

SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

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Issue 9/10

Winter/Spring 1981



FACT

- The real heroic barbarians — L. Sprague de Camp
- The farmers, chieftains, bards and pirates of ancient Ireland — Keith Taylor
- Languages in alien tongues — C.J. Cherryh
- Early cannon and gounnes: Them Black Powder Blues — J.E. Coplin
- Valkyries: amazons of the north

FICTION

- God & Golem, Inc. — The legends of sorcerous ambition — Al Sirols
- The linden's Song — Roger Zelazny
- Endgame — Victor Milan

GAMING

- More adventures on Greysmoke — Larry D'Illio
- The gold exchange in T&T — Paul O'Connor
- a complete GM adventure AND a mini-solo for T&T

Special Double Issue

TROLL TALK

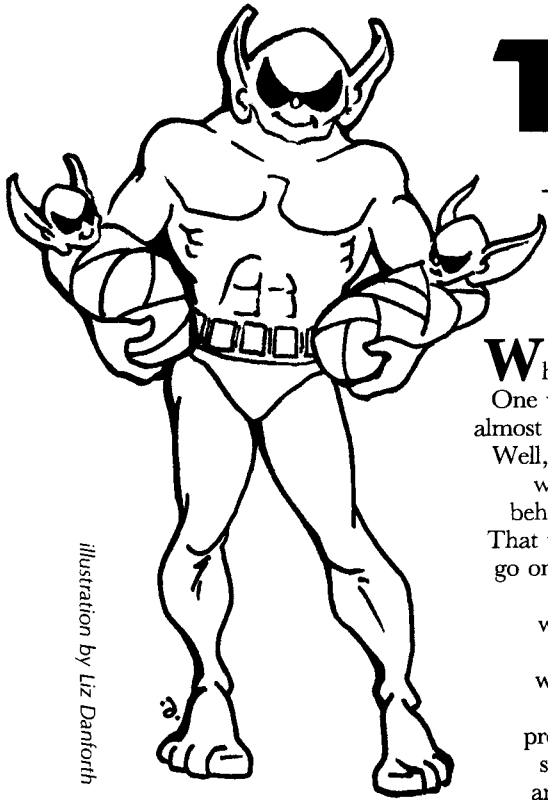


illustration by Liz Danforth

Why a *double issue*? One you had to wait almost six months for? Well, it's *not* because we were running behind time on #9. That was all ready to go on schedule. And *not* because we were feeling lazy or because we were too crushed under other projects (though it seems we always are). The reasons

are a bit too twisted to go into any detail, but the end result was that it was considerably advantageous *not* to publish an issue between December and March. So we saved up everything that had already been done for SA9, and arranged to print this double issue instead — and here we are (finally)!

Speaking of “crush of projects” . . . in the last editorial I mentioned we had quite a few projects on the burner. Several people asked what the projects were, when they'd come out, how much everything was going to cost, and when could they buy them! Unfortunately, I can't write up a list like that. It would be out of date and criminally erroneous within weeks. Moreover, that's what “Arcane Graffiti” is *all about* — news and new releases from other companies *and* from us. But our plans often go astray — if you look in AG this issue you'll see a note that *Sea of Mystery* (Solo 14) won't be out until April. When we noted it in SA8, it looked like there would be no stopping a January release . . .

Things should start improving, though, now that we have two more people helping out part-time. We ought to be able to dig down to the layers labelled “get to these when you can” . . .

On another subject, one of our fellow gaming magazines recently asked (albeit indirectly), “I wonder what happened to the relationship between Flying Buffalo and Ken St. Andre?” Apparently this question came up in response to the news that Ken had written *Toughest Dungeon in the World* for Judges Guild, and is in the middle of two projects for the Chaosium. The answer is perhaps disappointingly simple: nothing has happened. Ken is a prolific and capable writer/designer and because he lives in Phoenix, he brings a lot of his material here. He has a vested interest in T&T, naturally. But he does not submit everything he writes to Buffalo, nor does anyone here expect him to. Neither is Buffalo under any obligation to print what *any* of us write (except my editorial soapboxing, of course! That comes with the costume . . .). Anyway, we have always been happy with Ken's writing, and there's no question we'll publish more from him in the future. For starters, SA11 is slated to contain an article from Ken on *Arduin*-derived T&T character types. He has also mentioned that he's in the throes of

a new solo for us: a murder-mystery/adventure on the streets of Khazan! I suspect there would be even more in the works (for whatever publishers) were it not for his pbm Khazan game which is well underway, but guzzling his free time, all the same. So there you have it — all the gory details. Big deal, right?

That's about it for this issue. Until the next one . . . may your dice always fall face up!

Liz Danforth

IN THIS ISSUE

To start with what's *not* in this issue: the advertised John the Balladeer story from Manly Wade Wellman. It is with considerable distress that I decided not to print the story in this issue — but by the eleventh hour, the artwork still had not arrived. Lee Brown Coye illustrated the tale for us, and despite the most professional precautions, it seems the US Postal misService has devoured the originals. Out of consideration for the unique talents of an author-artist pairing that stretches back to the original *Weird Tales*, and forward to the award-winning Carcosa edition of *Worse Things Waiting*, and because I have this naive and childlike fantasy that the USPS will cough up the artwork between now and the publication of issue 11, the story isn't printed here. The story will appear in SA11 — *with* Lee Brown Coye's incomparable artwork. I hope.

Even without the John story, I think you will enjoy this issue. In the way of fiction, you'll find three short-short tales, all a bit strange. **Roger Zelazny's** Dilvish is a familiar character in these pages, once again illustrated by the powerful but delicate touch of **Stephan Peregrine**. Having achieved acclaim in the past as a twisted humorist with pen and ink, **Al Sirois** has more recently turned his talents to fiction. **God & Golem, Inc.** is his latest production and bears the traces of someone all too familiar with FRP gaming! Finally in the fiction department is a dark piece of SF — **Endgame** — dealing with an entirely different sort of gaming. The author is **Victor Milan**, who has co-authored the *War of the Powers* trilogy with Robert Vardeman.

C.J. Cherryh is well known for her *Faded Sun* novels, and her uncanny ability to depict a realistic, believable, but utterly alien people. One aspect of this is explored in her article, **In Alien Tongues**. **L. Sprague de Camp** is another name with which I'm certain you are all familiar — needless to say, he has more than a passing familiarity with “barbarians” as found in fiction and in the real world. His article, **The Heroic Barbarian**, may upset a few fond fantasies. **Keith Taylor** is an Australian, but his heart is firmly planted in the soil of Erin. Many of our fantasy traditions derive from the Celtic mythos, and **Farmers, Chieftains, Bards, & Pirates** provides a long look at the Celtic peoples. His familiarity with the time period has supplied the background for his fantasy novel *Bard*, forthcoming from Ace.

The list goes on and on, and my recommendation is to jump into the issue — there's a look at the introduction of firearms into sword-and-steel Europe by **J.E. Coplin**, two *Know Your Foe* offerings, another dramatization from **Larry DiTillio's** *Greysmoke* dungeon, and some comments on the gold standard in T&T. A little of something for everyone. Good reading! ■



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WILD RIDE!

a mini-solo adventure
for Tunnels & Trolls
by Bob Webber

For non-magic-users first level and up, including newly-created characters. Some equipment is provided, but new characters would be well-advised to equip themselves. Check the Bill of Lading before you begin. (You may need to refer to the Bill of Lading in the course of your adventures.)

When you first were drafted to fight in the Khazani Death Host, your only thoughts were of escape. When you deserted during the Battle for Overkill, you never thought you'd even get this far. And now you've made it to Khosht. All you need now do is obtain passage overland to Knor, then sail to Gull and freedom.

Fortune smiles and you find that the Trollways Coach Line needs a new driver for the Khosht-Knor run. You sign a contract, in blood, and are issued a broadsword and buckler. (You may use your own weapons if you wish, instead of or in addition to the company issue weapons.) Your gear is tossed up to a short stocky female warrior known as Montok the Taciturn. "Hop up, buster, I'm riding cranequin for ya."

The passengers board quickly, and you head the coach west to Knor. You become drowsy from the gentle rocking of the coach, but a curse from Montok snaps you out of your lethargy. "Damn! Centaurs!" A cloud of dust approaches your coach from the north.

If you speed the coach up, go to 38A. If you slow down, go to 55B. If you maintain your speed, go to 63A.

Coach Bill of Lading

Top of Coach: 5 Chakram. 3 Cranequins. 300 Cranequin Quarrels. 1 Broadsword (*under bench on Montok's side*). 1 Zagnal. Owner/player's equipment. Cashbox (*contains 1236 gp*).

Coach Driver: You. Equipped with minimum of broadsword and buckler. Equipment not on person in pack on top of coach.

Coach Guard: Montok the Taciturn. Carries gladius, main gauche and sax at belt. Has stiletto in right boot, dirk down neck of shirt. Wearing complete mail. Has sling in hair. Characteristics: ST:25 IQ:11 LK:16 CON:20 DEX:19 CHR:8 (+24, +31 missile).

Passenger: Boronius Fenchild. Travelling to Knor to apprentice to a mage. Characteristics: ST:8 IQ:17 LK:18 CON:9 DEX:16 CHR:13 (+9). Carries dirk, 8 gp.

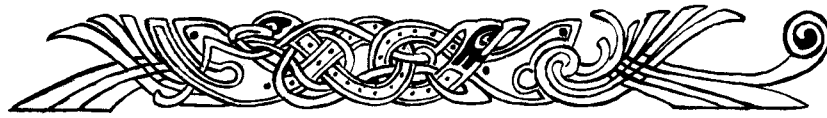
Passenger: Indelic Freeman. Acceptor of wagers. Fleeing past customers. Characteristics: ST:6 IQ:9 LK:6 CON:5 DEX:8 CHR:2 (-7) Carries sax (*note: too large for him*), 35 gp cash, 2300 gp as jewels.

Passenger: Jeremiah Soilson. Farmer. Husband of Ruth Toildaughter. Characteristics: ST:20 IQ:11 LK:15 CON:14 DEX:13 CHR:10 (+12). Carries quarterstaff, sax, 2 gp.

Passenger: Ruth Toildaughter. Farmer. Wife of Jeremiah Soilson. Characteristics: ST:15 IQ:13 LK:15 CON:14 DEX:15 CHR:11 (+9). Carries sax, 30 gp.



Illustration by Joe Erslavas



farmers, chieftains, Bards, & pirates

— KEITH TAYLOR



illustrations by Chris Carlson

Between the fifth and eighth centuries, the biggest difference between Britain and Ireland was that Britain had been part of the Roman Empire, while no legionary standard-bearer had ever so much as waded ashore in Ireland.

Therefore . . .

No paved roads. No cities, no seaports with engineered harbors, no central government or civil service, no coinage (except for Roman coins imported in trade or as plunder), no building in stone. No towns or even villages of any size.

As compensation, the country hadn't suffered mass slaughter or enslavement. It had never suffered under greedy procurators pimping for money-lenders in Rome or squeezing for themselves on the side. No Irish families had ever had their land taken and bestowed on army veterans as discharge benefits.

Poor, barbaric Irish. What joys they missed.

By the fifth century AD, Britain had lost them as well. The last auxiliary troops had been withdrawn from the island, and the pagan Saxons from the continent were pressing in to stay. The Irish of the time were lucky. Having escaped the Empire's heavy hand, they were still not being invaded by anybody else.

Not that they needed anybody else. After all, they had each other.

Their country was a patchwork

quilt of about a hundred tiny states called *tuatha*, loosely grouped into larger kingdoms. By law and tradition there were five of these, but at the time there were seven in fact. They, in turn, came under the general sovereignty of Cashel in the south or Tara in the north, with frequent disagreements over just who ruled what.

Don't go away; it gets worse.

Loose and *general* are the operative words. Each *tuath* was more or less independent and had its own royal family, but the king was no autocrat. When the freemen of his state assembled to hear lawsuits, impose taxes, enact laws and get drunk — not necessarily in that order — the king presided. He was the *tuath's* chief judge and its warleader as well, but not an absolute ruler. He couldn't be. There was no such thing as a standing army under his control to enforce his whims. The people he governed *were* the state's fighting force. The king himself had nothing but a handful of warriors to attend him personally as an honor guard. If he gave false judgements or in other ways proved an insufferably bad king, he could be deposed.

A further guarantee against any growth of royal absolutism lay in the Celtic laws of kindred and inheritance. The royal office was vested in the ruling family, not in any one member of it. ('Family' as I'm using the word here is a free translation of an Irish

term — *derbfine* — covering all those related to each other in the direct male line up to second cousins.) To be eligible for kingship, a man had to be the son, grandson or great grandson of someone who had already held the office. When it fell vacant, a new king was chosen by election from among the men who (a) met that qualification, (b) were seventeen years old or older without being senile, (c) were sane, and (d) were physically sound.

It sounds very democratic for the times, and in some ways it was. The kingship didn't automatically go from father to son in this scheme of things. The new king might be a brother, cousin, nephew or even uncle of the old one. But in practice the richest, most influential contender, or the one with the strongest faction backing him, generally got the throne. Besides, it was a system that often made trouble.

Suppose the royal office *did* go straight from the father to one of his sons for a generation or two. Although it didn't have to happen, there was, equally, no rule against it. In such a case the men on the fringes of the royal clan, second cousins and such, would be in danger of seeing their children lose royal status forever. And they might decide that a bit of kin-killing was necessary to prevent it.

Sometimes the members of such a faction would go for help to ambitious men outside their own *tuath*. In that



way, plottings and wars within the state could bring about an invasion. It wasn't unusual for a strong, devious and lucky man to achieve a reign over three or four *tuatha*, with subordinate kings as his clients. The situation was rarely stable, and the whole rickety structure was apt to break apart when the over-king died. When you remember that there were roughly a hundred *tuatha* in Ireland, you can guess what an endless seething ferment their politics must have been.

The Irish did see the disadvantages and tried to control them. One safety measure was the custom of tanistry, by which a king's heir was chosen while the king still remained above ground. Although this helped, it wasn't perfect.

But if Ireland was a crazy patchwork quilt politically (one always being ripped and re sewn, at that) it had one language and one culture. The laws and customs here described were uniform all over the country. As John O'Grady once wrote,

6A Five orcs approach on each side of the coach. Two of the orcs in each set of five are a bit further in front than their mates. Ruth and Montok both have cranequins set to fire, and must make L2SR's on DEX to hit their targets.

The surviving orcs will split up so that an equal number of them can attack each of the passengers, Montok, and you. Two will always attack Montok and you. Jeremiah and Ruth will fight side by side, so their totals and the totals of their foes will be dealt with together. Indelic and Boronius will fight alone. (If there aren't enough orcs to go around, they won't tangle with Ruth.)

Each orc is equipped with a broadsword, buckler, and leather armor. (There are only rogues in this band, so none of them will double their armor.) Each has combat adds equal to 1d - 2, and a CON of 1d + 10.

If your CON is reduced to zero, go to 52A. If this does not happen, and if all the orcs have been killed, go to 64A.

the Irish have always been good at making laws but very few have been good at obeying them.

The uniformity of culture was due to a particular social class. The *aes dána*, the men of arts, crafts and learning, had a status which did not depend on their birth. Poets, historians, jurists and lawyers — all of whom carried their learning in their heads and taught it to apprentices by word of mouth — belonged to it. So did physicians, blacksmiths, jewellers, shipwrights and one kind of musician, the harpers. 'A harp is the one art of music which deserves nobility, though it does not accompany any noble rank,' says an ancient law tract. In other words, a harper's status was his own. It did not depend on his being attached to the retinue of a king or noble. (Which implies that the standing of a piper or drummer, for instance, did.)

The *aes dána* were held in such respect for their learning or skill that they had legal status even outside the boundaries of their own *tuath*. They went where they pleased in the knowledge that very few men were abandoned enough to kill them. The sanctions against it were severe: cursing and outlawry. No other class had that privilege, not even the kings.

Moving away from kings and the exceptionally learned or skilled, suppose we look at an ordinary middle-class household. But don't call it that to anybody's face. These Dark Age Celts are proud and touchy whether they hold high rank or not.

The farmstead stands among fields for grazing and tillage. There's a high circular bank of earth around it, with a ditch outside and a timber palisade within. The earthwork, and by extension all it contains, is called a *rath*.

These ring-shaped defenses contain

quite a lot. There's the cattle-chief's thatched house, with apple and pear trees growing in the open space outside, and beehives made from plaited straw set among them. Honey is an important food. Then there is a barn, cowsheds, a combined home brewery and bakehouse, a pigsty, stables and a hen-coop. Beneath the house are tunnels, cut in clay and lined with timber. These lead to underground storage chambers, but they also have hidden entrances and obstructions in the passageways so they can be used as hiding places in an emergency (such as an attack by the neighbors). This particular cattle-chief has an old feud on his hands.

Even if he hadn't, his fortifications would be needed. There are always wolves and bears. An armed band from somewhere might make a cattle-raid to drive off his beasts. Not outlaws; just high-spirited young men after some reckless fun. Cattle-raiding is taken for granted.

In the absence of coinage, a family's wealth is reckoned in heads of cattle. This one is said to have 'the land of twenty-seven *cumals*,' or one hundred and eight cows. The common units of value and exchange are the cow and the *cumal*, which literally means 'bondswoman' — worth four cows.

No matter how that sounds, women here are not generally chattel, and free women (as opposed to bondswomen) have a legal status and strongly defined rights that women fifteen hundred years hence might envy. The Brehon Laws, 'the ancient laws and institutions of Erin', take it for granted that adults can work out their own marital and less formal arrangements to suit themselves. The legislators never tried to make people conform to a rigid moral code — they simply tried in a practical fashion to provide a fair deal for everybody concerned.

There's no problem if a man wants to take a second wife into his home; if a wife has a child by another man, the roofree won't shatter. The other man has to stand the cost of rearing his offspring, but there is no such thing as an illegitimate child, in law or in public opinion. A man and a woman can separate by mutual consent, and if they do, the woman is entitled to take out of her husband's house not only what she brought in when they were married, but everything she has produced by her own work since.

Neither do separations have to be by mutual consent. A woman can leave her husband for a range of

provocations, from betraying the secrets of the marriage bed to merely growing too fat. There is even what we'd describe as a mental cruelty clause: a wife has grounds for separation if her husband circulates 'a satire or false story about her until she is laughed at.'

While they remain married — if they are equals in social rank — the consent of both is needed to make any contract or agreement binding.

Even the worth of a bondswoman assessed at four cows seems less sexist when you consider that it's also the fine imposed for murder of a dairyman. Dairy workers are important, too; dairy produce formed most of the people's food in summer. In autumn, when the grain and other crops are in, the cattle which can not be fed through the winter are slaughtered and the meat preserved, so that beef and porridge become staples in the cold season. Irish winters are mild, though, and the beasts could have been turned out to graze fairly often.

The royal fortress of the *tuath* was larger and richer than a cattle-chief's home, but basically like it. Probably it would have three or four surrounding ramparts, and an avenue leading up to it which the people of the *tuath* had an obligation to keep clean. There would be many more people, cattle and horses, and perhaps a water-mill nearby. The legendary High King, Cormac mac Art, is said to have brought craftsmen from Britain to build the first water-mills in Ireland.

The story may have truth in it. Cormac is supposed to have lived in the third century AD, when Britain was a Roman province. The engineers who built superb paved roads, and houses with highly efficient central heating, could have introduced water-mills to Britain as well.

Cormac's reign is best remembered in legend as the time of the *fianna*. These were organized permanent bodies of fighting men, an institution foreign to Ireland and most likely based on the example of the Roman legions. Although the stories about them say the *fianna* lived in the open and fed themselves by hunting during the summer and were billeted on the people during the winter, they were more likely supported by the loot of Roman provinces, Britain and Gaul, which had been made vulnerable by the administrative disorders of the time. When that period passed, so did the institution of standing armed forces. Bodies of professional, full-time

soldiers under Irish kings were not seen again after the third century for fully a thousand years.

It may have been a splendid time for Ireland, but it was bad for Britain. Irish, Pictish and Saxon sea-rovers became a fearful menace. A Roman officer called the Count of the Saxon Shore was appointed to defend against them. Towards the end of the century, the position was held by Carausius, and he was accused of letting the pirates he intercepted go free for a share of their plunder. Rather than stand trial, he used the British defense fleet which he commanded to seize

Britain and the Low Countries and proclaimed himself Emperor. His soldiers backed him and he made his claim stick for six years, until he was assassinated by his chief henchman. Roman fleets under Constantius brought Imperial rule back to Britain three years later.

Through the third, fourth and fifth centuries, and into the sixth, the Irish kept up their pirate raids. The word 'Scot' originated in those times. To the harassed Britons, all the Irish, no matter what their tribe or family, were *Scotti*, meaning raiders or plunderers. When some of the Irish migrated to North Britain, the kingdom they founded



became known as Scotland after them. The archaic common noun *scot*, for a payment or tax, has the same source. (There wasn't much difference between pirates and tax collectors then. Some maintain there still isn't.) The term 'scot free,' to get safe away with a whole skin, also goes back to this time.

The Irish reavers covered the social scale from top to bottom. They might be shabby outlaws in a skin boat, hoping to steal a few sheep and, with luck, a woman, or a chieftain and his men, well regarded at home, or even a king and his followers with many ships, like the famous Niall of the Nine Hostages.

It's important to remember that few thought of this as criminal unless they happened to be the victims. To Dark Age seamen, piracy was a trade as valid as any other. It wasn't thought strange or even immoral to rob a weaker man. Pirate expeditions were fitted out and backed by wholly normal people seeking an outlay for their wealth that would bring them a good return. It might be one ship and crew, or several. A pirate who made his pile could return and settle on his farm. None of his neighbors would think of him as a thief or murderer.

Not nearly enough is known about the ships they did their raiding in. However, down to 550 AD, the most typical Irish native ship was the *curragh*. This was made of tanned leather, greased to prevent the seawater from spoiling it, drawn over a framework of wicker for the smallest sort and of skilfully-lashed timber laths for the larger. A big *curragh* was covered with triple-ply ox leather, carried a mast, a useful sail, a steering paddle with a tiller-bar, and five or six pairs of oars. It could have held a crew of about 18, with two and a half tons of stores or loot.

They were highly seaworthy and rode the waves well. Making them was a skilled craft with its best practitioners

in the Kerry region, facing the western sea. Irish monks came to Iceland in such ships a couple of centuries before the vikings.

The legend of Saint Brendan the Navigator has him reaching America in a *curragh*. The details and realism of the medieval manuscript describing it inspired Tim Severin to build a *curragh* to the authentic ancient pattern and try to duplicate the saint's voyage to show that it could have been done. His book, *The Brendan Voyage*, is worth reading, and that's an understatement.

There were other kinds of Irish ships. The Romans used fast scouting vessels of timber in these waters, apparently based on Pictish design. At least they were called *pictae*, and according to Vegetius carried ten pairs of oars, one mast and a camouflaged sail. They would have served well for hit-and-run raids or for spying out a hostile coast. Irish reavers probably built or obtained some.

There was also the fifth-century Irish longship, a galley with one bank of oars, a high bow and stern. It shouldn't be confused with the superb viking longships which began raiding the British Isles three hundred years later. These hadn't been developed at the time, and within the Baltic, ships were exclusively long rowboats like the Nydam ship. Sail was unknown to the Swedes and Danes of that day.

The Irish longships were smaller than the later viking sea-dragons, and doubtless not as seaworthy. They appear to have been built with the planks of the hull set edge to edge (carvel). Still, the term, longship appears in a law tract in contrast with *ba'irc*, a beamy trading vessel, and with *curragh*, so it must be a technical term, not one from romance.

The fifth century was the time of Saint Patrick's mission to Ireland, and some credit him with stopping the Irish pirate raids. I'm afraid they overestimate the power of conversion and Patrick's own effect. There were plenty of Christian vikings as fierce as their pagan brothers, and it would have been the same with the Irish reavers.

Their activity declined with the strength of Rome in the west, paradoxically enough. While trade and prosperity flourished, there were rich pickings. While prosperity was combined with unrest and corruption, as in the third century, the pirates enjoyed their greatest days. Shortly after the year 400, they had a free hand but found less plunder awaiting them. A number of silver hoards have been

found on Britain's west coast, showing that their owners hastily buried them for safe-keeping and then never lived to reclaim them. An entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for the year 418 says that '... the Romans collected all the treasures which were in Britain, and hid some in the earth so that no-one afterwards could find them, and some they took with them into Gaul.'

'All the treasures which were in Britain' is too sweeping, but with the buried silver hoards it does show a pattern. The fifth-century reavers found much less in the way of rich, compact loot. They had to settle for bulky cargoes of livestock and slaves, often without one jewel or piece of table silver to go with them. This is how Patrick was brought to Ireland for the first time. A mighty High King like Niall of the Nine Hostages could come with a fleet in massive attacks, and take enough of these less manageable goods to make his raids worthwhile. Lesser thieves would have had more trouble; the Britons weren't so soft that they didn't fight back.

