldiers of the Freedom Guild charge forwards.

Turn to **48**.



IV. The Warward walks towards the Shadakine Wytch, unable to resist the desire to slay

32

Urik and Samu volunteer to hunt out some wild game in order to collect enough food for the remainder of your journey.

Pick a number from the *Random Number Table*.

If the number you have picked is 0-3, turn to **106**.

If the number you have picked is 4-6, turn to **217**.

If the number you have picked is 7-9, turn to **173**.

33

You have been severely weakened by your combat with the madmen and lack the strength to escape from the throne room as fast as your companions. As you fall behind, the mad courtiers leap upon you. They are vicious and unrelenting in their attack and before Samu can help you, you have been torn to pieces by the howling mob.

Your life and quest end here.

34

Within the vision in your mind, you point towards the Element of Fire and, crackling with energy, it moves forwards. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 3 WILLPOWER points.

You open your eyes to see the Shadakine moving into position at the edge of the lake. The Shadakine who leads them is shouting instructions as they load their crossbows and prepare to attack. Unsuspecting, they take aim, failing to notice the smoke that is rising behind them.

Then before a single bolt has been released, a startled Shadakine breaks cover, leaping to his feet and slapping maniacally at his clothes. Within seconds he is wreathed in flames and the uniforms of his comrades have begun to smoulder. Desperately, one of the Shadakine hurls himself into the lake and immediately, the Eijalfish speeds towards him. Urik does not wait to see the outcome of this encounter and dives into the waters of the lake, splashing out towards the farther shore. Without hesitation you follow his example, the sound of the screaming Shadakine ringing in your ears.

You reach dry land and scramble out of the water. A fearful howl crosses the lake and your blood runs cold. Urik cocks his head to one side. 'They have fierce Magdi hounds, their hunting dogs,' he says. He points to a shallow waterway that winds its way through the tall grass. 'We move now. Keep to water. Hide scent. Come!' You both move off, stepping cautiously along the channel.

Turn to **25**.

35

Whoever is following bears you no malice. You sense that you have encountered this person before but the meeting must have been very brief, since you cannot identify him. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 1 WILLPOWER point.

You stop and make camp in the grove of trees as Urik suggested. Samu volunteers to scout out the area to make sure that you are not attacked in the night and

36-37

he has been gone only a few minutes when you hear a strangled cry.

Turn to **60**.

36

At the cost of 3 WILLPOWER points, the Shadakine fortress erupts into flames, sending Shadakine warriors rushing from their barracks into the street.

Turn to **207**.



37

You walk along the west passage. It rises steadily and eventually opens into a small cave. Beneath the light of the full moon you see miles and miles of contorted rock. It looks as if it has been melted in a furnace. You find the skeletal remains of several bodies but as you lift a skull to examine it, it crumbles to dust in your hand.

You search the cave and find a Silver Knife. You may

keep this Special Item, which can be worn on your belt. (Remember to mark it on your *Action Chart*.) You head back along the passage until you come to the circular cavern once more.

If you wish to take the passage leading east, turn to **46**.

If you wish to take the passage leading north, turn to **23**.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it, turn to **64**.

38

The room is dark and empty. You can see no other way out of the throne room and turn to leave.

‘Wait!’ says Hugi, suddenly. ‘I thought . . . yes, I’m sure . . .’

‘What’s up?’ asks Urik. ‘Thief go mad too?’

Hugi traces a line with his finger along a panel in the wall behind the throne. Suddenly, the panel swivels to reveal a passage leading down. ‘I thought as much,’ he grins. ‘The gap looked too wide; it reminded me of the Great Tomb of Naugorin, far to the east in the Shuri Mountains.’

Before Hugi launches into a long dissertation on his past criminal conquests, you step forward. ‘Into the passage,’ you order and, dutifully, they all file in.

Turn to **168**.

39

Hugi selects a key and opens the door with consummate ease. The room is full of shadows but, as your eyes adjust to the light, you see a huddle of people

40-42

crouched in the corner. They are gnawing on a large bone. They seem frightened by your appearance, Suddenly the largest of them stands, screams a frantic cry and runs straight at you.

Wildman: COMBAT SKILL 14 ENDURANCE 20

If you win the combat, turn to **259**.

40

You seize the chance to slip away and, turning down a side street, you and Urik leave the battle far behind you. However, almost immediately, you are forced to stop. At the end of the street stands a tall, shadowy figure, a huge broadsword in his hand.

Turn to **211**.

41

You are taken to a building that might once have been a temple. Here, the ragged crowd throws you into a deep pit. You are now in total darkness.

If, at the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point, you wish to make a light from your Staff, turn to **307**.

If you do not, turn to **150**.

42

You almost succeed. But, as the Shadakine step back, looking ready to break and run, and Sado's brave army of freedom fighters charge forward, the Shadakine Wytch tightens her grip over the minds of her countrymen and they hold their ground. Shifting emotions of fear, anger and frenzy contort their snarling features. The use of this spell has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

As the line of freedom fighters collides with that of the Shadakine warriors you give a smile. The Freedom Guild are superb soldiers, and despite the power of the Shadakine Wytch, the strength of their charge punches a great hole on the Shadakine defence.

Turn to **48**.

43

The wall of fire glows more brightly, for a moment only, before returning to its normal intensity. The use of this power has cost you 1 WILLPOWER point.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it, turn to **201**.

If you wish to fire at the wall of flame with your Staff, turn to **117**.

If you wish to walk through the wall of fire, turn to **240**.

44

A crossbow bolt flashes through the air, heading straight for you, but your Shield of Sorcery deflects it and you are unharmed.

The Ooslo bird is flying lower now, as it approaches its nesting place in the Gurlu Swamp. As soon as you are flying low enough to jump to the ground, Urik tells you to untie the vine that is knotted around you. You do as he asks and you both fall to the ground, tumbling through a swathe of marsh grass, which cushions your landing. Sitting up, Urik gives the Ooslo bird a comic wave as it continues, unheeding, back to its nest.

45-46

'Shadakine near. We go now,' Urik states. Immediately, he breaks into a stumbling trot, following the course of a shallow waterway that cuts through the tall marsh grass. A few minutes later, a chilling howl stops you dead in your tracks: the Shadakine have hunting dogs, the terrible Magdi hounds. As you move away once more, you keep to the waterway in an effort to hide your scent.

Turn to **25**.

45

Growing beside a small pool of murky water, you notice the yellow flowers of a Karmo bush. If you possess an empty vial, you may squeeze the clear liquid that is contained within the buds of the flower into the vial. This potion, when taken before combat, will double your ENDURANCE and WILLPOWER point totals for the duration of the combat. However, the side effects of the Karmo potion can be fatal. After taking the potion you must pick a number from the *Random Number Table*. The number that you pick equals the number of ENDURANCE points that you lose due to the side effects (0 = zero).

Turn to **71**.

46

You follow the dingy passage as it wends its way through the slate grey rock. Soon, you reach a wider cavern, where the ceiling is much higher. In the faint glow of a swarm of mineflies, you make out a staircase that ascends to the surface. Shafts of moonlight shine down the stairwell, twinkling on the wet stone steps. By the stairs you notice a large sack propped against the wall.

If you wish to examine the sack, turn to **233**.

If you wish to ignore the sack, you can climb the stairs to the surface, turn to **245**.

47

To your frustration, the wind begins to blow but gently – the Elementals have misunderstood your need. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

If you wish to try again, return to **290** and choose a different Element.

If you have the Magical Power of Enchantment and would prefer to use it, turn to **139**.

48

You totter on unsteady feet. Your struggles have made you feel faint with exhaustion. A strong hand grips your shoulder to steady you. You look up and see Samu, the giant warrior that you freed from the slave train of the Shadakine, outside the walls of Karnali. He has joined the Freedom Guild it seems. 'Are you all right?' he asks.

You nod. 'I will be.'

'Then I must away,' says Samu, drawing his massive broadsword and brandishing it in the air. 'The Shadakine filth must be purged from the face of the world!' He speaks with a terrible vehemence, as if he would be happy to complete the whole task himself. He then turns and lopes towards the Shadakine with an easy, athletic stride.

Turn to **133**.

Although the Wytch's attention is concentrated elsewhere, your initial assault on her mind proves unsuccessful: the power of the Kazim Stone protects her. Now, completely alerted to the peril that threatens her, she wrenches her attention away from the warriors at the fortress and focuses all her powers, and those of the Kazim Stone, upon you. At once, the morale of the Shadakine warriors sinks and they flee in confusion. With a cheer, the men of the Freedom Guild move forward to storm the fortress but you barely notice them, for you are now locked into a duel of wills with the Shadakine Wytch. A crimson haze fills the sky where the forces of the Mind Gem and the Kazim Stone clash.

The combined WILLPOWER score of the Wytch and the Stone is 40. Add together your current ENDURANCE and WILLPOWER scores and subtract this total from 40.

If your final score is 15 or higher, turn to **205**.

If your final score is 14 or lower, turn to **280**.



50

You leave the city far behind, as you and Urik struggle to match the pace of the giant's long stride. You head north for the Belzar River, which traces a westerly course towards the Mountains of Morn and the infamous dead lands. By the time you reach the river, night is upon you and you are nearly asleep on your feet. You tell the giant that you are too exhausted to continue and he stops to allow you to make camp. He has a supply of food which he shares with you before you fall into a deep sleep by the gentle lapping of the waters of the Belzar River.

The following morning, you continue on your journey. The Belzar Hills on the far side of the river seem to frown upon you as you pass and you are troubled by a gnawing doubt. Urik seems to share this doubt and he continually looks over his shoulder with an anxious expression on his face. When you stop at midday to rest, you voice your doubt to your companions.

'There is a simple explanation,' says Samu, confidently. 'We are being followed.'

You dart a startled look at Urik. 'I think Samu speak truth,' he says.

If you wish to lie in wait and ambush whoever is following you, turn to **22**.

If you wish to press on, turn to **16**.

51

Inside the vision of your mind, you point towards the being that represents the Element of Earth. Slowly, it lurnbers forward as if its body is too heavy for the

strength of its limbs. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

You open your eyes and see that the Shadakine have reached the edge of the lake. The officer in command is shouting orders as the warriors take cover, loading and priming their weapons and preparing to fire. There is no sign of the Earth Elemental and, fearfully, you reflect on the notorious stupidity of Earth Elementals.

If you decide that the Earth Elemental will fail, and have the Magical Power of Sorcery and wish to create a Shield of Sorcery about yourself to deflect the arrows of the Shadakine, turn to **226**.
If not, turn to **56**.

52

Standing before a crumbling bridge that crosses the left-hand fork of the Belzar River, you gaze, awe-struck, at the desolate city that rests beneath the shadow of the mountains. In your darkest dreams, you have never known a place so eerie and forbidding: the blackened shards of the city walls reach hauntingly into the sky; clumps of black weed grow between pieces of crumbling masonry, and the twisted heights of ancient spires and crippled towers point accusingly at the heavens; an awful gloom hangs in the air and an atmosphere of brooding menace emanates from the heart of the city.

You look at the faces of your brave companions; Urik's wrinkled face, so often creased with laughter, now set in a frown; the hard countenance of brave

Samu, the sundered king; and the angular, hawkish features of Hugi, whose eyes gleam greedily. You notice how pale they look, almost sickly, and a vague disquiet stirs in the back of your mind.

You approach the bridge and Hugi looks at it, his eyes full of doubt. 'Is it safe?' you ask.

'It's stood here for centuries,' Hugi answers.

The swift-flowing water looks black and uninviting.

If you wish to cross the bridge, turn to **186**.

If you wish to swim across the river, turn to **18**.

53

'I can guarantee your safety when you leave Karnali if you will agree to aid an attack we have planned against the Shadakine garrison of the city,' offers Sado. 'Help us, Grey Star; we need you.'

If you wish to aid Sado in his struggle against the Shadakine, turn to **91**.

If you decide to refuse, turn to **287**.

54

You are standing in a huge cavern. Eyes gleaming greedily, Hugi shoulders past you and runs headlong down the carved stone steps that lead to the cavern floor. 'This must be the place!' he says, excitedly. Immediately, he begins to search the chamber, scrabbling among the rocks and debris and then, with a jubilant cry, he unearths an old and rusty chest. In an instant, he has removed his wallet of thief's tools and, with practised ease, sets about the lock. Swiftly, he masters the challenge, flicking open the lid with a

55-56

hungry look. His face drops. 'Books!' he snarls contemptuously.

You walk over to his side and peer down at the leather-bound tomes. A closer examination reveals a shocking surprise.

Turn to **103**.

55

Drawing on the magical energy of the Astral plane, you hurl your power against the Kazim light that shines above the heads of the advancing Shadakine warriors. At first, you throw 1 WILLPOWER point against it, but this challenge serves only to attract attention to yourself and the Shadakine Wytch immediately sends the full power of the Kazim Stone against you. The numbing blast that washes through your mind loses you 8 WILLPOWER points but because the Wytch has diverted the power of the Kazim Stone away from the warriors the morale of the Shadakine is severely shaken and, with a cheer, the men of the Freedom Guild move forward to storm the fortress.

If you have survived the initial blast of the Kazim Stone, turn to **141**.

56

The Earth Elemental does not come in time. A volley of quarrels flies towards you, ripping into your flesh and inflicting terrible wounds.

Your quest is over. When the Earth Elemental does eventually arrive, he takes you down into the cold dark earth of his home – your final resting place.

57

You make camp in the small grove of trees. Samu scouts the area to make sure that your pursuer is not lurking nearby. Suddenly, you hear a strangled cry.

Turn to **60**.

58

Several minutes pass. With familiar tardiness, the Earth Elemental obeys your summons and the ground beneath the fortress begins to tremble. Great blocks of masonry tumble to the ground, driving the Shadakine from their barracks and out into the street. You have used 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **207**.

59

Now you must run to keep away from their deadly touch. Fortunately, the Deathgaunts are unable to move quickly and you are able to create some distance between them and yourselves, but you are weary from past assaults, and soon find yourself stumbling and staggering through the grey dust of the dead plain. You trip and fall, exhausted, but Samu sweeps you up in his strong arms.

For a full day, Samu carries you but, despite his enormous strength, eventually he, too, becomes too tired to continue. Panting for breath, he sets you down before collapsing to the ground. Hugi estimates that you are now only a day away from the Forbidden City.

If you wish to go without sleep and continue traveling through the night, turn to **129**.

(continued over)

If you have the Magical Power of Evocation and wish to use it to protect yourself while you sleep, turn to **137**.

If you have the Magical Power of Alchemy and a remaining Azawood leaf, turn to **138**.

60 — *Illustration V*

Samu enters the grove of trees. Held in a headlock, and gurgling pleas for release, is a scrawny-looking man, dressed in a leather jerkin and bright scarlet breeches. Immediately you recognize him as the thief who tried to steal your money in the cavern of the Freedom Guild. 'What are you doing here? State your purpose?' you say, leaping to your feet. The thief lets out a long gurgle by way of reply.

'What are you doing here?' you repeat, angrily. Samu tightens his grip on the thief's neck.

'Being . . . strangled!' he squawks, clawing desperately at the thick arm around his neck.

You give Samu a nod and the brawny giant releases his grip. The thief collapses to the floor in an untidy heap, choking for breath and rubbing his bruised throat. Urik chortles with laughter. 'Get up!' you command.

The thief staggers to his feet, an indignant expression on his face as he brushes the dust from his clothes. 'What have you got to say for yourself, thief?' you ask.

'I am Hugi of Suhn,' he says, haughtily.

'Was it you who tried to rob me in Karnali?'

'For that oversight I apologize, Master Wizard,' he says, barely disguising the smirk on his hawkish face.



V. Held in a headlock is a scrawny man, the thief from the cavern of the Freedom Guild

'If I had known that you were bound for the Forbidden City, I would have offered my services at once.'

'How came you by that information?' you snap angrily.

'I . . . er . . . listened at the door after Sado sent me out,' he replies innocently.

'Shall I kill the spy now?' asks Samu, menacingly.

'Spy? – Spy?' Hugi chokes. 'I am no spy. I am the greatest thief in all Karnali! What need have I for spying?'

'You not very good at picking Grey Star's pocket,' Urik points out.

'Nevertheless,' says Hugi, testily. 'Thief I am. Spy I am not.'

'That still does not explain why you are following us. Why should the Forbidden City interest you?'

'Ahhh!' sighs Hugi, 'the Forbidden City! Legends speak of priceless treasures – remnants of the ancient people who once lived there. But I have found none who dared go there. When I heard that you were bound for the City of the Dead, I chose to follow. Then, this great brute stepped out of nowhere and tried to strangle me to death.'

Samu glares at Hugi. 'Shall I kill him now?' bellows the giant, eagerly. Hugi steps back in alarm.

'No, wait. Hugi, what do you know of our quest – whom do you serve?' you ask.

'I know nothing of any quest and I serve no man but

myself. All I ask is that you allow me to accompany you to the Forbidden City. I am not unskilled in my own small way,' he sniffs, immodestly.

'If he is half as good as he thinks, he could be useful,' comments Urik.

'Yes, and if he is a spy, we daren't let him go, though I'll not kill a man for the sake of a suspicion. You're coming with us, Hugi.' Broadly, the thief begins to smile. 'And Samu, if he tries to escape . . . break one of his legs.' Samu grins ferociously as Hugi's face drops.

Turn to **214**.

61

Before you can fire your Staff again, the Magdi lunges at you. You attempt to parry the beast's charge with your Staff but its weight and the momentum of its attack hurl you to the ground. You thank the gods that there is only one of them to contend with as you grapple with the enraged animal. The Magdi's jaws snap dangerously close to your throat but you twist your body away and leap to your feet.

You cannot evade combat, and must fight the creature to the death. Due to the Magdi's resistance to magic, you must subtract 2 from your COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the combat.

Magdi: COMBAT SKILL 20 ENDURANCE 30

If the combat lasts for more than 5 rounds, turn to **149**.

If you win the combat in 5 rounds or less, turn to **271**.

62

The water is poisonous and, as it affects your body, you panic and begin to sink. Hugi and Urik have already reached the other side but, as soon as Samu sees you struggling, he strikes out towards you. With strong hands he grabs your robe and pulls you to the surface. Panting and gasping for breath, he hurls you to the safety of the river bank and slowly you crawl up the bank. The water you have swallowed has cost you 2 ENDURANCE points. Suddenly, Urik gives a cry 'Samu!'

You turn in time to see Samu's flailing arms disappear beneath the surface of the water. You are stunned and dismayed. He disappears completely from sight, swept away by the waters of the poisonous Belzar River.

With tears in your eyes, you walk in silence towards the walls of the Forbidden City.

Turn to **124**.

63

You cast 2 WILLPOWER points into the Red Jewel in an effort to control the Deathgaunt. But the Deathgaunt's mind is not its own; it is being commanded from a point outside this world and the sinister spectre advances.

Turn to **169**.

64

At the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point, your Magical Power of Prophecy tells you that the north passage leads out of the tunnel complex and on to the plain of Desolation Valley.

If you wish to take the passage leading north, turn to **23**.

If you wish to take the passage leading east, turn to **46**.

65

As the creature dies, its body melts away, leaving only a pile of mud and filth that once gave it form. Urik gives a shout of congratulation and you nod in acknowledgement; you are too tired to talk.

If you wish to continue with your previous use of the Power of Prophecy, turn to **165**.

If you do not, turn to **71**.

66 — *Illustration VI (overleaf)*

Within the darkness of a dream, you hear a voice whispering; it is calling your name, over and over again. Glowing with a sickly light, the figure of a man stands like a sinister vision. His face obscured by shadow. His grey robe is tattered and torn; his long bony claw-like fingers are covered by charred, black flesh. He points a crooked finger at you. 'You will fail. Your power does not suffice. This fool's errand is to no end.'

'NO!' you shout into the emptiness.

'Turn aside, Grey Star. Turn aside. You dare not stand against me.' The grim figure casts aside his hood and the shadow passes to a blood-red light, revealing a hideous face. Half of the face is missing and, in its place, a metal plate gives shape to the ruined visage of wasted flesh and scarred tissue. One eye is shrunken and sightless, while the other burns with the intensity of the sun. A gaze of unbearable

67-68

malice focuses on your heart. 'Desist, Wizard – or I will rend the very soul from your body.'

'I will not!' you scream into the darkness. A look of rage contorts his twisted features and the single eye burns into you. You are looking upon the face of Shasarak, Wytch-king of Shadaki, who has come to taunt and torment you as you sleep.

'You fear me now, foolish child, and you think that you have mastered fear. I will teach you the true meaning of terror. I will make you yearn for death as if it were your true love!' Shasarak raises his clawed, decaying hand and clutches his fingers in the air: 1 WILLPOWER point is drawn effortlessly from your body.

You wake up screaming.

Turn to **291**.

67

By sustaining a trance, you will be able to predict the location of the bogs and quicksand before you come across them. A prolonged trance will cost you 4 WILLPOWER points. If, for some reason, you have to break your trance before you have crossed the swamps, and you wish to use the spell again in order to continue you will need to use a further 4 WILLPOWER points.

If you wish to use the Power of Prophecy, turn to **79**.

If you do not, turn to **89**.