The annals say Niall died in 405, but there is reason to believe his son Nath I should not be included in the king lists and that Niall, in fact, lived until about 450. Thus he was probably the last of the great reavers, and an exception in his own time. When Patrick returned to Ireland to begin his mission, the high days of the Irish pirates had already passed, for causes which had little to do with Christian principles. Niall's successors were not converted to Christianity until at least four kings later, yet none of them went reaving as he had. And if they'd desired it, I doubt that conversion would have stopped them.

It's true that the Saxons and Jutes from the continent were still pagan, and kept coming to Britain. But they had long since stopped coming as hit-and-run raiders, and were now taking the land itself. The Jutes had been driven out of the Jutland peninsula by the stronger Danes, while the rising sea along the Frisian coasts made the land less attractive for farming each generation. The Irish had no such pressing reasons to seek new territory. They had a fertile, temperate land of their own, and no invaders were driving them out of it — *then*.

The exceptions, tribes like the Desi and the u'Liathain, crossed to Britain and settled there because other Irish tribes forced them out in dynastic warfare. Even then, coming from the west, they did less well than the

8A You made it! You found a farmhouse, and farmers nursed you back to health. You may go in peace, leaving ¼ of your gold as a gift to the farmers. You get 150 adventure points, and can sell any weapons or armor you picked up for ½ their new price.

Of course, if you robbed the cashbox, that's a different story. Make a L3SR on LK. If you make it, the above still applies, but if you ever drink *anything* alcoholic, a demon with a MR of 1200 will appear and try to kill you. Every time you win, double the MR of the next demon. If you miss the L3SR on LK, the 1200 MR demon ambushes you now. Go to 52A.

Saxons. The dark mountains and valleys of Wales were harder to take than the British lowlands of the southeast. Rome's legions had learned that before.

A fleet from North Britain under a prince named Cunedag expelled the Irish settlers. Nor did the raiding go all one way. British chieftains raided Ireland on occasion; a letter from Saint Patrick to a Briton named Coroticus begged him to free some of Patrick's converts whom he had captured.

The sea-raiding from Ireland did not stop in any one generation, or from any one cause. In Elizabethan times, the pirate queen Grace O'Malley revived the ancient traditions finely, even though the English of the day looked on looting of the seas as their exclusive prerogative. A terror to the shipping lanes, Grace led expeditions and boarding parties from her clan's island castle, paid no taxes and plotted continuously against the English. Captured and taken to Dublin, but later released, she ran wilder than ever when her second husband died. In his correspondence Bingham referred to her as 'the notable traitress, and nurse of all rebellions in the province for forty years.'

Old customs die hard. ■



WIZARDRY



WIZARDRY...

That's one word for it; the fantasy role-playing system which offers both advanced and basic rules, adventure supplements and programmed adventures suitable for solo play. . . The system whose mechanics easily become second nature to players so that they can concentrate on role-playing instead of constantly searching through endless pages of rules for some obscure passage.

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MICROS: Melee, Wizard (\$3.95 each, boxed MicroGames, each a game in itself as well as being basic magic and weapon rules); Death Test, Death Test 2, GrailQuest, The Treasure of the Silver Dragon, Security Station (\$3.95 each, boxed MicroQuests, programmed adventures for one to six players with advanced or basic Fantasy Trip rules.

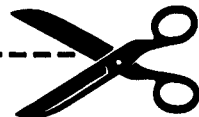
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THE CRUELEST CUT OF ALL

----- ***David F. Nalle***

We all know that monsters are out to get us. Those dragons, trolls and vampires are all after our blood for one reason or another. They lurk in every dark place, waiting for you to blithely wander by feeling safe in your innocence. Then they leap, never giving you a chance to fight back. They take your gold and your magic, and usually your life.

They're not the only ones out there who are after every hard-earned piece of gold in your purse. Just walk down a city street. Look at the people. They're all thieves and cheats. Never turn your back on any of them. Innkeepers and merchants are the worst: nothing but shiftless gougers. You can't even feel safe in your own home any more. Some second-story artist is bound to break in if you aren't there and steal all you have left, even if it's only your second-best sword.

We all know these common dangers of city and wilderness, which ring our far-from-placid lives. The only protection from them is constant watchfulness and quick action. To help protect yourself, you gather a band of like-minded, stalwart comrades with whom you can face all the dangers of a hostile world, and overcome them. Together you can rise above the perils of adventuring, and become wealthy and secure. You might even live to a venerable old age. All this, because of your buddies, those guys who'd do anything for you. After all, they're as close to you as brothers, and would gladly give their lives for you, right? **WRONG!!!**

Who takes all the treasure that should rightfully be yours? Who endangers you through their ill-considered actions and general incompetence? Your fellow adventurers, that's who.

The group of people who call themselves your 'friends' and 'comrades-in-arms' are the most deadly and deceitful creatures you will ever meet on an adventure. By their clumsiness and ignorance, or their conniving greed, these fools jeopardize every adventure, so that you can barely save *them* by your quick wits and consummate resourcefulness. Those among you who are inexperienced and make the mistake of trusting these demons in disguise may very well be making the last mistake of your lives. To help save others from fates which I myself have just barely escaped through foresight, here is a bestiary of the most fearsome abominations which you will ever encounter: a typical party of adventurers.

The Mighty Warrior: Here we have the leader of the party. He is a beast of great stature, ribboned with muscle, and capable of doing fearful damage to his foes, if he can find them.

Though often well-intentioned, and friendly in the way of a pet dog, this creature was dropped on his head at birth, and the indented forehead which resulted has limited his intellectual capacity. His main advantage is that his over-developed muscles provide a fine barrier for the rest of the party to hide behind when foes approach. He is also, fortunately, too slow to think of ripping off his comrades. His greatest drawback is that he is not very good at determining who his enemies *are*. Rather than following your good instructions, he may decide to listen to someone else, making terrible mistakes about who he attacks. When not being told who to attack, he

generally just stands around gurgling and drooling.

Another, if lesser, fault is that he was brought up to believe that he should be the leader of the party, because he is bigger, stronger, and cuter than the other members. It is easiest just to let him think he is leader, because by the time he has decided what to do, the party will have already dealt with the situation.

The Young Lordling: When this imperious fop joins your party, bringing with him an entourage of servants and dancing girls (which guarantee you'll be noticed everywhere you go) you have to ask yourself, 'Why is this flower of the nobility tagging along with a party of adventurous ruffians?' There can be only one answer. He must be obsessed with the Romance of Heroism. The stories his nurse told him when he was young sank into his soft head, and now he has decided to go out and be a hero. Oh Goodie.

Unfortunately, he is now your problem, and if he dies, the next thing you know you'll be rotting in some bottomless dungeon reserved for you by his father. So you have to protect him. Keeping him alive means that you have to keep him in line so that he doesn't hurt himself. Having never been disciplined in his coddled life, the first time you try to upbraid him he'll probably call for his father's guards — and you'll be down in that dank dungeon, wishing you'd become a rat-catcher like your father instead of going out to plunder and steal.

Lordlings have one advantage:

their relatives. It doesn't hurt to have all the royal troops in the world at your back when you face a dragon, or to be constantly monitored by a helpful court magician. Of course, the other side of this coin is the possibility of sloppy assassination attempts which take out the whole party, even though you would have gladly given the lordling up to his fate.

The best way to deal with the Lordling is to find someone else in the party who can take responsibility for him. A nice, simple-minded Warrior is always a good choice to babysit.

The Subtle Mage: This being has spent the first forty years of his life closeted with an even duller and more pointless mage, soaking up everything he knew. Now that he has emerged into the real world, he is imbued with great magical powers.

His brain bulges with facts and spells, which he is eager to employ. Unfortunately, his facts are all trivia, and his spells are so refined that the situations in which they could be useful come only once every century. He insists that his spells are useful, and always talks about what they can do. He slows down parties while he changes Demons into Dragons, and alters the color of statues. While it may be amusing to turn a statue pink, it does not keep the party fed. When he does find a spell that is appropriate, he will usually fumble in casting it, and will end up with an outrageous result which kills or maims half the party. After a few curt apologies, he will retreat to mumble into his books, which at least shuts him up for a while.

If you can get a Subtle Mage to talk

to a foe, he has a good chance of boring him to sleep. If the monster eats the Mage instead, it is a small loss. On the other hand, the Mage wastes time while inadvertently amusing the party, and tends to get lost among his thoughts, wandering off into places like dragon lairs. Of course, the dragons chase him, find the party, and wipe out everyone with glee. The best way to deal with the Subtle Mage is to ignore him until he gets separated from the party — and then flee, hoping he will never find you again.

The Holy Man: Dressed in flowing robes, with flowers in his hair, righteousness glows from him. Nothing can be more noxious than a Holy Man. He eats as much as five men, and does less work than any. He is fat and useless in combat; he is always trying to convince the party to go on a holy quest with him.

He will annoy you most when he attempts to convert you to his ridiculous faith — or worse, when he tries to convert the monsters you meet. He has a huge chest of holy relics which he insists on taking along, but isn't strong enough to lug around for himself. Naturally he has a huge, bulging purse, but when it comes to paying a toll or buying food, he expects a free ride — the coins are alms for his church. Worst of all, he chides you and tries to reform your language.

Of course, he might be able to raise you from the dead or cure your wounds. He'll insist you pay him everything you have for his services, though. If you are really unlucky, he wants you to convert in return for binding a few scratches.

His disadvantages are numerous. The worst might be his constant pleas for mercy when you are about to scrag a vicious monster. These are followed by vigorous upbraiding when you follow your wiser inclinations and slit the creature's throat. Some may be tempted to do unto the Holy Man what they do unto the monster, but the fear of his god's retribution usually stays their hands. The best way to deal with a Holy Man is to let him try to convert demons. They won't buy it, and he probably will.

The Warrior Mage: What happens when you know so much that the sections of your mind which govern common sense and reason have atrophied? You become a Warrior Mage.

This guy can outfight, outsmart, and outspell anyone he meets with obscene ease. Warped gods blessed him with phenomenal abilities and skills, and cursed the rest of us with his presence. He struts along with the party, contemplating the meaning of the cosmos. Then you meet a monster, and before you know what's happened he's killed it, dissected it, and is already cataloguing the parts. And, oddly enough, all the treasure has disappeared. If you press him about just what happened to the pile of gold and gems you saw in the room earlier, he just brushes it off, assuming you're too stupid to know what you saw.

If you take a Warrior Mage along on an adventure, you're never really in danger. Things may get awfully dull, though, and you'll never get rich except maybe by betting on how long it will take him to kill something. As long as the Warrior Mage maintains a





position of indifference or genial protectorship towards the party, he can be ignored.

If a Warrior Mage should happen to decide that he doesn't need the party, things may get tough. It's best to kill him off at the first sign of his disenchantment with the group. The only time it is really safe to deal with a Warrior Mage is when he is asleep, and the best medium of communication is sharp, cold steel. Since they all carry arsenals of magic items, there will be plenty of booty to make the disposal of the Warrior Mage well worth your while.



The Berserker: This is a fighter of another stripe. He is large and of normal intellect, though he tends to be surly and less than friendly when the party is gathered for meals.

The Berserker is unusual in that he loses control over his body when he goes into combat. He attacks madly, making no effort to defend himself. He kills anything he sees, ignoring his own wounds. After wiping out all enemies and half the party, he collapses from exhaustion, and lies on the ground drooling and bleeding. For a while after that, he is fairly cheerful, though he keeps looking at surviving party members and stroking the blade of his battle axe.



His disadvantages to the party become obvious to those of his "friends" who fall beneath his indiscriminating axe. He is a one-man killing machine, though, and if you aim him at an enemy and say "kill" you can just take cover and watch. If he kills the monster, wait until the rage wears off and *then* come out. If the monster kills your Berserker, it will probably be wounded and easy to finish off.

The best way to deal with a Berserker is to stay away from him as much as possible. Never annoy him. And always be somewhere else when he goes into battle.



The RuneMaster: When someone approaches you with a witty greeting phrase like, "The universe is divided into two planes. I prefer the plane of the spirit. Let me feel your Mana," or something equally outrageous, leave as quickly as possible — especially if he starts trying to draw illustrations for you.

To become a RuneMaster, a large portion of your mind dissipates into the spiritual plane, and you start drawing pictures of things. You mutter about the six elements, and shake your

head sagely. Then you find some obscure cult, like the Cult of the Reverend Beetle of Seven Feathers, shave your head, dress up in saffron robes, and start eating nothing but dung-beetles.

A RuneMaster is essentially useless on an adventure. He's always trying to contemplate the essence of a trap, or see the inner meaning of a dragon. Meanwhile, his companions are being slaughtered around him. When he finally realizes that he should be doing something, he runs off and starts praying, of all things. He returns later to find the party gone, so he wanders off to meditate in the mountains or some equally useless thing.

The ideal way to handle a RuneMaster is to give him a bunch of flowers. Then, tell him to sell them to every vicious monster he sees, and not to forget to tell them to have a karmically nice day. This should please him and when he toddles off, you can safely assume he won't return.

The Power Mage: This haughty student of the black arts has been slightly crazed by his power. He has the habit of slinking around and blasting anything that moves with gouts of raw magic power. He is myopic, and often "mistakes" friends for enemies.

His spells are usually loud, flashy, and violent. This results in cave-ins when underground, and in the increased attraction of monsters when in wild areas. He will also often blast things of great potential value and then lamely say that he "slipped" while hiding a grin. He lives to destroy, and while this is nice against enemies, it can also reduce your profits and increase your risks.

The Power Mage's advantage lies in his offensive capacity. His disadvantage is his tendency to taunt monsters, run away, and let a few comrades die before he blasts away (hopefully at the monsters). The only way to deal with a Power Mage is to stand behind him and send the Berserker into hand-to-hand combat. Hopefully the Berserker will kill the foe, the mage will blast the Berserker, and before he dies the Berserker will kill the mage.

The Roguish Thief: Your party is riddled with Roguish Thieves. Even those who don't claim thievery as their profession are probably thieves in disguise. Thieves lurk around, and their hands are always into something — usually your pocket or your pack.

All Thieves are cowards, so when you really need them to remove gold from beneath a sleeping dragon they are nowhere to be found. The only time they will be easy to locate is when the treasure they haven't yet pocketed or secreted away is ready to be divided up.

Many of these rogues are also inveterate liars, so you can't believe anything they tell you. They also like to give misinformation about important things. Never send a Thief to scout ahead. You may round a corner, and the last thing you'll hear as the giant spiders fall on you is his maniacal laughter echoing from down the hall.

However, a Thief is ultimately expendable. If you can convince one to undertake a dangerous theft, you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. A Thief has value only for what he can steal, or as cannon fodder.

Unfortunately, Thieves cannot be trusted. They are embodiments of greed and self-indulgence, and they refuse to act reasonably. The best way to deal with them is to coat everything you own with a virulent contact poison which causes a hideous death. When the Thief twitches, flip-flops and dies one night at dinner, you can say, "Tsk, tsk, he must have stolen one of my chocolates." Then you can take one out and munch on it, assured that it is safe from theft. Then when you flip-flop and die, the rest of the party can have a good laugh.

There are also several types who are not distinguished so much by their race. Following are several of the most common varieties of degenerate non-humans.

Elves are wimpy, effete fairy types. They simper around on an adventure, complain about everything, and insist that actually *doing* anything is against their dignity. Of course, when it comes to handing out gold or treasure, they are right in the thick of it, and never slow to knife an unsuspecting comrade in the back for a few pieces of silver.

Elves have some knowledge of woodcraft, and also have an affinity with those lesser animals who are too dumb to know what's good for them. Their disadvantage is that they make people think the party is a bit odd; their known sexual deviancies tend to scare off all but the bravest of harlots.

The best way to deal with Elves involves cold steel and vital areas of their bodies.

Dwarves are diminutive, boring tunnel-crawlers who are more interested in rocks than women, but are usually too drunk to know the difference. They have ridiculously long beards over which they trip all the time, and their women are hideous. You would think that this would drive them to seek larger women, but they have the audacity to claim that they find their own kind more attractive.

A Dwarf is useful when you need to know the exact value of gems, though he will insist that he should receive all the gems appraised as his rightful share of the treasure. A Dwarf's greatest flaw is that he maintains the ridiculous pretense that he is the equal of a real person. He gets into a huff when you call him Shorty, or Rock-Head.

The best thing to do with Dwarves is to light them on fire and drop them from high places onto your enemies.

Hobbits are disgusting, hairy little creatures similar to humanoid badgers in size and intractability. They have immense carnal appetites which they pursue to a ridiculous extreme. They are unhindered by common sense, and are full of pride out of proportion to their size or performance. They are of no particular use to anyone, and it is a marvel that the race has survived this long.

Hobbits are useful because they can fit into small places, and you can rest your arms on their heads while using missile weapons. At any other time they are a definite disadvantage. They constantly get underfoot, which results in their being kicked, stomped, and trampled. They do make good footballs. The best way to deal with Hobbits is to truss them up and keep them in your pack until you need them.

I have covered the greatest dangers you will encounter on an adventure. My last advice is on how to deal with the party as a whole.

While the bumbling morons of your party are in a battle, it is no problem to pick one or two off and blame it on the enemy. If you continue this process, there will be few party members left at the end of an expedition. You can finish these off at the division of treasure, while they slaver over the gold and gems. And then you are victorious! You have eliminated the greatest threat to your life (in self defense, of course), and you have gained all of their wealth as well. This is the only way to stay safe and wealthy as a member of a party of stalwart adventurers. ■



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Arcane Graffiti

— news, clues
and reviews
— MICHAEL STACKPOLE

News for the fantasy and gaming world — upcoming events, club announcements, the latest games and playing aids, conventions — are featured, reviewed and discussed in Arcane Graffiti. Personal ads and trade enquiries will be printed also, at 10¢/word (20 word minimum). Mail your news to: Michael Stackpole/Arcane Graffiti, Flying Buffalo Inc., P.O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, Arizona 85252.

For any of you who envy me the warm winter weather in Phoenix, don't. I am wintering on a temporary leave of absence, in Hartford, Connecticut. By the time you read this, I'll have left New England, and should return rich (in experience points, if nothing else).

In SA8 I said I'd let you know about **Steve Jackson Games** and products as soon as they come out. Well, *Kung Fu 2100*, *Raid on Iran*, and *One Page Bulge* have been released. Each game has a sheet of colorful counters printed on a stiff piece of card stock. Players must clip them apart, as they are not die-cut.

The rules and game board are all printed on the same sheet of glossy paper; maps are printed in four colors, and the reverse side of each map has player notes and historical notes. The rules and charts needed for play are printed on the same sheet, and dotted lines show where to cut, to free them. The general quality of the rules, both in appearance and in content, compares quite favorably with other small-format games. Each of these three games retails for \$3.00, and looks to be a good investment.

Steve Jackson Games also offers a playing aid for most FRP games, called *Cardboard Heroes*. It retails for \$3.00, and consists of forty full-color characters printed on card stock, to be cut apart and used in place of lead figures for fantasy gaming. These cardboard heroes show both front and back views of each character pictured, and are complete with their own bases.

Another product on the market like this is a series of die-cut counters mounted in plastic bases, called *Zargonians*. They sell for \$5.00, and

are manufactured by **Bearhug Enterprises, Inc.** (P.O. Box 12, Mission, KS 66201). These characters only portray the front or profile view, and must be mounted in plastic bases that are available separately.

I found the *Zargonians* superior to *Cardboard Heroes* in only one aspect — neither the dog or the cat could chew it up. Other than that, Jackson's *Heroes* are by far the best art and best buy for this type of product.

Daystar West Media Productions (834 E. 300 St., No. 7, Provo UT 84601) has released another in their *Nightventure* series. This one is called *Pharaoh* and is set in a world with an Egyptian flavor. The adventure takes place in a pyramid/tomb complex that has everything, including a curse. It reads well, and is very well organized. Daystar West produces great adventures, and I highly recommend *Pharaoh*. Converting it to T&T or *Runequest* will take a little work, but is well worth the effort.

Judges Guild has once again blessed us with a package of their new products. *Darthanon Queen* (\$3.50), *Ley Sector* (\$4.98), *Tancred* (\$5.98), and *Lazer Tank* (\$1.50) are all products for *Traveller*. *Duck Pond* (\$5.98) is a *Runequest* product, and *The Toughest Dungeon in the World* (\$4.00) is a solo adventure for T&T or *Monsters! Monsters!* designed by Ken St. Andre.

Since *Toughest Dungeon* was a T&T/MIM! product, I took it home and played with it. Maybe I'm biased, perhaps I'm accustomed to the way Flying Buffalo produces solo adventures, but I didn't like Judges Guild's productions standards. The paragraphs were left in the same order Ken wrote them, which means they just follow one after

the other. None of the obvious typographical errors were corrected (but will be, in the next printing). The illustrations are not very good. The adventure itself is too short (again, Ken has lengthened the adventure for the next printing). Little editing was done, and the dungeon was not thoroughly playtested. On the good side, it seems to be an adventure that can be played for a very long time. The situation is presented from a monster's point of view, which is interesting. Unfortunately, every time you turn around, you're rolling up a new opponent . . .

Metagaming has sent several new games for review. *Treasure of the Silver Dragon* (\$3.95) arrived the same day as the press release saying the Dragon had been found in New Mexico. I haven't had a chance to play the solo adventure, but I've talked with people who have — and they feel it isn't bad. *Dimension Demons* (\$3.95) is Microgame 17; I've read the rules over and it seems to be a fun little game. And the counters are actually die-cut. This seems to be one Microgame that might actually be worth the price.

The Lords of Underearth is Microgame 18, a two- or three-player game compatible with *The Fantasy Trip*, although it needs conversion. A game of raids, wars, and treasure hunts in an underground labyrinth, it sells for \$3.95. *The Fury of the Norsemen*, MicroHistory 4, deals with Vikings in medieval Europe (c. 10th century). *Security Station* is MicroQuest 5. For one to six "intelligent" players, this is a high technology adventure in *The Fantasy Trip*.

Silver Dragons not being enough, Metagaming has announced the second in a trilogy of its game/treasure hunts: *Treasure of the Unicorn Gold*. The game, with its clues, will appear in June 1981, and of course is part of the *Fantasy Trip* system. The person who locates the hidden unicorn's horn will receive \$10,000 in cash, and a gold-plated unicorn statue.

A Fistful of Turkeys (Some Turkey Games), Box 40, Cedar Park, TX 78613) is . . . amusing. Yes, folks, you always knew he was out there . . . designing games you wished you'd never bought. Well, Some Turkey has started his own company with a real turkey game. Oddly enough, it looks a lot like a MicroGame . . . and the address is one associated with Metagaming . . . but of course it is none of the above. It's just some turkey game, from the House of the Seven Gobblers. Retails for \$1.95 worth of corn.

Fantasy Paths is a set of terrain cards for dungeon construction, produced by

Board Craft Simulations, Inc. (P.O. Box 23256, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523). Each card is a drawing of a room or corridor, complete with furniture, doorways, and other details. And each card is numbered, so you could write up a room to go with each card and play the rooms as a gauntlet-type game, or lay them out in a set pattern. I really like the way they look, and I recommend them to anyone who wants a nice visual layout for his or her adventures. (\$14.95, boxed).

The Arduin Adventure (box, \$9.95), by Dave Hargrave, is published by **Grimoire Games** (P.O. Box 4363, Berkeley, CA 94704). This is a tight, fully-defined precursor to the already-available *Arduin Trilogy*. In this work, the designer clears up many of the questions that have been the bane of Arduin, while adding enough information to create a playable, worthwhile system in its own right. *The Arduin Adventure* covers character generation, classes, races, and magic, all of which may be supplemented by the *Trilogy* but need not be. In addition, it provides the beginning Game Master with many useful bits of information on how to design a campaign, what constitutes a monster, and what form magical treasures might take. All this is accomplished without falling into the trap of dictating to the GM, or filling up reams of paper with near-useless magical item lists. The inclusion of a GM dungeon further serves to bring the Arduin playing system together for the novice gamer. I would recommend *The Arduin Adventure* both as an independent game system for anyone interested in FRP, and as a supplement to the *Arduin Trilogy*. (Review by J.L. Walker)

Game Designers Workshop has once again turned out a number of fine products. A revised edition of *High Guard* (\$5.98) has been released; also, Adventure #3 for *Traveller*, *Twilight's Peak*, is out. It looks very interesting, and parts of it make good reading. Perhaps the most interesting *Traveller* playing aid, though, is *76 Patrons* (\$3.98). This booklet is a series of encounters with people, divided up according to the number of players needed in each situation. The best part about this is that each encounter has more than one resolution, so that they can be re-used at a later date. I fully recommend *76 Patrons*, because with very little work and imagination the encounters can be converted to any system, for any game.

GDW has also released a small boxed boardgame, *Asteroid* (\$5.98). This is the adventure of a professor, his daughter, and his aides as they try to shut down a

mad computer in an asteroid. Even though this sounds like an Italian sf thriller, the game is fun. Check it out!