68

You draw more energy into the Shield, restoring it to its former strength at a cost of 1 WILLPOWER point, but



VI. A gaze of unbearable malice focuses on your heart: you look upon Shasarak, Wytch-king of Shadaki

69-70

there is no third volley, only an unnerving silence. The Eijalfish is joined by another, and together they begin to circle the islet.

You are trapped without food or supplies and the Shadakine seem content to wait it out. As the sun begins to set, you hear the sound of movement from the direction of the Shadakine.

If you wish to fire in the direction of the movement, turn to **223**.

If you would prefer to attack the Eijalfish, turn to **258**.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it, turn to **147**.

If you would prefer to wait for nightfall, turn to **102**.

69

Uselessly, it begins to rain. The use of the Magical Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

If you wish to try again, return to **290** and choose a different Element.

If you have the Power of Enchantment and would prefer to use it, turn to **139**.

70

The water is poisonous and the shock, as the poison runs swiftly through your system, throws you into confusion. You are already weak from your exertions and unable to resist the strong current. Before Samu is able to swim back and attempt to rescue you, you have sunk to the bottom of the river.

Your life and your quest end here.

71

The atmosphere is heavy and humid, and it is hard to breathe. The effort of walking causes you to lose 1 ENDURANCE point as your lungs labour against the damp, cloying air. The sun begins to set and the exhausted state of your body requires that you stop to rest for the night even though you are still within the confines of the swamp. Urik locates a bare, dry hillock and you stop there for the night. The air is alive with nocturnal insects and among them, to your dismay, you notice the distinct vermilion bodies of winged Blood Nymphs.

If you have the Magical Power of Alchemy, turn to **121**.

If you do not, turn to **28**.



72

The Deathgaunt looks on as you usher your three companions within the protection of the pentacle. You possess no Magical Power capable of damaging

73-74

this creature, for its body is not of the real world; your Wizard's staff cannot help you here. You remain within the pentacle and continue to chant the warding words of Evocation. Eventually, with a whispered cry of frustration, the Deathgaunt dematerializes.

You press on through the barren wilderness, more anxious than ever to reach your goal. The Deathgaunt has given up its attack for now but it is not destroyed and could return at any time. That night, with the Black Mountains of Morn looming above you, you stop to make camp.

If you possess the Magical Power of Alchemy and have some Azawood leaves in your Herb Pouch, turn to **299**.

If not, turn to **265**.

73

Walking along the dusty street, a sudden prickling sensation at the back of your neck warns you that danger lurks nearby. You feel as if a hundred pairs of eyes are watching your every move.

If you possess the Magical Power of Prophecy, and wish to use it, turn to **231**.

If you do not possess this Power or do not wish to use it, turn to **116**.

74

You give Urik a nod and then dive into the water, swimming with all your might away from the Shadakine. A flurry of quarrels slices the water around you. Unharméd, you splash to the water's edge, grateful to be moving into the cover of the tall reeds that line the bank.

Panting for breath, both you and Urik run, half-crouched, through the undergrowth. A desperate chase begins as the Shadakine leave their hiding places and start to run after you. Urik leads the way, running along a shallow waterway that cuts through the tall marsh grass like a path. From behind, the chilling howl of hounds reaches your ears. Urik stops briefly and turns to you. 'They have hunting dogs, terrible Magdi Hounds. We move slow and quiet now – keep to water – hide scent. I am old Kundi – cannot run,' he wheezes, the hint of an apology in his voice.

Stealthily, you both creep away with all the speed you can muster.

Turn to **25**.

75

You leave the city by the north gate. Here the Suhni River and the Belzar River meet. By following the Belzar River west, you will come directly to the Mountains of Morn and the Forbidden City of Gyanima. You set off.

You have travelled only a short way when you see a tall figure running towards you at great speed. It is Samu and you stop to wait for him.

'You go to the Mountains?' he asks, pointing to the west. You tell him that this is so. 'Once, I was king of a great tribe – the Masbaté nomads of the Great Lissan Plain. Now, I am the only survivor. The Wytch-king saw the end of my people. The Shadakine fought and hounded us across the plains in their great chariots, led by the evil Wytch-king. Long we resisted him, but what use are swords and spears and brave warriors

against the black arts? A great plague of demons sealed our doom. Shasarak has deprived me of my family and my people.'

He looks at you with smouldering eyes. 'I will come with you. You will have need of strength as well as bravery. You have mine.'

Turn to **81**.

76 – *Illustration VII*

Urik gives you a look of bewilderment. You nod confidently, as if you know exactly what you are doing. The bizarre procession of madmen and mad women moves at a stately pace through the wide archway that leads from the throne room. Samu looks as solemn as ever but Hugi's face wears an expression of astonishment. You enter a dim, candle-lit hall dominated by a long table. Rats scuttle across the table, running for their bolt holes as the assemblage enters the room. You sit down and wait to see what happens next. 'Dinner is served,' announces a gaunt, grey-faced servant. A limping, squeaking, three-wheeled trolley is pushed into the room. At the far end of table, the deranged king moistens his lips with his coated tongue and tucks the table cloth into the top of his torn silk shirt. The tarnished silver dish is uncovered and a wave of revulsion churns your stomach: on the silver platter is a hideous array of human limbs.

The king stands up, brandishing a rusty carving knife. 'Would you like an arm or a leg?' he enquires innocently.

If you wish to accept, turn to **108**.



VII. The deranged king prepares to dine

77-78

If you wish to refuse, turn to **220**.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it to help you make your choice, turn to **281**.

77

The wretches fight with each other in a contest to be the first to leave. Once they have slain one of their kind they rush through the door. Outside, the street is now full of wretches and you scour the room to try to find another exit.

Turn to **246**.

78 — *Illustration VIII*

Hurriedly, you unfasten the knotted vine. Urik lets out a yell as you both plummet towards the ground at frightening speed. Your fall is broken by the sucking ooze of the marshy ground below but you are still bruised and must lose 2 ENDURANCE points.

Nearby, you can hear the shouts of the Shadakine Warriors as they search for you. You are surrounded by tall reeds and rushes and, for the moment, you are out of sight. You keep very still. The Shadakine are beating at the marsh reeds with large sticks, trying to flush you out. Just as a booted foot passes inches from your face, you suddenly realize that you are sinking.

If you wish to struggle out of the quicksand into which you are being drawn, turn to **115**.

If you would prefer to keep still, at least until the Shadakine have passed, turn to **235**.



VIII. You hide in the tall reeds as the Shadakine seek you out

79

Carefully, Urik leads you along while you sustain a trance state. Your mind is full of a thousand images of future events and you are able to discern which is solid land and which is not until suddenly, a disturbing vision forms in your mind. You see yourself in combat with a terrible monster that has risen from a dark pit.

If you wish to break your trance, turn to **13**.

If you wish to continue as you are, turn to **4**.

80

You begin to chant, scratching the shape of the pentacle into the ground. The Deathgaunt gives a cry of frustration and surges towards you. You feel its frozen touch before the pentacle is fully formed and you lose 4 **ENDURANCE** points. The deadly chill fever drags you into unconsciousness as the Deathgaunt's spell takes effect.

Turn to **66**.

81

Samu sets the pace, reaching forward with great strides to lead you across the gently undulating plain that lies between Karnali and the mountains of the west. The Belzar Hills on the far side of the river cast a shadow across the waters, as though disapproving of your choice of destination.

As the miles slip by, a growing feeling of uneasiness nags at your mind. You notice that Urik is constantly looking over his shoulder, his face clouded with uncertainty. In the afternoon, you stop to rest and you

voice your doubts to Samu and Urik. 'Ah! So you, too, have noticed!' says Samu. 'I felt this just after we set out. I fear we are being followed.' Startled, you flash a look at Urik.

'Me think it true,' he says.

If you wish to lie in wait, to ambush whoever is following you, turn to **22**.

If you wish to continue, turn to **16**.

82

Although you have defeated the Shadakine warriors, the clearing is now full of raging soldiers. Wary of the power of your Staff they avoid further risk to themselves and send in a Magdi. The beast lunges at you, its claws and fangs thirsting for your blood.

Magdi Hound: COMBAT SKILL 20 ENDURANCE 30

If you win the combat, turn to **247**.

83

Stunned by the swiftness of your evasion, the wretch stands back, immobile as you charge into the attack. Add 2 points to your COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the combat, due to the speed of your manoeuvre.

Dead City Wretch: COMBAT SKILL 15 ENDURANCE 25

If you win the combat, turn to **197**.

84

Soon, you are lost in a maze of alleys and side streets, all lined with small buildings. Above are a confusion of criss-crossing walkways.

85-87

If you wish to climb a wooden stair that leads up to one of the walkways, turn to **221**.

If you wish to enter one of the small dwellings, turn to **166**.

85

Urik points to a place directly below him. 'Here,' he says. 'It is here!' There is no way down, other than via the pot-holes. Another Scree Wyrms slithers out of one of the holes and crawls towards you from out of its shadowy lair.

If you have a Rope, turn to **157**.

If you do not have a Rope, turn to **304**.

86

You point towards the Water Elemental and it rolls forward, cascading towards the Earth. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

You open your eyes to see that the water of the lake is starting to boil with activity. The Eijalfish begins to circle in confusion, distressed at the buffeting it is receiving. Urik regards the bubbling water with interest. 'You want to swim?' he asks.

Turn to **74**.

87

You tell your companions of your intention and, at your word, and praying that your bravado will discourage attack, all four of you run down the stairs, yelling and shouting. It is an ill-founded hope. The dancers stop and stare at you with crazed expressions.

The mad guards of the insane king are the first to counter-charge, with the raving courtiers at their back.

Turn to **251**.



88

The Shadakine falls, his body a smouldering ruin and, under the command of their tall, ferocious-looking leader, the Shadakine warriors fall back into the cover of the tall grass. A fearsome howl alerts you to a further danger. Two large hounds, each with two monstrous horned heads, come bounding out of the grass towards you. They are Magdi, hideous creations of the Wytch-king, Shasarak.

Your nerve almost fails you at the sight of these terrifying beasts and you stand transfixed. Then, you hear Urik shout at you: 'We must flee.'

If you wish to stay and fight the Magdi, turn to **123**.

If you would prefer to run, turn to **156**.

89

You labour through the mud and slime, gingerly probing ahead with your Staff as you pass among the rancid pools and dark, sluggish streams.

Pick a number from the *Random Number Table*. If you have the Magic Talisman of the Shianti, add 2 to this number.

If your total is 0-4, turn to **110**.

If your total is 5-11, turn to **100**.

90

'Air!' you shout in the sibilant tongue of the Elementals. At once, a host of Gale Wraiths sweeps across the lake, fanning the flames to white-hot. Eventually they blow out the fire but the massive rise in temperature has burnt both you and Urik to a cinder.

Your life and your quest end here.

91

'I have great need for haste, Sado,' you say, 'but I will help you this night. What must I do?'

A fire lights in Sado's eyes. 'I thank you, Grey Star, in the name of the people of Karnali.'

He tells you of his need for a diversion that will lure the bulk of the Shadakine force outside their walled city fortress. You consider your Magical Powers, trying to decide which would best accomplish this.

If you have the Magical Power of Enchantment and wish to use it, turn to **139**.

If you have the Magical Power of Elementalism and wish to use it, turn to **290**.

If you have the Magical Power of Alchemy and wish to use it, turn to **208**.

92

You run forward along the main street as fast as your legs will carry you. The deserted street is full of old buildings, many of which are still intact. Their strange designs prevent you from guessing their original purpose.

If you wish to enter one of these buildings, turn to **175**.

If you wish to leave the main street in case the summons of the Gatekeeper is answered, turn to **84**.

93

You wake to the sound of exotic bird song. You resume your journey and, by late afternoon, have left the peril of the swamplands far behind. When you reach the northern edges of the Gurlu Marshes, you see, gleaming in the distance, the city of Karnali and the bright waters of the Suhni River.

Turn to **204**.

94

All you find in the banqueting room is a pile of human bones and some rats that are gnawing on them.

If you wish to look for Hugi in the throne room, turn to **306**.

If you wish to leave the palace without Hugi, turn to **127**.

95

All is silent once more. A third volley of bolts does not appear. Fortunately, the Shadakine are unaware that their attacks are weakening your Shield of Sorcery and have decided that further assaults are useless.

An hour passes. Then, from out of the reeds, a large barrel arcs through the air, a dark liquid spurting from holes drilled into the sides. It splashes into the lake. 'What are they up to?' you murmur.

'Who can say?' replies Urik. 'Shadakine have much cunning.' More barrels are thrown into the lake. Gradually, the thick liquid they contain forms a film on the water, reflecting the light of the setting sun, and soon the entire lake is polluted by the black liquid.

Suddenly, a lighted torch sails through the air and as it hits the water, ignites the oily surface, transforming the lake into a raging inferno. You are surrounded by flames and soon your clothes begin to smoulder; you wince as the intense heat sears your flesh. Urik fixes you with a panicked stare, primeval fear of fire twisting his features.

If you have the Magical Power of Elementalism and wish to use it, turn to **210**.

If you wish to attempt to swim under water, turn to **297**.

96

As you remove the Black Rod from the pocket of your robe you feel the latent energy that it contains. This was Shasarak's master key, an instrument of his power when Taklakot was his domain. Your skill enables you to detect that it will open the door.

The use of this Magical Power has cost you 1 WILLPOWER point.

Turn to **148**.

97

As the Magdi falls to the ground dead, you turn and race through the thickening trees with Urik labouring above you, clinging to the branch of a tall tree. He offers you his hand and hauls you up on to the branch. Silently you hide in the tree and watch as the Shadakine dash past. When they are out of sight, Urik gives you a wink and you drop to the ground and head back the way you came. When you return to the clearing there is no sign of the Chaksu.

Turn to **249**.

98

Grimly, you ignore the searing pain in your shoulder and clamber to your feet. Immediately, you are spotted by the Shadakine and a hail of quarrels flies towards you. You slump unconscious to the ground, your heart punctured by one of the many bolts penetrating your body.

Your life and your quest end here.

99

The warrior is amazed when an old beggar carrying a stick comes charging to attack him. He pays you scant regard until your Staff springs into life, shattering the illusion that deceived him. Owing to the surprise of your attack, ignore any ENDURANCE points lost in the first round of combat.

100-102

Shadakine Warrior: COMBAT SKILL 17 ENDURANCE 20

If you win the combat, turn to **40**.

100

The ground ahead, which looks so solid, gives way as you prod it with your Staff. Instinctively you take a step backwards. Ripples cross the surface of the quagmire and it starts to bubble furiously. Suddenly, a huge greenish mass of slime and mud, bedecked with trailing creepers and dead vegetation, rises up out of the pit. You have disturbed a Swamp Giant and now you must fight it!

Turn to **10**.

101

By using the summons of the Chaksu Pipes, you could seek the aid of the mighty Chaksu in fighting the Shadakine. An attack from the swamp would also serve to divert attention away from any action within the city.

If you wish to aid Sado and the Freedom Guild in this way, turn to **222**.

If not, turn to **53**.

102

Sadly you do not live long enough to see the sun set. The source of the movement amongst the Shadakine is a warrior who is creeping into position behind you. As you stare intently ahead, a crossbow bolt thuds into your back, throwing you forwards into the murky green water.

Your life and your quest end here.

103

The cover of the tome is emblazoned with a Shianti rune. A deep dread stirs in your heart as you slowly translate the meaning of the symbol – Shasarak. This symbol can mean but one thing: your mortal enemy, Shasarak the Wytch-king, is a Shianti Master! If you decide to keep the book, mark it on your *Action Chart* as a Backpack Item. At the bottom of the chest you notice a slender Black Rod, with the rune of Shasarak upon its silver tip. If you wish to keep this Black Rod, mark it on your *Action Chart* as a Special Item (which you carry in a pocket of your robe).

Meanwhile, Hugi has busied himself with his search for gold. 'No gold . . . nothing,' he blubbers.

'Come now, we have no time for this, Hugi. Is there another way out of here?'

Disgruntled by the lack of treasure, Hugi ambles to the far side of the cavern and points to an outcrop of rough-hewn granite. 'Here is a door,' he says, 'but it is magic-locked. A problem for you to solve, eh Wizard?'

If you possess the Power of Psychomancy and wish to use it, turn to **170**.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it, turn to **224**.

If you have the Power of Sorcery and possess 3 or more WILLPOWER points to use on the door, turn to **279**.

104

You pass through the archway and into the city. 'Gatekeeper, would you mind holding my horse for me?' asks Hugi, holding out the reins of an imaginary horse. The Gatekeeper accepts the non-existent reins and leads the imaginary horse away. Hugi shrugs. 'Sorry, I couldn't resist it,' he says with a smirk.

You walk along the deserted street, past old buildings, many of which are still intact, although, due to the strangeness of their designs, it is impossible to guess their original purpose.

If you wish to explore one of these buildings, turn to **175**.

If you wish to continue along the main street, turn to **73**.

105

The Magdi leap into action as the quailing slave unchains them. You unleash a mighty blast from your Staff at one of the hounds, knocking the Magdi off its feet but, to your dismay, despite the intensity of your attack the Magdi clambbers snarling to its feet, shaking both heads, as if dazed. The attack has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points. The Magdi have a high resistance to magic.

Meanwhile, the other Magdi continues towards you at an alarming speed, its great drooling jaws thirsting for your flesh. The hound is almost upon you and its muscles coil, ready to leap.

If you wish to stand and fight the Magdi, turn to **61**.

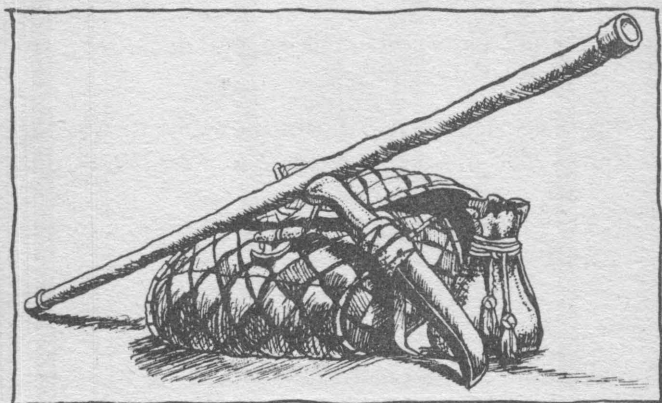
If you prefer to evade the attack, turn to **185**.

106

Samu and Urik do not return until nightfall. You cook the fresh meat they have caught over the fire and, when their catch is shared equally among the party, you find you have enough food for four Meals.

The following morning you enter the region called the dead lands.

Turn to **195**.



107

Your Shield of Sorcery forms around you but its power cannot resist the translucent creature that advances towards you, for it is a Deathgaunt, a creature from the spirit world, raised by the Wytch-king to assail you.

Turn to **169**.

108

With a weak smile, you thank the king. 'Either,' you say with a gulp of dismay. As the nightmare banquet

109-110

continues, you and your companions watch with mounting horror as the court feasts on human flesh.

'We have to get out of here,' whispers Hugi, his face tinged with green.

Having dined to satiety, the king rises. 'And now, dear guests and friends of Gyanima,' he nods in your direction, 'I must retire to my chamber. A good morrow to you all.' The king departs. Soon, the courtiers leave and you make your way from the banquet hall. Now you are alone, you decide to try to find a way out of the palace.

If you wish to return to the throne room, turn to **38**.

If you wish to enter a passage to your left, turn to **184**.

If you wish to enter a passage to your right, turn to **248**.

109

A wall of fire six feet high springs up in front of you; forcing the Shadakine charge to halt abruptly. You beat a hasty retreat while the civilian mob and the Shadakine stare at each other in stunned silence, separated by a widening sheet of flame.

Turn to **9**.

110

The ground certainly felt solid enough when you probed ahead with your Staff but with your next step you are sucked down with great force. You disappear below the surface so quickly that Urik is unable to help you.

Your life is over and your quest ends here.

111

'The land beyond the Mountains of Morn, the region that is called Desolation Valley, was once the heart of a great kingdom, a nation called Taklakot. One day, a mighty wizard came amongst them, and he bore a great gift, so they thought. It was a magical stone which harnessed the fire of the sun. The people of Taklakot grew in knowledge but it was a power gained without wisdom and a great calamity befell them. Somehow, the fire of the Sun stone was released and in a single day an entire race was wiped from the face of the Earth. The barren land you see around you is the result of that fateful day; its curse still lingers.'

'But what of the Forbidden City? Why does it still stand?' asks Samu.

'The mountains that surround the valley held the blast. The Forbidden City, or Gyanima as it was called, stands beyond those mountains. It was built to guard the pass through the mountains and is the only remnant of a dead civilization.' A greedy light gleams in Hugi's eyes. 'The value of its treasures is immeasurable,' he breathes.

Your Shianti training and lifestyle have taught you to place no value on material wealth and you soon lose interest in Hugi's tales of hidden gold. Once more, you ponder the incredible bleakness of the place. You gaze across the Belzar River, and to the hills beyond, and an involuntary shiver runs down your spine. Drifting down from the hills, you see an eerie,

112-113

chilling sight. A ghostly, pallid form floats across the river, its hands outstretched towards you; it whispers with a voice like grating stone.

If you wish to fire a bolt of magical energy from your Staff at the ghostly form, turn to **132**.

If you wish to wait for it to come closer, turn to **209**.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery and wish to use it, turn to **227**.

If you have the Magical Power of Elementalism and wish to use it, turn to **256**.

If you have the Magical Power of Enchantment and wish to use it, turn to **269**.

If you have the Magical Power of Evocation and wish to use it, turn to **295**.

112

The Kazim light begins to falter. The Shadakine Wytch is weakening. Sustaining the challenge against the Kazim light costs you 1 WILLPOWER point.

If you wish to maintain the same level of attack, expending 1 WILLPOWER point altogether this round, turn to **286**.

If you wish to increase your attack by 1 WILLPOWER point, giving a total of 2 WILLPOWER points expended this round, turn to **190**.

If you wish to increase your attack by 2 WILLPOWER points, giving a total of 3 WILLPOWER points expended this round, turn to **253**.

113

The Kleasá does not advance, it is reluctant to leave the defence of the Shadow Gate. Tanith looks out to you with hope in her eyes. You lift your Wizard's Staff

and aim it at the demon shadow, which radiates a strange black light.

Tanith's expression changes to one of horror. 'Grey Star!' you hear her cry, her voice muffled by the proximity of the other world. 'Stay your hand!' The wild fire of your Staff tears towards the Kleasá and, as the bolt of energy hits the creature, it is Tanith who recoils in pain. Somehow, the Kleasá is making Tanith the victim of its pain. The Kleasá emits a chilling laugh full of scorn.

If you wish to attack the Kleasá with the Magical Power of Sorcery, turn to **122**.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery and possess the Mind Gem, turn to **143**.

If you have the Black Rod of Shasarak and wish to use it, turn to **229**.

114

You fall to the ground, unconscious. Your efforts have tested your body to the limit and you have lost a further 8 ENDURANCE points due to mental and physical exhaustion.

If you are still alive, turn to **8**.

115

Your struggling only causes you to sink deeper into the mire. Urik reaches out with his long tail and loops it around your Wizard's Staff. He pulls hard as you cling to the Staff with both hands. 'No struggle,' Urik whispers. 'Relax and quicksand let you free. If you resist, quicksand drag you harder.' You do as he says and, immediately, you stop sinking. Within minutes, Urik is able to grab your hand, and soon you are free.

116-118

Before you can thank Urik, you hear a loud cry. 'There they are!' A crossbow bolt whistles past your face – you have been seen by the Shadakine hunters.

If you wish to turn to face your enemy, turn to **163**.
If you would rather evade them, turn to **283**.

116

Suddenly, a wild, dirt-encrusted man, clothed in tatters of dusty rags, jumps on you from the roof of a small building to your left, sending you sprawling to the floor in a cloud of black dust. With an animal howl, he attempts to tear out your throat with his bare teeth.

Owing to the surprise of the wretch's attack, subtract 2 from your COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the fight.

Dead City Wretch:

COMBAT SKILL 15 ENDURANCE 25

If you win the combat turn to **197**.

117

You decide to fight fire with fire and hurl a bolt of flaming energy at the wall of fire. Your attack is ineffective: the wall of flame neither flickers nor wavers. You have expended 2 WILLPOWER points in your attack. (Remember to make the necessary adjustment to your *Action Chart*.)

Turn to **240**.

118

Hidden in the tall marsh reeds, a Shadakine takes careful aim and fires a crossbow bolt at you. The

Ooslo screeches with pain as the bolt penetrates its body. It is a deadly wound and you fall like a stone, hurtling towards a shallow lake that is dotted with small sand banks. You pray that the water is deep enough to contain your fall.

Turn to **125**.

119

At the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point you concentrate on the future. You perceive that there are four humans in the building and that one of them is ready to pounce. If you wish to enter this building, you may add 2 to your COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the fight that is sure to follow.

If you wish to enter the building, turn to **39**.

If you wish to continue down the main street, turn to **116**.

120

'Old Kundi have idea,' says Urik, suddenly. He produces a small hollow sphere of metal, which is attached to a short metal chain. 'Give me Azawood leaf!' he demands. He places the Azawood leaf inside the hollow sphere and asks you to light it with your Staff. As the smoke of the slow-burning leaf begins to drift up from holes in the sphere, he whirls the ball above his head. You see his plan, recalling that, with a similar device, the Kundi men saved you from certain death when the Cave Mantiz attacked you in the cloud forest of the Azanam.

Urik steps outside the circle of protection and begins to advance on the Deathgaunts. Immediately, they

121-122

step back in fear of the cloud of smoke that Urik is carrying towards them. As they retreat, Urik breaks into a shambling run and plunges into their midst. With a fearful moan, the Deathgaunts fade and Urik shouts in triumph.

You have used 3 WILLPOWER points through the use of Evocation, and one Azawood leaf. Adjust your *Action Chart* accordingly.

Turn to **129**.

121

Before sleeping, you hunt out a Yabari bush. When pounded into an ointment and smeared into the skin, its roots are a potent protection against insect bites. Eventually, despite the half light of the gloaming, you find a Yabari and set about making the ointment. When you have finished, you take the ointment back to Urik and you both cover yourselves thoroughly before settling down to sleep.

Turn to **93**.

122

The Kleasá remains within the Shadow Gate, for its purpose is to guard it. Tanith gazes out at you with a tormented expression on her face. Using 2 WILLPOWER points, you throw the Power of your Sorcery at the shadow creature. Tanith staggers with a mute cry. 'No, Grey Star!' she screams. 'The Kleasá is using me as a shield.' The Kleasá laughs maliciously.

If you have the Mind Gem and wish to use it, turn to **143**.

If you have the Black Rod of Shasarak and wish to use it, turn to **229**.

123

The Magdi leap at you, their fangs and claws seeking your vulnerable throat. You cannot evade combat and must fight the Magdi as one enemy. Due to the magical skills of their maker, Shasarak, the Magdi have a strong resistance to magic. You must therefore subtract 2 from your COMBAT SKILL for the duration of the fight.

Magdi Hounds: COMBAT SKILL 25 ENDURANCE 35

If you win the combat, turn to **177**.

124 — *Illustration IX (overleaf)*

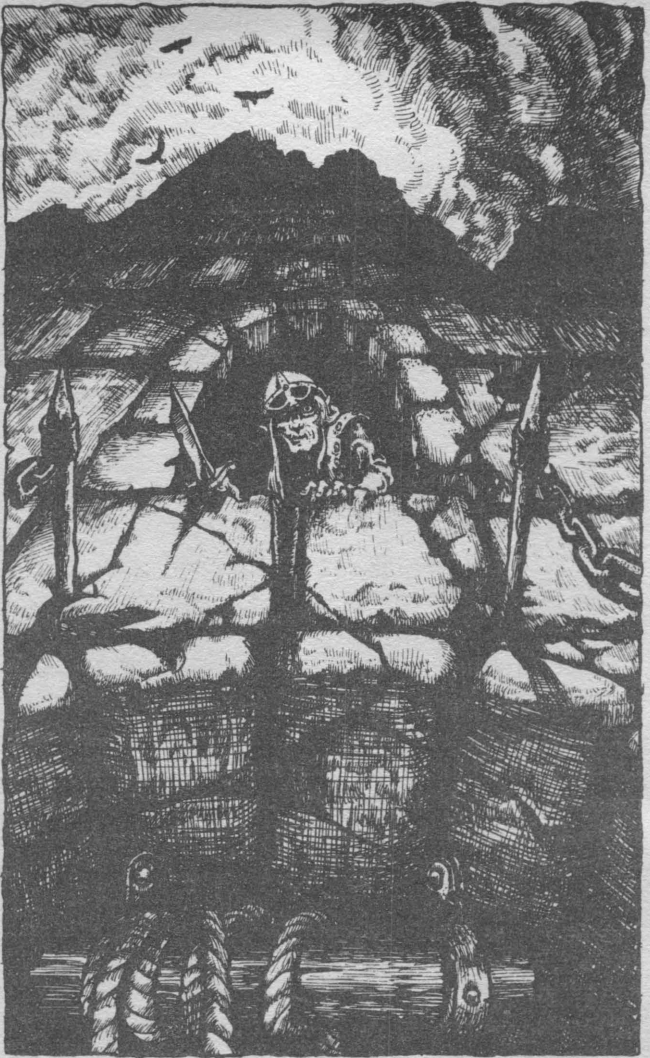
You come to the remains of an elaborate archway carved into the city wall. The gate collapsed long ago and the street beyond is bleak and deserted. You take a deep breath and start forward, you have taken one step when a voice cries out: 'Who goes there?'

The head and shoulders of a bony old man pop through a window high above the shattered gate. He regards you suspiciously with wild, bloodshot eyes. His filthy, matted hair hangs down over his shoulders and he waves a broken, rusty sword. 'Speak now!' he continues. 'I can't open the gate until you tell me.'

Puzzled, you look at the archway and then up at the grime-encrusted man. You can see no gate.

If you wish to humour the Gatekeeper, turn to **212**.

(continued over)



IX. A bony old man regards you with wild eyes

If you wish to ignore the ravings of the old man, turn to **254**.

125 — *Illustration X (overleaf)*

Water explodes around you as you hit the lake. You career downwards, water swirling and bubbling all about you, until you hit the bottom. Fortunately, the water has slowed your descent and you survive the fall without injury.

Although encumbered by your Backpack and Staff, you manage to kick out strongly towards the surface, your lungs bursting for air. Emerging into the air, gasping for breath and choking, you look around for some sign of Urik. Moments later, he breaks through the surface of the water, grinning fiercely. 'Greetings, Wizard,' he says, spitting water and coughing, 'you are well?' You give a curt nod before splashing towards a sandy islet.

The islet is located near the centre of the lake. Dense clumps of reeds surround its dull, green waters and beyond them, you can hear the shouts of the Shadakine as they seek you out. 'We must hide – get away from here. We're too exposed,' you say urgently to Urik, making to step into the water. You feel Urik's restraining hand on your shoulder.

'Wait!' he says, pointing ahead. You follow the direction of his arm. A host of multi-coloured birds has taken off in alarm from the surface of the lake. The blur of colour draws your eye to something immediately below them that is moving straight towards you.

Two pale eyes on slender stalks protrude above the water, cold and emotionless, their irises no more than



X. Two pale eyes protrude above the water, cold and emotionless

red slashes. 'Eijalfish,' says Urik 'Very big. Very poisonous. Very dangerous! And now, Shadakine come . . . is not good.' Sure enough, you hear the sound of the Shadakine hunting party, beating at the dense foliage as they draw closer. In a few minutes, they are sure to discover you, stranded here in the middle of the lake.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery and wish to create a magical shield capable of deflecting missiles, turn to **181**.

If you have the Magical Power of Elementalism and wish to use it, turn to **230**.

If you wish to attack the Eijalfish with your Wizard's Staff, turn to **274**.

126

It is still dark when you are woken by Urik the following morning. 'Come, Wizard – no time for sleep now, time for haste.' Still groggy with sleep, you rise, take up your Backpack and Staff and make ready to leave.

'What about food?' you ask.

'Food?' Urik sniffs, derisively. 'Food grows on the land . . . water falls from sky . . . down from mountain river . . . only foolish man wish to carry the earth and the sky upon his back in little bag. Come now.'

Urik disappears through the door of your room and you have no choice but to follow. You follow Urik in the half light as he clambers along the wooden walkways of the Kundi colony. The air is warm and damp with dew and the clouds hang low above the trees of the Azanam. Already, Urik has nearly disappeared

127-128

from sight in the thick mist and you struggle to match his pace as he steps nimbly from one platform to another. Soon the Kundi village is far behind and you are travelling along the thick branches of the giant Azawood trees.

If you have the Magical Power of Alchemy, turn to **216**.

If you do not possess this power, turn to **257**.

127

It takes more than a day to find your way out of the palace and even longer to escape the Forbidden City. The slow and laborious climb into the Mountains of Morn takes a further three days and on the eve of the third day, you look up with a sinking heart to see the shining face of a full moon. The Shadow Gate appears somewhere in the desolate valley below. When the moon eventually passes to its next phase, you are still searching for a way down from the mountains. The sickness that afflicts the dead lands and the Mountains of Morn eventually takes its toll and one by one you and your companions die in the desolate wilderness.

Your life and your quest end here.

128

It does not require a prophet to predict the outcome of your situation. As you attempt to gaze into the future, twenty trained soldiers aim their crossbows at you. You tumble to the ground, a mass of bolts buried in your chest, and pass swiftly from this world.

Your life and your quest end here.

129

Steeling yourself for the long march through the night, you strike out and pray that the Deathgaunts do not appear. You are already tired, and the chill fever that the Deathgaunts have inflicted on you is wearing down your resistance.

Stumbling with fatigue through the inky black night, you lose 2 **ENDURANCE** points through lack of sleep but your heart lifts when, with the coming of dawn, you see the shattered outline of a city couched in the hills at the foot of the mountains at the point where the Belzar River forks.

Turn to **52**.

130

You run down a long road that runs parallel to the city wall, the mob still at your back. You are forced to an abrupt halt by the sight of another pack of madmen heading straight towards you.

If you wish to climb a flight of stairs that leads to a wooden walkway above your head, turn to **221**.

If you decide to enter one of the small houses that face the city wall, turn to **301**.

131

You take the jewel and stare at it intently. The giant continues to look confused.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery, turn to **282**.

If you do not possess this power, turn to **305**.

132

You release the might of your Wizard's Staff and its flame shoots towards the spectre on the water. To your surprise, however it passes straight through, inflicting no damage. This creature is a Deathgaunt, an undead being summoned to the world of the living by the Wytch-king himself. Your unsuccessful assault has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **169**.

133

That night, the streets of Karnali are filled with joyous celebration. The surviving Shadakine are flushed out from their bolt-holes and imprisoned in the dungeons beneath their own fortress. It is a great victory for the brave fighters of the Freedom Guild, for at last, after many years of oppression, the people in this small corner of the Shadakine Empire are free.

In a chamber in the Shadakine fortress, you sit with Urik and Sado of the Long Knife, who toasts you with a huge goblet of wine. 'To you, Grey Star,' he says, 'I give my thanks and good wishes. Long may you endure.'

But Urik sits in the corner and grumbles: 'Much celebration. Small victory. Shadakine Empire,' and he stretches his arms wide apart, 'BIG!' Then placing his thumb and forefinger together, 'City of Karnali, small.'

'Urik is right,' you say, 'but at least this is a beginning.' And you smile warmly at Sado.

'Where will you go now, Grey Star?' he asks.

'West, to the Mountains of Morn – and beyond.'

Sado gapes. 'To the deadlands!' he exclaims. 'But this is folly. None return from there. There is a sickness on the land that kills all and the Mountains of Morn are impassable.'

'There must be some way through them,' you say, 'and I will find it.'

'There is only one known pass,' Sado continues, 'but it holds the greatest peril of all – Gyanima, the Forbidden City . . . the City of the Dead!' He shakes his head solemnly. 'Will you not turn away from this reckless course?'

You shrug. 'There is no other way. Urik's vision leads to Desolation Valley and my quest takes me there.'

Sado falls silent and an uncomfortable quiet follows. Finally, you rise and bid Sado goodnight, for you intend to leave Karnali the following morning. 'I had hoped you would remain, Grey Star,' he says. 'You are a powerful ally and I have great need of strength. Soon, the Wytch-king will seek to destroy our freedom. Without your help, our liberty may prove short-lived. Moreover, you choose a path of doom, heedless of my words of warning.'

'Fear not, Sado of the Long Knife,' you reply. 'If I achieve my goal, there will be freedom for all ensnared by the cruel grasp of the Wytch-king. I do not intend to fail.'

You leave the chamber, and close the door behind you. Despite your courageous words, a creeping uncertainty is stirring in your heart. 'Hmph!' snorts Urik.

'Him brave man . . . but have small mind.' He places a finger to his nose. 'Him see only this far. Young Wizard learn quickly . . . carry blessing of wise Shianti. You will not fail.' You pray that the old Kundi man is right.

You rise the following morning and prepare to leave. Your sleep has restored to you 1 ENDURANCE point and 1 WILLPOWER point. Sado enters your chamber to bid you farewell. 'I have come to apologize for my harsh words last night,' he says. 'It is not for me to question the way of Wizards. I am but a simple soldier. I have brought gifts by way of recompense.' He lays before you the following Items:

Enough food for 5 Meals

A Short Sword and Sheath (hung on a belt)

A Backpack

2 potions of Laumspur (swallowing 1 potion restores 4 ENDURANCE points)

A coil of Rope

You may take any or all of these Items. Remember to make the necessary adjustments to your *Action Chart*.

Turn to **75**.

134

Samu has a great, bloody gash on his shoulder but he has managed to slay his opponent. Now the crowd of mad courtiers attempts to halt your path; they are unarmed but filled with a raging intensity. Desperately, you try to fight your way out of the throne room.

Mad Courtiers: COMBAT SKILL 18 ENDURANCE 23

If you survive 3 rounds of combat, turn to **153**.

135

Unsure of your direction and physically exhausted you move along the passage, unable to run any faster than a slow trot. Suddenly you hear the shouts of the enraged courtiers pursuing you once more and Hugi gives a shrill whistle. 'Let's hide in here,' he calls.

If you wish to do as Hugi suggests, turn to **270**.

If you possess the Magical Power of Enchantment and wish to use it, turn to **178**.

136

You increase the power of your attack and, for one brief moment, the Kazim light is extinguished, but only to flare again with increased vigour. The Shadakine look around them; a strange mixture of fear and ferocity contorts their faces.

If you wish to sustain the same intensity of attack, expending 1 WILLPOWER point this round, turn to **286**.

If you wish to increase your attack by 1 WILLPOWER point making a total of 2 WILLPOWER points expended this round, turn to **253**.

137

You draw a wide pentacle around the area you have chosen to rest in. At the cost of 3 WILLPOWER points you chant a spell of protection that will prevent the Deathgaunts from attacking. Fighting your sense of unease, you settle down to sleep.

Turn to **298**.

138

As before, you soak the leaf and leave it to smoulder at the centre of the company. You then lie down on the ground, hungry now for sleep. (Remember to delete the Azawood leaf from your *Action Chart*.)

Turn to **298**.

139

You set about the task of creating a grand illusion. A Guildsman guides you to the fortress and you begin to focus your power upon it. There are many soldiers within and it takes a considerable time to exert your influence over them. Finally, after exerting 4 WILL-POWER points, you are able to cease your trials. Hundreds of Shadakine pour forth from their barracks, slapping and scratching at the hordes of crawling insects that only they can see and feel. They open the gates to the fortress and run into the street where Sado's army, disguised as civilians, lies in wait.

Turn to **207**.

140

A crossbow bolt slices through the air. You gasp with pain as it penetrates your shoulder (lose 3 ENDURANCE points). Urik looks up in alarm. 'Grey Star!' he shouts. 'You all right?' You grit your teeth against the pain and nod. A dark stain of blood spreads across your robe. The Ooslo bird is losing height rapidly and, before the Shadakine are able to release another bolt, you are flying low enough to jump to the ground. At Urik's instruction you untie the vine, wincing with the pain of your wound, and fall to the ground without further injury.

You tumble through a vast swathe of marsh grass that grows chest-high, and stretches in all directions. Urik gets to his feet and comes to inspect your wound. Bravely, you make to withdraw the shaft that protrudes from your shoulder but Urik stays your hand. 'No, not yet. Much bleeding if you pull the spike. We need herbs . . . stop bleeding . . . stop infection, yes?' You nod in agreement. 'Come follow old Kundi. Find good herbs very near.' He moves away, his eyes searching the ground, and you follow. Soon you reach a shallow waterway that cuts through the tall marsh grass like a trail. There, Urik finds what he is looking for and sits you down beside the little stream. 'Urik cannot find anything to stop pain but make sure wound heal. I must hurt you now – I am sorry.'

With a hand both swift and sure, he pulls the bolt from your shoulder: you hiss with pain. He tears away the material of your sleeve and presses his steady hand to the wound. Then, cupping his hand, he takes some water from the stream and cleans the wound. Next, to your surprise, he grabs a handful of mud from the bottom of the stream and smears it over the injury. The cool mud eases the fire in your shoulder and, as it dries, quickly staunches the bleeding. He cleans the torn shreds of your sleeve and knots them like a bandage around your shoulder. 'Is good?' he asks

'I thank you, Urik,' you reply. He pats your hand, affectionately.

'No need for thanks,' he says. 'Wise old Kundi know healing ways. Pain stop soon.'

Suddenly, a terrible sound reaches your ears; a

moaning howl like that of an animal in pain. Urik's face darkens and he helps you to your feet. Crouching, so that you remain hidden, you both peep across the top of the marsh grass in the direction of the sound. In a small clearing, some two hundred yards away, you see a frightened peasant – a Shadakine slave. He is struggling to control two snarling hounds who tug at the lengths of thick chain fixed to their harnesses. They are huge and fierce: each has two heads with a single horn growing at the centre of each, and out-sized fangs show through their slaver-ing jowls. 'Master! Master!' the slave calls to a tall Shadakine, undoubtedly the officer in charge. 'The Magdi – they smell something.' The tall Shadakine officer screws up his eyes; a wicked smile plays across his face.

If you wish to attempt to evade by following the waterway, turn to **25**.