Dimension Six has released *Furioso*, a scenario designed for use with *Dungeons & Dragons* (it says on the front cover) . . . or *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* (it says on the back cover). This is the tournament adventure used at GenghisCon II, held in Denver in May, 1980. *Furioso* appears to be quite thorough and well-formatted for a judge's use, although the maps are primitive at best. It retails for \$7.00.

Also from Dimension Six is *King of the Mountain*, a fantasy role-playing boardgame. The board is mounted, the counters are a disaster, and the rules have a few minor contradictions. Heroes start off at the edge of the board, attempting to reach the top of the mountain to be crowned King of the Mountain (vaguely like the kid's game we all used to play). The Mountain is owned by an evil wizard who attempts to kill the Heroes.

On my last evening in Phoenix, some friends and I sat down to play the game. Because the counters were so bad, we used *Cardboard Heroes* as our playing pieces. The game proved to be simple in scope and mechanics, while the paths taken up the mountain were difficult to defend. Since players could move their counters through the tunnels in the mountain, the gargoyle attacks that seemed so nasty in the rules were never made. Within four game turns, Liz marched a character into the castle at the top and won.

Given the quality of the game components, the rules, and the amount of play per game, *King of the Mountain* is 'way overpriced at \$15. For half that much, without the mounted map and with better counters, it would be fun.

Broadsword Miniatures (1691 So. Hidden Hills Pkwy., Stone Mountain, GA 30088), gave us some of their miniatures for review. I'd like to like miniatures, but being an artist I expect near-perfection from them. Consequently, I haven't got very many. However, this new company's line is good enough for even my picky tastes! Ral Partha's line still tops these, but just barely; nothing else I've seen even comes close. The faces and expressions are clear, present, and detailed, the clothing flows as real clothing does, and the poses are reasonably natural. If miniatures are just leaden place-holders for you, this probably doesn't matter. But if you delight in tiny statuettes to paint, display, and call your own — check these out. I think you'll be impressed. Most of

the fantasy line is 25mm; there are also several 90mm collector kits. (Liz)

Two more semi-pro magazines have come to my attention since last issue. The first is *Pandora*, (Sproing Inc., 1150 St. Paul St., Denver, CO 80206), which is oriented towards women in fantasy and sf. The art is good, and the stories and articles are very good for a semi-pro publication. If you're looking for new reading material, here is one magazine you can't pass up. A four-issue subscription costs \$6.00.

The other magazine is called *Wildcat*. It is printed on newsprint, in a digest format, and contains fantasy fiction, articles about sf and comics, and a number of continuing comic strips. It's a quarterly magazine, and a year's subscription costs \$3.50. *Wildcat* is available from Mike Lail, P.O. Box 1427, Seminole, OK 74868. It's an interesting magazine, and a potential market for those who like to write or draw.

Paul and Susan Allen, the publishers of *Fantasy Newsletter*, have recently moved. If you're interested in learning what's happening in the fantasy market, you should subscribe to this excellent monthly magazine. Rates are \$15/year (second class) or \$22/year (first class); write to *Fantasy Newsletter*, P.O. Box 170A, Rochester, NY 14601.

Last Minute Reviews, Plugs, and News (*Why so many? Everything had to go through the U.S. Mails to Mike, then come back. These didn't get that far . . . —Liz*)

Gamelords Ltd. (18616 Grosbeak Terrace, Gaithersburg, MD 20760) has released *Thieves' Guild III* and *The Compleat Tavern*, all of which continue the available adventuring of the roguish ruffians which got underway with the original *Thieves' Guild*. We'll try to give both a more complete review in SA11, as they only just arrived in time to get a glance and brief mention before this issue is whisked off to press.

Mage is a fantasy module by Wilf K. Backhaus, co-designer of *Chivalry & Sorcery*, produced by **Archaeon Games, Ltd.** (P.O. Box 5063, Station E, Edmonton, Alberta T5P 4C1). This is apparently the first of the modular rules to the *Archaeon Game System*. I say "modular" because the individual booklets are designed: 1) to stand alone, 2) to mix and match with other parts of the soon-to-be-published modules of the AGS system, and 3) to mix and match with "all other existing role-playing games", including *Tunnels & Trolls*. As the name "Mage" implies, this module details magic — its modes (psionic, clerical, and ordinary), its practitioners

(including attributes and abilities), and what it can do (the spells themselves). Retail for \$5.95 (U.S.).

Heritage USA is expanding its horizons with plastic miniatures, pre-painted miniatures, and the production of poly dice. Also under the Heritage flag is a new publishing division, **Dwarfstar**. The publications appearing under the Dwarfstar name will be games (without miniatures); the first four are scheduled for release in the summer of 1981. Each Dwarfstar game is to retail at \$4.95.

The very latest releases from **Judges Guild** include:

Wilderlands of the Fantastic Reaches II, (\$8.50) from Judges Guild. This details the Silver Skein Isles and the Ghinor Highlands. The descriptions are very general, too much so in my opinion. The package includes a 16-page booklet, plus two large 2-sided maps, one for players and one for the judge.

The Astrogator's Chartbook, which is a 96-page booklet similar to the *Fantasy Cartographer's Fieldbook*. The *Chartbook* includes a "planetary and system grid" using hexagons arranged in a staggered triangular pattern which, if "folded up", would produce an isotahedron — recognizable as the familiar 20-sided die shape. This is an acceptable solution to the round-world-on-a-flat-map problem since you need not get out on your own two treads and traverse the distance! This is an indispensable aid for anyone refereeing a science fiction role-playing game, and retails for \$3.98.

The Unknown Gods is a 48-page compendium of 83 rather peculiar gods, goddesses, and other divine beings. In these exact incarnations, I recognize none as having Earth-historical/mythological precedents, but most are clearly derivative, even so. If you want a substantial increase in the number of petty deities in your campaign, this is definitely the book for you. It's approved for D&D, and sells for \$6.00.

Hazard (\$2) is the first JG playing aid approved for use with *Super Hero 2044*. It includes a 22x34 map of the Pacific Ocean area, with background information on the politics, history, and societies of this area after the hypothetical Six Day War. Since the information is printed on the back of the map, this could get a trifle unwieldy . . .

Russell McCormick has released **Dungeon Drawings**, a collection of 30 different black-and-white line drawings of dungeon scenes (interior and exterior). These provide a shortcut for the GM's room descriptions, and show players exactly what *is* in that room. The concept isn't bad, but the execution is

amateur in the extreme: great art this isn't. (The artist is at about the skill level of the work in the original *Dargon's Dungeon*, or original *Weirdworld*, if you ever saw them.) If that doesn't deter you, remember that you're going to have to work with the rooms *as drawn*, with the scrolls, monsters, daggers, altars, etc. as the artist imagined them. And if that doesn't bother you either, then this is just the product you've been waiting for! Set #1 retails for \$5.

Prolific designer Glenn Rahman (TSR's *Divine Right*) reports several new games are in the hands of publishers. Most notable is *Down With the King*, which has been accepted by Avalon Hill; it is an 18th Century political fantasy game of intrigue, and is co-authored with brother Kenneth Rahman.

Speaking of Glenn Rahman, *Sea of Mystery, Flying Buffalo's* new solitaire adventure for T&T, won't see release until at least April, contrary to our announcement in SA8. Glenn is the author of this solitaire, which sends your character across the waves and around the world in a truly whirlwind manner!

Other Flying Buffalo news: *Dargon's Dungeon* should be available about the time you read this. It has been out of print for some time while being substantially rewritten and completely re-illustrated. You'll find that some (only some) of the rooms *look* a little bit the same to your characters, but don't assume that anything will act the same inside! Interior artwork is by Brian McCrary.

If you want the perfect 3-ring binder to keep all your gaming material together — look no further. We've come out with the **T&T GM Notebook and Screen**, for \$10. While one three-ring binder is usually the same as another, this one serves as a GM screen at the same time. The lower half folds back to make a kind of easel — holds your notes at an easy-to-read 50° angle, hides your dice rolls and maps, and leaves your hands free to handle dice, miniatures, or point to doomed players. Sturdy black vinyl, it has our demon-head logo and print in bright gold. Inside are two heavy sheets with the most-used charts and reference material from the 5th edition of T&T. It's available at most game and hobby stores, or direct from Flying Buffalo.

Larry DiTillio, whose T&T dramatization appears elsewhere in this issue, has sent the entire Isle of Greysmoke adventure for publication as a Game Master's dungeon; it is *huge*, and cunningly designed. It should appear under the title *Isle of Darksmoke*, some

time this summer.

The **T&T Directory** should be available shortly; it contains all the new listings of T&Ters who are interested and/or willing to make contact with others. We're still not sure of the price, but it won't be Expensive . . .

Our 1981 poster-calendar of Gary Freeman's artwork has sold out, but if you are looking for an excellent alternative, consider the **1981 Fantasy Artists Calendar**, available from Kennedy Poyser, 503 S. Sawyer, Olympia, WA 98501. There aren't enough positive adjectives in English to describe the sheer beauty of this calendar. Some of the artists have been seen in SA's pages: Lela Dowling, Victoria Poyser, and C. Lee Healy; all are of equivalent talent. These are carefully packaged for first class mailing; price is \$4.95 plus \$1 postage.

Roger Zelazny's Dilvish novel, **The Changing Land**, will be available in April from Ballantine.

For those of you with a taste for excellent fantasy artwork, if you aren't in touch with **Schanes and Schanes** (P.O. Box 99217, San Diego, CA 92109), you're missing a bet. They publish some of the very finest in fantasy art print portfolios, including a folio of **Lela Dowling's Unicorns** (1200 edition, signed and numbered, \$12). This is a very quality-oriented company, worth looking into. Recent releases also include folios from Alicia Austin and Frank Cirocco.

Millea Kenin (1025 55th St., Oakland, CA 94608) is publishing **Owlflight**, an "alternative magazine of science fiction and fantasy". More than a fanzine, less than a commercial pro-zine, this 65-page magazine is primarily fiction, some poetry, even a very short article on a pair of Marin County (CA) farmers/zoologists trying to raise . . . real, live unicorns. This issue of *Owlflight* is only the first (\$3), and I venture to say that much of it won't please a casual reader — but there is also much worth a second look as well.

CONVENTIONS

(To publicize your convention in this magazine, send us a flyer or progress report. We assume no responsibility for the accuracy of the following listings. A ■ beside a listing means Flying Buffalo plans to attend.)

□ May 1 — 3. **USACON 3**. University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL. Role-playing, Board gaming tournaments, films, dealers, SCA medieval fighter demo, more! Pre-registration \$5. Info: Leo Vaulin, 5856 Lisloy Dr., Mobile, AL 36608. Sponsored by the USA Conflict Simulation Society.

■ May 22 — 25. **Grimcon III.** *Fantasy/SF Gaming Con.* Oakland Hyatt House, Oakland, CA. \$12.50/4 days, \$10/3 days. Information: Grimcon, P.O. Box 4153, Berkeley, CA 94704.

■ June 5 — 7, 1981. **PhringeCon 2.** *For the Fringes of SF Fandom.* Ramada Inn East, Phoenix, AZ. Confirmed guests include James Doohan, Theodore Sturgeon, Chris Claremont, others. Electronic games room, wargamer's room, costume contest, space exploration exhibits, T&T Tournament, more. Memberships: \$15 until June 1, \$20 at the door. Information: PhringeCon, P.O. Box 128, Tempe, AZ 85281.

□ June 5 — 7. **Dalcon 81.** A complete gaming convention featuring tourneys in Traveller, SQL/COI, Ancients, Napoleonic, Stellar Conquest, Kingmaker, Diplomacy, Ogre/GEV, Star Fleet Battles. Plus \$150 first team prize for The Fantasy Trip, and a trip to GenCon XIV for the first team prize in AD&D. Also Dealers, Seminars, Computers, and more. DALCON 81, Richland College, 12800 Abrams Rd., Dallas, TX 75243.

■ July 3 — 5. **Origins '81.** Dunfey Hotel, San Mateo, CA. Info: Pacificon, P.O. Box 5548, San Jose, CA 95150.

□ July 3 — 5. **NanCon 88-III.** *Wargame convention.* Holiday Inn, Houston, TX. Information: Nan's Toys & Games, 1385 Galleria Mall, 5015 Westheimer, Houston, TX 77056.

□ July 10 — 12. **ARCHON 5.** *Science fiction convention.* Chase Park Plaza, St. Louis MO. GoH: Tanith Lee. Fan GoH: Joan Hanke Woods. Membership: \$7 to June 15, \$12 thereafter. Info: Archon 5, P.O. Box 15852, Overland, MO 63114.

□ July 11 — 12. **Minnesota Campaign Five.** Earl Brown Continuing Education Center, U of M St. Paul, MN. GoH: Prof. M.A.R. Barker, Dave Arneson. Membership: \$5 pre-registration, \$8 at the door, \$5 Sunday only. Information: Jeff Berry, 343 E. 19th St., Apt. 4B, Mpls, MN 55406.

■ July 17 — 20. **9th Annual Flying Buffalo Wargame Convention.** *Pbm gaming con.* Face-to-face SW, BP, ND. Info: FBCon, Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252.

■ July 23 — 26. **GenCon® East.** Cherry Hill Inn, Cherry Hill NJ. Information: GenCon East, P.O. Box 139, Middletown, NJ 07748.

□ September 4 — 7. **DunDraClone.** DunDraCon VI was cancelled — and now there's DunDraClone, a bigger, better version. Films, open gaming, official adventures, seminars, demos,

dealer room, fantasy miniatures gaming, and more. Memberships: \$12 through June 15, \$15 thereafter. Information: DunDraCon, 386 Alcatraz Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618.

□ September 11 — 13. **Dragon Flight.** *Fantasy role-playing convention.* Seattle University University, Seattle, WA. Info: The Brass Dragon Society, P.O. Box 33872, Seattle, WA 98133.

CLASSIFIED ADS

(Personal ads and trade enquiries, 10-/word, 20 word minimum)

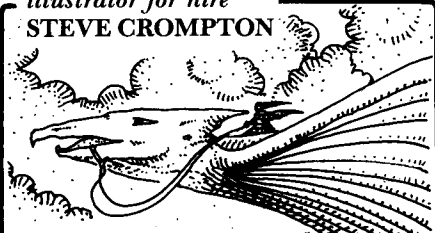
FANTASY ART CALENDAR for 1981. Frank Cirocco, Lela Dowling, C.L. Healy, Ken Macklin, Linda Michaels, Victoria Poyser and other artists. \$4.95 plus \$1 postage. Also, full-color postcards with SA4 cover illo by Victoria Poyser, 10 for \$2. Kennedy Poyser, 503 S. Sawyer, Olympia, WA 98501.

SEE Where Ken St. Andre Spent His Summer Vacation! **GAME-O-RAMA**, Strategy and Simulated Games. El Mercado Plaza, 4141 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93110; great game store for variety in the

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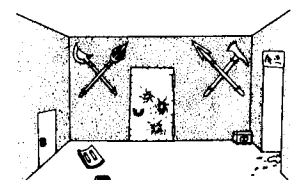
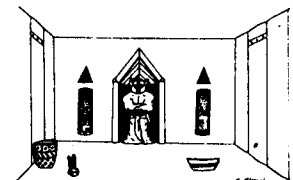
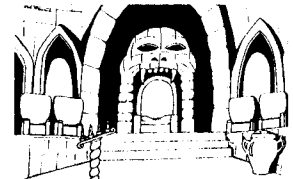
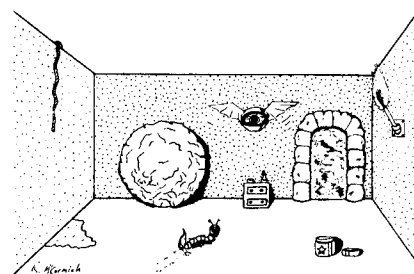
DANFORTH'S FANTASY ART: A fantasy art portfolio, *Tokens, Portents & Patterns.* A limited run of 100 copies, signed and numbered on the first plate. Each plate 8½x11, quality tan stock, black printing. Those familiar with Flying Buffalo publications will recognize a number of the illustrations (including the inside back cover of the 5th Edition T&T rules), but some of the plates have only seen very limited printing elsewhere. Price \$10 plus \$1 postage (overseas airmail, \$5 postage). Please make check or M.O. (US funds, please) payable to Elizabeth Danforth; mail to: E.T. Danforth, P.O. Box 5192, Phoenix, AZ 85010.

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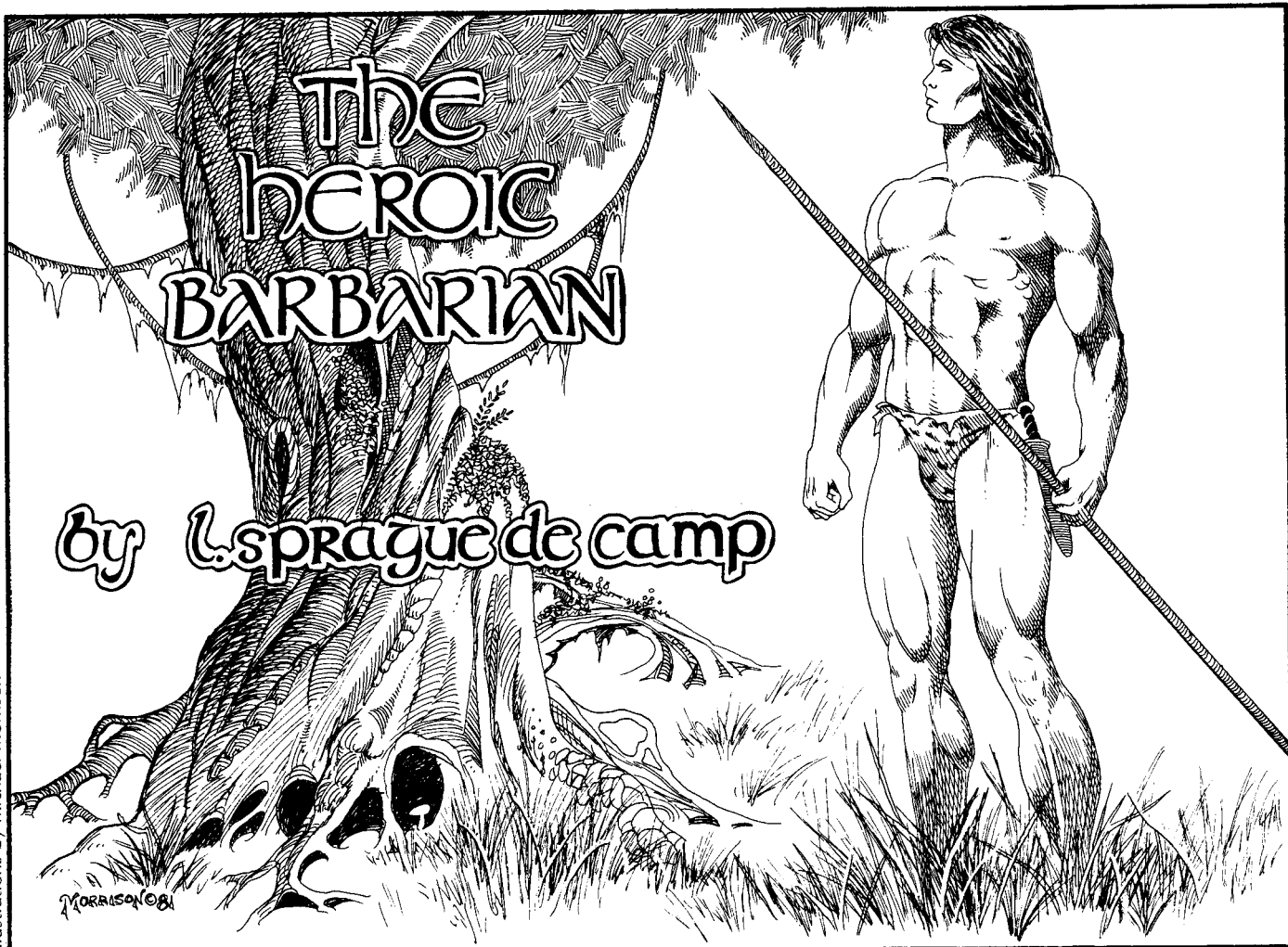
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Illustrations by Michael Morrison

Conan the Cimmerian is generally considered the archtypical barbarian hero, but he is certainly not the only one who has charged from the pages of sword and sorcery fiction. L. Sprague de Camp knows literary barbarians inside and out, and what follows are a few of his views on the nature, reality, and value of the Heroic Barbarian. When next you take out your character cards, you may look at them with a different eye...

His keen barbarian's senses alert, Smytor of Klinex slunk with catlike tread through the tunnels beneath the ruins of the lost city of Calthuria. One mighty hand held his huge broadsword; the other, a guttering torch. As silent as the shadows through which he strode, Smytor prowled ahead, while from beneath lowering brows his keen glance raked the confining walls. Fifty paces more should bring him to the vault containing the fabled treasure of Tocus the sorcerer . . .

He stiffened as his nostrils, not dulled like the senses of civilized men, caught an

alien scent — a musky taint in the stagnant air. He took three strides, then whirled as the flickering light disclosed the figure of a woman standing in the entrance to a narrow side passage.

"Who are you?" growled Smytor, his blood throbbing as he surveyed the woman. Tall, lithe, voluptuously formed, she was nude save for snakeskin slippers.

"I," said the woman in a low, thrilling voice, "am Ophis, the guardian of the treasure. If anyone need identify himself, it is you. Pray, put up that sword, barbarian! You need it not against one like myself."

Smytor sheathed his blade; then, struck by a remembered warning, he fumbled in the pouch at his belt. His hand came out with a pinch of the powder that Pediculus, Tocus's wizardly rival, had provided. Touching a little of the powder to each eyelid, he looked again.

Then he sprang back as his sword sang from its sheath. Instead of a beautiful woman, an enormous serpent reared up the forward part of its barrel-thick body to the height of a man. Evil, ageless wisdom leered from the slit-pupiled eyes in its wedge-shaped head.

"Ha!" grunted the barbarian. "So you thought to befoul me with your human shape, eh?"

"Had I not," hissed the snake, "you

would have sought to slay me out of hand. You bipeds are so dreadfully prejudiced against us serpent folk! It's pure racism, that's what it is. Here am I, trying to earn an honest living as a watchman — or watchwoman — or watchperson . . ."

• • •

We have all read passages like this — save for that last paragraph — and we shall probably see many more; for heroic fantasy is alive and flourishing, often with a barbarian as the hero.

Here is a contradiction. When someone wants to disparage something — say, capital punishment or bad table manners — he labels it "barbarous". But if barbarism is bad, why do we make heroes of barbarians?

People so crave heroes that they often hail, as heroes, living leaders, including characters as diverse as Nikolai Lenin, John F. Kennedy, and Adolf Hitler. Living heroes, however, are in short supply, thanks partly to the diligence of the press in airing the faults and blunders of even the most personable and well-meaning public

figures. Even to those tolerant of fornication, John Kennedy's shining armor seemed a little tarnished when the public learned of his weakness for busty movie actresses.

Others pick their heroes from the pages of history or of fiction. Alexander Hamilton once roundly declared: "The greatest man who ever lived was Julius Caesar!" With the ever-growing complexity of industrial civilization, those caught in its meshes more and more dream of the simpler, freer life that, they think, people led long ago and far away. Hence rose the myth of the noble savage.

The term "noble savage" was coined by John Dryden in his verse drama *The Conquest of Granada* (1672). At the beginning, a character declaims:

*I am as free as Nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.*

A century later, the term was taken up by critics of Jean Jacques Rousseau, when that weepy Swiss philosopher praised primitive life. The idea that primitive men were superior to those of today is rooted in ancient myths of Edens and Golden Ages, but Rousseau's writings gave it a mighty boost. So far as I know, Rousseau never used the words "noble savage" himself. Neither did he ever know any savages, noble or otherwise.

In 1755 Rousseau published a *Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality Among Men*, heading the second chapter: "That Nature has made man happy and good, but that Society depraves him and renders him wretched". Man, he insisted, was naturally good, but civilization — especially the institution of private property — turns him to evil. Seven years later, Rousseau developed the same argument, a little more conservatively, in his famous book *The Social Contract*.

When Rousseau wrote, scientific

anthropology hardly existed. Philosophers theorized about the "state of nature" that preceded civilization, drawing analogies from Genesis and from the lives of living primitives. At this time, European navigators were exploring the South Seas and sending home idyllic but entirely unrealistic accounts of Polynesian life. Soon, fiction writers began composing stories in which American Indians and other barbarians were portrayed as noble savages.

Thus began the Romantic Era, which prevailed from roughly 1790 to 1840. It did not end all at once; in fact, it has not ended even yet. Some of its ideas, though declining in influence, have continued to agitate the minds of men down to the present.

• • •

One manifestation of the Romantic spirit was a multitude of utopian colonies set up in the United States during the nineteenth century. Some of these settlements, notably that of New Harmony, Indiana, attracted leading intellectual lights from Europe and America. In each colony, alas, the idealists soon fell into factions and quarreled furiously, with the result that the group either broke up in recriminations or turned themselves into an ordinary incorporated village.