If you wish to attempt a long range attack with your Wizard's Staff, turn to **105**.



141

You are now engaged in a duel of wills. The combined WILLPOWER score of the Wytch and her Stone is 40. Add together your current ENDURANCE and WILLPOWER scores and subtract this total from 40.

If your final score is 15 or higher, turn to **205**.

If your final score is 14 or lower, turn to **280**.

142

Taking care to shield yourself from the yellow glare of the Kazim light, you trace the shaft to its source within the fortress. The Shadakine Wytch fails to notice your presence, lurking like a crimson corona at the edge of her mind. The strain of her effort to uphold the courage of so many of her countrymen shows plainly on her pock-marked face.

You then notice another mind in the chamber of the Wytch. It is that of the Warward, Kiro, the hard-faced military governor of the Shadakine garrison in Karnali. He is sweating profusely, his fear of the wrath of the Wytch-king weakening him.

If you wish to control the mind of the Warward, Kiro, turn to **31**.

If you wish to control the mind of the Shadakine Wytch, turn to **49**.

143

You take out the red jewel. Drawing on the Power of Sorcery from the Astral plane, you project your will into the Gem and it begins to glow, shining with a blood-red light. You throw this power at the Kleasá and attempt to bend it to your will. Tanith's body

becomes rigid and, stiffly, she turns her head towards you. The Kleasá remains unaffected and emits a chill laugh. You have used 2 WILLPOWER points.

If you wish to use your Magical Power of Sorcery against the Kleasá, turn to **122**.

If you have the Black Rod of Shasarak and wish to use it, turn to **229**.

144

With the evil cunning that you have come to expect of the Shadakine, they use their slaves as a human wall, thus preventing the masked attackers from bringing their full force to bear for fear of killing the innocent people they have come to free.

You notice that the chains that manacle the slaves are all linked to one metal ring at the end of the line. If you can break the chain at this point, you will be able to free all the slaves at a stroke. Standing by this link-pin is the Shadakine slavemaster. Fearlessly, you charge. The slavemaster's eyes widen with surprise but he appears unshaken by your advance. He clutches at a red Gem at his neck and, as he does, his personal slave steps forward. Seven feet tall and with powerful muscles bulging beneath his ebony skin, he fixes you with a blank expression as he raises his huge broadsword.

If you wish to attack the black giant, turn to **179**.

If you wish to unleash a long-range attack on the slavemaster, turn to **196**.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery and wish to use it, turn to **266**.

145 – *Illustration XI (overleaf)*

You mark your pentacle in the dust and begin to chant. The Deathgaunts come no further but remain outside the reach of the spell, whispering. The four of you stand huddled within the pentacle, each regarding the Deathgaunts with frightened eyes.

‘Grey Star,’ says Samu in a hushed tone. ‘They have not departed. We cannot remain here forever.’

‘They can,’ comments Urik.

If you possess some Azawood leaves, turn to **120**.

If you do not have any Azawood leaves, turn to **162**.

146

There is no time to cast an illusion as the Shadakine are advancing fast. Instead, you try to place the compulsion to flee into their minds.

Pick a number from the *Random Number Table*. You may add 3 to this number if you possess the Chaksu Pipes.

If the number you have picked is 0–5, turn to **42**.

If the number you have picked is 7–12, turn to **289**.

147

You close your eyes and send the power of your thought forwards in time. The use of this Magical Power costs you 1 WILLPOWER point. The source of the movement is a Shadakine warrior attempting to get behind you, and your best course of action is to fire at the warrior before he can make his move.

Turn to **223**.



XI. The Deathgaunts come no further but remain outside the reach of the spell whispering

148

You raise the Black Rod and point it towards the door. Willing the door to open, you notice a thin beam of yellow light strike the surface and silently it swings open to reveal another passage sloping upwards into the distance.

If you wish to pass through the door, turn to **267**.

If you prefer to stay where you are, turn to **213**.

149

Despite the great damage you are inflicting on the Magdi, the enraged beast refuses to die. Try as he might, Urik is of no use — his old limbs and physical weakness make him incapable of hand to hand combat. He can only watch with fear and apprehension. His concern is so great that he fails to notice the band of Shadakine warriors stealing up on you through the dense undergrowth. As a result, you are quickly overpowered by the gloating Shadakine and, at a word from their tall sour-faced captain, the Magdi obediently ceases its attack.

‘Not much of a catch,’ sneers the captain, ‘but good sport, eh?’ Your Staff and Backpack are taken from you and your wrists and ankles are tightly bound with leather thongs. ‘And this is a pretty toy,’ he says, weighing your Staff in his hands. ‘But tell me, who are you, boy? Speak!’ You remain silent. ‘Lost your tongue, have you? Well that can be arranged, permanently!’ He gives you a stinging blow across the face, smiling grimly. Urik struggles angrily against the restraining hands that hold him. ‘Be still “monkey-man”,’ he scowls, ‘or you’ll be tasting some of the same.’ He returns his hateful gaze to you. ‘What are

you then, boy? What do you know of the Freedom Guild? You are their spy perhaps? You serve the rebel army, do you not?’

Still, you remain silent. You have no knowledge of the Freedom Guild he has mentioned but the thought that there exists a form of organized resistance to the evil of the Shadakine Empire is a comfort. With a look of disgust, the captain turns away. ‘The Warward, Kiro will find out all he needs to know on our return to Karnali,’ he says threateningly, ‘and Mother Niya’s truthsay is hard to refuse.’

You are unable to repress a shudder as you are reminded of the truthsay of Mother Magri and her awful Kazim Stone when first you came to the trader’s city of Suhn. The Wytches of Shadaki are among the most powerful of Shasarak’s servants, upholders of his corrupt law in all the major cities of the Empire.

‘Move, you scum!’ the captain shouts at his men. ‘We must reach Karnali as soon as possible.’ He glances sideways at you, one eyebrow raised. ‘There’s more to this strange pair than meets the eye,’ he says under his breath.

You and Urik are carried by slave bearers, slung to long wooden poles like hunting trophies. Your ankles and wrists are constantly bound and you are offered the barest of scraps of food and a minimum of water. By the second day of travelling, you have lost 3 ENDURANCE points and you begin to wonder if you will survive the journey as you linger in a weak, semi-conscious haze that makes the casting of any spell impossible.

Turn to **200**.

150

You must eat a Meal now or lose 3 ENDURANCE points. Time passes and soon you lose track of the passing hours in the pitch dark. You curse your ill-fortune, thinking that you will have to use the power of your Staff to blast a way out of your prison, but you are feeling weak and still you have to reach Desolation Valley, which is bound to hold other dangers for you. You are roused from this moody reflection by the sound of shouting voices and the noise of a struggle from above. Suddenly, the door of your prison is thrown open. Looking down on you is the broad smiling figure of Samu, bloodied broadsword in hand. 'But how . . . ?' stutters Hugi.

'The river carried me way downstream before I was able to resist its current,' says Samu. 'I've been looking all over for you. Fortunately, I was nearby when you were captured. I saw them bring you down into this crypt.' He turns and slashes at a wretch who is trying to drag him away from the door. The wretch is swatted like a fly and Samu turns back to face you. 'Come now. We must hurry.'

He pulls you out, each in turn, stopping to deliver a kick at two wretches who block the doorway from the crypt. 'This way,' he says, indicating a narrow passage that leads upwards. 'These creatures seem reluctant to travel this passage. They will not follow us, I think.' You run along the passage as fast as you can with Samu protecting the rear. At the end of the passage is a heavy door. Urik swings it open and charges through.

Turn to **26**.

Hardly daring to breathe, you and Urik remain crouched within the dense marsh grass. A Shadakine warrior pauses to look around only a few yards from your hiding place. He takes a step towards you, then gives a startled cry as he sinks into the quicksand which once held you. His cries for help alert a number of his fellow warriors who come to his aid, hurling jeers and insults at his apparent stupidity.

Urik gives a satisfied nod and gestures for you to follow him. With quiet, tentative steps, you move away from the clamour of the Shadakine warriors, exploiting this unexpected distraction to the full. When Urik is satisfied that you have placed a sufficient distance between you and your enemy, he motions for you to sit down. With sure hands he breaks the quarrel that is embedded in your shoulder. 'Make no sound,' whispers Urik, before pulling the bolt. You grit your teeth as he tugs at the shaft and 'swallow' the pain. A shallow stream trickles close by and he uses its waters to clean the wound. 'There is good medicine here,' he says, plunging his hand into the stream and withdrawing a fistful of mud, which he daubs liberally over your injury. The mud feels cool against the throbbing pain of your shoulder and as it dries, it staunches the bleeding. You thank Urik for his aid.

Suddenly a chilling howl reaches your ears, sending a shiver of fear down your spine. Cautiously, Urik rises to peer along the tops of the chest-high marsh grass, searching for the source of the howl. He quickly ducks his head and turns to speak, a worried look on his face. He tells you that the Shadakine have hunting

dogs and are preparing to release them. They are the Magdi: ferocious hounds with two heads – the creation of the Wytch-king Shasarak.

If you wish to stand and fight the Magdi, turn to **123**.

If you prefer to run from the Magdi, following the shallow waterway that cuts through the grass, turn to **156**.

152

You shake your head, moulding the force of your will in an attempt to draw a Shield of Sorcery before you once again. 'We must,' says Urik, urgently. But it is too late. Before you are able to complete the Shield, a hail of bolts darkens the sky. With a gasp of pain, you expel your last breath, falling back into the murky waters of the lake, your body pierced by several crossbow bolts.

Your life and your mission end here.

153

The overwhelming cut and thrust of your attack has cleared a path to the large archway that is the only exit from the throne room. 'Now, Grey Star!' shouts Samu, and with Urik and Hugi between you, you run towards the archway, thrusting glancing blows at anyone who comes too close.

If your current ENDURANCE total is 10 or more, turn to **19**.

If your current ENDURANCE total is 9 or less, pick a number from the *Random Number Table*. If the number you have picked is 0–5, turn to **27**.

(continued over)

154-155

If the number is 6-9, turn to **33**.

154

You ignore their evil taunting and continue towards the mountains. Slowly, the Deathgaunts drift towards you, filling your heart with panic as they draw closer and closer.

Turn to **59**.

155

The confidence of the Shadakine is visibly shaken when your discharge of fiery magic completely incinerates a warrior. The use of your Staff has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points. You are amazed, your powers seem greatly increased since last you used them. A blast as potent as the one you have just released would normally have drained a great deal of your WILLPOWER. You smile with grim satisfaction as the shocked Shadakine dive for cover.

The Shadakine officer is quickly trying to restore order as the shaken Shadakine scramble behind the cover of the tall marsh grass. He orders them to ready weapons and prepare to fire. Soon, the Shadakine will be able to bring the full force of their weaponry against you. You feel that you are in a hopeless situation. The Shadakine are not short of supplies and will be content to wait out this siege. Meanwhile, you have no food and no cover.

If you wish to attempt to swim away, turn to **5**.

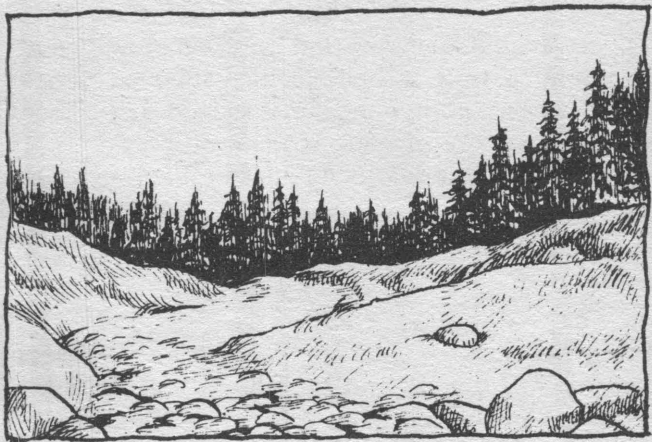
If you possess the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to foresee the outcome of your predicament, turn to **128**.

156

The thick foliage of the marsh makes for ideal cover and the latticed network of small waterways and streams, tributaries of the Suhni River delta, are sure to confuse any tracks that you might leave. The whole verdant expanse of the Gurlu Marshes is one huge natural maze.

The air is thick with humidity and an abundance of insect life. Splashing through the dark mud of the stream, you struggle to maintain a fast pace, and your efforts are well rewarded. Eventually, the sound of pursuit and the hoarse cries of the Shadakine fade into the distance. It seems that you have shaken off your pursuers.

Turn to **252**.



157

You call over to Samu. 'Guard this entrance,' you say, tying the Rope around you and indicating the

158-159

hole you intend to descend into. He gives a grim nod. 'Hugi!' you say, 'feed the Rope down gently.'

With these words, you leap to the edge of the hole and begin to lower yourself down slowly. You land safely at the bottom and wait for Urik to clamber down. A lifetime of tree-life has made him more than capable of climbing safely to the ground beside you.

You are standing in the middle of a honeycomb made of stone. The light of the full moon streams through the holes in the surface of the plain and the maze is bright with translucent light. Urik sniffs the air, 'Follow me,' he says. With tension mounting in your heart, you prepare to meet your enemy.

Turn to **272**.

158

As you strike a final blow, the Gatekeeper falls dead. Suddenly a host of half-naked, wild-eyed people round a street corner and surge towards you. There are over a score of men, women and children, all howling with murderous intent. Horrified, you turn and run.

Turn to **130**.

159

The urgent fury of your Staff throws the Shadakine warrior into the air and he falls to the ground, a scorched and bloody thing. The attack has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points. The mob surge forward to attack the Shadakine, hurling bricks and stones at their hated enemies.

Turn to **40**.

160

You deepen your concentration, pouring more energy into your Shield of Sorcery, so that it grows in size to include Urik within its field of protection. This costs you another 2 WILLPOWER points. Pick a number from the *Random Number Table*.

If the number you have picked is 0-6, turn to **118**.

If the number you have picked is 7 or higher, turn to **44**.

161

A long and thorough search reveals nothing. He is not in the passage.

If you wish to look for Hugi in the banqueting room, turn to **94**.

If you wish to look for Hugi in the throne room, turn to **300**.

If you wish to continue without Hugi, turn to **127**.

162

You are trapped. The Deathgaunts remain where they are, whispering taunts and goading you to attack them if you dare. You have no choice other than to step outside the pentacle.

Turn to **59**.

163

Heedless of the danger to yourself, you turn and fire at the Shadakine as they tramp through the marsh grass. A bolt of force rips into the nearest Shadakine as he fumbles to reload his weapon and he falls to the ground in a blinding sheet of magical flame. Your

attack has cost you only 1 WILLPOWER point. You are amazed at the effect of your attack at such little cost. You conclude that your powers must have increased greatly since last you used your Staff in combat.

A second Shadakine warrior confronts you, his crossbow levelled at your chest. Suddenly, before you are able to attack, Urik produces a weapon of his own. It is a small boomerang, its edges lined with a row of razor-sharp teeth. With great skill and accuracy he hurls the boomerang at the Shadakine, inflicting a fatal neck wound. Urik runs forward and retrieves his weapon from the Shadakine's neck.

An enemy swordman bursts out of his hiding place among the foliage and charges towards you, his scimitar whirling above his head.

Shadakine Warrior:

COMBAT SKILL 18 ENDURANCE 25

If you wish to evade combat altogether, turn to **30**.
If you win the combat, turn to **88**.

164

You remove the long sturdy Rope from your Backpack and tie it around your waist. 'If I should fall, haul me up,' you say. Samu nods. 'We'll do the same for you on the other side.'

With your heart in your mouth, you run across the bridge; you feel a slight tremor through the stone. 'It doesn't look too good!' you shout across to Samu. He ties his end of the Rope around his waist and, gingerly, begins his crossing. He has reached the

middle of the bridge when it starts to crumble. Large slabs of stone fall away and Samu is forced to run. But he is too late – the bridge collapses at the centre and Samu disappears. Although Hugi and Urik have a tight hold of the Rope, Samu's great bulk, plus the downward pull of his fall, snatches it from their hands. You are dragged forward: the Rope is still tied around your waist!

If your current ENDURANCE total is 12 or higher, turn to **191**.

If your current ENDURANCE total is 11 or lower, turn to **277**.

165

At the cost of 4 WILLPOWER points, you return to the trance state that has guided you through the swamp. The air is teeming with life: the song of strange birds; the scurrying of furred rodents disturbed by your passing; and the steady hum of insects. Yet, all your attention is focused on the dim and distant future as you steer an eccentric course between the stagnant pools and ponds that are alive with creatures of every imagining.

The humid atmosphere makes every step a labour and you make slow progress. When sunset finally comes, you are still in the swampland, and fatigue forces you to rest for the night. The sheer exertion of walking causes you to lose 1 ENDURANCE point. Urik sights a stretch of dry land and you head towards it, relieved to cease the strain of maintaining your trance. The air is alive with nocturnal insects and, to your dismay, you notice the distinct, vermilion bodies of winged Blood Nymphs.

166-168

If you have the Magical Power of Alchemy, turn to **121**.

If you do not possess this power, turn to **28**.

166

You throw open the nearest door and enter the building which, after a quick search, proves to be empty. As you start to leave, Urik shouts a warning, but it is too late. Just as you walk through the door a Dead City wretch coshes you with a wooden club. You do not have time to react and the blow knocks you unconscious. You lose 1 ENDURANCE point.

When you regain consciousness you are lying in the dark with your Wizard's Staff by your side.

If you wish to make a light from your Staff at the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point, turn to **307**.

If you do not, turn to **150**.

167

A powerful wind blows through your hair as the Shadakine fall upon you, cutting you to pieces with their curved scimitars.

Your life and your quest end here.

168

The passage has been carved from the bedrock of the Mountains of Morn. At the end of the corridor is a wall of fire, burning with a fierce intensity. You stop, deep in thought. 'How are we to pass through that?' Samu asks.

If you have the Magical Power of Elementalism and wish to use it, turn to **293**.

If you have the magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it, turn to **201**.

If you wish to fire at the wall of flame with your Staff, turn to **117**.

If you wish to pass through the wall of flames, turn to **240**.

169

Bravely, Samu charges at the Deathgaunt, launching a flurry of strokes at it with his broadsword. To your dismay, the blade passes through the body of the Deathgaunt, which remains completely unaffected. 'Grey Star,' the Deathgaunt says, in a soft echoing whisper. 'I have come for you.' It reaches out a transparent hand and lays it on your head. An icy chill rushes through your body and you are instantly drained of 8 ENDURANCE points.

If your current ENDURANCE total is now 10 or higher, turn to **232**.

If your current ENDURANCE total has now fallen to 9 or lower, turn to **202**.

170

You place your hand upon the door and concentrate hard. The key that opens the door is the Black Rod that lies within the chest.

The use of this Magical Power has cost you 1 WILL-POWER point.

If you wish to take the Black Rod and use it to open the magic-locked door, turn to **148**.

If you would rather use the Magical Power of Sorcery to open the door and possess 3 or more WILLPOWER points, turn to **279**.

171

Cowering with fear, you step back, flinching at the sight of the sinister spectre. Silently, it reaches out a transparent hand and touches your forehead. The cold of the Deathgaunt's touch freezes your very soul. You fall to the ground, plunging into the dark well of unconsciousness. You have lost 4 ENDURANCE points.

If your current ENDURANCE total is now 10 or higher, turn to **66**.

If your current ENDURANCE total is now 9 or lower, turn to **202**.

172

In desperation, you hurl the Black Rod of Shasarak at the shadow beast. The demon towers above you and your heart is filled with dread as the Kleasá is unharmed by the impact of the Black Rod. The rod falls with a clatter to the rocky floor and swiftly, the Kleasá stoops and picks it up.

Turn to **310**.

173

That evening, Samu and Urik return with an abundance of game, wild berries and Lianor. After the meat has been cooked and the food shared out, you find that you have far more food than you can carry. You may carry as much food as you wish but remember that one Meal counts as one Item in your backpack.

The following morning you pass into the region known as the dead lands.

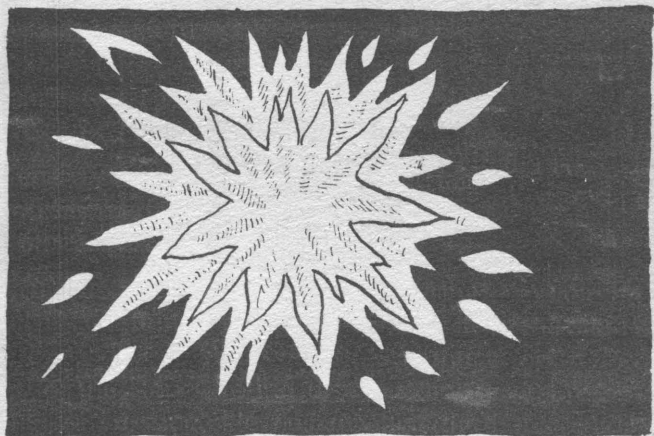
Turn to **195**.

174

You draw on the energy of the Astral plane, the source of power for the magic of Sorcery. You draw just 1 WILLPOWER point of energy (cross this off your *Action Chart*) and cast it at the Gem. Immediately, it begins to glow with a rosy hue. As you merge your power with that of the Gem you begin to understand its true nature. The Gem is a transmitter of thought, a device capable of increasing and amplifying mental energy. This is how it enables others, even the unskilled, to exert control over the minds of men. Your Magical power of Sorcery will allow you to transmit this power great distances.

If you wish to exert 2 WILLPOWER points in your attempt to control the mind of the user of the Kazim Stone, turn to **14**.

If you wish to exert 3 WILLPOWER points in your attempt to control the mind of the user of the Kazim Stone, turn to **142**.



175

You approach a tall, dusty building with a high-domed roof. You turn the door handle. Nothing happens; it is locked. As you release the handle, you hear the scuffle of naked feet coming from behind the door. The thief, Hugi, produces a large set of keys. 'Do you want it opened?' he asks, confidently.

If you want him to open the door, turn to **39**.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy, and wish to use it, turn to **119**.

176

You jump to the door to impede their escape and deal wide, slashing blows at the wretches. Despite their fear, they fight back with all the strength their wasted bodies will allow.

3 Dead City Wretches:

COMBAT SKILL 18 ENDURANCE 25

If you win the combat, turn to **308**.

177

Finally the second dog weakens and dies and you breathe a sigh of relief. You have expended a great deal of energy in the fight but, at Urik's insistence, you travel as fast as the muddy ground will allow, following the winding course of the shallow waterway and crouching low below the line of the tall marsh grass.

Turn to **156**.

178

At the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point, you cast an illusion

transforming your companions and yourself into the guise of ragged courtiers. When the guards and the crowd have rushed past, you run in the opposite direction. 'Follow me!' says Hugi. 'I've found a way out of here.' He leads you back to the throne room.

Turn to **38**.

179

You lunge at the giant but his reflexes are surprisingly quick and your blow misses. With colossal strength, the giant brings his sword down on your neck, killing you instantly.

You are dead. Your quest has failed.

180

After a brief pause, the group of Shadakine warriors comes wading through the marsh grass. The leader barks commands, ordering his men into positions that provide them with cover. There is no sense of urgency in their actions and they seem unconcerned by the possibility that you may pose any kind of threat to them.

If you wish to make a long-range attack with your Wizard's Staff, turn to **155**.

If you wish to form a Shield of Sorcery around you, turn to **199**.

181

You draw on the vibrant energy of your will, shaping it to your needs by creating a shimmering force field before you. 'Urik,' you call, 'behind me quickly.' Urik obeys. The tension mounts as you await discovery.

182-183

The use of this Magical Power has, so far, cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **183**.

182 – *Illustration XII*

Samu appears at your side and attacks the writhing creature with his broadsword. Hugi and Urik grab you by your cloak and pull you away from the fight as Samu's sword cuts back and forth in wide sweeping arcs. 'He more danger to you than Scree Wym,' shouts Urik, pointing at Samu, who is lost in a berserk fury.

Suddenly, a loud cry makes you start. It is Hugi – he is struggling in the bony coils of another Scree Wym. You dare not attack the creature with a blast from your Staff for fear of hitting the struggling thief.

If you decide to engage the creature in close combat, turn to **206**.

If you do not wish to attack the Scree Wym, turn to **255**.

183

The brief moments that pass before the first of the Shadakine spots you feel like an eternity. Instantly he throws himself to the ground and rolls behind a rock at the edge of the lake. He shouts to his comrades and the tall rushes shiver and sway as the warriors approach.

You hear a sharp command and, immediately afterwards, a dozen crossbow bolts whistle through the air only to be deflected by your Shield of Sorcery. All falls strangely silent. Suddenly, a second volley of



XII. Samu, lost in a berserk fury, battles with the Scree Wym

184-185

quarrels shoots towards you, only to be deflected in the same way. This time, however, you feel your Shield weaken.

If you wish to expend more WILLPOWER points to strengthen your Shield of Sorcery, turn to **68**.

If you wish to leave it at the same strength, turn to **95**.

184

You have been walking down the passage for several minutes when Samu suddenly notices that Hugi is missing.

If you wish to go back along the passage to look for Hugi, turn to **161**.

If you wish to look for Hugi in the banqueting room, turn to **94**.

If you wish to look for Hugi in the throne room, turn to **300**.

If you wish to continue without Hugi, turn to **127**.

185

With the ferocious hound snapping at your heels, you and Urik thread your way along the shallow waterway leading from the bog. Sadly the muddy ground slows your progress and you are unable to out-run the wild beast. Instead, you stop suddenly and swing your Staff in an arc that smashes into the Magdi's snout. It is not a serious injury but your bravado has paid off. The Magdi is too stunned to move against you, one head lolling uselessly to one side in a daze and the other too confused to understand what has happened.

If you wish to kill the Magdi, turn to **149**.

If you wish to flee, turn to **156**.

186

Hugi examines the bridge closely. After a short spell of deliberation, he turns and says, 'It will bear our weight, but it would be best if we cross one at a time. Who wants to go first?' He steps away, indicating that he has no intention of crossing first.

Urik gives him a disapproving look and steps forward. 'I am Kundi, an old man, but do not fear to cross.' After scowling at Hugi, he runs across the bridge as fast as his old bones will allow. A cloud of dust falls from the bridge and a couple of loose stones tumble and fall into the black water below.

'Me next,' says Hugi, running across the bridge with nimble feet before anyone can try to take his place. His light passage makes no impression on the bridge and he calls across to you and Samu. 'It's perfectly safe,' he says, unhelpfully.

Samu turns to you: 'I am the heaviest. You should go next.'

If you have a Rope, turn to **164**.

If you do not have a Rope, turn to **294**.

187

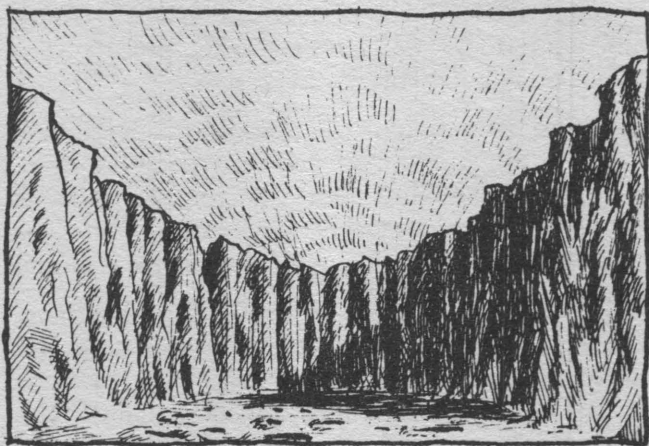
After a short wait, a Rock Giant burrows its way into the passage. It strides purposefully through the wall of flame and does not return. You have learnt nothing and the wall of flame remains. The use of this spell has cost you 1 WILLPOWER point.

If you have the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it, turn to **201**.

(continued over)

If you wish to fire at the wall of flame with your Staff, turn to **117**.

If you wish to walk through the wall of fire, turn to **240**.



188

You aim a bolt of energy from your Staff at the nearest crossbowman and fire. A streak of white-hot fire slices through the air, exploding into a massive wall of flame that engulfs the howling Shadakine warrior. The man is completely incinerated and all that remains is a smoking crater in the ground. The Ooslo gives a cry of distress, soaring up into the air at high speed. Below, the Shadakine break and scatter in all directions, plunging into the tall marsh reeds that surround them.

The effect of your attack leaves you quite amazed. Your powers are greatly increased since last you used them. At the cost of only **2** WILLPOWER points (remem-

ber to deduct these from your current WILLPOWER points total), you have delivered an attack that, previously, would have drained a great deal more.

You are now high in the air and the Shadakine have all moved out of sight. You begin to wonder, however, exactly how to control your feathered mount. Pick a number from the *Random Number Table*.

If the number you have picked is 5 or lower, turn to **15**.

If the number you have chosen is 6 or higher, turn to **140**.

189

You totter on unsteady feet. The exertion has made you weak but the supportive hand of Samu bears you up. 'Are you all right?' he asks. You nod. 'Then I must away,' says Samu, drawing his great sword. 'The Shadakine must be purged from my land forever!' He turns and runs towards the noise of battle with an easy, athletic stride. Your efforts have drained you of 4 ENDURANCE points.

If you are still alive, turn to **133**.

190

The Kazim light gutters as the energy of your Staff absorbs and consumes its fulvous light. The Shadakine stand frozen, their faces racked with fear and uncertainty.

Turn to **286**.

191

You are wrenched towards the very edge of the

192-193

falling bridge. Helplessly, Samu dangles at the end of the Rope, looking at the fast-moving waters of the Belzar. 'I . . . I can't hold it,' you shout in a strained voice to Urik and Hugi. They start forward, but as they step on to the bridge, bricks and stones fall into the river at an alarming rate. 'Stop!' you scream, 'or we're all doomed!'

Before anyone can act, the strain on the Rope is suddenly released and you fall backwards. Samu, seeing your plight, has cut the Rope with his sword, allowing himself to fall into the running water. Horrified, you watch as Samu struggles against the current. Then he is gone; there is no trace. 'Grey Star!' Urik shouts. 'Come away . . . the bridge!' Eyes blurred with tears, you stagger away from the bridge. Too numb to speak, the three of you walk towards the gate of the Forbidden City.

Turn to **124**.

192

You pour more energy into your Shield of sorcery so that Urik and the Ooslo bird are secure within its protection. This exertion costs you 4 WILLPOWER points. It is a wise move as you soon find out.

Turn to **44**.

193

The Black Rod suddenly erupts into flame in your hand. You scream with pain as the yellow fire shoots up your arm and explodes within your body. You fall to the ground before the Shadow Gate. Tanith calls out your name but you have no ears to hear; you are

a victim of the malignant fire of Shasarak. The last sound that you hear is the Wytch-king's snarling laughter.

You have failed before the very gateway of your quest.

194

The following morning, Urik scouts the ground. You both decide to head for the city of Karnali which stands on the northernmost edge of the Gurlu Marsh, on the far side of the Suhni River. Urik explains that you are about to enter the heart of the swamp and the danger is sure to increase. He takes you to the top of a low hill and you survey the land ahead. You have the choice of two routes. To the north-west, the land comprises a mixture of low, twisted bushes and shrubs, further on, a jungle of gnarled, lichenous trees. The more direct route lies to the north but the land there is more perilous. Tall marsh grass abruptly gives way to a broad expanse of guagmire and bog, interspersed with squat, black trees and stagnant pools. Urik tells you that the ground is highly treacherous, containing concealed quicksand and soft mud.

If you wish to take the slower route to the north-west, turn to **2**.

If you wish to take the more direct route to the north, turn to **12**.

195

The stark land is silent: no bird sings, no flower grows. The silence is oppressive and your senses recoil against the evil of the place. You have entered 'the dead lands'.

196-197

As you walk, you kick up clouds of ash and dust. Everywhere it is impossibly grey – the very soil has been charred to cinders. ‘How . . .’ you breathe into the silence, ‘how in the world did this happen? What could blight the land as utterly as this?’

‘You do not know the legend?’ asks Hugi, surprised. You shake your head. ‘Go on,’ you say, if only for the comfort of another human voice.

Turn to **111**.

196

As the giant charges towards you, the silver flame of your Staff kills the slavemaster instantly. The use of this spell has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points. The giant falters, apparently confused. He shakes his head and looks at his sword as if it was not his own. The Gem around the slavemaster’s neck continues to glow.

If you wish to attack the giant, turn to **179**.

If you wish to take the Gem from around the dead slavemaster’s neck, turn to **131**.

197

The wretch lies dead at your feet. Hugi taps you on the shoulder and points down the street. A swarm of howling wretches is charging towards you. There are hundreds of them: a ragged, tattered army of madmen, besmirched with grime and dust. The curse of the city of the dead is upon them. It is the curse of a life spent amongst mouldering ruins and decay, of an existence that has endured against the utter desolation of ‘the dead lands’.

Immediately, you turn and run, as do Hugi and Urik. The wailing pack are close behind.

Turn to **84**.

198

You hold the Gem tightly in your hand and allow its power to flood through you. Immediately, your mind is assailed by a multitude of memories, for the Gem is ancient. You sense the good and ill-wills of those who have possessed the Gem in the past; easiest to define is the evil of the Shadakine slavemaster who owned it last. Uncomprehending of its power, he had used it for petty thefts and crimes, manipulating those who had earned his displeasure.

You gradually come to understand the true nature of the Gem. It is a transmitter of thought, a magical item capable of increasing and amplifying mental energy. It is capable of controlling only one mind at a time, but your Magical Power of Sorcery will enable you to transmit this power across a great distance. The use of the Power of Psychomancy has cost you 1 WILLPOWER point.

You exert 2 WILLPOWER points and attempt to control the mind of the user of the Kazim Stone.

Turn to **14**.

199

You concentrate the power of your mind, shaping your will to the creation of a magical force field. You complete your spell just in time to deflect the dark cloud of crossbow bolts that whistle towards you. Angered by his failure, the Shadakine officer orders

200-201

his men to reload. A second volley comes hurtling towards you, only to be deflected in the same way, but this time, your Shield weakens.

If you wish to expend more WILLPOWER points on strengthening your Shield of Sorcery, turn to **68**.

If you do not, turn to **95**.

200

It is the last day of your tortuous journey. You are roused by the cries of the Shadakine and, a few minutes later, you are dumped on the ground by the slave bearers. 'Beware, the fighters of the Freedom League!' You see little of the battle that ensues. You glimpse many soldiers with red veils over their faces and the fall of the cruel Shadakine captain.

Finally, the battle ceases and you and Urik are freed from your bonds by the red-veiled soldiers. 'My thanks,' you say, as your Staff and Backpack are returned to you.

'You are lucky, friend,' says one of the soldiers. 'We are only scouts, clearing the way for tomorrow's attack upon a Shadakine slave train.' You are given food and enjoy a comfortable sleep that restores to you 2 ENDURANCE points and 1 WILLPOWER point.

Turn to **275**.

201

Closing your eyes, you summon a vision of the future at the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point. Your power of Prophecy tells you that the wall of flames will not burn you.

Turn to **240**.

202

The deadly clutch of the Deathgaunt forces you to your knees. You are already too weak to resist and you quickly pass into the realm of the undead to join the ranks of Shasarak's army of tormented souls.

Your life and your quest end here.

203

At the cost of 2 WILLPOWER points, you cast about yourself the illusion that you are an old beggar and hurriedly cross the street. The escort look on in amazement and, totally confused, flee the wrath of the advancing Shadakine. Urik, however, with his long tail and eccentric feathered dress, attracts the attention of the Shadakine, one of whom charges straight at him with his sword held high.

If you wish to fire a long-range attack from your Staff at the Shadakine warrior threatening Urik, turn to **159**.

If you wish to charge the Shadakine and fight with him in close combat, turn to **99**.

204

A wide road, the great Suhm Road, runs parallel to the river. You see a long line of men, women and children marching slowly along the road away from the city like forsaken souls journeying towards their doom. Shadakine warriors walk up and down the line, brandishing their flails brutally.

'Grey Star,' says Urik, 'I thought . . . There are others

205–206

here in marsh. They . . . ' Before he can finish, a wave of men pour out of the brush that lines the marsh and run towards the column of slaves with a roar, waving their swords above their heads. They wear veils over their faces, but otherwise share no common uniform.

The few Shadakine guards fall into defensive positions along the road, but the swiftness of the ambush prevents them from deploying effectively. Only a few of the veiled soldiers are felled by a volley of cross-bow bolts before the Shadakine are beset by their attackers. 'Shall we?' you ask Urik. A broad smile creases his old face and he gives vent to a bellowing yell as he shambles out of the brush towards the fray as fast as his old bones will permit. You follow close behind.

Turn to **144**.

205

You sense the dismay of the Wytch as plainly as if it were your own, as you quench the light of her Kazim Stone. Quickly, you withdraw your power before she finds some other way to attack you – you feel very faint after your prolonged test of minds. You have exerted 4 WILLPOWER points and lost 5 ENDURANCE points. Remember to adjust your *Action Chart* accordingly.

If you are still alive, turn to **114**.

206

Wielding your Staff high above your head, you wait for your chance to strike. Hugi manages to wriggle free from the coils of the beast and, as he rolls clear,

you bring your Staff down with a mighty blow. A crackle of energy rips through the creature as your Staff crushes its head. The Scree Wyrms contracts into a knot and flips over and over in the throes of death to disappear from sight into one of the many pot-holes that dot the plain. You have lost 1 WILLPOWER point effecting this attack.

Turn to **85**.

207

Sado prepares his men to charge. A familiar yellow light attracts your attention, shining from the highest turret of the fortress. It can only be the light of the Kazim Stone, a powerful instrument of pain in the hands of a Shadakine Wytch.

The yellow glow expands and then envelopes the flagging soldiers who stand before the fortress. You see their resolve tighten as the Kazim Stone robs them of their fear. 'Sorcery!' breathes Sado in a desperate voice. You feel the gaze of Sado and his men burning into you like an accusation. Slowly, the Shadakine advance, tightening the ragged line of their defence in preparation for a counter-attack; they move like automatons as the Kazim Stone burns into their minds.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery and wish to use it against the Kazim Stone, turn to **6**.

If you have the Magical Power of Enchantment and wish to use it against the Shadakine, turn to **146**.

If you wish to challenge the power of the Kazim Stone with your Staff, turn to **234**.

208

Casting your mind back, you recall seeing a proliferation of Mustow pods growing in the Gurlu Marshes. These strange, fungal growths are renowned for their pungent odour when broken open. At your command, a large number of these are brought to you by some of Sado's followers. You order that the Mustow pods be hurled over the walls of the fortress in large numbers, and soon many Shadakine can be seen pouring out of their barracks, eyes streaming, as the Mustow pods explode within the fortress, emitting great clouds of foul-smelling gas. The gates are thrown open and a horde of Shadakine spill into the street where Sado's army, disguised as civilians, lie in wait.

Turn to **207**.

209

The creature floats across the river. Within the shimmering tatters of its grey robe, you perceive the dim outline of a tormented and eyeless face. It is a Deathgaunt, an undead spirit, raised by Shasarak, the Wytch-king, to roam the world of the living.

Turn to **169**.

210

As the fire rages all around, you fall into the trance state necessary to transport your mind to the Elemental plane. A silent scream of fear howls amidst images of fire and such is the urgency of your need, you expend 3 WILLPOWER points. The smoke and heat are beginning to choke you and still no answer

comes from the Elemental plane. Urik suddenly slumps to your feet, barely conscious.

Your mind is then offered a strange vision, further evidence of the growth of your powers and the strength of your mastery over the Lesser Magicks. Four humanoid figures appear, representatives of the four Elements of Earth, Wind, Fire and Water, their bodies formed of the Element they represent. Each bows in turn, arms outstretched in a humble gesture. You must choose the Element you wish to help you.

If you require the aid of the Element of Air, turn to **90**.

If you choose the Element of Water, turn to **228**.

If you choose the Element of Fire, turn to **261**.

If you choose the Element of Earth, turn to **309**.

211

You brace yourself for combat but the man in the shadows quickly sheathes his sword and steps out of the darkness. It is Samu, the ebony giant you saved from the mind grip of the slavemaster. He strides towards you, hand outstretched in a gesture of greeting. 'You are leaving Karnali?' he asks.

'I must,' you say, solemnly. 'I must reach Desolation Valley beyond the Mountains of Morn before the turning of the next full moon.'

Samu raises his eyebrows in surprise. 'You are going into the dead lands?' he asks. 'None has ever returned from there: you will perish for sure.'

'I have to try, or die in the attempt. There's too much at stake.' You briefly describe the nature of your

quest and its ultimate goal: to throw down the Wytch-king and all his works.

Samu is silent for a while, deep in thought. Once, he was a proud king, the ruler of a nomadic people called the Masbalé, a warrior nation that dwelt upon the rolling savannah of the Great Lisson Plain. Of his brave people, only he remains, the sole survivor of the depredations of the Wytch-king of Shadaki; riven of his family, his nation and of hope by the cruelty of an inhuman tyrant. With smouldering eyes that hint at his bitter loss, he looks down on you. 'I will come with you, I think,' he says. 'You will have need of my strength to partner your bravery.'

You thread your way among the dark, deserted streets of Karnali and leave by the west gate. With a man such as this by your side, how can you fail?

Turn to **50**.

212

'We are friends, Gatekeeper. Open up now,' you say, uncomfortably.

'State your business,' the Gatekeeper replies.

'We are merchants,' continues Hugi, taking up the charade. 'Here to trade our silks for the rich treasures of Gyanima.'

'What's the password?' the Gatekeeper snaps. 'You can't come in if you don't know the password.'

'Crows foot!' says Hugi immediately and more than a little hopefully.

The Gatekeeper holds his hand out in front of his face

and looks it up and down as if checking off an invisible list. 'No, that was yesterday. You've given me the luneday password.'

'But today is luneday,' replies Hugi indignantly.

'It is?' says the Gatekeeper, astonished. Mutely, all three of you nod your heads. 'Very well then, you may pass.'

The Gatekeeper vanishes and moments later reappears in the archway, lifting the non-existent bar on the non-existent gate and ushering you in with a show of great respect.

Turn to **104**.