The utopian urge has not yet died, as witness the communes established by the "counterculture" of the 1960s. The only such communities to show real staying power have been a few German groups, like the Amish and the Hutterites, whose settlements were based upon fervent religious convictions, puritanical austerity, and a passion for hard work. Would-be founders of communes may take note.

A popular writer of the Romantic Era was Francois Rene de Chateaubriand, who in 1791 came as a youth to America to view the noble savage in his native haunts. In the Mohawk Valley of upstate New York, he was enchanted by the forest primeval until he heard music coming from a shed. Inside he found a score of Iroquois men and women solemnly dancing a fashionable French dance to the tune scraped out on a fiddle by a small, powder-wigged Frenchman. This Monsieur Violet, it turned out, had come to the New World as a soldier in Rochambeau's army during the American Revolution. Staying on after his discharge and setting himself up as a dancing teacher among the Indians, he was full of praise for *Messieurs les Sauvages et Mesdames les*

Sauvageses. Chateaubriand's disillusionment did not stop him from later writing an immensely popular noble-savage novel, *Atala*.

Later in the nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche added his bit to the growth of romantic primitivism with his talk of "the Aryan conquering race" and the coming of the Superman, who he hoped would unite Europe, break the shackles of the Judaeo-Christian "slave morality," and bring the masses under proper discipline. The great German windbag was vague as to how the Superman was to be created, save for the interesting suggestion that the mating of German officers with Jewish women might produce him.

• • •

Around the turn of the century, the barbarian hero was glorified by three very successful writers in the English-Speaking world: Rudyard Kipling, Jack London, and Edgar Rice Burroughs. Kipling's *Jungle Books* (1894-95), written for juveniles, present one of the purest examples of romantic primitivism in Mowgli, a boy reared by wolves in India. Mowgli:

... must have been nearly seventeen years old. He looked older, for hard exercise, the best of good eating, and baths whenever he felt in the least hot or dusty had given him strength and growth far beyond his age. He could swing by one hand from a top branch for half an hour at a time, when he had occasion to look along the tree-roads. He could stop a young buck in mid-gallop and throw him sideways by the head . . .

Kipling's animal characters are always making snide remarks about "civilized" men: "Men are only men, Little Brother, and their talk is like the talk of frogs in a pond." "Men are blood-brothers to the *Bandar-log* [monkeys]." "Who is Man that we should fear him — the naked brown digger, the hairless and toothless, the eater of earth?"

Then, in 1912, Edgar Rice Burroughs created the most popular of all noble savages, Tarzan. Burroughs had been a bookkeeper, cowboy, prep-school teacher, railroad detective, salesman, and soldier without much success in any line. At last he turned to fiction, writing the interplanetary novel, *A Princess of Mars*. His third novel, *Tarzan of the Apes*, made Burroughs's fortune. Tarzan became the hero of more than a score of books and of an endless series of movies and comic strips.

Tarzan is reared, not by wolves in

20A You are tied, thrown across a centaur's back, and taken to their village. The centaur warriors cut their arms and bleed into a long trough, so there is half an inch of their blood in the bottom.

The village headman says, "To prove your worth, you must walk the length of this trough. If you succeed, we will accept you as our own, and much good will befall you. If you fail or if you refuse, you will die. Choose now."

You realize that centaur blood is deadly poison to humankind, and even its touch on unbroken skin is dangerous. To walk the trough, go to 65A. To refuse, go to 38B.

India, but by African apes of a species unknown to science. Burroughs told contradictory stories of where he got the idea of an animal-reared child, both admitting and denying that he had read Kipling's *Jungle Books*. The Tarzan stories show the romantic illusion of simple primitive virtue in its purest form. Tarzan is ever contrasting the faults of civilization, its "greed and selfishness and cruelty," the "weaknesses, vices, hypocrisies, and little vanities" of civilized men with the "open primitive ways of his ferocious jungle mates."

When he wrote *Tarzan of the Apes*, Burroughs knew next to nothing about either Africa or primitive life. In the first version, he even peopled the African jungle with tiger and deer, both of which are missing from the African continent — outside of zoos, at least.

Jack London, who incongruously combined romantic primitivism with Marxism and racism, also wrote voluminously about the virtue of getting back tonature and the superiority of the "natural man". But he created no such towering barbarian hero as Tarzan. The man who inherited Burroughs's mantle was Robert E. Howard (1906-36), the

young Texan pulp writer who created several primitive heroes, including the now famous Conan the Cimmerian. Howard read and greatly admired Kipling, London, and Burroughs.

Howard's Conan lives, loves, and battles in an imaginary prehistoric era, the Hyborian Age, existing some 12,000 years ago, between the sinking of Atlantis and the rise of recorded history. A gigantic barbarian adventurer, Conan wades through rivers of gore and overcomes foes both natural and supernatural to become at last the monarch of a great Hyborian kingdom. He is the primitive hero to end all primitive heroes. When, after his enemies capture and crucify him, a vulture flies down to peck his eyes out, Conan bites off the vulture's head. You can't have a tougher hero than that.

Like other writers in the vein of romantic primitivism, Howard was given to sweeping statements about barbarians and barbarism, as when he wrote of Conan:

Now the barbarian suggestion about the king was more pronounced, as if in his extremity the outward aspects of civilization were stripped away, to reveal the primordial core. Conan was reverting to his pristine type.

He did not act as a civilized man would act under the same conditions, nor did his thoughts run in the same channels. He was unpredictable.

The idea that barbarians are somehow freer, less bound than civilized men by conventions and inhibitions, is rife among romantic primitivists. They contrast the strong, free, simple, fearless barbarian warrior with the weak, convention-bound, decadent, degenerate, cowardly civilized man. In his letters, Robert Howard often expressed the wish that he had been born on the American frontier of a century earlier or in a barbarian culture. He admitted that, if translated to such a milieu in his own time, he would have been a misfit; but he thought that barbarism would have fitted him perfectly if he had grown up in it.

Would the "state of nature" have really fitted Howard or, indeed, any other romantic primitivist? There is no way to tell; but we might bear some things in mind. People who wish they had been born in some former time and place always assume that they would arrive with the health, wealth, and status needed to enjoy life in that environment. For instance, I know of a professor who says he wishes he had





been born in ancient Athens, in the time of Socrates and Pericles, and he loudly condemns the modern world by comparison with Classical Greece.

Well, perhaps he could have been happy in Periclean Athens — assuming that he had been born into the Eupatridai, the landowning aristocracy. He also obviously assumes that he would not have been “exposed” at birth, as the Athenians were wont to do with unwanted infants, and that he would not have been carried off early by diphtheria, cholera, typhus, smallpox, or any of the myriad other ills that gave a child only an outside chance of survival. These are a lot of assumptions.

Suppose my professor arrived in Classical Athens to find himself a slave in the silver mines of Laureion, with nothing to look forward to but a few years of man-killing toil before death? Or, one step up from that, suppose he found himself the domestic slave of an ill-tempered master, with a ring threaded through the skin of his penis to keep him from fornicating with the women of the household? Or suppose he were born a woman, in Athens where women were treated much as they are in backward Muslim countries? Our professor might then change his mind about the glory that was Greece.

• • •

How do real barbarians compare with the picture painted by romantic primitivists? First let us make sure we know what we mean by “barbarian.” The Greek word *barbaros* originally meant simply one who did not speak Greek. Later “barbarian”, like “savage”, came to mean a man from a culture more primitive — that is, less technologically advanced — than that of the speaker.

The nineteenth-century American anthropologist, Lewis Henry Morgan, brought order to this nomenclature by defining “savagery” as a state of culture before the discovery of agriculture, when people got all their food by hunting, fishing, and gathering edible wild plants. Only a few such peoples are left on earth, in places like the Kalahari Desert of South Africa and the Australian outback.

Then, Morgan supposed, came “barbarism”, a stage after men had learned farming and stock raising but had not yet attained cities and writing. Cities and writing constituted “civilization”. Examples of barbarians, in this sense, are the Celts and Germans of Classical times and, before the coming of the Europeans, most of the American Indians, the African Negroes, and the South Sea Islanders.

Although many details of Morgan’s

theories of cultural evolution are now outdated, his definitions of savage and barbarian are still useful in a rough-and-ready way. The distinctions are not hard-and-fast. For instance, metallurgy is usually associated with civilization. Yet, while both the early Mayas of Central America and the Incas of Peru had well-organized states, with cities, the Mayas had writing but lacked metals, and the Incas had metals but not writing.

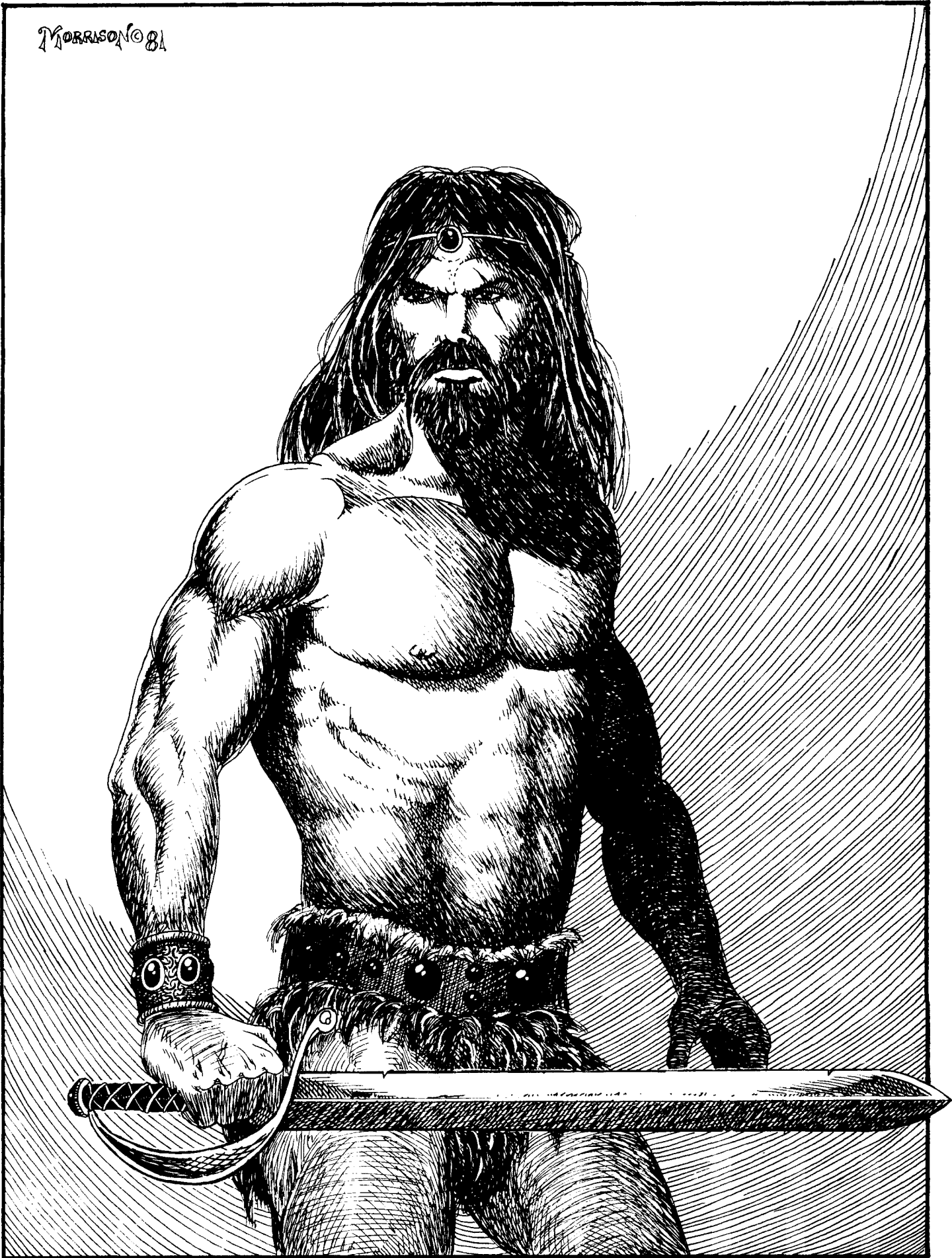
However we define civilization, the distinction between civilized men on one hand and barbarians and savages on the other has nothing to do with such virtues as kindness, politeness, or honesty. Savages and civilized men can be equally kind or cruel, courteous or rude, and upright or knavish, depending on circumstances and individual character. Civilized men can be quite as “savage” (in the popular sense) as savages and quite as “barbarous” as barbarians when they put their minds to it.

The change from savagery to barbarism and from barbarism to civilization is thus a matter, not of virtue, but of knowledge and the power that knowledge brings. Knowledge enables men to exploit their environment more effectively and thus to support more people on a given area. When farming becomes efficient enough for the farmer to raise more food than he and his family need, cities become possible. In cities, craftsmen turn out specialized products to trade for the farmer’s surplus. Knowledge also provides deadlier weapons against the group’s enemies.

Fictional barbarians are always big, stalwart men with thews of iron. This is not quite the case among real barbarians. True, many appear strong and healthy, but they are strong because they must do hard physical work; civilized men who get as much exercise are just as strong. Barbarians are healthy on the principle set forth by Lord Dunsany’s Arab guide when Dunsany was hunting in the Sahara. Quoth Smail ben-Ibrahim: “the Arab of the desert is never sick. If the Arab of the desert is sick he dies.” Primitive and if you travel in, say, Central Africa, you will be struck by the surprising number of deformed and crippled people you see.

As for barbarians’ freedom from convention, that ideal is the greatest myth of all. Barbarians are, on the whole, more cabined, cribbed, confined by customs and tabus than civilized men. They are, if anything, more

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conservative, conventional, and predictable. If a primitive society seems permissive in one way, as with sex among the Polynesians or violence among the Comanches, they more than make up for it by rigid rules in other departments. Etiquette may be very elaborate, as among the Arab *badawin*.

Rigid custom is necessary to primitive societies because they lack written laws, police, courts, and jails to keep evil-doers in line. For similar reasons, tribesmen tend to be slow to adopt anything new and to be hostile to the innovator. They have to be cautious, because they have no surplus production to act as a survival cushion if some innovation fails to work. If they make one bad mistake, they are dead; so the naturally cling to a way of life they know.



To find "unspoiled" primitives nowadays, one must go to the remotest deserts and jungles. In the course of my travels, I have come to know a few barbarians — or at least men whose near ancestors were such, although they themselves had been partly assimilated to civilization. I remember Joe the Iroquois in upstate New York, a fat, jolly, sensual man who kept the survey gang laughing at his dirty jokes; Juma the Ugandan, devout, conscientious, intelligent, and moralistic; and Tejani the young Sudanese jeep driver, bright, garrulous, hot-tempered, grasping, and obnoxious. Far from resembling a heroic Tarzan or Conan, they were ordinary human beings with the usual assortment of virtues and faults. Any practicing anthropologist would, I am sure, say the same about the primitive men and women whom he has studied.



When we speak of barbarians nowadays, we think of harmless, helpless primitives living afar and struggling with the problems of encroaching civilization. In earlier centuries, though, barbarians were not so harmless. Having weapons as good as those of civilized men, they sometimes overthrew civilized states and even smashed great empires. Sometimes the barbarians conquered because a civilized state had been weakened by plague, civil war, or incompetent leadership. Sometimes the barbarians had superior technology, as when the ancestors of the Indo-European-speaking peoples

spread east, west, and south because they had a new and terrifying weapon: the horse-drawn chariot.

Thus the ancestral Hellenes overcame the Minoan civilization around the fourteenth century B.C., while the Aryans (the eastern branch of the Indo-European-speakers) overran Iran and India. The Huns conquered most of divided China in the fourth century of the Christian Era and much of India in the fifth; also in the fifth century, the West Roman Empire was conquered by Teutons from Germany and Sweden, Alans from Russia, and Huns from Mongolia. The Turks seized control of the Caliphate in the eleventh century, and the Mongols overran Russia, Iran, and China in the thirteenth.

By the time the African Negroes, the American Indians, and the South Sea Islanders were confronted by European civilization, the Europeans had gone so far beyond them in weaponry and organization that these barbarians, while as brave and warlike as any others, had little chance. As late as the 1870s, barbarians who had a big advantage in numbers over a civilized army, and who were willing to keep attacking despite losses, could still win on occasion. This the Sioux proved at Little Big Horn and the Zulus proved at Isandhlwana. But, by the end of the century, rapid-fire repeating firearms had made even such rare victories impossible. At Omdurman in 1898, Kitchener's machine guns and repeating rifles mowed down the masses of charging Sudanese until none was left to charge.



The swaggering, all-conquering barbarian of fiction is not entirely a figment of writers' imagination. On those occasions — unlikely ever to occur again — when primitives conquered a civilized land, they did indeed cast off their inhibitions and behaved more like the barbarians of fiction.

Of all the overthrows of civilizations, the best-documented is the fall of the West Roman Empire. This event produced not only a body of history but also an abundant epic literature, based both on history and on myths and legends. Some epics celebrate barbarian leaders like Theodoric the Ostrogoth ("Dietrich of Bern"); others, leaders of the former Romanized peoples, like Arthur of Britain. Sometimes, as with Siegfried, it is hard to tell whether the hero is based, at least partly, on a real man or is created wholly from myth.

Even when based upon real persons,

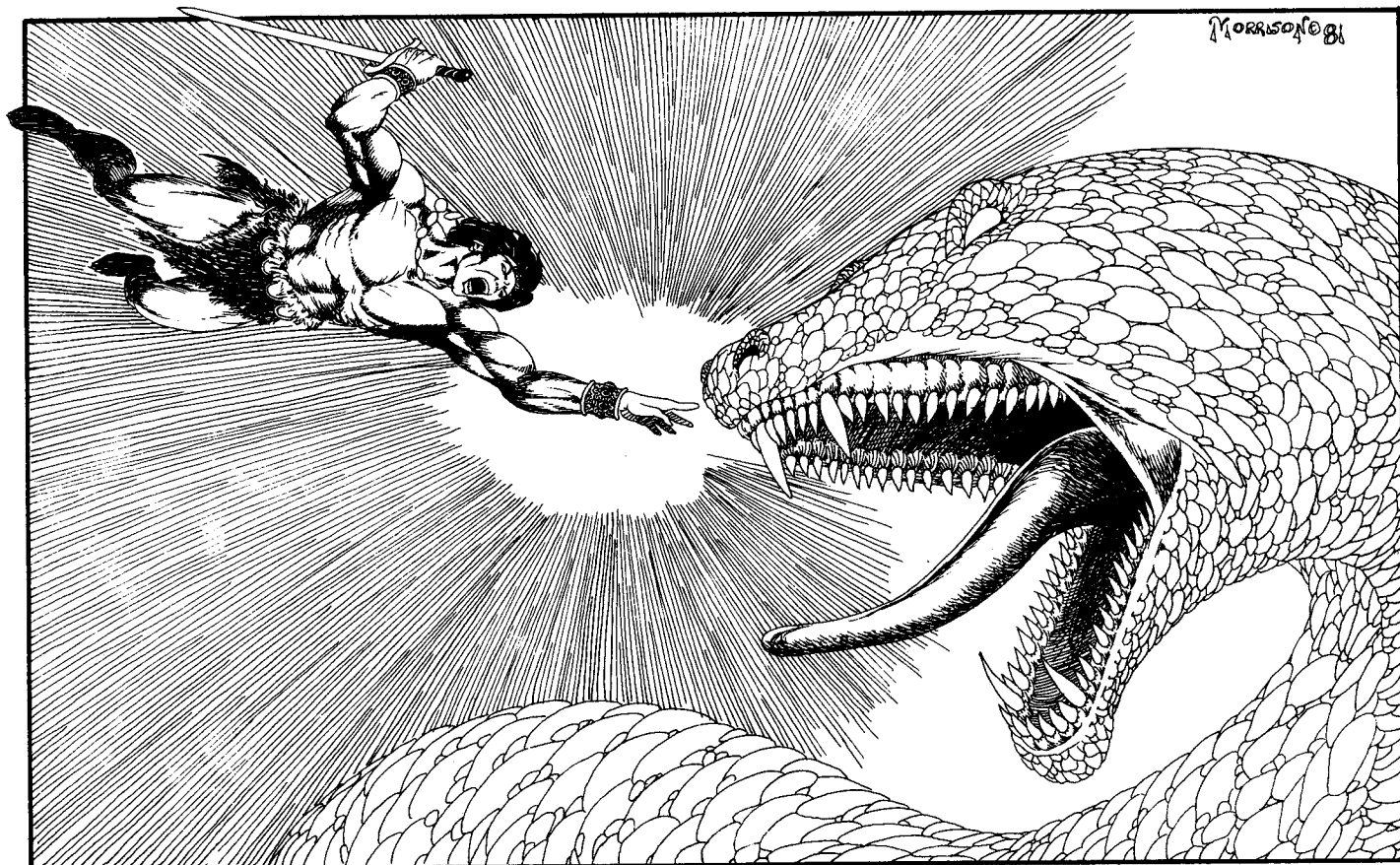
the heroes of epics are romanticized beyond recognition. They slay dragons and other monsters, go on long solitary quests, and have adventures with supernatural beings, none of which their real-life prototypes did. Like real barbarian leaders, however, fictional heroes usually come to violent ends. Bellerophon is bucked off Pegasus in flight; Siegfried is stabbed in the back; and Arthur is slain in battle by his bastard son. In real life Odovakar, like Conan, rose to be general of a civilized land — the West Roman Empire — and seized the throne. But soon after, he was besieged and treacherously killed by Theodoric the Ostrogoth.

During times of barbarian conquest, barbarians tend to lose their inhibitions and act like the barbarian heroes of fiction. The conquerer has left behind him the dreary, monotonous, toilsome, humdrum round of normal barbarian life, with its rigid customs and tabus; but he has not taken on the mores of the conquered, whom he despises because he has worsted them. Once he has thrown off the rules that made him a functioning member of the barbarian society, he sees no reason not to obey every whim and lust. He acts like a bumptious adolescent, freed from his parents' control but not yet fitted into the mold of adult life. After a war, behavior of the same sort occurs among soldiers from civilized lands — including our own — when quartered in a foreign country.

Barbarian conquest often results in a catastrophic decline in the culture and living standards of the conquered civilization, since the conquerer is more interested in indulging his desires, prosecuting feuds, and confiscating property than he is in keeping up roads, harbors, and aqueducts. He happily squanders the capital accumulated by generations of civilized men and lets the future take care of itself. The result is a chaotic squalor appealing mainly to those with a gangster mentality.

Hence it is not surprising that many heroes of modern sword-and-sorcery fiction behave like overgrown juvenile delinquents, just as did their real-life models. And here we begin to see the reason for the ageless attraction of the barbarian hero.

We all carry memories of our emotional reactions to each of the stages through which we pass in life. This includes our feelings during our struggle for adolescent emancipation. Notoriously we tend, in striving for adulthood, to quarrel with our families and to try deeds of daring and self-assertion to see what we can get away with.



At this time, all the doors of the universe seem open to us. Possibilities seem boundless. We indulge in phantasies of being a tycoon, a world-athlete, a Nobel Prize winner, a saint, a general, a movie star, a president, a pope, a reformer, a revolutionist, a conqueror, a dictator. We search for models among older people, real or fictional, living or historical, literary or cinematic. As our ideal we may choose d'Artagnan, Einstein, St. Francis, Lenin, Lindbergh, Robin Hood, Tarzan, or a favorite uncle. We dream of reforming the world, or of inventing a new way of life that will make obsolete all the old ways and customs. If we could but . . .

*. . . grasp this sorry Scheme of Things Entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's desire!*

Even decades later, we hanker for that time when, for once in our lives, we enjoyed a feeling of liberation from rules and restrictions.

That splendid feeling, alas, proved mostly illusion. We soon learned that the world around us — the laws of nature, our fellow men, and our own limitations — impose upon us a set of rules as stringent as anything our parents inflicted on us. The doors of the future slam shut one by one, as time and chance foreclose one

possibility after another. Some beat vainly on the closed doors; some go into a funk of despair; most make the best of such opportunities as remain open to them.

But the memory of the emotion that possessed us at the time of adolescent emancipation lingers. Hence multitudes enjoy, if only vicariously, the uninhibited life of the irresponsible barbarian conquerer.

• • •

What future has the real barbarian on earth? Not much, now that pre-industrial peoples everywhere scramble frantically to modernize themselves. True, every advance towards industrialization brings its own problems and disadvantages; there is no free lunch. Still, the world's remaining barbarians and savages seem quite willing, for the most part, to accept the risks and problems of civilization.

What else can they do? Primitive people that do not quickly adapt themselves are bound to suffer a major disruption from mere contact with civilization. This happens even when the civilized persons they meet mean well and are not trying to exploit or exterminate them.

Left to itself, a primitive tribe weaves its own cloth, molds its own pots,

hammers out its own hoes and spearheads on the village forge, and gets along. But when a civilized trader sets up shop, he so drastically undersells the native products with British or Japanese textiles, aluminum pots and pans, and rifles and shotguns that the native skills are soon forgotten. The tribe, from a self-contained, self-supporting, self-respecting mini-nation, becomes a mere mob of illiterate, unskilled workers. Missionaries complete their demoralization by telling them that all their former concepts, codes, and ways of life were wrong or immoral.