213

A minute passes and the door slides shut as silently as it opened. Gradually, you sense that the room is becoming colder. A chill wind rises from nowhere,

214-215

sending a shiver down your spine. It is not ordinary cold air causing you to tremble, it is the familiar presence of a Deathgaunt. It materializes in the centre of the cavern, close to where you stand. 'Welcome,' it hisses menacingly as it stretches out its wispy fingers to claw at your soul. You fight to hang on to life, but it is a fight that you cannot win. Here, in the chamber of Shasarak the Wytch-king, the Deathgaunt draws on a power that you cannot resist, and you are borne swiftly from the realm of the living.

Your life and your quest end here.

214

Before going to sleep that night, you must eat a Meal or lose 3 ENDURANCE points. The following morning you continue your journey. Hugi has made no attempt to escape, but he keeps very quiet, especially when Samu is around.

As the miles pass by, the mountains of Morn loom larger in the distance, aloof and forbidding. The land is becoming sparse of vegetation as you approach the region known as 'the dead lands'.

If you have no more food in your Backpack and want to gather supplies before going any further, turn to **32**.

If you have enough food to complete your quest, turn to **195**.

215

Steeling yourself, you launch a massive bolt of mental energy at the magic-locked door. There is a deafening shriek as the bolt glances off the granite surface

and explodes into the ceiling of the chamber. A shower of rock and dust rains down and a shock wave throws you to the floor. You realize that the door is held by a power far greater than your own.

If you have the Magical Power of Psychomancy and wish to use it, turn to **224**.

If you do not possess this skill, turn to **242**.

216

The broad, dark leaves of the Azawood tree are much sought after by alchemists and magicians, for the smoke of the burning leaves is said to grant protection against the forces of evil, and when dried and crushed, they can be sprinkled into various potions as a charm to increase magical potency.

You may break off three of these leaves and place them in your Herb Pouch. Remember to mark these Items on your *Action Chart* and don't forget that your Herb Pouch can hold only a maximum of six Items at any one time.

Turn to **257**

217

Night falls before Samu and Urik return. They have caught fresh game and Urik has discovered a store of Lianor. After the meat has been cooked over the fire and the food shared equally amongst the four of you, you discover that there is enough food for six Meals.

The following morning, you come to the region that men call the dead lands.

Turn to **195**.

218

Dwarfed by the looming shadow beast, you step forward. You offer the Black Rod of Shasarak with a terrible fear in your heart. The demon surges towards you and the Black Rod is drawn from your grasp.

Turn to **310**.

219 – *Illustration XIII*

A flash of gleaming white light leaps from your Staff, tearing open the darkness of the night. The pallid glow of the Kazim light shrinks, curls, and is utterly consumed by the force of your challenge. The Shadakine panic and run, casting their weapons and armour aside as they scatter in all directions. The soldiers of the Freedom Guild give vent to a victorious cry as Sado of the Long Knife leads them into the fortress of stone.

If your current WILLPOWER total is 15 or higher, turn to **48**.

If your current WILLPOWER total is 12 to 14, turn to **189**.

If your current WILLPOWER total is 11 or lower, turn to **114**.

220

As politely as you can, in the face of your obvious horror at the provender laid before you, you refuse. The deranged king's face contorts with fury. 'You dare to insult the Imperial Court of Gyanima!' he roars. At once the assembled nobles turn into a snarling mob.

'Guards!' The guards of the king, armed with javelins, enter the banqueting room. Their aim is deadly and



XIII. A flash of gleaming white light leaps from your staff, tearing open the darkness of the night

221-222

true. Before you have had the opportunity to defend yourself, your heart is impaled upon a steel point.

Your life and your quest end here.

221

You begin to climb the stairway but you have only taken a dozen steps when suddenly they collapse, dropping you, Urik and Hugi to the ground in a cloud of dust and rotten wood. You have lost 1 ENDURANCE point due to the fall.

As you are picking yourselves up, a crowd of wretches pours into the side street. A large, hairy man carrying a wooden club, gives you a malicious grin. 'Big trouble,' comments Urik, as you are led away by the mob.

Turn to **41**.

222

You tell Sado of your plan and he nods his approval. You leave the large cavern and ascend into the city. Standing on a city wall, you place the Pipes to your lips and blow. The sound is very high pitched and you can hear nothing but Urik places his hands to his ears. An hour later, you see some movement on the edge of the swamp: the Chaksu have answered your call just as you had hoped. Quickly, you leave the city wall and tell Sado to proceed with the rest of his plan – to attack the Shadakine garrison housed in a fortress in the heart of the city.

Disguised as ordinary citizens, you, Urik and Sado lie in wait on a street that borders the granite fortress of

the Shadakine. As the first of the Chaksu smashes down the east gate of the city, the alarm is raised and a host of Shadakine warriors pours out of the fortress to meet the peril.

Turn to **207**.

223

You drop your Shield of Sorcery and fire. At the cost of 2 WILLPOWER points, you hurl a bolt of force in the direction of the movement. A bright plume of flame erupts among the marsh reeds and a terrible scream breaks the heavy silence of the swamp. A Shadakine warrior staggers to his feet, a ball of raging fire. Wreathed in flames, he stumbles through the foliage, clawing desperately at his body before plunging into the lake to extinguish the fire. As he hits the water, the two Eijalfish dart towards him.

'We go?' asks Urik, half-rising to his feet.

If you wish to use this chance to swim away, turn to **74**.

If you would prefer to recreate your Shield of Sorcery instead, turn to **152**.

224

You stare at the magic-locked door and concentrate on the secret that will open its lock.

If you possess the Black Rod, turn to **96**.

If you do not possess this Special Item, turn to **170**.

225 – *Illustration XIV (overleaf)*

You enter a small clearing that is sheltered by a Toa-tree. Curled in its shade, you see a strange,

reptilian creature, four feet long, with large, soft eyes that look at you pleadingly with more than a hint of human intelligence. A large wound oozes blood from its side. Urik explains that it is a young Chaksu, a much sought after beast. The adult grows to as much as ten feet in height and Chaksu hide is an expensive commodity, much in demand due to its toughness and elasticity. It is said that the wealth of the city of Karnali that stands on the edge of the Gurlu Marshes was built upon its trade in Chaksu hides and hunters frequently come to the marshes in search of their fortune.

Chaksu are capable of a primitive form of mind speech and you can clearly sense its distress. As Urik moves to tend its wound, the Shadakine break from cover and come running straight at you. It was these same Shadakine that injured the young Chaksu, leaving it for dead when they sighted you and Urik.

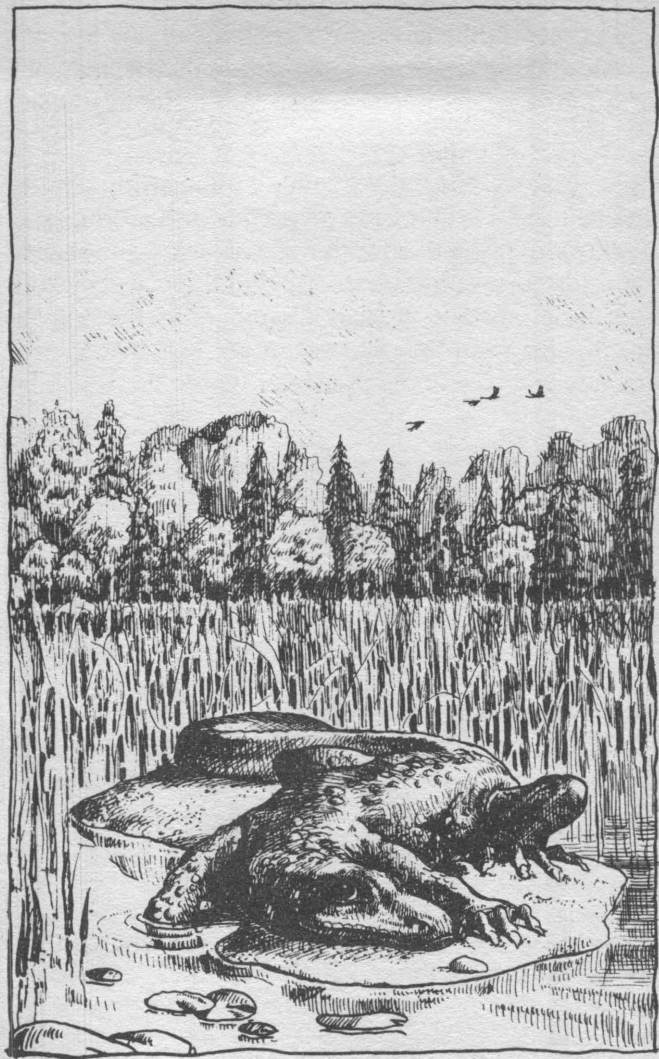
If you wish to make a stand in this clearing and protect the Chaksu from further harm, turn to **11**.

If you wish to flee, turn to **20**.

226

In a state of anxiety, you throw the force of your will into the formation of a Shield of Sorcery. Your undisciplined state of mind and the need for haste rather than precision, causes you to expend as much as 4 WILLPOWER points.

The air shimmers before you but you have acted wisely and just in time to deflect the volley of quarrels that flies towards you. At last, the Earth Elemental makes his presence known. A ripple, like a single fold



XIV. A young Chaksu, a much sought after beast

227-228

moving across the land, emerges beneath the feet of the Shadakine warriors. Then suddenly a miniature earthquake erupts beneath their feet scattering those not killed.

'Urik,' you say, 'is there anything you can do about the Eijalfish?' He gives you broad grin and produces a small boomerang lined with rows of tiny, razor-sharp teeth. He throws the boomerang at the eye stalks of the Eijalfish. Neatly, it slices an eye before twisting in the air and returning to land at his feet. A slick of green blood discolours the water where the Eijalfish was.

'Time to go?' says Urik, still grinning.

Turn to **74**.

227

If you wish to build a Shield of Sorcery around yourself at the cost of 2 WILLPOWER points, turn to **107**.

If you have the Mind Gem and wish to use it, turn to **63**.

If you wish to draw on the energy of the Astral plane and throw it against the creature at the cost of 3 WILLPOWER points, turn to **24**.

228

You call on the Element of Water in the language of the Elementals. In the space of a heartbeat, the waters of the lake swirl and rise high into the air dispersing the flames.

A ball of water and flame splashes your arm, burning through the material of your robe and scorching your

flesh. Lose 2 ENDURANCE points. However, the crisis has passed and the water settles back to its former self, the flames now extinguished.

Turn to **74**.

229

The rippling shadow of the Kleasá blurs momentarily and the yellow eyes like fangs shine with hunger that almost forces you to step back, such is the intensity of the malice glinting there.

If you wish to fire a beam at the Kleasá, using the power of the Black Rod, turn to **264**.

If you wish to throw the Black Rod at the Kleasá, turn to **172**.

If you wish to give the Black Rod to the Kleasá, turn to **218**.

230

With eyes closed, you send the power of your thought racing out to the Elemental plane, the realm of the powers of Earth, Air, Fire and Water. At the expense of 2 WILLPOWER points, you make contact but a strange phenomenon occurs that you have never encountered before. Instead of the silent aid of the Elementals, you are confronted by four humanoid beings of normal stature but each composed of the element that it represents. You give a grim smile; surely this is evidence of the growing mastery of your power? Each of the beings gives a bow, their arms opened wide in a gesture of humble service.

You must choose which Element you wish to aid you.

If you choose the Element of Air, turn to **7**.

(continued over)

231-233

If you choose the Element of Fire, turn to **34**.

If you choose the Element of Earth, turn to **51**.

If you choose the Element of Water, turn to **86**.

231

With closed eyes and at the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point you concentrate on the future. You try to uncover the nature of your peril and your vision warns you of an imminent attack. A wild, filth-encrusted man, dressed in rags jumps from the roof of a small building to your left. With a sure-footed side step you dodge aside and then turn to face him.

If you wish to fire a long-range attack at the man who claws the ground where you once stood, turn to **241**.

If you wish to close in and fight him hand-to-hand, turn to **83**.

If you wish to evade combat by running into a side street, turn to **84**.

232

Trembling as the icy cold washes through your body, you sink to your knees, hovering on the very edge of unconsciousness. The Deathgaunt fades and as you see it dematerialize, you fall into darkness.

Turn to **17**.

233

You tip the contents of the sack on to the rough stone floor. The moonlight illuminates a grisly assortment of bones and skulls. Hugi wanders over to your side, his curiosity aroused by the promise of plunder. He kicks the tangle of bones and uncovers a small velvet

pouch. Eagerly, he snatches the bag to his chest and rips open the drawstring. The little sack contains five Nobles and a Gold Tooth. Hugi grins, his teeth glinting in the ashen light as he swiftly pockets the money. He offers the Gold Tooth to you as your share of the loot. If you wish to keep the Gold Tooth, mark it on your *Action Chart* as a Special Item and keep it in a pocket of your robe.

The others are getting restless – they are eager to reach the surface. Without further delay you lead them up the stairs.

Turn to **245**.

234

You release a beam of radiant energy at the sickly yellow light of the Kazim Stone. The Kazim light flickers and fades briefly before surging back with renewed vigour. Your attack has cost you 2 WILL-POWER points.

If you wish to throw more WILLPOWER points into your attack, turn to **29**.

If you possess the Magical Power of Sorcery and wish to use it, turn to **6**.

If you have the Magical Power of Enchantment and wish to use it, turn to **289**.

235

Waist deep in the marsh, you keep perfectly still, counting the rapid beat of your heart but not daring even to breathe. Very gradually you feel yourself sinking. Urik has fallen on solid ground, but looks completely unharmed. You look towards him,

helplessly. He places a finger to his lips and slowly reaches out for your staff which, miraculously, you have managed to retain. After what seems an eternity, he grasps the end of your Staff and begins to pull. As the shouts of the Shadakine grow fainter, Urik manages to pull you free.

Just as you are thinking how lucky you have been, you hear a new and ominous sound, a discordant howling that makes your blood run cold. Cautiously, you raise your head and peer along the tops of the rushes. Standing in a small clearing, some two hundred yards off, you see a frightened-looking peasant – a Shadakine slave. He is barely able to control two snarling hounds, who tug at the lengths of chain attached to their harnesses. These are no ordinary hounds: they each have two heads with a single horn protruding from each, and a pair of out-sized fangs showing through their slavering jowls. Urik peers over your shoulder and swears under his breath. 'Big trouble, Wizard,' he mutters. 'They catch our scent pretty soon.'

Suddenly the peasant calls out. 'Master! Master!' he cries to a tall Shadakine, undoubtedly the officer in charge. 'The Magdi – they smell something.' The tall Shadakine officer screws up his eyes, a wicked smile playing across his face. You must act and quickly. There is no time to prepare any elaborate magic before the Shadakine officer releases his monstrous hounds.

A shallow waterway leads away from the bog and if you wish to enter this, turn to **25**.

If you prefer to attempt a long-range attack with your wizard's Staff, turn to **105**.

236

You plunge into the waters of the lake and splash your way to the far shore. Suddenly a volley of arrows burrows into your flesh, inflicting mortal wounds. Your body stiffens and you sink to the bottom of the lake.

Your life and your quest end here.

237

You wield the Power of Sorcery against the door. In a flash of sparks, your energy bolt ricochets off the granite surface and slams into the cavern floor inches from Hugi's feet. You sense that the door is held by a power far greater than your own.

If you have the Magical Power of Psychomancy and wish to use it, turn to **224**.

If you do not possess this skill, turn to **242**.

238

You draw out the red Mind Gem and stare at it for a few minutes – you have never used anything like this before. You must now decide on the most effective way of fighting the Kazim light that controls the Shadakine like puppets.

If you wish to attempt to control the mind of the user of the Kazim Stone, turn to **174**.

If you wish to try to wrest control of the minds of the approaching Shadakine, turn to **292**.

If you have the Magical Power of Psychomancy and wish to use it, turn to **198**.

239

The sky darkens and storm clouds gather to hurl gouts of rain upon you, as you are cut to pieces by the advancing Shadakine.

Your quest is over.

240

This wall of fire is nothing but an illusion, cast long ago by the wizard of Taklakot. Something of great importance must lie beyond this stone doorway. You pass through the flames and, as you cross the threshold, the flames simply melt away: you have dispelled the wizard's illusion.

Turn to **54**.

241

The wretch tumbles across the floor in a cloud of dirt and dust, stunned and dazed by the speed of your evasion. He never regains his feet; you throw a blast from your Staff that tears his body apart. Your attack has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **197**.

242

Gradually you become aware that the temperature is dropping. A chill wind rises from nowhere and a shiver runs down your spine. But it is not the cold air that causes you to shake, it is the familiar presence of a Deathgaunt. It materializes in the centre of the cavern, close to where you stand. 'Welcome,' it hisses, menacingly, its icy talons clutching at your life and soul. You fight to hold on to your life but it is a

fight you cannot win. Here, in the chamber of Shasarak the Wytch-king, the Deathgaunt draws on a power that you cannot resist and swiftly you are borne away from the realm of the living.

Your life and your quest end here.

243

You turn and run across the plain, half-dragging Urik along with you. 'Where is it?' you cry, desperately.

'Down . . . below our feet. I feel it but cannot see it.'

The Scree Wyrn slithers towards you and Samu battles the monster as it tries to coil around him.

If you wish to try to help Samu, turn to **262**.

If not, turn to **85**.

244

It is well known by experienced Wizards that Earth Elementals are notoriously stupid and slow to act. Before you have a chance to discover what kind of help was sent, the Shadakine have hacked you to pieces.

Your life and your quest end here.

245

Cautiously, you ascend the staircase, taking care not to slip on the slimy steps. As you near the surface, you catch your first glimpse of the full moon that shines down on the desolate plain of Taklakot. It is covered with pot-holes and as the night wind blows across them, they sigh and wail like some monstrous

246-247

creature in pain. 'How long has the full moon been shining?' you ask Urik.

'Me know not,' he says, shrugging his shoulders. Once more you push on across the moonlit valley, taking pains to avoid the many fissures and holes that crack the surface. 'I feel the Shadow Gate,' says Urik suddenly. 'It below the ground.'

At that moment there is a long, baleful cry and a gruesome sight emerges from the shadow of a crevice; a snake-like creature, its body is bone-white and skeletal. 'Scree Wyrn,' breathes Hugi, his voice shaking with fear.

If you wish to stand and fight the Scree Wyrn, turn to **273**.

If you wish to evade it, turn to **243**.

246

You discover a small door at the far end of the hall which opens on to a narrow alley. A loud banging warns you that the wretches are attempting to break down the door of the hall.

If you wish to stand and fight, turn to **260**.

If you wish to enter the alley, turn to **84**.

247 – *Illustration XV*

The Magdi crumples and falls lifelessly to the ground but still the Shadakine remain. They each wear a menacing grin, sensing victory. The tall Shadakine captain steps forward. 'Surrender yourself, Wizard. You cannot hope to win.' As he speaks, the Chaksu utters a long trilling cry like a forlorn plea for help. The captain laughs scornfully, but his smug, self-satisfied



XV. Two large Chaksu burst out of the undergrowth, roaring with fury in search of their lost offspring

expression changes to one of terrified disbelief as two large Chaksu burst out of the undergrowth, roaring with fury and searching for their lost offspring. The largest of the Chaksu, and mother of the young Chaksu you have protected, reaches out and grabs the Shadakine officer by the neck. With a deathly grip, she lifts him off the ground. His eyes bulge and his face turns purple, he is asphyxiated before she hurls him to the ground breaking his body in several places. With a triumphant howl, the Chaksu rush towards the Shadakine, who are running in all directions. Those Shadakine who are too slow of foot are mercilessly broken underfoot; the carnage is terrible to behold.

When no Shadakine remain, the Chaksu turn and bow low before the mother sweeps her baby into her arms. Although they do not speak, their thanks echo in your mind. They give you a small set of wooden pipes. Should you need help, you have only to blow the pipes and they will come to your aid. Gratefully, you accept the Chaksu Pipes and place this Special Item in a pocket in your robe. (Remember to mark it on your *Action Chart*.) Then, the Chaksu are gone, trampling the thick foliage as if it were matchwood. ““Great in might is the power of kindness”,’ says Urik, quoting from *The Way of the Shianti*.

““Oft comes help when help is unlooked for”,’ you reply, anxious not to be outdone. Urik chuckles.

Turn to **249**.

248

After you have been going down the passage for a few minutes, you notice that Hugi is missing.

If you wish to walk back along the passage and search for him, turn to **161**.

If you wish to look for Hugi in the throne room, turn to **300**.

If you wish to continue without Hugi, turn to **127**.

249

The darkening sky blossoms like a vast purple flower as the sun sets. The chirping of cicadas fills the air and you both decide to stop and rest. Urik gathers up handfuls of berries and offers you a strange new food, a blue fungus that grows beneath the soil. Cautiously you bite into it then smile with surprise, for it is delicious and tastes remarkably like cured meat.

'It is called Lianor,' says Urik. 'Grows everywhere, yet hard to find. The secret gift of the Earth. Urik sees the secret places below the ground. Is it good?' You nod and hungrily finish the delicious fungi. The Lianor is packed with goodness and you may restore 1 ENDURANCE point. You rest beneath a twisted Toa tree while Urik stands watch; eventually you drift off into a peaceful sleep.

Turn to **194**.

250

A patch of brush and foliage is pulled aside to reveal a concealed entrance. Following Sado, you enter a wide tunnel lit with torches. 'This tunnel leads all the way to our secret headquarters beneath the city of Karnali,' he says.

The tunnel twists and turns for many miles before opening into a large cavern. You and Urik are given

food and wine, and while you eat, he tells you of his army – the Freedom Guild, a rebel band resisting the rule of the Shadakine Empire.

‘Karnali was the last city to fall to Shasarak,’ Sado explains. ‘The spirit of unrest was never truly crushed, and so we fight on in our small way, striking blows against the Wytch-king whenever we may. Our attacks are based in the marshes, for we hope to avoid the retribution of the Warward, Kiro against our people by making him believe that we come from outside the city. The Shadakine waste much effort patrolling the marsh, seeking to flush us out, and attention is drawn away from the city. Only our fear that the citizens of Karnali would be punished for our actions, prevents us from rising up within the city walls. And,’ he shrugs, ‘our numbers are small while the Shadakine maintain a heavy garrison. But what of you?’

A thin man comes and begins to clear away your plates and empty wine goblets. He brushes past you and, to your amazement, attempts to pick your pocket. ‘You man!’ shouts Sado, ‘what do you think you’re doing? Guards, arrest this man.’

He turns and apologizes to you, explaining that the bulk of his army is recruited from the criminal ranks of the city. You explain your quest and the land that you seek. Sado’s eyes widen with astonishment. ‘Then the legends are true?’ he gapes. ‘The Shianti still exist!’

You nod. ‘If my quest should finally succeed and I retrieve the Moonstone, the full might of their wisdom and magic will be turned against Shasarak,’ you tell him.

'How the people would rejoice to know that a Shianti walked among us once more,' says Sado, 'though I understand the need for secrecy. Nevertheless,' he continues, his eyes lighting up, 'I would ask a boon of you. Tonight, we attempt our most daring stratagem against the corrupt rule of the Shadakine. Stand with us in battle tonight, aid us if you will. With the might of a Shianti Wizard in our ranks, who knows what we could achieve! Help the Freedom Guild, Grey Star, in our struggle to free the people of Karnali.'

He looks, a searching gaze on his face, with an intensity that almost crackles with energy.

If you have the Chaksu Pipes, turn to **101**.

If you do not have the Chaksu Pipes, or do not wish to use them, turn to **53**.

251

Samu engages the first of the guards and you are both surprised at his ability to match Samu's fighting skill, for the guard looks so ill and pale. However, he is a trained soldier and he fights with the preternatural strength of a madman.

You are distracted from Samu's confrontation as the second guard charges at you.

Mad Guard: COMBAT SKILL 20 ENDURANCE 25

If you win the combat, turn to **134**.

252

The evening is drawing in. Suddenly, Urik stops and bids you listen. Just off the waterway, you can hear the quiet whimpering of a creature in distress.

253-255

If you wish to investigate the sound, turn to **225**.

If you prefer to ignore the sound, turn to **249**.

253

Jaws clamped together with grim determination, you increase the power of your attack. Your nerves scream and your body protests at the concentration of life force that you are transmitting through the incandescence of your staff.

The Kazim light is faltering to a jaundiced glow in the sky. The Shadakine Wytch is weakening.

'Now I've got you!' you whisper, hoarsely, clinging to your power with every fibre of your being.

Turn to **286**.

254

You pass through the archway and into the main street. Immediately, the gatekeeper rings a cracked bell and hurries down the stairs of his guardroom to charge at you in a raging fury. He wields his broken sword with little skill but he seems possessed of unnatural strength and savagery.

If you choose to fight you must fight the Gatekeeper to the death.

Gatekeeper: COMBAT SKILL 10 ENDURANCE 28

If you wish to avoid the combat completely turn to **92**.

If you win the combat, turn to **158**.

255

A missile whistles past your shoulder and embeds

itself in the throat of the deadly Scree Wym. It is a razor-edged boomerang – Urik's weapon. The Scree Wym convulses violently, hurling Hugi to the ground close by your feet. The little Kundi man waits patiently for the creature's death throes to cease before daring to retrieve his weapon. With a swift tug, he wrenches it free and kicks the lifeless carcass into the crevice from which it emerged.

Turn to **85**.

256

The creature floats towards you across the Belzar River, its tattered robe shimmering with a silvery light. You can see the dim outline of an eyeless face locked in torment.

You send your thoughts racing out to the Elemental plane in a desperate plea for help but the Elementals do not answer your plea, for this is a Deathgaunt, one of the undead raised by the Wytch-king Shazarak, and against it the Elemental powers cannot prevail. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **169**.

257 – *Illustration XVI (overleaf)*

You soon realize that Urik's eccentric, shambling gait is not due to senility, but is one that he has adapted to suit his environment: his bow legs, the rolling rhythm of his stride, and his long tail, enable him to trot along the narrowest of branches with ease. Meanwhile, you are left tottering along, your back bent in a curious balancing act, and your eyes averted from the ground, far below.



XVI. You make out the awkward shape of an Ooslo bird, a strange creature

By mid-morning, you have reached the edge of the rain forest of the Azanam and are overlooking the Azagad Gorge. Far below, you can make out the sharp pinnacles of rock known as the 'Dragon's Teeth' which cover the canyon floor. It was through this gorge that you came in search of the Azanam, and the lost Kundi tribe. There it was that your friend and guide, Shan Li the merchant, died so terribly, devoured by a poisonous Quoku, the flying amphibians that inhabit the desolate land. Your silent reverie is interrupted by the sound of Urik calling to you from above. 'Azagad hold sad memories for Grey Star?' he enquires sympathetically. You nod your head, not thinking to ask how he knew what was on your mind. 'No time for sorrow now . . . time fly! Catch.' He throws you a length of vine cut from the tree on which he stands. You take up the creeper and look at it in puzzlement. 'Make yourself a harness and tie it on – good and tight,' he orders. You do as he suggests and before you can question his purpose, he produces a carved flute. He places it to his lips and begins to play a strange melody quite unlike any music you have ever heard before.

The music lasts for some time. Eventually, Urik puts down his pipe and looks expectantly at the sky. 'What now?' you ask, a hint of cynicism in your voice.

'Look . . . see!' he replies. Far away you can see a tiny speck on the skyline. 'Ooslo bird . . . love Kundi music.' The dark speck grows larger and soon you are able to make out the awkward, disproportionate shape of an Ooslo bird. Long-necked and small bodied, the bird's great wings flap without rhythm or grace. It is a strange creature.

As the bird draws nearer, Urik takes up his pipe once more and plays. Eventually, the bird settles on a nearby branch, craning its neck and twisting its head, an expression of rapt fascination in its big, saucer-like eyes. Urik ties the other end of vine into a lasso. He stops playing and, with amazing accuracy, throws the lasso over the Ooslo's head. As the loop of the vine falls and tightens around the bird's neck, it gives a squawk of alarm. Only now does the nature of Urik's plan to 'cover many miles in just one day', dawn on you.

Suddenly, you are dragged up into the air by the Ooslo bird. Urik gives an excited whoop of delight, leaping into the air and grabbing at your legs, dangling there as the bird flies higher. 'What do we do now?' you shout, swinging wildly in the air, the old Kundi man clinging to your legs and grinning maniacally.

'Ooslo bird fly home now . . . back to Gurlu Marshes. Ooslo – strong flier. Take us far . . . and good fun, eh?' The Ooslo bird squawks loudly and Urik hoots back with a howl of wild laughter.

Despite the discomfort of the vine that chafes under your arms and the dizzying heights of your aerial journey away from the Azanam, you finally admit to yourself that Urik's dangerous and eccentric plan has saved you many miles of walking and perhaps days of wandering. Far below, the landscape rushes by and by late afternoon the scenery has completely changed. Ahead lie the marshy wastes of the Gurlu Swamplands, the nesting place of the Ooslo bird.

The Ooslo bird begins to fly lower, its voluminous

wings flapping erratically as it checks its speed. You are wondering how you are to land safely when Urik shouts up to you. He is pointing ahead. 'Big trouble. Hunters,' he says. Sure enough, you can see a party of men armed with crossbows. With horror, you recognize the party to be comprised of Shadakine warriors, soldier slaves of the Wytch-king, Shasarak. It is evident that you have been spotted, as the warriors are running this way and that, shouting and busily priming their weapons. The ground speeds by over twenty feet below.

If you wish to untie the vine and risk the fall, turn to **78**.

If you prefer to attack the party of hunters with your Wizard's Staff, turn to **188**.

If you possess the Power of Sorcery and prefer to create a magical shield about yourself, turn to **278**.

258

Before you are able to fire your Wizard's staff, you must drop your Shield of Sorcery. Taking careful aim, you hurl the might of your Staff at the Eijalfish. Immediately, a sheet of flame blankets the water of the lake, throwing the charred body of the Eijalfish into the air atop a great waterspout. Radiant droplets of fire and water are flung in all directions across the boiling lake. The use of your Staff has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points. 'Time to go?' asks Urik.

If you wish to swim away, turn to **74**.

If you prefer to recall your Shield of Sorcery, turn to **263**.

259-262

259

At the sight of your Wizard's Staff and in the light of the damage it has inflicted on their fellows the wild-men rise up in fear and make a run for the door.

If you wish to stop them from leaving by attacking them, turn to **176**.

If you wish to conserve your energy and let them go, turn to **77**.

260

The wretches break down the door. Many fall dead before they are able to reach you, however, the overwhelming press of numbers is too much, even for the might of the Wizard's Staff. You are taken prisoner and kept in a dark room for many days before you are killed by the wretches of the Forbidden City.

You have failed in your quest.

261

'Fire!' you shout in the language of the Elementals. Suddenly the lake erupts into one gigantic fireball that engulfs both you and Urik in searing flame.

Your life and your mission have come to a fatal end here.

262

Staff raised above your head, you wait for your chance to strike. Samu's defence against the Scree Wyrms is a dizzying blur of sword strokes. The Wyrms' attack weakens and, as it does, you strike out with the

might of your Staff. A bolt of power shudders through the fearful creature as its body tenses before flopping lifelessly to the ground. Disdainfully, Samu gives the carcass a kick and the creature disappears through one of the pot-holes that litter the desolate plain.

Turn to **85**.



263

You begin to call up your Shield of Sorcery as before. Then suddenly you realize the reason for the movement amongst the Shadakine. The realization comes too late: a crossbow bolt thuds into your back, fired by a soldier who has crept behind you. With a shout of pain you fall, face forwards, into the water of the lake.

Your life and your quest end here.

264

You point the Rod at the Kleasá and its yellow beam of light strikes its body. You watch as the light is absorbed by the darkness of the creature; the Black Rod begins to feel warm.

If you wish to stop your attack, turn to **229**.

If you wish to continue with your attack, turn to **193**.

265

You are alerted by the cries of your companions. The Deathgaunt has returned! It ignores the efforts of the company to block its advance and speeds towards you.

If you have the Magical Power of Evocation, and wish to use it, turn to **80**.

If you do not have this Power, or do not wish to use it, turn to **171**.

266

With your Magical Power of Sorcery, you are able to free the giant's mind of the control that the slave-master has over him. At the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point, you extinguish the light of the jewel around his neck. It is a Mind Gem and, with the fading of its power, the giant returns to true consciousness. As he does, he turns and deals the slavemaster a killing blow. In turn, you raise your Staff and shear through the master link that holds the other slaves in chains. With a cheer, they break away from the battle.

If you wish to take the Mind Gem from the slave-

master's dead body, mark it as a Special Item on your *Action Chart*. The Mind Gem may be placed in your Backpack where it will count as a Backpack Item, or it can be worn around your neck. The giant offers you his thanks before turning to charge into the battle. You follow close behind.

Turn to **276**.

267

You climb the steeply sloping passage. An hour passes and Urik begins to sniff the air. 'Shadow Gate drawing near,' he says. You increase your pace to match the quickening beat of your heart. At last, the passage opens on to a small, circular cavern: exits lead north, east and west.

If you wish to take the passage leading north, turn to **23**.

If you wish to take the passage leading west, turn to **37**.

If you wish to take the passage leading east, turn to **46**.

If you possess the Magical Power of Prophecy and wish to use it, turn to **64**.

268

You decide to conserve your WILLPOWER in case you are required to face greater perils in the future. Now pick a number from the *Random Number Table*

If the number you have picked is 0-6, turn to **44**.

If the number you have picked is 7 or higher, turn to **118**.

269

You can see the dim outline of an eyeless tormented face. The shimmering, silvery creature is a Deathgaunt, an undead spirit freed by Shasarak, the Wytch-king, to roam the world of the living.

You attempt to cast the illusion of a warrior moving to attack it but the Deathgaunt is not fooled. It passes through the illusion and dispels it. The use of this magical Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **169**.

270

He throws open the door and you slip inside. Panting, Urik slams the door shut behind him. Within moments it seems that the whole of the mad court of the king is hammering on the door. You survey the interior of the room with dismay for there is no other exit. Samu is trying to keep the baying crowd from forcing the door but even his great strength cannot hold it shut for long.

'There must be another way out,' says Hugi, calmly, as if he has all the time in the world. He begins to run his hands along the walls of the small room, knocking with his knuckle against the smooth stone. Then he hears a hollow tone. 'Here!' he exclaims.

A wooden panel falls away in Hugi's hand to reveal the latch of a hidden door. It is locked but Hugi produces a wallet full of small knives and pieces of wire and selects a length of fine copper with which to pick the lock. 'Hurry!' says Samu. 'This door will not hold.'

Skilfully, Hugi opens the door to reveal a passage

leading downwards. You run down into its darkness, little knowing what lies ahead.

Turn to **168**.

271

No sooner have you slain the Magdi than the second hound comes charging towards you. Without hesitation, you turn and run, the Magdi in hot pursuit.

Turn to **185**.

272

'There!' says Urik, pointing. Beneath the opalescent light you see a great pool of darkness.

'Where?' you say 'I see only a dark . . . ' You stop abruptly in the middle of your sentence as a vast, looming shadow ripples and takes shape. Standing guard over the site of the Shadow Gate is a creature of shadow. A Kleasá, sent by Shasarak to thwart your final attempt to step through the door and into the Daziarn plane. These servants of evil feed on the energy of human souls, draining their being like a vampire drinking of life's blood.

Cowering within the black light of the Kleasá, you see Tanith – tormented prisoner of Shasarak and victim of the Kleasá.

If you wish to fire a blast from your Staff at the creature, turn to **113**.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery and wish to use it, turn to **122**.

If you have the Magical Power of Sorcery and the Mind Gem and wish to use them both against the Kleasá, turn to **143**.

(continued over)

273-275

If you have the Black Rod and wish to use it, turn to **229**.

273

The slithering Scree Wyrms snakes towards you, the bones of its opaque body clacking as they pass through the cinders and dust of the valley. You raise your Wizard's Staff and prepare for combat.

Scree Wyrms: COMBAT SKILL 18 ENDURANCE 22

If you win the combat in 3 rounds or less, turn to **85**.

If the fight lasts for 4 rounds or more, turn to **182**.

274

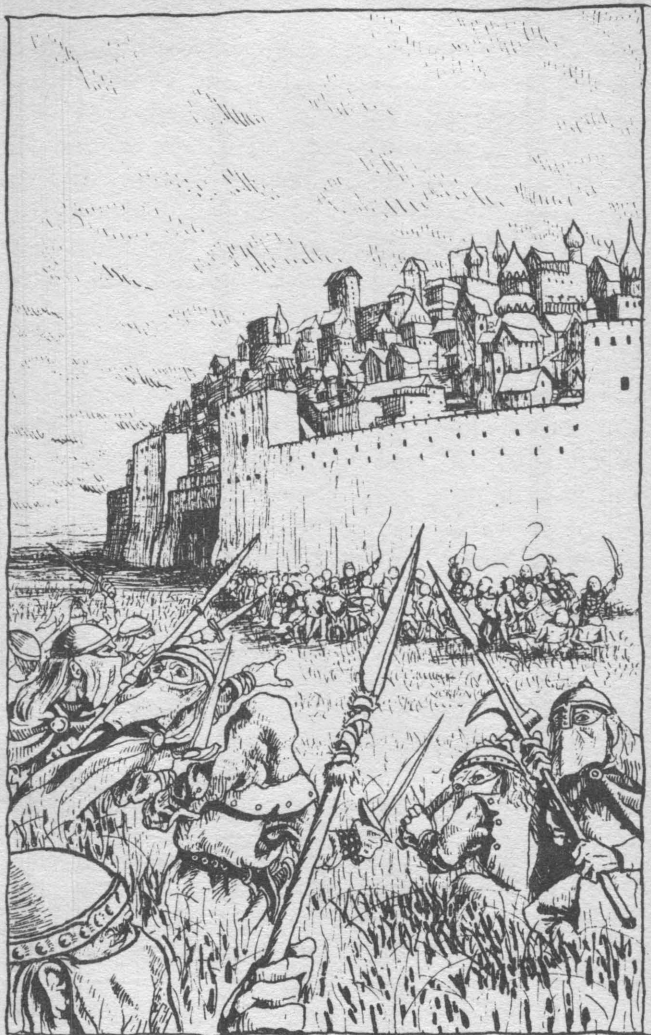
Taking careful aim, you hurl the might of your Wizard's Staff at the Eijalfish. A sheet of flame blankets the water of the lake, throwing the charred body of the Eijalfish high into the air atop a great waterspout. Radiant droplets of fire and water are flung in all directions across the boiling lake. The distant cries of the Shadakine warn you that they have seen the conflagration and now know your position. The use of your Staff has cost you 2 WILL-POWER points.

If you wish to use this chance to swim away, turn to **74**.

If you wish to wait and do battle with the Shadakine, turn to **180**.

275 – *Illustration XVII*

The following day, you, Urik and the fighters of the Freedom Guild are ensconced in the tall grass at the



XVII. Suddenly, the charge is sounded and the fighters of the Freedom Guild fall upon the slave train

edge of the marsh. In the distance gleams the city of Karnali overlooking the Suhni and Belzar Rivers. Along the Great Suhn Road that leads east away from Karnali, you see a long line of men, women and children: slaves of the Shadakine. Warriors walk up and down the line, brandishing flails with needless ferocity. Suddenly, the charge is sounded and a wave of men pours out of the brush and runs towards the column of slaves.

The Shadakine guards falls into defensive positions along the road, but the stealth of the ambush outmanoeuvres them and they have no time to deploy effectively. 'Shall we?' you ask Urik. He grins broadly and gives vent to a bellowing yell before shambling out of the brush towards the fray as fast as his old bones will allow. You follow behind.

Turn to **144**.

276

The battle is nearly won. Able to avoid killing the slaves, the veiled soldiers overwhelm the Shadakine slave guards. As the last cries of battle fade away, the few surviving Shadakine attempt to flee: to a man they are cut down without mercy.

One of the masked attackers approaches you. 'Stranger' he says, 'our leader, Sado of the Long Knife, wishes to speak to you.' You follow the soldier and arrive before Sado of the Long Knife. He has put aside his veil to reveal a lean, haggard face and eyes of piercing blue.

'My thanks,' says Sado with a polite bow. 'Your timely arrival was most welcome. We return now to

the marshes; the attack will not have gone unnoticed and we must move swiftly to avoid the retribution of the Shadakine of Karnali. Will you accompany us?"

You and Urik walk beside Sado as his small army of a hundred men move into the cover of the marshes.

Turn to **250**.

277

The abruptness of Samu's fall drags you forward with a jolt. At the same time the Rope is pulled from Hugi and Urik's grasp.

The Rope is still tied around your waist but, already weakened by the rigours of your adventure, you lack the strength to hold Samu's bulk and you too are dragged into the fast running waters of the Belzar River. The current and the poisonous black waters swiftly overwhelm you.

Your life and your quest end here.

278

You shape the force of your will, building a shimmering Shield of Sorcery around yourself at the cost of 2 WILLPOWER points. This will only serve as protection for yourself.

If you wish to expend further WILLPOWER points and extend your Shield to protect Urik, turn to **160**.

If you wish also to include the Ooslo bird behind your Shield, at a still greater cost of WILLPOWER points, turn to **192**.

If you wish to conserve WILLPOWER points, turn to **268**.

279

You draw on the energy of the Astral plane and focus it upon the door.

If you wish to use 2 WILLPOWER points in your attempt to open the door, turn to **288**.

If you wish to use 3 WILLPOWER points in your attempt, turn to **237**.

If you wish to use 4 WILLPOWER points in your attempt, turn to **215**.

280

With a tremendous effort, you endure the rigours of the mental duel for over an hour but eventually you succumb to the power of the stone. You sink into a dark well of insanity. The Kazim stone breaks your spirit and your will to live and finally the tiny conscious part of your being still remaining lets go and your heart forgets to beat.

Your life and your quest end here.

281

You concentrate your mind on the events of the near future at a cost of 1 WILLPOWER point. If you do not accept the king's offer, he will have you killed. Your vision extends no further than this.

Turn to **108**.

282

The Special Item that you hold in your hand is a Mind Gem. The magical jewel holds the mind of the giant under its malign control. With a small exertion of your will, you snuff out the Mind Gem's light. Awareness

floods back into the giant's mind as he recovers control of his own mind. 'My thanks,' he bellows. If you wish to keep the Mind Gem, you may wear it round your neck.

You raise your Staff and, at the cost of 1 WILLPOWER point, use it to shear through the master link that holds the Shadakine slaves in chains. They give a cheer and break away from the battle in great numbers.