• • •

A well-worn subject of science fiction is *Our Barbarous Descendants* — the folk who will inherit the earth after civilization has collapsed from war, plague, or other cause. Many stories have described skin-clad, more-or-less-noble savages poking in the ruins of some former metropolis, wondering at the remains of the subway and making laughable mistakes in trying to imagine the lives of their urban ancestors. Nelson Bond wrote a well-known novelette on this theme, "Magic City," in the February 1941 *Astounding*; H.G. Wells and Stephen Vincent Benet also toyed with the concept. What are the chances of such

an event in the real world?

To judge by history, not much. True, civilization has retreated in some times in places, as in western Europe after the fall of the West Roman Empire, or in southern Guatemala after the eruption of Mt. Ilopango in the third century sent the Mayas fleeing north to Yucatan. (At least, that is the latest theory of the cause of this striking population shift.)

But the masses of Italy, Gaul, and Iberia were not really much worse off under their new barbarian ruling classes than they had been before. At least, they were free of the strangling web of regulations that the emperor Diocletian, trying to stabilize an empire torn by a century of civil war, had imposed. He fixed prices and wages and compelled all men, with a few exceptions, to work at their fathers' trades.

If the Dark Ages produced a negligible literature, and if Viking and Magyar raids made a hash of much of the area from time to time, there was a temporary revival under Charlemagne and a more substantial one from the eleventh century on. The time also saw several significant technical advances, such as the horse collar, the wheeled plow, the tidal mill, and the windmill.

Human habit is very durable. You can oppress people, massacre some, push the rest around, and generally make life miserable for them. But given a breathing spell, they pick up the pieces and start putting them back together in accordance with their memories of how things ought to be done. Therefore we should not be surprised when the overthrow of the Romanovs merely substitutes another tyranny. That is the sort of government the Russians have had for half a millennium, so to them it seems normal and right.

Modern civilization would, if anything, be harder to extirpate than those of former times, because literacy is now so much more widespread and printed matter so voluminous. When the Mongols devastated Khwarezm and Iraq in the thirteenth century, and the Spaniards overthrew the Inca Empire in the sixteenth, a sharp and long-lasting slump in living standards took place, because the masses in those countries were too ignorant to build and maintain elaborate agricultural works like canals and rainfall catchments without the supervision of their former lords. But if every library in the United States were destroyed save that in my little neighboring town of

Wayne, Pennsylvania, with fewer than 10,000 people, that library alone has enough information to give a revival of civilization a good start. People like to eat regularly and cherish, at least in their more rational moments, any device, organization, or program that they think will enable them to go on doing so.

We can of course expect continuing conflicts: nation against nation, and within nations hostile groups forming on almost any pretext: race, class, sect, language, culture, age, or sporting loyalties. Many young will continue to be perennially outraged by their elders' management of the world, before becoming elders themselves and succumbing to the same tendencies. As Aristotle (*Rhetoric*, II, 12) said: "The young are full of exalted notions, because they have not been humbled by life and learnt its limitations . . . They trust others readily, because they have not yet often been cheated."

In sixth-century Constantinople, for instance, the partisans of the Green and Blue chariot-racing factions zestfully murdered each other; in one affray the Greens killed 3,000 Blues. Like other youth movements, the Byzantine factionists affected dress designed to outrage their elders. Since the Huns were then admired for their valor, feared for their ferocity, and despised for their barbarism, young advanced thinkers adopted the dress of Huns, shaving their hair in front and letting it grow long behind, wearing Hunnish breeches and boots, speaking in growling voices, and carrying swords beneath their cloaks to rob citizens. When in 532 the factions united to revolt against Emperor Justinian, Belisarius trapped them in the Hippodrome and slaughtered 30,000. Constantinople was quiet for a long time thereafter.

I need not belabor modern parallels. But such synthetic barbarians are not to be confused with the real thing. A real barbarian society is a cohesive, conservative, exclusive group, with strong traditions and tabus. Those are precisely what a group of modern urban rebels, whether uprooted peasants, children of recent immigrants, members of a depressed caste, or bored youths looking for an excuse to riot, do not have. So their influence tends to be ephemeral. They may do a lot of damage and even topple a government. But when they have done this, they show little staying power. No matter how idealistic their aims, as soon as they show signs of succeeding, clever, self-seeking

men take over the movement and exploit it for their own benefit, or their own leaders are seduced by the pleasures of power. Soon things are pretty much back where they were, with perhaps a few changes for better or worse.

• • •

So, while anthropologists scurry about studying the few remaining primitives while there are any left to study, all signs point to an ever-increasing modernization and industrialization of the former barbarians. More and more crowding is inevitable as the world's population continues to swell, bringing with it ever-increasing organization, complication, and regulation.

But dreamers are bound to look back ever more longingly to the days when the world was uncrowded and unregulated, and "natural man" flourished. No matter that the real barbarian only rarely resembled the barbarian hero of fiction. As real barbarism recedes into the misty past, more and more people, exasperated by the elaboration of life that their burgeoning numbers bring, will idealize a supposedly simpler, freer barbarian past, even though that past is nine-tenths fiction. So Tarzan, Conan, and their colleagues are assured of popularity for many years to come. ■





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~ Queries & Quandaries ~

A forum for questions and answers about T&T, about the solo adventures, and about anything else in FRP you readers can come up with for us to answer (if we can!). One of the most basic philosophies of T&T is to adjust the game as you see fit to suit your own style of play — so don't misuse the answers given here. If our point of view seems reasonable, feel free to use it, but do not feel compelled to do so.

— Michael Stackpole

For the life of me, I cannot figure out the Deluxe Staff. It “remembers every spell cast through it”. Does this mean that the wizard casts the spell once, using his own Strength — and thereafter can cast that spell for free?

The Deluxe Staff merely *remembers* the spell. The Strength to power the spell must be supplied by the magic-user every time, for no spells can be cast for free. The joy of obtaining a Deluxe Staff comes when another wizard has used it previously — it may well contain spells you have not yet learned! In that case, you can power the spells even though you do not know them. However, you must have the IQ and DEX minimum requirements to handle the spell. Also, because Deluxe Staves are very hard to destroy, they have been known to hold up ceilings or stop walls from closing in and crushing people . . .

In previous editions of the T&T rules, there was a slight provision made for using a weapon without sufficient DEX. It has been dropped, yet it seems necessary to me. (I believe a DEX-SR was required to avoid hitting yourself or a friend.)

In *Arena of Khazan*, you have to roll up certain foes (like Orcs) who may not have the DEX needed to wield their weapons. What happens to the shiny scimitar an Orc uses when you roll a 3 for his DEX?

The DEX saving roll you mentioned was dropped because it was clumsy. Though it seems to answer the problems, it led to questions like, “Can I hurt myself?” If answered “Yes,” people complained that they’d never use a weapon that would do that because it was stupid. Consequently, the rules were revised; now you must have a minimum DEX to use certain weapons.

I encountered the same problem with *Arena of Khazan*. I rolled up two horribly awkward Orcs and one pitiful Hobbit. As the adventure doesn't specify what to do,

I assumed one of two things: either they had access to other weapons and selected those appropriate to them, or they *had* the DEX needed for their listed weapon (and I simply raised their DEX to a suitable level). You should deal with the situation in a way that seems logical to you.

You have spoken of ‘dismantling traps’. How is it done?

Traps often are easy to take apart, *once you locate them*. A *Lock Tight* cast upon archers' ports in a hallway has frustrated many a hidden archer. I have seen situations where the party located a trip wire, *Slush-Yucked* the wall near the wire, and then pulled the entire mechanism out of the wall. The trick is *not* in taking the trap apart — if the GM designs carefully, then describes the situation in detail, an average character should be able to circumvent a trap. *But*, the thing must first be found. An *Oh There It Is* spell will point out a hidden trap; intuition and luck will help you spot others. Follow the axiom, “When you think you are safe, you probably aren't”, take some simple precautions (avoid running headlong down an open corridor, for instance), and you'll last longer.

If ST lost in spell-casting is ‘mental’ strength, then why would personal adds decrease and a weapon suddenly become too heavy?

I tend to think of ‘mental’ strength used in casting spells as the oriental *chi* or inner strength/life force, instead of willpower. Whichever way you look at it, Strength is Will Energy. When you burn off some of your energy, you are bound to become tired. For that reason, physical exhaustion is often the result of casting a spell.

How can a ghost be a magic-user when it has no Strength?

A ghost with no Strength really cannot be a magic-user. I've played a ghost, once, and tended to use him to scout ahead for the party. (He was the ghost of

a man killed by one of the other characters I was running, so he was good for snappy patter, too.) Obviously, ghosts are also good for scaring people, and might well find employment with a fortune-teller. The GM should reward “ghostly” actions with a different eye to what's appropriate than when considering the behavior of an Orc.

When you're thrown into the *Sewers of Oblivion*, you are left with your armor, sword and daggers. What if you have magic armor, or a magic sword?

Looking at the introduction to *Sewers*, I can understand the confusion. However, the operative phrase is that “The City Guard . . . keeps your . . . magical items in safe-keeping until you return.” In other words, no magical items of any sort, whether weapons, armor, trinkets or jewelry, will make it into the Sewers. Obviously one of the robbers is an efficient magic-sniffer, and if your silver-chased plate armor is the most magic-reeking thing around, they aren't going to overlook it.

If a rogue gets the Indian Head coins from *Deathtrap Equalizer* (at 24A), it says you can buy spells from 1st to 10th level with them, once you get out of the dungeon. But in the rules you state a rogue cannot learn spells above 7th level. Which is right? Also, do the rogues have to wait until they attain the level of a spell to buy it, using those coins?

Deathtrap was written under the earlier rule editions, wherein rogues could learn any spell they could coerce someone into teaching them. With Ken's approval, we've changed that to “from 1st to 7th level” since we are also in the process of revising *DED*. Since it is presumably the Wizards' Guild from whom the rogues are buying the spells, and the Guild is notorious for not being fond of rogues, I'd say you should wait to get the spells until you reach the spell's level.

Letters



illustration by Rob Carver

The latest issue of SA is a knockout! The fiction was a bit thin, but the article on dungeon design and mega-characters more than made up for it. One way I've found to dispose of mega-characters is to burn the character sheet while the person isn't looking . . .

Carl S. Joslyn
Montclair, NJ

Regarding Dean Simmons' letter (SA8) — he is not correct. "Old Ones" is a term used for both the Antarctic ones and the gods. See "The Dunwich Horror", part V: "The Old Ones were, the Old Ones are, and the Old Ones shall be."

Glen Rahman
St. Paul, MN

Concerning Mike's reply in SA8 to criticism of the *Fantasy Trip* review — I like TFT but you definitely reviewed it as you saw it. Accusations of "house organ review" I consider foul play. You're doing OK with your reviews, keep it up!

Your earlier issues struck me as being almost totally T&T, while these new issues have info that's much more general in application. I know you can only print what's submitted, but I still heartily approve of the trend.

Bob Ellis
Sydney, Australia

Thank you, Bob. However, as you can see in the following letter, there's no pleasing everybody . . .

I wonder about the space assigned to reviews (such as *Top Secret*) — do you intend to limit it to FRP/SF/F or not? Back when Ken St. Andre was editing (what does an Editorial Consultant do??) he spoke of covering many FRP games to cut down the amount of T&T. You don't seem to be making much progress.

Richard Levin
Spring Valley, NY

Curiouser and curiouser . . . in one breath condemned for talking about another RPG and then for not doing enough of it. Bob Ellis' letter strikes the crux of the question, however: we can't print what we don't receive. We will never delete T&T from the magazine entirely, if for no other reason that it's what we know and love best. Neither will I reject material about other RPGs out of hand — if it looks interesting, useful, or informative, I'll be happy to see it printed. It has to show up in the mailbox first, though.

Finally, the "trend" to articles of general information is something both Ken and I have worked for all along — I see such material as the core of what good gaming comes out of. And it also serves to de-fuse arguments concerning superiority of one game system over another by presenting the basic information for a GM (of whatever game) to use as he or she desires.

"Editorial Consultant" means Ken pops in to read manuscripts, make comments, suggestions, occasionally turn in material of his own or from writers he is in contact with — from which I make the final decisions as "Editor" as to what gets printed in what issues. He's on no time schedule; I am. It works, and everyone seems pretty happy with the arrangements.

In the T&T rules you say "There is no reason why a character who stumbles across a diamond worth 10,000 gp, picks it up and walks off, should get 10,000 experience points". Here is my opinion.

Legolorn the elf found a chest containing 1,000 g.p. during his last adventure. After he leaves the dungeon, he will go back to a city and buy anything he desires. We know that many people are teaching different skills (magic, fighting, etc.), and so what is wrong with Legolorn taking some crash courses to improve his skill?

Why does 10,000 g.p. mean 10,000 ep, whilst 1,000 gp only gets 1,000 ep? Some teachers are obviously better than others, and a good teacher would charge a much higher price than a teacher who is not so good! So if

Legolorn only had a very small amount of gp's, he would not be able to get as good tutoring as he would if he had a lot of gold pieces.

Paul Carstairs
Beckenham, Kent, UK

I like your comments about experience points for treasure — justified with the idea that the wealthy delver takes lessons from qualified instructors, and improves in that manner. Quite frankly, this is a pretty good idea — and the first time I know of anyone coming up with a good reason.

It does imply a few things, however. One, that the cash is actually spent. The characters used to keep all the cash and get experience too, which seems hardly fair. Two, those experience points can only be taken once outside the tunnels; and three, by rights, it would seem more fair to assume a campaign-length game, where the character is out of action while taking lessons. For my own part, the very most I'd give in exchange of cash for teaching/experience is 10:1, not 1:1 either. (In other words, for 10,000 gold, a character can't buy more than 1000 e.p. with it. But then, I'm a stingy GM.)

In the long run, though, I wouldn't make a habit of taking experience points for gold under any circumstances — a character getting too many level bonuses will become a mega-character and hurt the playability of the game, to my mind. If you play with friends, talk it over with them and then decide.

SA just keeps getting better! I was 'wowed' by the John Barnes cover on SA8, but it struck me as seeming familiar in some way. A couple of weeks after buying the magazine, while going through my record albums, I noticed on the cover of a Yes jacket, "Tales from Topographic Oceans," the Roger Dean painting with the exact tree and moon used in the Barnes cover on SA8. I was doubly taken to see Barnes' fairy without her wings on the album "Close to the Edge," another Roger Dean painting. It made me think if there was anything original in the Barnes cover at all, and if he hadn't copied more elements from other Dean works.

Isn't taking and re-arranging a well-known artist's work and calling it your own cheating? Don't get me wrong, I still think it is a good cover — but is it his?

Paul Timms
Eau Galle, WI

A copy of this letter was sent to John Barnes, and what follows is his own reply.

Paul's observations are a bit overstated. Check it out. You'll see that while both Dean's and my paintings involve a tree without leaves near water with moons, in no way are they "the exact same tree and

moon". As for the fairy; true, both girls are seated in almost the same position. It's not an unusual position. I'm sure it's appeared in many other paintings and photos. If no artist could use the same position used by another, we'd have run out of positions long ago! Believe it or not, I used a model for mine.

Any student of fine and commercial art (not to mention literature and music) will find definite similarities between one artist and another. The handling of my rocks and tree bark is often similar to the work of Brian Froud. I did the moons like some watercolors by Galileo. The castle was worked up from one in an ad in my clip file. We do not create from a vacuum. There is a big difference between this and stealing "the exact tree and moon".

John Barnes
Malaga, WA

I sent a photocopy of the Tolkien article in SA6 to Helen Armstrong, the Tolkien Society secretary. It's out of date now that "Unfinished Tales" has been published. Also, the TS didn't get mentioned in the list of groups and *we've* been around for *eleven* years. Currently the membership secretary is Lester E. Simons, 11 Regal Way, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 OR2, UK, and the secretary is Mrs. Helen Armstrong, 9 Kingston Road, Ilford, Essex. The Tolkien Society Bulletin is *Amon Hen* (bimonthly), and the journal is *Mallorn* (semi-annually). Current subscription rates to USA/Canada are £10.00 airmail and £6.00 surface.

David George Bell
North Kelsey, Lincoln, UK

Almost immediately after "Unfinished Tales" appeared, Tom Egan wrote us a review, but constraints of space in this issue prevented it from being included. Reviews of widely-distributed books are not high on my list of things to include in SA, however. Small-press and specialty publishers get mentioned in "Arcane Graffiti" because they are usually not widely publicized, although they may well hold considerable interest to the fantasy reader.

As an alternative to "Queries and Quandaries" (which was mentioned to be running out of "Q's"), why don't you include a column that has short (1 — 2 paragraphs) ideas on variant Tunnels & Trolls techniques, such as new combat rules, magic system embellishments, etc. Most T&T GMs muddle with the rules, so you'd have no shortage of material.

Stefan Jones
Locust Valley, NY

The call for new questions has produced a veritable flood of responses — some quite peculiar! — but we won't run out soon. However, your idea of variant T&T techniques has considerable merit and I'd like to see it implemented. But this will depend on the response of the readership from whom the ideas must come.

So consider this a call from us to all you T&T GMs and active players! Send us your ideas, suggestions, adjustments, variations, schemes and set-ups . . . try to be brief but complete. We'll pay our basic contributor's rates for material printed, and you'll also get the notoriety of appearing in the pages of SA! Please avoid copying chunks of another game system's rules simply because you've adapted it into your T&T games; we're most interested in your own innovations!

I note vast differences between each RPG game; it makes me wonder how anyone can really consider one game "superior" over the rest. If one were to put dots on a graph, one dot for each of the eight FRP games I know of (discounting sf, etc.), with one side of the graph representing complexity and the other flexibility, one would find that the games on the market are scattered in taste appeals indeed.

I recognized the concept of taste appeal about a year ago when I told an avid D&Der that the main complaint against D&D by T&Ters is that the former is too complex. His reply was, "But the complexity is the *fun* of it!" So apparently some people like simplicity and some like complexity, and likewise flexibility vs. structure.

Bob Greenwade
Monmouth, OR

There's no question that different games appeal to different tastes. However, I think you missed one of the bigger points to T&T's simplicity — a point illustrated with the letter below.

I must compliment you on T&T. I've always liked the idea of these sort of games, but usually found them too baffling. At least on a cursory look. When you're as busy as I am, it's hard to find the time to wade through page upon bloody page of nearly incomprehensible rules. The nice thing about T&T is that you can pick it up right away. Yet for all the ease in picking it up, you can get as complicated as you like — all depending on your imagination. And it's good fun.

Charles de Lint
Ottawa, Ontario

To judge by letters received here from gamers who've switched to T&T from any one of the

more complex systems, the complaints are against unnecessary and excessive complications, and games where you are expected to relinquish the chance to set your own level of complexity — be it very complex or very simple. That doesn't make T&T "superior", and Bob is quite correct that it is very much a matter of taste what game(s) you choose. It's a matter of tearing down in order to re-structure if you want simplicity, or building on a basic foundation if you want complexity.

My favorite part of SA8 was the article on mega-characters. I agree that GMs create mega-characters, but none of my active characters have more than 600 for any attribute. The only weapon that I have created is a deathstaff, capable of offing almost anything under godlike. The only problem with its use is that it cannot be used as a missile weapon. Most of Mike's ideas are spectacular in their obvious use, this being the only low point in the article. Also, I think Paul Jaquays' art fits in very well with the article.

I thank you for an entertainment well worth the wait.

Todd Diesen
Warren, MN

Your magazine is very useful and entertaining. Don't ever drop the entertaining part. Let some complain about the fiction by Zelazny and Tanith Lee. Let some complain about the tongue-in-cheek articles by John Morrison. Let these same come go out and publish their own magazine which I will promptly not buy.

Keep a steady hand on the helm of SA, Liz. (But how about doing a cover with the other hand?)

Ronald James
Indianapolis, IN

Though I enjoy T&T very much and disagree with very little, disagree I do. I'm not crazy about the combat system, and I don't like the way T&T characters end up speaking more languages than there are words in the Webster's dictionary. Basically that's it, though.

What exactly is *Supernova*? I heard it was the forerunner of SA. If so, who published it, and what issues are available?

Allen Sanceau
San Clements, CA

Supernova was a small magazine, not at all like SA. It's available from Flying Buffalo for \$2 — this is nine issues, which are all there are.

Thelinde's Song

illustrations by Stephan Peregrine



Roger Zelazny

Across the evening, on the other side of the hill, beneath a moon that was huge and golden, Thelinde was singing.

In the high were-hall of Caer Devash, rung all around with pine trees and mirrored far below its cliffs in that silver river called Denesh, Mildin could hear her daughter's voice, and the words of her song:

*The Men of Westrim are hardy,
The Men of Westrim bold,
But Dilvish who was damned came back
And made their blood run cold.*

*When they hounded him from Portaroy
To Dilfar in the East,
He rode a thing he'd brought from Hell —
A black and steel beast.*

*They could not cut nor turn his mount —
The horse that Men call Black —
For the Colonel gained much wisdom
With the curse of Jelerak —*

Mildin shuddered and fetched her shimmering were-cloak — for she was Mistress of the Coven — and throwing it about her shoulders and clasping it at her neck with the smoky Stone of the Moon, she became as a silvergray bird and passed out through the window and high above the Denesh.

She crossed over the hill to where Thelinde stood, staring South. Coming to rest upon the lower limb of a nearby tree, she said, through her bird-throat: "My child, stop your singing."

"Mother! What is the matter?" asked Thelinde. "Why are you come in swift-form?" And her eyes were full, for they followed the changing of the moon, and in her hair was the silver fire of the Witches of the North. She was seventeen and supple, and she loved singing.

"You have sung a Name which

must not be uttered, even here in the fastness of our keep," said Mildin. "Where did you learn that song?"

"From a thing in the cave," she answered, "where the river called Midnight makes a pool as it passes on its way underground."

"What was the thing in the cave?"

"He is gone by now," Thelinde replied. "He was a dark-traveler, one of the frog-kind, I think, who rested there on his way to the Council of Beasts."

"Did he tell you the meaning of that song?" she asked.

"No, he said that it has come but recent, and it is of the wars in the South and the East."

"That is true," said Mildin, "and the frog has no fear of croaking it, for he is of the dark kind, and is of no consequence to the Mighty. But you, Thelinde, you must be more wary. All of those with power upon them, unless they be rash indeed, fear to mention that name which begins with 'J'."

"Why is that?"

The silvergray form fluttered to the ground. Then her mother was standing beside her, tall and pale under the moon; her hair was braided and twisted high upon her head into a Crown of the Coven, as it is called.

"Come with me now within my cloak, and we will go to the Pool of the Goddess, while the fingers of the Moon still touch upon its surface," said Mildin, "and you shall see something of which you have sung."

They descended the hill to the place where the rivulet, which begins high upon the hill at the spring, passes down with barely a ripple into their pool. Mildin knelt beside it in silence, and leaning forward she breathed upon the surface of the water. Then she summoned Thelinde to her side and they stared downward.

"Look now into the image of the moon reflected in the water," she told her. "Look deeply. Listen . . ."

"Long ago," she began, "even as we reckon time, there was a House which was stricken from the peerage of the East, because several generations had intermarried with the Elf-kind. Elf-men are tall and fair to look upon, quick in thought and action, and though their race is much older, Men do not generally recognize the Elf-peerage. Pity . . . The last man of this particular House, bereft of his lands and his titles, turned his hand to many occupations, from the sea to the



mountains, and finally he came into soldiery, in those first wars with the West, some several centuries ago. Then did he distinguish himself in the great Battle of Portaroy, delivering that city out of the hands of its enemies, so that he came to be called Dilvish the Deliverer. See! The picture comes now clear! It is the entry of Dilvish into Portaroy . . ."

And Thelinde stared into the pool where a picture had formed:

Tall he was, and darker than the Elf-kind, with eyes that laughed and glowed with the pride of triumph. He was mounted on a brown stallion, and his armor, though dented and scratched, still glowed in the morning sun. He rode at the head of his troops, and the people of Portaroy stood at the sides of the roadway and cheered, and the women threw down flowers before him. When he came at last to the Fountain in the Square, he

dismounted and drank the wine of victory. Then the Elders gave speeches of thanks and a great open banquet was laid out for their deliverers.

"He looks to be a good man," said Thelinde. "But what a great sword he wears! — it reaches down to the tops of his boots!"

"Yes, a two-handed engine named that day Deliverer. And his boots, you will note, are of the green Elvish leather, which Men cannot buy — but which are sometimes given as a gift, in sign of favor by the High Ones — and it is said that they leave no footprints. It is a pity that within a sennight of that feast which you see spread, Deliverer should be smashed and Dilvish no longer among the living."

"But he *still* lives!"

"Yes — again."

There was a turbulence within the pool, and another picture emerged.

A dark hillside . . . A man, cloaked and hooded, within a faintly glowing circle . . . A girl bound upon a stone altar . . . A blade in the man's right hand and a staff in his left . . .

Mildin felt her daughter's fingers seize upon her shoulder.

"Mother! What is it?"

"It is the One you must never name."

"What is he about?"

"A dark thing, requiring the life-blood of a virgin. He has waited since beyond time for the stars to reform themselves into the proper positions for this rite. He has journeyed far, to come to that ancient altar in the hills above Portaroy, to the place where the thing must be accomplished.

"See how the dark things dance about the Circle — bats and wraiths and wandering wisps — craving but a drop! They will not touch the Circle, though."

"Of course not . . ."

"Now, as the flames of that single brazier reach higher and the stars come into the correct positions, he prepares to take her life . . ."

"I cannot watch!"

"Watch!"

"It is the Deliverer, Dilvish, coming that way."

"Yes. After the manner of the High Ones, he seldom sleeps. He goes to take his air in the hills above Portaroy, wearing his full battle-trappings as people expect of deliverers."

"He sees Jel— He sees the Circle! He advances!"

"Yes, and he breaks the Circle. Being of the High Blood, he knows he

has ten times the immunity of a Man to sorcery. But he does not know whose Circle he has broken. Still, it does not kill him. Yet he is weakened — see how he staggers! — so great is the power of That One.

“He strikes the wizard with his hand, knocking him to the ground, and he upsets the brazier. Then he turns to free the girl . . .”

Within the pool, the shadow that was the sorcerer rose from off the ground. His face was invisible within the hood, but he lifted his staff on high. Suddenly, he seemed to grow to an enormous height, and his staff lengthened and twisted like a serpent. He reached out and touched the girl, lightly, with its tip.

Thelinde screamed.

Before her eyes the girl was aging. Wrinkles appeared on her face and her hair grew white. Her skin yellowed and her every bone grew prominent beneath it.

Finally, she stopped breathing, but the spell did not cease. The thing on the altar shriveled and a fine powder, like smoke, arose from it.

Then a skeleton lay upon the stone.

Dilvish turned on the sorcerer, raising Deliverer above his shoulder.

But as he brought the blade down, the Dark One touched it with his staff and it shattered and fell at his feet. Then Dilvish advanced one step upon the sorcerer.

Again the staff licked forward, and a nimbus of pale fire played about the form of the Deliverer. After a time it subsided. Still though, did he stand there, unmoving.

The picture vanished.

“What has happened?”

“The Dark One,” said Mildin, “wrought him a terrible curse, against which even the High Blood was not proof. Look now.”

Day lay upon the hillside. The skeleton lay upon the altar. The sorcerer was gone. Dilvish stood alone, all marble in the sunfall, with the dew of morning upon him, and his right hand was still raised as if to smite an enemy.

Later, a group of boys came by and stared for a long while. Then they ran back to the town to tell of it. The Elders of Portaroy came up into the hills, and taking the statue as a gift of the many strange ones who were accounted friends of their Deliverer, they had it carted back to Portaroy and set up in the Square beside the fountain.

“He turned him to stone!”

“Yes, and he stood there in the Square for over two centuries, his own monument, fist raised against the enemies of the town he had delivered. None ever knew what had become of him, but his human friends grew old and died, and still his statue stood.”

“ . . . And he slept in stone.”

“No, the Dark One does not curse that kindly. While his body stood rigid, in full battle-trappings, his spirit was banished to one of the deepest pits of Hell the Dark One could manage.”

“Oh . . .”

“ . . . And whether the spell was meant only to be so, or whether the High Blood prevailed in a time of need, or whether some powerful ally of Dilvish’s learned the truth and finally worked his release, no one knows. But one day recent, as Lylish, Colonel of the West, swept across the land, all the Men of Portaroy were assembled in the Square preparing defense of the town.”

The moon had now crept to the edge of the pool. Beneath it, there came another picture:

The Men of Portaroy were arming themselves and drilling in the Square. They were too few, but they seemed intent upon selling their lives as dearly as possible. Many looked upon the statue of the Deliverer that morning, as though recalling a legend. Then, as the sun wrapped it in color, it moved . . .

For a quarter of an hour, slowly, and with apparent great effort, the limbs changed position. The entire crowd in the Square stood and watched, itself unmoving now. Finally, Dilvish climbed down from his pedestal and drank from the Fountain.

The people were all around him then, and he turned toward them.

“His eyes, mother! They have changed!”

“After what he has seen with the eyes of his spirit, is it a wonder that the other ones reflect it?”

The picture vanished. The moon swam further away.

“ . . . And from somewhere he got him a horse that was not a horse, but a beast of steel in the likeness of a horse.”

For a moment a dark and running form appeared within the pool.

“That is Black, his mount. Dilvish rode him into the battle, and though he fought long on foot too, he rode him out again, much later — the only survivor. In the weeks before the battle he had trained his men well, but they were too few. He was named Colonel of the East by them, in opposition to the title Lord Lylish wears. All fell, however, save he, though the Lords and Elders of the other cities of the East have now risen in arms and they, too, recognize his rank. This very day, I have been told, he stood before the walls of Dilfar and slew Lance of the Invincible Armor in single



combat. But the moon falls now and the water darkens . . .”

“But the name? Why must I not mention the name of Jelerak?”

As she spoke it, there came a rustling sound, as of great dry wings beating at the air overhead, and the moon was obscured by a cloud, and a dark shape was reflected deep within the pool.

Mildin drew her daughter within the were-cloak.

The rustling grew louder and a faint mist sprang up about them.

Mildin made the Sign of the Moon, and she began to speak softly:

“Back with thee — in the Name of the Covenant, of which I am Mistress, I charge thee return. Go back where thou camest. We desire not thy dark wings above Caer Devash.”

There was a downdraft of air, and a flat expressionless face hovered just above them, couched between wide bat wings. Its talons were faintly glowing, red, as of metal just heated at the forge.

It circled them, and Mildin drew the cloak tighter and raised her hand.

“By the Moon, our Mother, in all her guises, I charge thee depart. Now! This

instant! Get away from Caer Devash!”

It landed upon the ground beside them, but Mildin’s cloak began to glow and the Stone of the Moon blazed like a milky flame. It drew back from the light, back within the mists.

Then an opening appeared in the cloud and a shaft of moonlight passed through it. A single moonbeam touched upon the creature.

It screamed once, like a Man in great pain, then mounted into the air heading southwest.

Thelinde looked up into her mother’s face, which suddenly appeared very tired, older . . .

“What was it?” she asked her.

“It was a servant of the Dark One. I tried to warn you, in the most graphic way possible, of his power. For so long has his Name been used in the conjuring and compelling of fell spirits and dark nights that his has become a Name of Power. They rush to find the speaker, whenever they hear it uttered, lest it should be he and he should grow angry at their tardiness. If it is not he, they often seek vengeance upon the presumptuous speaker. It is also said though, that if his Name be pronounced too often by one

person, then he himself becomes aware of this and sends a doom upon that person. Either way, it is not wise to go about singing such songs.”

“I will not, ever. How can a sorcerer be that strong?”

“He is as old as the hills. He was once a white wizard and he fell into dark ways, which makes him particularly malicious — you know, they seldom ever change for the better — and he is now accounted to be one of the three most powerful, possibly *the* most powerful, of all the wizards in all the kingdoms of all the Earths. He is still alive and very strong, though the story which you saw took place centuries ago. But even he is not without his problems . . .”

“Why is that?” asked the witch’s daughter.

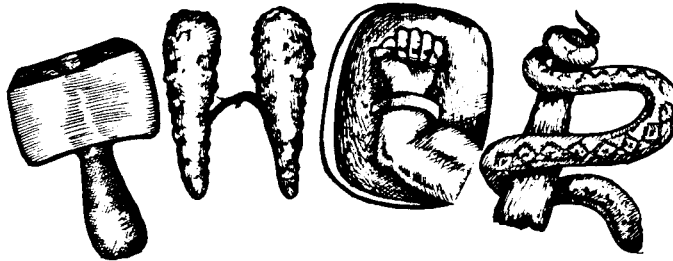
“Because Dilvish is come alive once more, and I believe he is somewhat angry.”

The moon emerged from behind the cloud, and huge it was, and it had turned to fallow gold during its absence.

Mildin and her daughter headed back up the hill then, toward Caer Devash rung round with pines, high above Denesh, the silver river. ■



THE HAMMER OF



The Hammer Of thoR is a role playing fantasy boardgame for any number of players from 1 to 362. It recreates the personalities and adventures of Norse Mythology in a way no other game has ever done. Play evolves along two phases: adventure in the wilderness to gather your forces for RAGNARÖK, the final battle between good and evil. The player who is on the winning side of this battle who has the highest RePutation wins the game. It is possible to recreate all of the Norse myths, but much more fun to rewrite them in game form yourself. There are over 600 cards which can be played in almost any sequence so the game will never play the same twice.

In **The Hammer of Thor**, you could start with **THOR**, **ODIN**, or **LOKI** as you build a veritable army of Gods, Giants, Dwarves, and Elves! All the flavor of Norse Mythology is here!

all encounters in this place are resolved as
ATTACK/subdue

Attractively boxed, *Thor* also includes a four color poster-like map of the Norse universe, a 20-sided die, and player aids.

Retail: \$18.95

Please include 10% for postage and handling.



NOVA GAME DESIGNS

Formerly Gameshop Inc. 46 Dougherty Street, Manchester, Connecticut 06040



*. . . featuring weapons and armor of unusual nature, items not often well-defined in fantasy role-playing games. Values marked with * are those which seemed closest to how such a weapon should be treated under the T&T rules. If you play other game systems, the descriptions should help you adapt the weapon to suit your own requirements.*

DAGGER AND WHEEL LOCK *a combination weapon*

- Origin:** Italian, 16th century
Length: overall: 48.3 cm
 hilt: 12.7 cm
 blade: 35.5 cm
 detachable point: 6.4 cm
Width: blade: 6.4 cm
 guard: 15.3 cm
***Weight:** 45 weight units (2 kg)
***Cost:** 1720 gold pieces
***Dice + Adds:** dagger: 2 + 3 (2 dice if point is missing)
 wheel lock: 5 + 15
***Dexterity:** dagger: 5 (20 to throw)
 wheel lock: 8
***Strength:** dagger: 8
 wheel lock: 10
***Range:** dagger: 10 meters
 wheel lock: 20 meters only (due to a lack of sights)

COMMENTS

The Wheel Lock Dagger has an iron hilt and guard. The steel blade-barrel has a 40-caliber bore through $\frac{2}{3}$ of its length. All of the weapon, with the exception of the honed edges of the blade, is engraved in fine detail and gilded.

The ring-guard (a ring-shaped piece of metal on the cross-guard) acts as the hammer, and contains the pyrites for igniting the powder. The flash pan is hidden in the ricasso (the unsharpened part of the blade nearest the hilt), and has a sliding cover to keep water from the powder. Within the blade is concealed the barrel, which extends to within 6 cm of the point. This last 6 cm. is fashioned like an arrowhead, with a steel shaft running from it inside the blade. This arrow-like device is used to span (wind up) the spring that operates the striker. If there is no time to remove this device before firing the gun, it will become an additional projectile (along with the bullet).

To ready the gun for firing, remove the arrow and load the barrel in the normal manner of muzzle-loaders. Next, span the spring by removing a cap on the pommel and inserting the shaft of the arrow into the hole and turning it until the spring is tight.

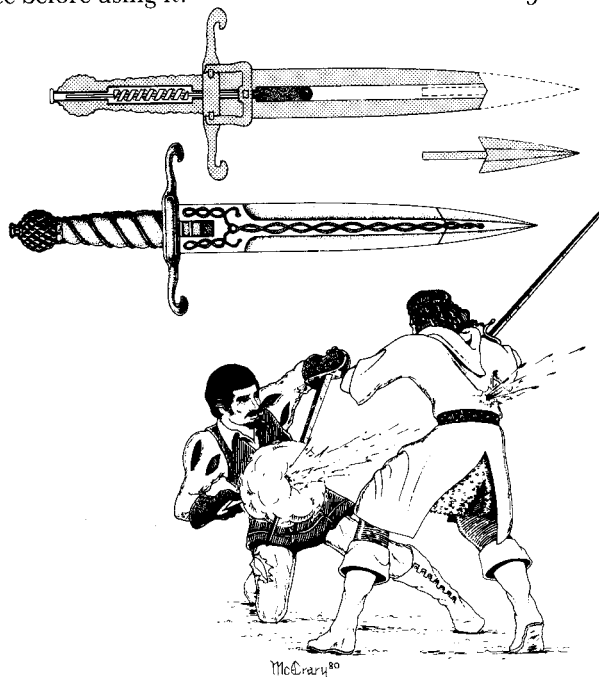
Slide back the flash pan cover, and prime the flash pan and touch hole. Replace the flash pan cover, pommel cap, and arrow, and the gun is now ready to fire.

To fire the gun, one pushes the ring-guard forward until it touches the flash pan cover. This will cause the cover to withdraw, and brings the pyrite in contact with the striker. A spark will then ignite the powder.

The wheel lock dagger is best kept in reserve, and used only as a last resort surprise weapon. One way would be to use it as a *Main gauche*, and fire the gun point-blank into your adversary when it would seem you are losing. All other regulations and prices concerning 'Gunnes' apply as per the rules.

Normally I would not do a "Weapons Shop" on a firearm, as I dislike their use in T&T. However, this weapon is such a beautiful piece of art that I could not resist using it. Besides, the complicated procedure for reloading and the noise of firing the gun would make a delver think twice before using it.

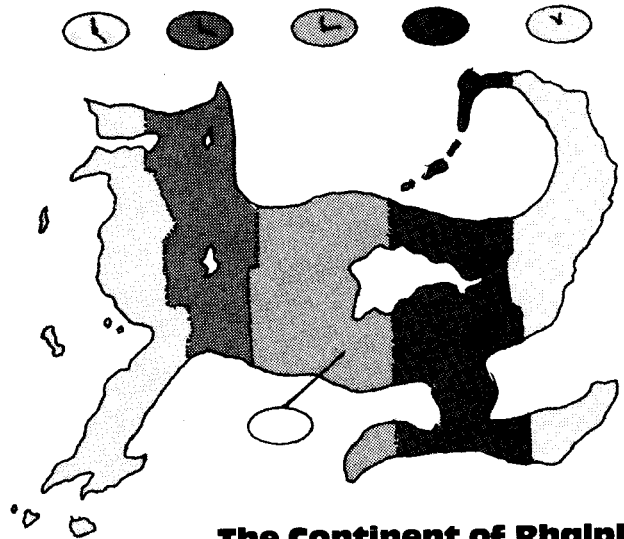
— L. J. Harris



Illustrations by Brian McCrary

TIME IN THE CAMPAIGN

— Dean H. Judson



The Continent of Rhalph

Time has always been one of the hardest things to handle in any campaign. It spreads characters out to the four winds, determines who can adventure in a single session, and fouls up some of the best-laid plans of both characters and GameMasters. But conversely — and perversely — time is almost essential for characters to have any meaning in a “world sense”. A GM needs to have some sort of idea (if not exact knowledge) of what *time* it is for characters. There are four basic methods of doing this.

No time at all: This method consists of merely saying, “OK, you just got out of Dungeon A. Wanna go 500 miles north and run through my new Dungeon B?” Easy, to be sure — but realistic? Never. However, it does have certain advantages over other, more complicated systems. The GM has no complex charts, no fancy record sheets, and he can bring a new factor (such as Plague, Raids and Revolts, or Natural

Disaster) into play whenever the mood strikes. This system is probably best for beginning campaigns with only one or two dungeons near each other.

However, there are grievous disadvantages to this method. With no time scale, player actions tend to become meaningless. Players sit around just “waiting for the next dungeon”. Outdoor adventures tend to devolve into “OK, you travel 25 miles to Dungeon Q. There are three entrances — which one do you want to take?” After a short time, adventures (no matter how well done) tend to become stale and boring.

No time, but Distance: This method assumes that characters are within the same time zone — but if Character A is in a city 200 miles from Character B, they must travel to meet before they can go adventuring together. Again, while easy to play, it gives characters almost telepathic abilities to “just happen to run into each other”. This looks good in a book, but it’s highly unlikely it would actually happen. And even if Character A goes on an adventure that takes three months and places her several thousand miles away, she is still in the same time as Character B, who spends all his time counting money. Oh well . . .

1 Day = X Days: Here we have the system suggested for use by almost every FRP game system. If Character A is in day 32, and B is in day 37, Character A can either adventure by herself, or wait for five days and join up with Character B (assuming they are in the same general area). This method works, but requires many charts. It also creates problems for the introduction of new factors (Raids and Revolts, etc.). If you decide that there will be a massive meteor shower in Month 3, and Character A advances to Month 3, then characters still existing in

Months 1 and 2 will have advance warning. Still, players can adventure for as long as they wish, and they don’t have to stop at a certain point because time won’t allow them to continue. For this system to work only the characters that are the earliest in time should be allowed to adventure in a single session, so that time disparities do not become enormous. More than a month’s disparity between two characters is too much.

Written Orders for Weekly Turns: This system assumes that characters occupy the same bi-weekly time period, and that at the end of the bi-weekly period players will write out a new set of orders for the next two-week time period.

All characters begin on Week 1 of Month 1 of Year 1. Players write down what their characters will do for the next two weeks. The GM runs the two-week adventure for each player or group of players. When all these adventures are completed, the GM asks for another set of orders. This allows the GM to easily introduce new factors while handling all the players as they run their characters.

Player intrigues are handled easily when using this system. However, if one player’s character goes on an uneventful 3-month boat trip, that character will miss six sets of orders. Since it could take a week of real time before the GM finishes all the current sets of adventures, this could cause problems. To overcome this, make sure that no single player has more than one character in the campaign. At any rate, I recommend that there be no more than thirty characters in a single campaign.

Each of the four systems above has its own advantages and disadvantages. Use them as you will — and don’t take time *too* seriously . . .

38A Make a L4SR on LK. If you make it, Montok’s shot strikes home. Otherwise, she misses. Two more centaurs appear and chase the coach. Montok glares at you, and you know you did something wrong. She picks up another cranequin.

If you speed up, make a L2SR on LK. If you make it, go to 51A; if you miss, go to 63A. If you maintain your current speed, go to 48B.

38B The village shaman is the equivalent of a 35th level sorcerer; a lightning bolt strikes you . . . Take 500 hits. If this reduces your CON to zero, go to 52A.

If you live, the centaurs apologize and let you go in peace (they’re impressed!). But what were you doing in a dinky little mini-solo like this?

GOD & GOLEM, INC.

—Al Sirois—

illustration by Chris Carlsson



Erren knew that in trying to call up a demon he was taking a tremendous risk, but he had no other choice. His own inaction had backed him into a corner and there was only one way out.

He didn't like demons in the first place, and he was (he admitted to himself) even a little afraid of them. He wasn't really very strong, so he couldn't afford to go around materializing demons and imps all the time. That sort of thing was the special province of the Big Boys, as Erren thought of the sorcerers and magicians who had been lucky enough to have been born with a high magical potential.

For a living, Erren made use of his own limited strength to cast small friendly spells on good luck charms, amulets and love philtres. These material things were manufactured in the modest factory which he owned. He made a daily tour of the place, magicking the products.

Recently, however, sales had been on a downswing. Erren knew full well that this was due to his low-key advertising campaign, and not to failing strength as his competitors alleged.

"Ridiculous, nonsense!" he muttered to himself as he carefully positioned and lit the black wax candles surrounding the pentagram he had so laboriously chalked upon the floor of his office. The hour was late. Erren had stayed behind as his staff departed for the day, stating rather self-importantly that

he had, umm, some unfinished business to attend to. Then he closed his office door firmly, and bent to listen at the keyhole, hoping that his employees hadn't seen the beads of perspiration on his forehead.

His staff had been heartened, as he'd hoped. The Old Man was going to cast a spell, they said among themselves as they left. Damn well about time, too. Thought he might really *be* losing his strength like the rumour said, it's taken him so long to make a move . . .

"They'll see!" Erren thought, mopping his face with a handkerchief drawn from under his ceremonial robes, which up to now he'd only worn on Guild holidays. "Things'll be different around here, *different*, I think! Yes, sir!" He realized that he was mumbling aloud. He picked up his conical hat from his desk. He was glad that he'd had his wife fix that frayed spot by the bottom. Fitting the hat to his head, he turned to face the pentagram.

The office was lit only by the flickering candles. The outside door was locked. Erren walked to his circle of safety and folded his arms across his ample belly.

This was it.

The carefully repressed excitement and apprehension, resolutely ignored during the time it had taken him to set up his paraphernalia, now burst forth from his soul. Instantly his palms were

awash with sweat. He hadn't summoned a demon since his college days, over forty years ago. And even then the materialization had taken place under laboratory conditions with a real sorcerer present. Erren stared at the candle-lit sign on the floor, and rubbed at his faded blue eyes. He'd never wanted to be one of the Big Boys. When he had taken his MPTs (Magical Potential Tests) in high school and was later informed of his low score, he'd been secretly relieved. Erren had been an unambitious young man, and he had remained that way throughout his life. His small business kept him fairly comfortable, and he had been content.

But now his firm, although established and respected, was being undermined by several of the high-profit-oriented newcomers to the field. The public seemed to be responding more, nowadays, to fancy packaging and extravagant claims, and less to honest craftsmanship and quality.

Craftmanship and quality! Erren's lined face firmed with resolve. After all, he reasoned to himself, all he wanted was a little precognitive information so he could adjust his advertising and product output to correspond to the public tastes and needs. Honesty will out! It certainly wasn't much to ask for, and the demon would be duty-bound to grant Erren's requests. And so long as he stayed in his circle of safety, the demon wouldn't be able to harm him

Sorcerer's Apprentice



or snatch him away to Hell.

Still, demons were known to be crafty, obnoxious creatures. What if...?

Erren stamped mentally on the rogue thought. There was no time for self-doubt. He drew himself up, took a deep breath, and began the requisite chant, which had taken him several days to memorize. His eyes were tightly closed. Two minutes passed, and he was about halfway through the almost unpronounceable string of eldritch syllables when he felt a sudden cold breeze spring up in the closed room. This breeze swirled around his robes, chilling his calves, and was followed after a few seconds by a scorching blast of air that was tainted with the acrid odor of burnt matches. The demon had arrived!

Erren, tense with apprehension, concentrated on speaking the spell correctly. This was the most dangerous part of the process, and he had to ignore the supernatural being until the chant was completed. One slip meant — but he couldn't think about that now.

Mercifully, the demon wasn't acting the way demons were normally expected to act. It wasn't trying to interrupt the spell with screams of derision, or oaths and threats. It was probably waiting for him to open his eyes, whereupon it would leap at him in all its hideousness, unmindful of the restraining power of the pentagram, trying to frighten him out of his circle. Possibly it hoped to give him a heart attack. The thought of this

almost made Erren falter in his exposition. His throat felt very dry.

He wasn't looking forward to seeing the demon. The ones he had seen in college had been bad enough, and now there were no sorcerers present to take over if something went wrong . . .

Finally the spell was complete, and he had to open his eyes. With a certain measure of trepidation, he did so.

He found himself staring at a metal box about the same general size and shape of a china closet. The side facing Erren was studded with small blinking lights, various and sundry appurtenances for which he had no name, and a large glass window near the top behind which incomprehensible things spun and whirled. The thing smelled of brimstone, and was steaming slightly. It radiated heat.

Erren bit at his knuckles in astonishment. His shoulders hunched, and his wrinkled neck drew his head down; the action made him resemble a tortoise (albeit one with a pointed hat).

He didn't know what to do. This boxlike affair didn't look anything like any demon he had ever heard of. It didn't even look alive. He began to feel a little faint. This was, he knew, his only chance to summon an aide from the Nether Regions: he didn't have enough strength to be able to do it again at his age and still be able to charm his love-potions and amulets. One more attempt would drain him of

all his Magical Potential.

"What *are* you?" he whispered, more to himself than to the thing; it had, after all, no ears.

"This entity is a demon," the thing said in a tinny monotone. "What else did you think you would get with that spell? A crate of oranges?"

Erren's eyes widened more than he would have believed possible, and he involuntarily drew back a pace, but retained enough presence of mind to stay inside his circle. This thing was a demon—? *This thing was a demon?*

"Ha-ha-how can you talk without a mouth?" Erren asked, desperately trying to remember his college texts on demonology. He'd never heard of any demons like this.

"You would not understand. But as long as I am within this geometric figure I must answer any question you ask. Shall I explain?"

"N-no, no—" Erren knew that he had to assert himself, no matter how strange the thing looked — and after all, a metal box wasn't nearly as unsettling as a horned, tufted and clawed horror with too many eyes and the wrong sort of fingers. "But are you an — unh, uncommon species?"

"I am a machine," the demon said. "An analog/digital hybrid computer with self-programming capabilities developed by AI research."

"What? A machine?" Erren had seen printing presses and steam engines,

but . . . "What's AI?"

"Artificial Intelligence," replied the demon enigmatically. "You have a nineteenth-century cultural level on this world. AI is beyond your present technological level."