Turn to **276**.

283

You turn and run, plunging into the cover of the dense undergrowth. With a gasp of pain, you suddenly pitch forward, landing face downwards in the muck of the swamp with a crossbow bolt protruding from your shoulder. You lose 3 ENDURANCE points. With a groan, you attempt to rise to your feet but Urik urges you to remain where you are. The shouts and movements of the Shadakine tell you that they are very close.

If you wish to get to your feet and continue with your escape, turn to **98**.

If you wish to follow Urik's advice, turn to **151**.

284

You descend the stairway with as much dignity as you can muster. The dancers continue as if your appearance were the most natural thing in the world. The old man gets to his feet and waves a regal hand.

'Welcome friends. Welcome!' he says. 'Your arrival is most timely. The banquet is about to begin. Pray tell

285-286

me your names.' His mad, red-rimmed eyes glint dangerously.

If you wish to continue with your bluff, turn to **76**.
If you wish to make a run for it, turn to **296**.

285

A great gust of wind blows down the shaft towards the flame but the fire does not flicker. Suddenly, you realize that the wall of fire is an illusion. The use of this Power has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **240**.



286

Beads of perspiration form on your forehead and your whole body trembles with the strain of sustaining your attack. Your senses whirl and you feel as if you are going to black out. 'Now!' you shout to Sado, 'Charge your men . . . now!' you repeat through clenched teeth.

Instantly, Sado gives the command and his small heroic army charges forward with blood-curdling cries. The light above the Shadakine warriors is abruptly snuffed out and the Shadakine quail with fear.

If your current WILLPOWER total is 12 or higher, turn to **48**.

If your current WILLPOWER total is 11 or lower, turn to **189**.

287

‘Sado, I am sorry but I must refuse. My quest demands it.’

A look of fury passes momentarily over Sado’s face. ‘Very well,’ he answers sadly. ‘Then I will ensure your safe conduct from the city to aid you on your quest.’

A small escort of soldiers in disguise leads you and Urik through the city streets. Suddenly, you notice that you are passing the stone fortress of the Shadakine – you have been duped by Sado, he has gone ahead with his plan. A huge mob of Karnalese civilians armed with sticks and stones charges towards the fortress, and you are trapped between the enraged mob and the Shadakine who are leaving the fortress to counter-attack. Urik curses as you turn to face the Shadakine.

If you have the Chaksu Pipes and wish to use them, turn to **3**.

If you have the Power of Enchantment and wish to conceal your appearance, turn to **203**.

If you have the Magical Power of Elementalism and wish to use it, turn to **21**.

(continued over)

288-290

If you wish to release a long-range attack at the advancing Shadakine, turn to **303**.

288

You hurl the force of your will against the door. The rock trembles and a crackle of energy snakes across its surface, but to no avail. The door is held by a force far greater than your own.

If you have the Magical Power of Psychomancy and wish to use it, turn to **224**.

If you do not possess this skill, or do not wish to use it, turn to **242**.

289

Beset by perils and magic, the Shadakine line breaks in fear and confusion. Sado of the Long Knife gives the command and his brave army surges forward with a victorious cry to storm the fortress. The use of the power of Enchantment has cost you 2 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **48**.

290

You concentrate hard, sending your thought to the Elemental plane of existence. Huminoid representatives of the four Elements of Earth, Air, Wind and Water appear before you and you must choose which one you wish to aid you.

If you choose Air, turn to **47**.

If you choose Fire, turn to **36**.

If you choose Earth, turn to **58**.

If you choose Water, turn to **69**.

291

It is dawn and you are sweating with a fever (lose 2 ENDURANCE points).

You wake your companions and begin your journey without delay, your heart still quaking with fear. Your leaden feet carry you through the fields of dust and the grim monotony of the landscape dampens your spirits. Your companions eye you with concern. When you stumble and fall with weariness, they lift you to your feet and you are comforted a little.

Suddenly Hugi gives a cry of alarm and you spin round. You gasp with fear as you see three Death-gaunts drifting after you, their arms outstretched in a sinister greeting, as if you were already one of their kind. You hear their evil voices whispering insidiously in your mind. 'Go no further – only doom awaits you,' they chant.

If you have the Magical power of Evocation and wish to use it, turn to **145**.

If you prefer to continue, turn to **154**.

292

You draw the power of the Astral plane to the Jewel and it begins to glow. However, as you try to impose your will upon the Shadakine, you realize that the Mind Gem's power can only be brought to bear on one mind at a time. You have used 1 WILLPOWER point in your attempt.

If you wish to attempt to control the mind of the user of the Kazim Stone, turn to **174**.

If you have the Magical Power of Enchantment and wish to use it against the Shadakine, turn to **146**.

293-294

If you wish to challenge the power of the Kazim Stone with your Staff, turn to **208**.

293

You reach out to the Elemental plane and ask for the help of the Elementals. Representatives of the four Elements appear before you and you must choose which one you wish to help you.

If you wish to be aided by the Element of Air, turn to **285**.

If you wish to be aided by the Element of Earth, turn to **187**.

If you wish to be aided by the Element of Water, turn to **240**.

If you wish to be aided by the Element of Fire, turn to **43**.

294

With your heart pounding you scamper across the bridge; a slight tremor runs through the stone. 'I think its starting to go!' you shout across to Samu.

Gingerly, he starts to cross but as he reaches the middle of the bridge, the stone cracks and, abruptly, Samu disappears from view. You rush to the edge of the collapsing bridge and look down into the water. Briefly, you see a pair of flailing arms as Samu struggles valiantly against the fast current, and then he is gone. The bridge continues to crumble but, unheeding, you stare at the black water, your eyes blurred with tears.

'Grey Star!' Urik shouts. 'Come away . . . the bridge!' Heedless of its fragile state, you walk slowly from the

bridge, too numb to speak. Without looking back, the three of you walk towards the gate of the Forbidden City in silence.

Turn to **124**.

295

As the creature draws nearer, hurriedly you scratch a pentacle into the dusty ground with the tip of your Staff. The shining being is a Deathgaunt, an undead spirit raised by Shasarak to roam the realm of the living. As you begin to chant the warding words of Evocation, the creature hesitates, then stops, hanging as if suspended just above the ground. The use of this Magical Power has cost you 3 WILLPOWER points.

Turn to **72**.

296

The elegance of the mime is interrupted by the clatter of your feet and shout of the king, who stares at you, furiously. 'Stop them!' he cries.

The mad guardsmen of the insane king's court charge you, with a mass of raving courtiers at their back.

Turn to **251**.

297

Taking a deep breath, you plunge into the water. Urik follows directly after. Hampered by your Staff and Backpack you make slow progress and soon your lungs feel ready to burst but you cannot surface for air. You must discard your Backpack to avoid drown-

ing. (Remember to cross this item and all its contents from your *Action Chart*.)

Freed of the encumbrance of your Backpack, you kick out and soon reach the edge of the lake. You break the surface, gulping at the air as you scramble away from the flames. As you cross from the water to the land, you suffer mild burns on the exposed flesh of your hands (lose 1 ENDURANCE point).

Injured and exhausted, you throw yourself into the haven of tall marsh grass. Urik staggers to your side, water cascading from his sodden clothes. You lie still for a while to regain your breath, then suddenly a chilling howl freezes your blood. Urik cocks his head to one side, then wearily clambers to his feet. 'They have hunting dogs,' he says, urgently. 'One . . . maybe two terrible Magdi Hounds.' He points to a shallow waterway that disappears through the tall grass like a trail. 'We move now – slow and silent. Keep to water. Hide scent. Come.'

You both creep away, stepping tentatively along the channel between the reeds as a knot of fear rises in your stomach.

Turn to **25**.

298 – *Illustration XVIII*

It is a sleep that gives you no rest. Through a dark haze, the ghastly figure of Shasarak appears. 'And still you persist – fool!' he spits. 'I see that my friends were unable to make you see the error of your ways,' he says, scornfully. 'Perhaps this will better persuade you.'



XVIII: Through a dark haze, the ghastly figure of Shasarak appears

With a gesture of his ruined hand, he shows you the vision of a young girl, sobbing, surrounded by a pool of darkness. With a dull ache in your heart you recognize the girl. It is Tanith, the Wytch girl who helped you escape from a Shadakine prison in the Port of Suhm and finally leapt to her death to save you. Now, trapped upon another plane, she weeps alone, her eyes wild with fear. 'Tanith!' you call into the void of your dream.

Shasarak laughs, savagely. 'She cannot hear you, Wizard. No one can hear her now. She is mine to torment as and when I wish. And my imagination knows no limit in the matter of torment – in that field I rule supreme.' The Wytch-king begins to laugh with malicious glee, relishing Tanith's plight and your misery at witnessing it. 'Turn aside, Grey Star, or she is lost.' With the howl of Shasarak's mocking laughter ringing in your ears, you wake with a start. You have lost 1 ENDURANCE point and 1 WILLPOWER point during the night.

In the grey light of dawn you trudge towards the Forbidden City, your companions walking silently by your side. Soon, you are able to see the outline of the city in the distance. A few more hours and you will be standing before its gates. There is only one solution to the sinking of your heart and the mounting ache that racks your mind: you must complete your quest.

Turn to **52**.

You take out one of the huge leaves and unfold it. Before going to sleep, you soak the leaf in the river and place it on the dying embers of the fire. The

smoke of the Azawood leaf should, hopefully, prevent the Deathgaunt from approaching. You have two Azawood leaves remaining. Adjust your *Action Chart* accordingly.

The pungent aroma of the Azawood leaves fills your nostrils as you sink into a deep sleep.

Turn to **66**.

300

You enter the throne room once more and see Hugi, scratching around in the dark, searching the chamber and examining the walls. He turns with a startled look and regards you with a guilty expression.

‘Still looking for treasure?’ you say.

He smiles nervously and shrugs. ‘I thought there might be another way out of here,’ he says.

‘Thief is good liar,’ says Urik, nodding to himself.

Turn to **38**.



301

You burst into the crumbling house and Hugi slams the door shut. The room is full of cobwebs and shadows. As your eyes adjust to the light, you see a huddle of ragged people gnawing on a large bone. They look at you with starving eyes and the largest gets up and charges at you with an animal yell.

Wildman: COMBAT SKILL 14 ENDURANCE 20

If you win the combat, turn to **259**.



302

You walk along the dark passage and enter the throne room once more. Hugi is there, searching the chamber and testing the walls by knocking them. He turns with a startled expression and looks at you, guiltily.

'Still looking for treasure?' you say. He smiles nervously and shrugs.

'I thought there might be another way out of the palace,' he says.

Turn to **38**.

303

As the line of Shadakine warriors charge towards you, one of them, a burly spearman, charges straight at you with a blood-curdling scream. You raise your staff and attack.

Turn to **159**.

304

You turn to Samu. 'Guard this entrance,' you say to him, 'I'm going down.' Gingerly, you lower yourself into a hole and begin to clamber down. Halfway down the pot-hole, you slip and fall to the bottom, slightly injuring your leg, though you are still able to walk on it. You lose 1 ENDURANCE point.

Urik follows you down. After a life spent among the tree tops, he has no difficulty with the climb. You are both standing in the midst of a honeycombed labyrinth of stone. The light of the full moon streams through the holes in the surface of the plain and the maze is bright with translucent light.

Urik sniffs the air and points. 'Follow me.' With tension mounting in your heart, you prepare to meet your goal.

Turn to **272**.

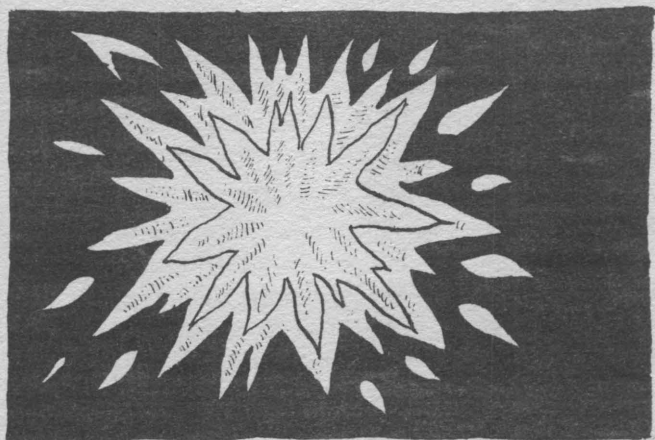
The Special Item that you hold in your hand is a Mind Gem. As the light of the jewel fades, Samu, the giant slave, shakes his head and then looks at you, a spark of intelligence in his eyes as he recovers the control of his mind.

'My thanks,' he says with a bow.

With one mighty blow, Samu shatters the master link that holds the Shadakine slaves in chains. They give a cheer and break away from the battle.

If you wish to keep the Mind Gem, you may wear it around your neck or keep it in your Backpack where it will count as a Backpack Item.

Now turn to **276**.



You leave the banqueting room and walk down the

passage to enter the throne room once more. Hugi is there, searching and scratching around the dark chamber. As you walk into the room he turns with a startled expression on his face. 'Ah, there you are!' he says guiltily, with a nervous laugh.

'Still looking for treasure eh, thief?' says Samu with a grim look.

Hugi shrugs sheepishly by way of apology.

'I thought there might be another way out of here,' he says.

Turn to **38**.

307 — *Illustration XIX (overleaf)*

You cause the tip of your staff to emit a dim glow that illuminates the interior of your prison. You are in a large, low-ceilinged chamber, littered with shards of fallen masonry. Urik and Hugi lie in a far corner. They both remain silent. What use are words now? (The cost of creating a light from your staff has been 1 WILLPOWER point.)

You curse your bad luck. You are sure that some wizardry is required to free you from this prison, but you are weak and still have to reach Desolation Valley. It is sure to hold other dangers for you. You are suddenly distracted from this moody introspection by the sound of shouting voices, and the noise of a struggle coming from above. Suddenly, the door of the chamber is thrown open. Looking down on you is the figure of Samu, smiling broadly, sword in hand. 'How?' you cry in disbelief.



XIX. Samu turns and slashes at the wretches who try to drag him from the door

'The river carried me downstream before I was able to resist its current,' says Samu, 'I've been looking for you everywhere. Luckily for you, I was nearby when the wretches of this city caught you. I saw them bring you to this crypt. Wait a moment.' Swiftly, he turns and slashes at a wretch who is trying to drag him away from the door. He swats his assailant like a fly then turns to face you once more. 'Come, we must hurry.'

He pulls each of you out in turn, and stops to deliver a kick at two wretches blocking a doorway that leads from the crypt. 'This way,' he says, indicating a narrow passage that leads upwards. 'These creatures seem reluctant to travel this passage. They will not follow, I think.'

You run down the passage as fast as you can with Samu protecting the rear. At the end of the passage is a heavy door. Urik swings it open and you all dash through.

Turn to **26**.

308

As the last of the Wretches falls to the ground, you hear the angry roar of a mob that has formed outside. Desperately, you look around the room and try to find another exit.

Turn to **246**.

309

You call out to the Element of Earth in the strange language of the Elemental plane. As the fire around you burns brighter, the exposed flesh on your face and hands suffers minor burns; lose 2 ENDURANCE

points. Then, looming like a giant shadow in the fire, the huge form of an Earth Demon storms towards you. It is impervious to the flames and quickly it reaches towards you with huge, gnarled hands, sweeping you both up into a protective embrace. You can smell the damp scent of freshly turned soil as it holds you close. 'Where?' it asks impassively.

Earth elementals are noted for their stupidity but when you point to the far edge of the bank, it begins to stride forward deliberately. Its vast bulk shields you from the burning lake and it sets you down safely among the chest-high marsh grass. Wordlessly, it turns away, slowly melting back into the ground until it is gone.

A shallow waterway leads out of the marsh grass, cutting through it like a path. Suddenly, a terrible sound rends the air, a howling that holds your spine in an icy grip. The Shadakine have hunting dogs – the ferocious Magdi Hounds.

Turn to **25**.

310 – *Illustration XX*

Despite the soullessness of the being, the Kleasá emits a great howling yell of triumph and expands like a great black cloud of terror. With the Black Rod in its possession it is freed from the mastery of Shasarak – free to roam the universe at will.

As the Kleasá soars up into the air, its shape extended like a great bat's wing, the Shadow Gate truly appears before you: a great, grey arch, a window to other worlds filled with formless mists and nightmare



XX. The Kleasá emits a great howling yell of triumph

glimpses. Tanith stands before you on the other side of the threshold and, without hesitation, you step through.

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RANDOM NUMBER TABLE

4	1	6	8	4	2	5	0	4	8
6	5	9	4	6	0	5	9	5	7
9	6	2	7	9	2	8	2	5	6
8	7	1	3	8	1	6	8	4	0
3	1	1	6	3	7	5	6	2	0
6	6	8	1	6	2	5	0	4	8
0	9	4	5	0	0	5	9	5	7
3	2	7	6	3	2	8	2	5	6
4	1	3	7	4	1	6	8	4	0
4	1	6	1	4	7	5	6	2	0

COMBAT RULES SUMMARY

1. Calculate your COMBAT SKILL based on the weapon that you are using.
2. Subtract the COMBAT SKILL of your enemy from this total. This number = Combat Ratio.
3. If using your Wizard's Staff, note the number of WILLPOWER points you wish to expend.
4. Turn to *Combat Results Table*.
5. Find your Combat Ratio on the top of chart and cross reference to random number you have picked. (E indicates loss of ENDURANCE points to Enemy. GS indicates loss of ENDURANCE points to Grey Star.)
6. Multiply the enemy's lost ENDURANCE points by the number of WILLPOWER points used.
7. Continue the combat from Stage 3 until one character is dead. This is when ENDURANCE points of either character fall to 0.

TO EVADE COMBAT

1. You may only evade combat when the text of the adventure offers you the opportunity.
2. You undertake one round of combat in the usual way. All points lost by the enemy are ignored, only Grey Star loses ENDURANCE points.
3. If the book offers the chance of taking evasive action in place of combat, it can be taken in the first round of combat or any subsequent round.

COMBAT RES

Combat Ratio

Random Number

	-11 OR GREATER		-10/-9		-8/-7		-6/-5		-4/-3		-2/-1	
1	E	-0	E	-0	E	-0	E	-0	E	-1	E	-2
	GS	K	GS	K	GS	-8	GS	-6	GS	-6	GS	-5
2	E	-0	E	-0	E	-0	E	-1	E	-2	E	-3
	GS	K	GS	-8	GS	-7	GS	-6	GS	-5	GS	-5
3	E	-0	E	-0	E	-1	E	-2	E	-3	E	-4
	GS	-8	GS	-7	GS	-6	GS	-5	GS	-5	GS	-4
4	E	-0	E	-1	E	-2	E	-3	E	-4	E	-5
	GS	-8	GS	-7	GS	-6	GS	-5	GS	-4	GS	-4
5	E	-1	E	-2	E	-3	E	-4	E	-5	E	-6
	GS	-7	GS	-6	GS	-5	GS	-4	GS	-4	GS	-3
6	E	-2	E	-3	E	-4	E	-5	E	-6	E	-7
	GS	-6	GS	-6	GS	-5	GS	-4	GS	-3	GS	-2
7	E	-3	E	-4	E	-5	E	-6	E	-7	E	-8
	GS	-5	GS	-5	GS	-4	GS	-3	GS	-2	GS	-2
8	E	-4	E	-5	E	-6	E	-7	E	-8	E	-9
	GS	-4	GS	-4	GS	-3	GS	-2	GS	-1	GS	-1
9	E	-5	E	-6	E	-7	E	-8	E	-9	E	-10
	GS	-3	GS	-3	GS	-2	GS	-0	GS	-0	GS	-0
0	E	-6	E	-7	E	-8	E	-9	E	-10	E	-11
	GS	-0	GS	-0	GS	-0	GS	-0	GS	-0	GS	-0

E = ENEMY

GS = GREY STAR

ULTS TABLE

0/0	+1/+2	+3/+4	+5/+6	+7/+8	+9/+10	+11 OR GREATER	
E -3	E -4	E -5	E -6	E -7	E -8	E -9	1
GS -5	GS -5	GS -4	GS -4	GS -4	GS -3	GS -3	
E -4	E -5	E -6	E -7	E -8	E -9	E -10	2
GS -4	GS -4	GS -3	GS -3	GS -3	GS -3	GS -2	
E -5	E -6	E -7	E -8	E -9	E -10	E -11	3
GS -4	GS -3	GS -3	GS -3	GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	
E -6	E -7	E -8	E -9	E -10	E -11	E -12	4
GS -3	GS -3	GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	
E -7	E -8	E -9	E -10	E -11	E -12	E -14	5
GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	GS -1	
E -8	E -9	E -10	E -11	E -12	E -14	E -16	6
GS -2	GS -2	GS -2	GS -1	GS -1	GS -1	GS -1	
E -9	E -10	E -11	E -12	E -14	E -16	E -18	7
GS -1	GS -1	GS -1	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	
E -10	E -11	E -12	E -14	E -16	E -18	E K	8
GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	
E -11	E -12	E -14	E -16	E -18	E K	E K	9
GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	
E -12	E -14	E -16	E -18	E K	E K	E K	0
GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	GS -0	

K = AUTOMATICALLY KILLED

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