Erren could have sworn that he could detect a faint taint of pride in the demon's monotonous voice. Well, that must mean that it had been damned for hubris, then . . .

Hubris in a *machine*? Erren shook his head. He was badly confused, and the situation seemed to be passing beyond his limited control. The thing was a demon, that much was clear; and a demon was what Erren wanted, and it was what he'd gotten. Now he had to use it before his nerve shattered completely.

"O Demon!" he announced, raising his arms. "Hear me!"

"What is it you require?"

Erren was delighted, although he tried not to show it. It was obeying him, supernatural steam engine though it might be. It was just a machine! He wasn't frightened of machines.

"What is your name?" Erren asked, and folded his arms.

"ESAN 505," said the demon.

A strange name, reflected Erren. "Very well, S. Ann Fivo'Five, listen carefully. My business isn't doing very well right now, what with the devaluation and all, and I need some small knowledge of the future to help me anticipate the needs of my customers. Convince 'em that I know what they want better than *they* do, that's what I want. Prove that I've still got my strength . . ." he trailed off, then shook himself. "You will help me!"

"Insufficient data," said ESAN 505 cryptically. "Excuse me," it added, as if in apology. It fell silent. The little things behind the window moved a bit more quickly.

Erren waited for the demon to say or do something. He wasn't certain if he should make a comment, but he was feeling more or less at ease. He stared unseeingly at the winking lights on the demon's metal hide, pleased that he was holding his own against the manifestation. He pulled out his handkerchief and dabbed again at his wide face. Not all of his perspiration was due to nervousness; the room had grown uncomfortably hot since the demon's advent.

Suddenly it spoke. "I have been interfaced with the Central Data Bank in Hell, and have correlated enough data to construct an accurate model for programming purposes.

"Excellent!" said Erren with false heartiness, hoping it was the right thing to say. What sort of arcane terror was a central data bank? He added, "I imagine that you know the spell we'll need. Will you require any special materials? Bats' blood, virgins' teeth . . .?"

"Indeed," responded the machine. "Here. I have a hard copy for you. We can start at once." From a small slot in its "chest", the demon ejected a small card, which fluttered to the floor.

Eagerly, Erren stepped forward to pick it up. Instantaneously there came a sizzling *crash!* of thunder, and Erren vanished into a sphere of flame. It winked out of existence.

In the ensuing silence, the demon switched to long-range communications mode. "Transfer achieved. Soul is number eight hundred seventy-three, this terminal. Success factor one hundred per cent." Whereupon it, too, vanished.

The candles in the room flickered out, one by one. ■

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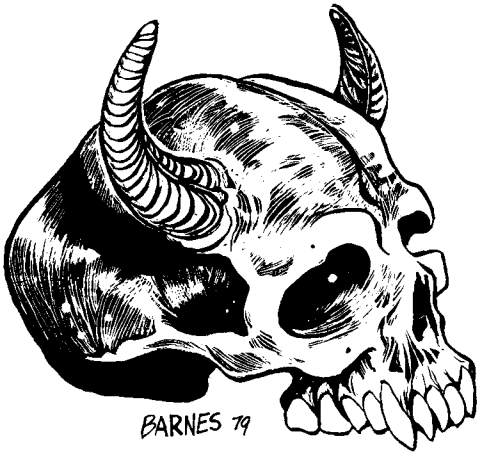
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IN ALIEN TONGUES

— C.J. Cherryh

illustration by John Barnes



Language has an overwhelming effect on how and what a person thinks. Unfortunately, there is little intensive examination of the nuts and bolts that make one language different — or similar — to another among those outside the field of linguistics. But for anyone who deals with invented names — whether you are a GM seeking to create a unique world, or a player trying to come up with a good name for your newest character — or if you're just interested in the nature of thought itself — you should find this short article valuable.

The United States, Britain, Europe, Russia, and a good slice of the Middle East and Asia are of the Indo-European (IE) language family, belonging to that group that begins with Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, Old Norse, Persian, etc., and branches to English, Russian, German, the Romance Languages, certain languages of India, and so on, into a number that would be tedious to name.

The fact is therefore that a considerable linguistic bias is built into the understanding of the most polylingual of readers and writers, unless they have chanced to study languages outside this very extensive group. This bias is carried most particularly into SF and Fantasy, these being the forms of literature which tend toward the invention of alien tongues. Very often a supposedly alien language turns out to have amazing

coincidence with IE structures and roots. Occasionally this coincidence becomes embarrassing, actually producing a word that has a meaning in some other IE language, a meaning that may be obscene or ridiculous in the context.

The bias also shows in sentence structure, and in singularity-plurality distinction, and in categories of the parts of speech. The *subject-verb-direct object* pattern is IE; and so is the *subject-direct object-verb* pattern. The plural in -s, -i, and -a is IE; so is the division of words into eight parts of speech: noun, verb, adjective, and so on. There are, for instance, languages that might utterly lack prepositions, expressing them by alteration of the noun. There are languages that might build nouns by what is called Determinant, adding a particle to a noun or verb to indicate which of several meanings is intended: such as — person-male, building-personal, building-general — but most of these would be too complicated for full development.

Now, without delivering a lecture on grammar (anyone who is interested can consult a grammar text and figure by that normality a few alterations that would have a profound effect on structure), there are a few simple methods by which an alien language can be built.

First, consider spelling. IE spelling pattern is ideally consonant-vowel-consonant, etc., ad infinitum. The English letter frequency is ETAISON: the most common letter is E, next most common T, third A, and so on. The

most common English consonant clusters are: ST, TH, NT, FR, QU, RR, SS, TT. Look at any line of English print and you can figure others. So if you would break out of that pattern, replace the ETAISON order with something different, like ANUORIH, choosing the least used letters in the IE repertoire; and use other consonant clusters, such as ZH, BH, FN, DN, YL, etc. Remember that M, N, and R are sometimes vowels, as is Y; and that other consonants exist, as, for instance, a back-throated click in one of the African languages, or almost any other sound made conveniently enough by the species' speech apparatus.

With the letter frequency ANUORIH, one could produce place names like Afnuru, Dni, Iru, and Naairun.

Maps play a considerable part in language development. A major mountain chain would dictate a geographical and thereby a linguistic division. If languages on either side of it are to be taken as related for some historical reason, still there would be some slight variation in the letter frequency table. If unrelated entirely, then the place names and personal names will need an entirely different letter frequency.

It is perhaps convenient to have everyone on a given world speaking a common language. It is far from likely that this would be the case, and if a common language were postulated, it properly demands considerable justification for its existence. There are

laws of linguistics, and they may no more be casually dismissed than a conscientious SF writer could dispense with the laws of gravity or inertia.

Isolation of a mere century's duration produces a different accent in a population that once shared a common accent; of five centuries, real difficulty in understanding; of more than five centuries, you may assume that there is now a different, though related, language. The only universal languages that have ever succeeded, such as Latin and Greek, succeeded because of merchants. Legislate what you wish, people will still speak what they were taught by their parents . . . but link success in trade to language — money, in other words — and they will break their necks learning the language of international trade.

The rate of linguistic change, however, is not constant. The higher the level of education in your population, the less change will occur: educated people do not change their speech overmuch from the traditional, except to adopt words for unfamiliar ideas and new inventions. The lower the educational level, the more rapidly the change will occur.

If knowledge were transmitted mind-to-mind and entire, or learned by computer, change could be kept to a minimum; and it remains to be seen what retarding effect the invention of sound recording in this century will have on the rate of linguistic change. Each transmission away from the original or perfect source (that is, generation to generation) tends to be a deterioration of classic grammar and spelling.

The only major force that tends to interfere in the rate of linguistic change is religion. Certain religions, where sacred writings and chants are strongly connected to a certain language, place a premium on absolutely accurate transmission of grammar and pronunciation that may put a halt to the priestly language for (in human experience) as long as two thousand years and possibly many more, barring political or religious upheaval. After a long time lapse in separated populations, only priests (or computers with long records) might still be able to talk to each other.

In completely alien lifeforms, furthermore, biology will dictate certain consonantal and vowel forms. Consider the facial shape of the alien, the mouth structure, the nose; consider what would be changed were the lips virtually immobile, or the jaw very prominent, or the nasal cavities quite resonant. Or are there even vocal cords?

Consider the grammar of a species with three sexes. *He, she, and it* may be completely inaccurate.

Or what if they had three arms? Singularity-plurality? Not likely. Singular and plural are concepts of a bilaterally symmetrical species . . . and old Greek had a dual, happening to like paired things, another attribute of bilateralism. But consider a trilateral orientation.

Further, languages have an overabundance of words for things that are highly valued or often used. Consider the number of words in English for automobiles, including brand names and types of components thereof. The Eskimo tongue has many different words for snow. Latin has five words for *he*, depending on relationship and status, but cannot tell the difference between loving and liking without effort — while Greek has three different kinds of love.

A being cannot even think what is not in his language to say. A being will automatically make distinctions that are built into his language, but must know more than one language to think beyond his own. Therefore, the psychology of an alien species is implied in its language, and it is as important to know what *cannot* be said as it is to know what *can*.

Language, then, is dictated by geography, environment, level of technology, duration of isolation, passage of time (deterioration), outside contacts, physiology, political stability . . . and it has a circular cause and effect relationship with the psychology of the speaker. It dictates attitude and predisposes the speaker to certain beliefs.

Minute diversity from another group in any of these areas, particularly in environment and experience, will produce another language in little more than five hundred years unless severe braking influence is exerted by incredibly rigid education or religious taboo. The more rigid the braking influence (which of course must have strong motivation), the longer the change can be postponed. In human experience, to retain a language unchanged for much more than two thousand years (and that not in the general population) is a considerable feat . . . but that has been in the midst of violent wars and upheavals, migrations and revolutions, so it can be done for longer periods if such disruptions could be removed.

It would be possible to imagine a computer-educated society, in which every learner returns to an original source

and is force-fed precise and unchanged knowledge . . . or a telepathic society, in which group consciousness precludes individual separation or disaffection . . . or an eidetic species, in which transmission of knowledge is likewise exceedingly precise. Change in language basically proceeds from ignorance or from the desire to produce ignorance: from ignorance of the correct form, spelling or usage, or from ignorance of an unfamiliar object for which a foreign name must be borrowed. Unless a society has invented a method for dispensing entirely with ignorance, linguistic change is inevitable.

The other cause, the desire to produce ignorance, is extremely visible in advanced civilizations. It proceeds from disaffection, and produces, for instance, slang . . . purposely inventing words to confuse those external to the group that is using the slang. This usually arises from politics or from economics. In any civilization undergoing extreme political stress, slang is common to the group in rebellion, but not to the conforming group, which will tend to traditional and educated usage. It is also true that (also in advanced civilizations) perverted usage arises among bureaucracies, likewise interested in producing ignorance and in keeping certain things secret while pretending to open communication. This combination of slang and bureaucratism at either end of the political scale tends to accelerate to great extreme, but the traditionalists in the center customarily apply a braking influence that maintains some sort of balance. Occasionally violent political upheaval will erupt and scar the language as well as the landscape, but the return under these circumstances is basically to the traditional center, unless education breaks down entirely.

Immigration of another linguistic group (or conquest or being conquered) likewise has a profound effect on the region thus affected, and the blending of languages will likewise cause a blending of attitudes and concepts that will produce thoughts impossible to either population prior to the mingling. Linguistic pollution is therefore a creative force as well as a destructive one. Ignorance destroys; diversity develops; ideas and concepts collide on the front of invading armies or peaceful immigration, and new ideas are born of the contrast.

So it is possible by the simple invention of a language to provide an alien culture much longer than the moment, a sense of past that is vastly important to the creation of a whole world, as much as the consideration of its physical atmosphere and environment. ■

Valkyries

Laurence Gillespie

illustrations by Peter Laird



She's a beautiful humanoid female, dressed for war in blood-red byrnies, armed for war with spark-shooting spear and shining shield. She is usually found alone, but also travels in groups of 3's, 9's, or 27's. She's a Valkyrie!

Valkyries are so integral to Norse mythology that it is impossible to trace their roots with any certainty. There are almost as many theories of their origins as there are Old Norse scholars. Most evidence, however, suggests that these beautiful amazons of the heroic poems are a relatively late development, probably dating from when Norse paganism came under Christian influence.

What they developed from, though, is anyone's guess. Some Valkyrie names, like Hlokk ("Shrieker"), Goll ("Screamer") and Skogul ("Raging") suggest they may once have been far more terrible than the sanitized version that survives in literature. These proto-Valkyries probably had far more in common with giant maidens and blood-drinking trollwives than with 36B opera stars. The gore-drenched twelve who make that unforgettable appearance in *Njal's Saga* seem to have had more than a little troll in them, at least. The Wagnerian amazon type is probably more fun to use in FRP gaming, though.

Valkyries roam all over Middle Earth (and over several other of the nine worlds of the Norse mythos), in constant search of battles, wars, and potential wars. The most spectacular legendary sightings have occurred in conjunction with the ride of the Valkyries, when Othinn's shield-

maidens sweep across the sky en route to battle. This ride is usually accompanied by tremendous storms, earthquakes, and other dire portents; it is always followed by a great battle or a natural disaster.

When not in search of bloodshed, Valkyries normally shun all contact with humans. Some have a fondness for swimming in secluded lakes, and this is when they are most vulnerable. Anyone who steals a Valkyrie's clothes (typically fashioned from swan-feathers) has her under his power. A Valkyrie will do anything to get her clothes back, for two very good reasons. She can't fly without them, and Nordic winters are *very* cold!

Othinn has also been known to shut Valkyries up in flaming towers atop high mountains, to punish them for insubordination. Usually the offending Valkyrie is spellbound in her prison, until a great hero rescues her.

Othinn's residence, Valhalla, is another good place to meet Valkyries, since they serve all the drinks there. Getting to Valhalla is easy, if you're a good warrior and happen to die in battle. Getting out, however, can be tough.

Valkyries are the traditional shield-maidens of Othinn, the Norse god of war and death. Their name is their business, for they are the choosers (*kyrja*, to choose) of those to die (*valr*, the slain). Othinn chooses which side will win or lose in any given battle, and it is the task of the Valkyries to enforce his choice. The Valkyries are the ones who must visit the battle-fields of Middle Earth and ensure things go according to Othinn's plans. They will even intervene physically, if necessary, though normally they rely on their formidable magic spells to resolve combat.

The purpose of the Valkyries underlies one of the most fundamental motivations of the Viking gods: they are planning for the end of the world. Each warrior chosen is carried up to Valhalla, where he becomes one of the *einherjar*, Othinn's elite band that will one day fight at Ragnarok. Each hero the Valkyries deliver is another soldier for that last hopeless battle against the powers of chaos and destruction.

As it is, most fantasy role-playing alignment systems fall apart when forced to deal with the Valkyrie. Her moral code, like Othinn's, simply cannot be contained within the conventional ethical slots of good and evil.

Everything done by Othinn is designed to ensure victory for the forces of law and order at Ragnarok. Only those who die by violence, however, can

serve in Othinn's ranks — everyone else goes down to Hel (the Norse goddess of the dead), to one day join the giants in their attack on Asgarth. Thus, Othinn has a vested interest in having as many people die by violence as possible. That is why he incites wars among men. And that is why he and his Valkyrie are often seen as the source of all evil.

As it is, even the most battle-hardened berserk will be repelled by the Valkyries' love of war and death. Blood, gore, and suffering do not deter them in the slightest — it's their daily business. In fact, a Valkyrie is never happier than when in battle. And though you can take the Valkyrie out of the battle, you can never take the battle out of the Valkyrie. Even those who settle down and raise families are never immune to the siren call of war. It may take nine days, or nine years, but sooner or later the Valkyrie will abandon home and hearth for the field of battle. Not even Volund and his brothers were able to keep their Valkyries home for good, and they were elvish princes.

When assessing the powers of the Valkyrie, never forget that she works for Othinn, the god of war and death. A Valkyrie's powers are Othinn's powers, almost all of which relate to war and the killing of men. And like Othinn, many Valkyries are both great sorcerers and great warriors. (Just how great is a matter for some debate, since the legends seldom indicate their limits.)

A Valkyrie's eyes are perhaps her most terrible and awe-inspiring feature. She can cast fear and paralysis spells with a single glance. With a sustained gaze, she can implant dread and horror in all but the stoutest of hearts. With her eyes, a Valkyrie can even inflict elf-shot, an intense piercing pain, over long range. Only the most powerful of counterspells, and a carefully averted gaze, can turn these spells aside.

Valkyries are also great sources of runelore and arcane knowledge — and they are not above teaching this wisdom to a favored human. In one Viking poem, *Sigdrifomal*, a Valkyrie recites no fewer than eight runespells which do everything from calm storms to aid childbirth. A Valkyrie can be handy friend, if you're trying to learn magic.

Though Valkyries carry a wide repertoire of spells, they tend to specialize in battle and nature magic. Most are weathermasters, able to produce violent storms with a word, a gesture, or a flight through the heavens.

One of the Valkyries' most powerful battle-spells is the *herfjoturr* ("fetter of the host"). It is best described as a mass fear spell, like an *Oh Go Away* bloated to obscene proportions. Properly applied, it can reduce an entire army to screaming chaos. Valkyries don't hesitate to cast this spell when battles diverge from Othinn's script.

Another potent Valkyrie spell is the *galdraband*, which means "magic bond". Valkyries use it when they're trying to slay an individual warrior, rather than an entire army. If the man they cast it upon cannot protect himself, he's paralyzed. Fighters with strong wills and great strength can sometimes break free, but only after wasting precious moments. Valkyries are experts at casting a *galdraband* at just the right time, too. If you happen to be fighting off fifty berserk goblins when the "right time" comes up, a *galdraband* can be downright inconvenient.

A noted Valkyrie ability is one of flight. This seems to be a power located in the swan-shifts they wear, and also seems to be inherent in the horses they ride across the sky (though the legendary references on this point are unclear). Some Valkyries must actually assume the shape of a swan if they wish to become airborne — but they can cast other spells while flying, too.

Many Valkyries also have the power of invisibility. Some even fight in this state, though others use it merely for casting spells. Valkyries can also temporarily impart second sight (the ability to see invisible and hidden things), simply by crooking their arms. Anything, even if invisible, will assume its true form for the viewer when he looks through this crook. Valkyries themselves have second sight, of course.

A Valkyrie can always hear her true name, no matter where it is spoken. Saying it (preferably in a south wind, since Valkyries come from the south) is a sure-fire way to summon one

47A As you run, you are visible from the far side of the coach. Montok never did much care for cowards: she takes you out with one spectacularly lucky cranequin quarrel. Go to 52A.

47B Make a L2SR on LK. If you miss it, reduce your CON by one point: you have wandered aimlessly and suffer from hunger, exposure, and possibly thirst. Continue making saving rolls until you succeed. If your CON is reduced to zero first, go to 52A. If you make a roll, go to 8A.



instantly. Of course, you better have a good reason!

Valkyries get along well with crows, wolves, and other creatures that feast on the carrion left by war. For fantasy gaming purposes, Valkyries should be able to communicate with and control such animals, but they are not likely to use this power as anything more than a source of information. In addition, Valkyries can acquire full control over *any* animal simply by speaking its true name (yes, this even includes faithful dogs!)

Valkyries cast many of their most powerful spells by singing them. Sometimes, their songs will even blunt weapons. At other times, they cause those within hearing range to abandon

all thoughts of defense and to attack berserkly. (In fantasy game terminology, the GM should reduce the fighter to the first level for the purposes of defense, and square his level for the purpose of offense. Or, in T&T parlance, ignore his adds for the purposes of defense and double them for the purposes of offense.)

A Valkyrie is a difficult foe to overcome. Stealing her swansuit will keep her earthbound, at least. And as far as the legends go, Valkyries seem to be killable — they may be great fighters, but they're not invulnerable. However, since Valkyries are able to travel to and from the world of the dead, death may not be as permanent for them as it is for others. The matter doesn't seem to have come up much in the legends. The Valkyries' best protection is Othinn, the guy they work for. I mean, if you want to offend the god that decides who wins your next battle, go right ahead!

Though short on banes, some Valkyries are long on one serious weakness: they're suckers for a pretty face. Despite strong orders to the contrary from Othinn, Valkyries have

been known to become emotionally involved with warriors they were supposed to kill. This often causes them to rig fights "the wrong way" (from Othinn's point of view, at least). The Valkyrie responsible is usually sent to a flaming tower, and the hero is killed anyway — but it makes for a great opera. To reduce such high Nordic romance to T&T terms, have your favorite hero attempt a L3-SR on Charisma the next time he's fighting against the odds. If he makes it, a beautiful Valkyrie comes down and rescues him. If not, well, she doesn't (or, for people running Groucho Marx/Monty Python type worlds, make that an *ugly* Valkyrie if he fails!).

Suggested Readings

Just about any good survey of Norse mythology should have a section on Valkyries. Particularly recommended is that found in H. Ellis-Davidson's *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe*. For some great Valkyrie trivia, try Grimm's *Teutonic Mythology* (particularly Volumes I and IV). Last, but not least, don't overlook the original source of Valkyrie lore, the heroic poems and sagas of Old Iceland (especially *Volundarkviða*, *Sigrdrifumál*, and *The First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbane*). ■

48A Take one die worth of damage from an arrow and go to 53A.

48B Montok misses her shot, glares at you, grabs another cranequin, and shouts, "Faster!" If you obey, go to 52B. If not, go to 55B.

48C You throw down your weapons and approach one of the orcs, your arms out from your side. One orc grins . . . and lops your head off. If you survive this, *everyone* runs screaming into the forest. If not, go to 52A.



an adventure on the Isle of Greysmoke

The Rainbow World and More

by Larry DiTillio

In Sorcerer's Apprentice #6, Larry DiTillio first opened the back doors of the Dome of Greysmoke for a readers' tour of some unusual T&T gaming tactics. The adventurers are different here, but the setting is the same, so welcome again to the cold halls of Greysmoke's dungeon . . . where, perhaps, you'll pick up a few ideas for your own adventuring. If the Isle of Greysmoke intrigues you, you'll be glad to learn that Flying Buffalo will publish it in its entirety for Game Master use, some time late this summer, as the "Isle of Darksmoke".

T*o the Tavern of the Seven Curses on the Isle of Greysmoke comes many a bold adventurer. Some come for business, others for pleasure and still others on mysterious quests for even more mysterious masters. And yet others simply seek directions to the stronghold of the warrior-wizard Greysmoke in hopes of breaching its walls and plundering some share of the fabulous treasure hoards legends say are stored there. These last are seldom seen again, except perhaps by the devils who stoke the furnaces of the Dark World Beyond Life...*

Twenty thousand gold pieces for the return of one female. To Tarron Mag Afdan it seemed a sublimely easy way to make money. He had even smiled graciously at the effete nobleman while accepting the task. He was smiling no longer.

"Leave him. He knew the risk when he asked to join us." The

speaker was Sopedi of the Shadows and he spoke of Nyven, the young elven swordsman once so eager to join the veteran delvers on their "mission of mercy."

With sad eyes, Tarron Mag Afdan looked down at the elf. Nyven had been warned of Greysmoke's masterful way with subtle poisons yet with unprotected hands had examined the handles of a large urn. Nothing had happened at the time — but the elf's palms were coated with red dust. An hour later, Nyven began to stagger slightly, complaining of a burning sensation in his legs.

Little by little, this staggering had increased until finally the elf could not walk at all. He lay now against the stone wall of the room into which Tarron had carried him, and listened as the others discussed his fate.

"To leave him in this condition is

to condemn him," said Tarron.

"Not necessarily. I can place an enchantment on the entrance which shall ward off anything seeking an easy meal. After the poison has run its course, he need only await our return." This practical evaluation came from the midnight-skinned sorceress Ashvyra, the final member of the contingent.

"Good enough, witch. Do it and let us be off," grunted Sophedi.

Ashvyra looked to Tarron Mag Afdan. The Dridani warrior nodded. She began her incantations at the portal while Tarron knelt beside Nyven, tipping a wine skin to his lips. The young elf drank sparingly, his eyes betraying his fear.

"This enchantment, Tarron. How long . . .?"

"Long enough, young elf, long enough." The Dridani placed the wineskin in Nyven's hands, clapped him on the shoulder and stood up. "There, now, you are set for a few hours of pleasant resting."

Nyven smiled a small, courageous smile and in a moment, Ashvyra came to kneel at his side, directing his attention to the doorway which now glowed with a merry, eldritch light.

"You see, brave elf. You now have a magic light to ward off evil. And I will give you yet another bit of magic to dispell any chill of terror you may feel." So saying, she pressed her dark red lips against those of Nyven.

Sophedi of the Shadows spat impatiently and grumbled to Tarron Mag Afdan. "Demons of the Nine Isles, she'll kill him before the poison does." Tarron did not appreciate the rogue's humor or implied prediction, but said nothing.

Ashvyra broke off her kiss with a laugh, moving away from a much-bemused Nyven. "Think interesting thoughts, good elf," she murmured as she rejoined Tarron and Sophedi.

"Good fortune to you all!" the elf cried.

"And to you, Nyven. We shall be back before you know it."

The elf nodded gamely as the door closed behind his companions and he was alone. He peered at the arcane glow of the portal and ran his tongue over his lips, tasting again the lingering gingerberry nectar of Ashvyra's kiss. Despite his predicament, he felt somehow safe.

"If your spell is as potent as your kiss, the lad should be well protected," Tarron said as the party strode down a corridor, away from

Nyven's room.

"The spell, alas, provides only light. It will serve to lessen his fear, however." Tarron could hardly believe his ears, but Sophedi's unpleasant laughter confirmed the truth.

"Devil's Horns, I thought as much. Would that I could see the poor fool's face when some creature of this foul pit breaches that 'enchanted' portal!" Sophedi cackled rudely at the thought, a cackle cut short by the pinking tip of Tarron's blade at his throat.

"We will return for Nyven as we promised. Is that clear, scum?"

"Only a fool keeps promises to a dead man," snarled Sophedi, his hand inching toward the hilt of his dagger.

Ashvyra swiftly stepped between the two. "Enough!" she said. "We did what had to be done. Our task is to find the niece of the Kythir of Morbelos. I have no objections to returning for the elf, but only when our mission is complete. I have need of my share of the promised gold."

The doors were metal and much aged. Sophedi tested the right-hand one and found it unsecured. Taking a deep breath, the rogue slipped inside and scanned the darkness. He could hear a low, on-off grumbling sound, and his nostrils twitched at a somehow familiar smell. He looked to the source of the sound, but saw only an intermittent glowing, timed to the coming and going of the grumbling sound. It was enough to give him a notion of what the room contained — and that notion was not one he was pleased with.

"Shall we enter?" Ashvyra whispered. Sophedi slipped out and drew the mage and warrior back from the portals. His face was filled with doubt as Ashvyra unmasked the lantern she carried.

"What did you see, rogue?" Tarron asked.

"A dragon, if I am not very much mistaken."

"Of what size?"

"Hard to say, though it makes little difference. Even a tiny dragon is still a dragon. And this one did not look all that tiny, from what I could see of it."

"It sleeps?" asked Ashvyra.

"Thank all the long-fanged devils of Green Mountain it does!" Sophedi answered. "Else our quest would surely be over at this moment. As it is, we must re-trace our steps and try some other area."

Tarron shook his head. "We have been everywhere but here. The way

down must be within or beyond this oversized serpent's lair."

"Then we must chance it," said Ashvyra. Sophedi would have snorted loudly if he had not been so fearful of waking the occupant of the dark double-doored room.

"Chance it?" he whispered incredulously. "Are you mad, witch?"

"What choice is there?" Tarron answered. "With care, perhaps we will find the proper passage without waking the beast."

"And perhaps I will take up eating shards of glass for breakfast!" cried Sophedi, though still keeping his voice low.

"Bring the lantern, Ashvyra, and let this one do as he wishes. I tire of his company." With that, Tarron Mag Afdan made his way into the dragon's lair. Ashvyra followed, while Sophedi stood in the dark corridor for a minute. He heard no serpentine roars, and reluctantly came after.

In the light of the lantern, Sophedi's observations were uncomfortably confirmed. It was indeed a dragon, and it was far from tiny. Its great bulk stretched across almost forty feet of the large room; its head was the size of two large men and a husky dwarf. Small wisps of smoke wafted from the dragon's nostrils, testifying to the monster's ability to use more than fang and claw in battle.

Tarron and Ashvyra stared at the beast, all else forgotten in the creature's magnificence. Sophedi silently crept to them, hoping to remind them of their plan to find the right path without waking the creature. Unfortunately, as he did so, one baleful eye opened. For a second, all was strangely still. And then the great head swung skyward, the huge body heaved up like an ocean swell, and a burst of fire seared the air as the

51A The centaurs fall behind, shouting. You reach the next staging house unmolested.

Starting off early the following morning, Montok leans over and grunts, "Woods today. More trouble. Stay awake this time." You do your best, but after the hot, dry plains the forest seems so cool and relaxing that you find yourself drowsing anyway.

You round a curve in the road, and wake with a start. Across the road ahead of you is a massive tree trunk. As you rein and brake to a stop, another tree falls behind you, blocking any retreat. Montok shouts, "Down!" She dives off her side of the coach, you dive off yours. Make a L1SR on LK. If you make it, go to 53A. If not, go to 48A.



dragon roared!

"Who dares enter the lair of Granamyr!"

Sophedi's eyes darted about for the quickest exit. Tarron gripped the hilt of his long sword and moved his shield into position. Ashvyra, however, called up to the beast in a language neither man could fathom. The dragon ceased bellowing, cocked one yellow eye at Ashvyra, and answered her in the same tongue (which was, of course, the language of dragons).

"Who are you, DragonSpeaker?"

"I am Ashvyra, oh Mighty of Mighties, a humble worker of magic from a far-off land called Tallow's End." Ashvyra accompanied the introduction with a charming and complex bow. Tarron Mag Afdan scratched his head in wonder, while Sophedi of the Shadows scuttled crablike toward the double doors. A blast of fire scorched the stones between the

rogue and his destination.

"Your skulking companion is ill-mannered," said the Dragon to Ashvyra. *"And this other one looks all too willing to make use of that ridiculous hatpin he clutches . . ."*

The sorceress turned to her companions and conveyed the tenor of the monster's remarks, accompanied by suitable suggestions. The Dridani sheathed his sword, amazed at the ability of the dark-skinned mage to communicate with this awesome serpent. Sophedi said nothing, but looked discomfited by the entire situation.

Again, Granamyr bellowed, a normal dragon method of gaining attention. When he was satisfied that all were indeed focused on his magnificent being, he addressed Ashvyra again.

"Now then, DragonSpeaker — speak! Why have you dared to intrude upon my rest? Did you seek to slay me and make off with my treasure?"

Ashvyra overacted her expression of shocked innocence as she replied to the accusation. "Prince of Scales, such perfidy against your august and magnificent personage never crossed our thoughts. We meant only to pass

through your lair without disturbance, as indeed would have happened had not your senses been so undeniably keen." Granamyr accepted the flattery as fact, though in truth his senses were not nearly as keen as she had suggested.

"Your words have the ring of truth . . . yet I am not accustomed to allow humans to stroll through my lair as though it were a public highway. It would be within my rights to devour you for trespassing!"

"What does he say, Ashvyra?" Sophedi whispered.

The mage of Tallow's End smiled crookedly. "He thinks he might eat us." Sophedi's eyes widened.

Ashvyra shouted up to the beast once more. "It is always a dragon's right to devour — but to tell the truth, you would not relish doing so where we are concerned."

"So? And how do you reckon this?"

"You need only look at us, great Granamyr. Why, this one here (*she pointed to Sophedi*) is thin and pallid, all bones and no meat. A common state for one afflicted with the Wasting Wiggles, poor fellow that he is."

Granamyr cocked his huge head to one side and blew two tiny smoke rings through his nostrils, which as everyone knows is a common dragonic expression of puzzlement. *"What is this ailment?"* he asked. *"I have not heard it spoken of before."*

"I am not surprised, great one. It is a new disease brought, some say, by a vicious mage's dying curse. It is said to cause the victim's innards to shake and twist and writhe and wriggle, flailing away at the interior of the skin until it becomes so thin that it tears. I myself saw a pig devour a wriggling heart, only to fall victim to the plague. I do not know if it would affect one of your magnificence . . . however . . ."

"Enough!" thundered the dragon, looking somewhat ill from the description. *"The other one seems fit enough to eat."*

"Ah yes, Mag Afdan. He looks fit enough, I grant you, but this is only natural for a man whose carcass is braced in fully a dozen places by bits of metal. He is truly a man of iron, this one, for he has iron in his skull and in the joints of both elbows and in his knees and the small of his back, all hard-forged replacements for flesh lost in combat. Why, to chew on Mag Afdan would be like swallowing broken swords and rusty dagger blades. I would not be surprised if the length of your inner throat were pierced four score times before his torso reached your great stomach."

52A You are dead. Go read some of the articles and buy from the advertisers in this magazine.

52B Make a L2SR on LK. If you succeed, go to 51A. If you miss the roll, go to 55B.

Granamyr raised one huge claw to his throat and gulped as though it were already happening. After a moment, he recovered his dragonly composure and smiled a wickedly toothy smile.

"You, then, *DragonSpeaker*. You look a most tasty morsel indeed!" Granamyr licked his lips with his great forked tongue.

"Would that it were true, Oh King of All FireBreathers, would that it were true. But, as you and I both know, dragons prize only the tender flesh of virgin females and the fact is that the number of men who have had this poor flesh of mine is exceeded only the the roster of the army of the Great Thane of GoldFyn. And that excess is a matter of a mere squire or two. No, great one, I would not offend your sensitive palate with such over-marinated tissue as mine."

Granamyr was by this time most befuddled by the arguments of the mage of Tallow's End. He tossed his Great Pate from side to side, blowing many a tiny ring of smoke as he pondered what course to follow. Ashvyra took the opportunity to fill Tarron and Sophedi in on what had transpired so far. She suggested they remain alert for her signal. They nodded in agreement as Granamyr spoke again.

"You have convinced me. Devouring you is likely to gain me only a sour stomach. Still, I must have some satisfaction!"

"I believe you have already hit upon the best solution yourself, Emperor of Serpents."

Two more tiny rings of smoke emerged from the beast's nostrils. "I have?"

"Most assuredly. You said yourself that we used your lair as a public highway. Therefore it is only fitting that as punishment we pay you a toll."

"A toll?"

"Does it not seem just to you, most Wise of Worms?"

Granamyr was more confused than ever. Tiny rings of smoke emerged in scores from his nostrils. Ashvyra spoke again, playing on this confusion.

"Of course, the Toll must be sufficiently great to match the magnificence of both road and caretaker. Let us say, one thousand pieces of gold for each foot traveled?"

"It seems an adequate sum," the dragon replied, greed glimmering in his eyes. This sort of talk he could understand and appreciate.

"Then it is agreed. Now, we need merely measure the distance traveled. We started there (*she pointed to the double doors*) and are bound, hmmm?" She

rubbed her chin, pretending to be deep in thought.

"What delays you, woman?" Granamyr boomed impatiently.

"I cannot seem to determine the path we would take. We had thought to travel downward, but . . ."

"There, foolish mage, behind the great tapestry. That is the path you seek. Now proceed with the measurement!"

Ashvyra bowed graciously.

"As you will, most generous of creatures. And my friends shall help to assure an accurate measurement."

She quickly called Sophedi and Tarron to her side, explaining in low, fast whispers her intention. The trio then walked to the large double doors and in very strict fashion faced the tapestry indicated by the dragon. Under the



watchful eye of Granamyr, they began pacing off the distance. Ashvyra called out the sum owed as Tarron and Sophedi took exaggerated strides.

"Two thousand gold pieces, four thousand gold pieces, six thousand gold pieces . . ." and so on until they reached the great tapestry. Tarron drew it aside, revealing an open archway and a flight of stairs leading downward, stairs which they happily noted were far too narrow for a dragon to essay.

"One hundred thousand Pieces of Gold!" Ashvyra called out the last sum. "Is this Toll enough, o Pasha of Lizards?"

"It shall do!" Granamyr chuckled with delight, a sound most odd indeed, coming from a dragon.

Ashvyra bowed one last time. "Then you shall have it. When next we use your road!" And with that she and her companions plunged through

the archway and raced furiously down the stairs. The bellowing of the furious dragon followed them.

"Witch of Tallow's End! You have tricked me!" I shall have your heart for breakfast, your lungs for lunch . . ."

Ashvyra never learned what portion the Dragon planned to have for his supper, since their flight took them out of range of his voice at that moment. She was most exhilarated by her bantering with the Dragon. And in a small way, she was somewhat ashamed of having to trick the old fellow. But only in a very small way.

Some twenty minutes after leaving Granamyr's lair, the trio found themselves at the base of the stairs, facing a large oval room. In the center of this room stood a statue with four oddly-configured arms; stone benches and hanging plants completed the setting. Opposite the delvers, a single door was visible. Sophedi of the Shadows used his limited rogue's magick to open the portal, and they found themselves again facing a long, stone-walled corridor.

"Gogan's Fist!" cursed Tarron Mag Afdan. "This is a fool's errand! We shall never find the maiden in this unending maze of tunnels."

"The woman was lost somewhere on this level," Sophedi said. "And since we cannot return the way we came, I suggest we continue our errand until we can determine a path out of here."

Tarron realized that Sophedi was correct, and that Nyven was a lost man as well. The elf could not survive long enough for them to rescue him, not now.

His thoughts were interrupted by a shout from Ashvyra. The sorceress held something in her hand, something she and Sophedi examined with joy. Tarron joined them and Ashvyra displayed the piece of small, circular metal she had discovered. It was a tunic button, decorated with the Hawk and Lily Crest of Morbelos.

"Some hope at last!" cried the warrior.

53A As you reach the ground, arrows whistle over your head. The door of the passenger cabin flies open and Jeremiah Soilson rolls out. Someone throws his quarterstaff after him.

A second flight of arrows thunks into the sides of the coach, and ten orcs come rolling out of the woods like bad apples out of a barrel. If you surrender to them, go to 48C. If you run for the woods, go to 47A. If you stand and fight, go to 6A.

"More than hope, Dridani," Sophedi laughed. "For look here!" The rogue had found fresh tracks in the dust, most of which were of unfamiliar shape — but one pair was obviously human and small enough to be female.

Ashvyra held the lantern to the tracks as Sophedi followed the trail to a doorway at one end of the corridor. Tarron flicked his long blade out of his scabbard. Sophedi drew his rogue's knife, and Ashvyra steadied her mind, letting the incantations of power flow. Any strife between the three was now set aside as they sensed their goal.

"Is it open?" Tarron asked. Sophedi tested it carefully and nodded. With a mighty rush, Tarron barreled through the door, rogue and sorceress close on his heels. The sight that greeted them caused all three to stop dead in their tracks.

In the center of the room, five surpassingly strange figures sat cross-legged around a small pedestal. Each was a different color: one white, one orange, another green, one red and the last blue. Each was vaguely humanoid, though their heads were featureless, elongated melon-

shapes and their arms were jointed in eerie, counter-pointed fashion.

They were seated about a pedestal which burned with bright-hued flames of varying color. In the midst of these flames was a young woman, naked save for singular gems strapped to her wrists, ankles, waist and forehead. The woman swayed, her eyes half-shut as if in the throes of some arcane seduction.

As the trio watched, they fancied they could see a second and third image of the woman, one of violet and another of yellow. These images seemed to flow out of her body, become tangible for a moment and then flow back into it as she continued her mysterious dance.

"What insanity is this?" gasped Tarron.

As if in reply, the heads of the colored man-shapes swung round toward them, pivoting a full 180° to do so. It was a most disconcerting sight. Suddenly, a voice filled the minds of the adventurers, a voice that did not issue from human lips.

You disturb a most sacred ceremony of our race. Please go.

Tarron felt that the White being

delivered this message, though he could not say why. He looked to his companions, who seemed as unsure as himself. The dancer on the pedestal could be the woman they were searching for — but if she were not?

I ask a second time. Go! cried the voice in their minds. Upon the flaming pedestal, the yellow image of the female lingered, and strained gasps issued from the dancer's lips. Tarron stepped forward, as once more the mind-voice spoke.

I will not ask again. Leave us!

Sophedi of the Shadows suddenly called out, his upraised voice a welcome change from the eerie telepathy that shrieked the warnings at them. The rogue had noticed a bundle in one corner and had gone to investigate. In it he had found the sword and garments described to them as Dyara's.

"Strike, Tarron! It is she!" Sophedi shouted.

The seated figures rose and held out their long-fingered hands, hands which suddenly held staves. Only the White figure remained in its place, evidently the key to whatever odd process was happening on the pedestal.



Tarron surged forward, aiming a mighty blow at the creature nearest him, the Orange "man". To his amazement, the blow missed by a foot, though the creature did not seem to even move. In the next instant the Orange thing *did* move, and Tarron felt a rib crack under a blow from the staff.

At the same time, the Green and Red creatures came after Ashvyra, and the Blue man's staff swung with amazing speed toward Sophedi. The rogue's agility alone saved his skull — yet despite this, his return thrust was easily avoided by the Blue thing.

Ashvyra raised her hands to smite the Red creature with a spell of force, only to find herself hesitating. She took a devastating blow from the Red thing's staff that knocked her to her knees. The Green man likewise lambasted her, and the dusky woman sprawled forward on the cold stone.

Sophedi barely avoided another swing by the Blue man and again missed with a return blow. Tarron broke from his foe and cut with his long sword at the Green creature. Then Tarron's sword struck home with all the force of his sinewy arms behind it. But the wound seemed only a scratch — extraordinary for a blow that would have cut a full-sized goblin in half.

Tarron wasted no time puzzling it out, but struck again. This time the wound was deeper, though inflicted only at the cost of taking two more knocks from staves. Fortunately, Tarron's armor absorbed most of the impact, though by now he was facing both the Blue and the Green creatures, while Sophedi gamely tried to battle the Red and the Orange.

The White thing still had not left its place before the pedestal, and had the rogue and the fighter glanced in that direction, they would have noted that a creature of yellow was beginning to appear in one of the spaces around the pedestal. This new "man" of color was almost fully formed when Tarron Mag Afdan let fly with his most telling swing, a blow that sent the Green thing's head sailing off its shoulders. There came a scream from the woman in the flames as the Green man dropped and in an instant disappeared.

Sophedi flung himself away from his foes and looked at the pedestal. Dyara of Morbelos had resumed her dance, yet now green and violet images floated in and out of her, rather than yellow and violet. And the Yellow creature now rose and started towards them. A staff appeared in its hands.

"Deities and Devils!" shouted

Sophedi. "The creatures come from the girl herself!"

Even as he shouted, a staff whistled down and struck him on the face, crushing his hawk-like nose and stunning him into helplessness. He would have perished then and there but for the fact that Ashvyra had regained consciousness. Thrusting out her hand, she sent shafts of fire blazing at the things attacking the rogue.

Another pitiful scream came from Dyara, as both the Blue and Orange beings seemed to explode and vanish in eldritch flame.

The Red creature turned toward the sorceress and as it did the Dridani was freed of the hesitation which had kept him from effectively attacking the creature before. His sword flashed, and the inhuman thing was halved neatly. It disappeared as its fellows had before. Again, Dyara screamed, and now five images fluctuated in and out of the mortal woman on the pedestal.

Tarron, his blood aboil, turned now to the Yellow thing. The creature swung its staff at the Dridani, and Tarron evaded it. Before he could swing back, something tore at his mind and sent him spinning to the floor.

The Yellow being's staff descended once, twice, and then Ashvyra summoned up what remained of her strength and sent a bolt of pure mental force flying toward the creature. The thing staggered backward, and Sophedi leaped up and plunged his dagger into its breast. Once again, Dyara of Morbelos screamed, as a sixth image joined the five flowing in and out of her.

Only the White creature remained, yet the three adventurers sensed this was only a temporary victory. Within the dancing images about Dyara, a green figure was already solidifying, and the trio had little doubt it would soon appear again beside the pedestal, staff in hand.

They exchanged glances desperately, knowing they had but one chance. Tarron staggered up, his body a mass of aches, bruises, and broken bones. Sophedi wiped the blood from his eyes and clutched the hilt of his dagger. Ashvyra let her mind go calm, feeling the last vestiges of her strength bubbling within her. Then as a single entity they attacked, sword and dagger descending as eldritch power bristled into their White target.

There was a harsh burst of light and a woman's scream that seemed to linger indefinitely. The room seemed to swim about Sophedi of the Shadows,

Tarron Mag Afdan, and Ashvyra, mage of Tallow's End. And then all went black.

Ashvyra was the last of the trio to regain consciousness. A small candle was burning, its light cheery and pleasant in the stone room. The mage looked up at the smiling face of Tarron Mag Afdan.

"You have slept long, woman of Tallow's End," she heard a feminine voice say. Ashvyra gazed to the right, and beheld the young, brash face of Dyara, niece of the Kythir of the House of Morbelos.

"I have waited long to thank you, good sorceress," Dyara continued. "You and these men have saved not only my life, but my very soul."

Ashvyra smiled at all of them. "It was our pleasure, I am sure," she said. Tarron lifted a cup of water to the mage's lips, and she drank gratefully. "And what is our plan now?" she asked.

"Fortunately, Dyara had found a way out of here before being captured by those rainbow men, or whatever they were," Tarron said.

"Aye, and I have checked it and found the way still open," added Sophedi. His voice sounded somewhat comical, due to his smashed nose. "Now that you are awake, we need merely walk out, return Dyara to the Tavern, and collect our reward."

"And after that?" Ashvyra asked.

Tarron was somewhat surprised by the question and a bit embarrassed by the slyly lusty tone in the dark woman's voice. Nonetheless, he had a ready answer. "I shall rest for a time, and then return here to seek out the young elf."

"What?" Sophedi cried. "Are you completely senseless, Dridani?"

Ashvyra looked into the face of the warrior. Some strange thing passed between them.

"If I can be of service to rescue

55A Taking the contents of the box is no problem, as it split open on a rock. But sometime in the future, probably when you're drunk, a demon will appear, sent by Trollways, and it will rip your heart out. Go to 47B.

55B The centaurs close quickly, and one of them reaches out with his lance to trip a horse. Montok gets a shot off at this centaur; her characteristics are ST:25 IQ:10 LK:16 CON:20 DEX:19 CHR:8, and the centaur is a "large" target at point blank range (L2SR on DEX).

If the quarrel strikes home, the centaur falls and trips his companions; go to 51A. If it misses, he trips a horse. Go to 63A.



your friend,” Dyara said, “please feel free to include my sword on your venture.” Mag Afdan looked at her with great respect.

“Perhaps I shall join you as well, Tarron,” Ashvyra added. “I liked the young elf, despite his foolish ways.”

Tarron nodded gratefully. “I will be overjoyed to have you, Speaker to Dragons.”

“Demons, Deities, Devils, and Dropsy! You are all madder than a pack of ravening warthens! But you will need a person with roguish talents if you are to rescue young Nyven.”

All looked to Sophedi with amazed eyes. And then all laughed heartily, a laugh which was echoed far, far below them though they heard it not.

□ □ □

AFTERWORD

I hope this dramatization from my *Isle of Greysmoke* dungeon amused you and maybe gave you a little heroic thrill or two. My basic intent was to highlight certain T&T-style events as they might or might not occur in a game.

First among these events was the poisoning of Nyven the elf. You will note that Nyven touched a contact poison, and its effects did not become noticeable until about six turns later. This poison was designed to destroy dexterity, rather than simply killing the affected character (or characters — I usually manage to get more than one). This situation presents the party with a difficult choice. Do they drag the character around, lessening their own chances of evading pursuit or reacting quickly to a sudden event? Or do they leave the poor poisoned fools behind, thereby increasing the chances of violent attack by their fellow players? It’s the kind of situation I love to instigate in a T&T game, just for the ensuing arguments.

The next event I dramatized was negotiation with my ace dragon, Granamyr. I do a great dragon voice, and so far no party has opted to attack Granamyr. Powerful but intelligent monsters like Granamyr are the key to fostering role-playing through negotiation, and while I grant that Ashvyra’s trick doesn’t seem to speak too highly for ole Gran’s mental capacity, I let it happen because any bit of cleverness should be rewarded and appreciated by a GameMaster. If someone came up with the Toll Road trip in a game, I’d probably let it work even though I’d have to play my beloved Dragon a little dumber. It’s a lot more fun than watching everyone wave their swords in the air.

In a very small way, I dramatized how to use clues to help a party find the object of their quest, in Sophedi’s tracking and Ashvyra’s

finding of the tunic button. Fresh footprints are a great way to send a party the way you want them to go. Put them in whenever you think it will improve the action!

Finally, I dramatized the encounter with the rainbow men. Here I’ll have to confess that I gave my adventuresome trio a break. The White creature is not that easy to take (though they did put quite a bit of power into the effort). As for the other rainbow men ... did you guess what the idea was?

Assuming you didn’t, it was really quite simple. Each color of rainbow man represents a being which emphasizes a single normal attribute.

Thus, Green represented Constitution (which is why Tarron had trouble harming it), Red was Charisma (which is why Ashvyra hesitated to strike it), Blue was Dexterity (Sophedi could have done better against the Blue creature — bad rolls?), and Orange stood for Luck (which is why Tarron missed it so completely). Yellow represented IQ and was used in the form of a psychic blast to down Mag Afdan. Violet, which never entered the fray, would have been Strength, a formidable foe indeed. The beings’ staves are merely normal quarterstaves, plucked out of their own dimension.

Rainbow men begin with a White being who finds a suitable victim (in this case, Dyara of Morbelos). The creature then projects light from its body into the pedestal (which has a series of prisms on it). This light becomes flame which draws attributes one by one from the victim, and creates the different colors of rainbow men. Naturally, the better the victim, the tougher the subsequent creations.

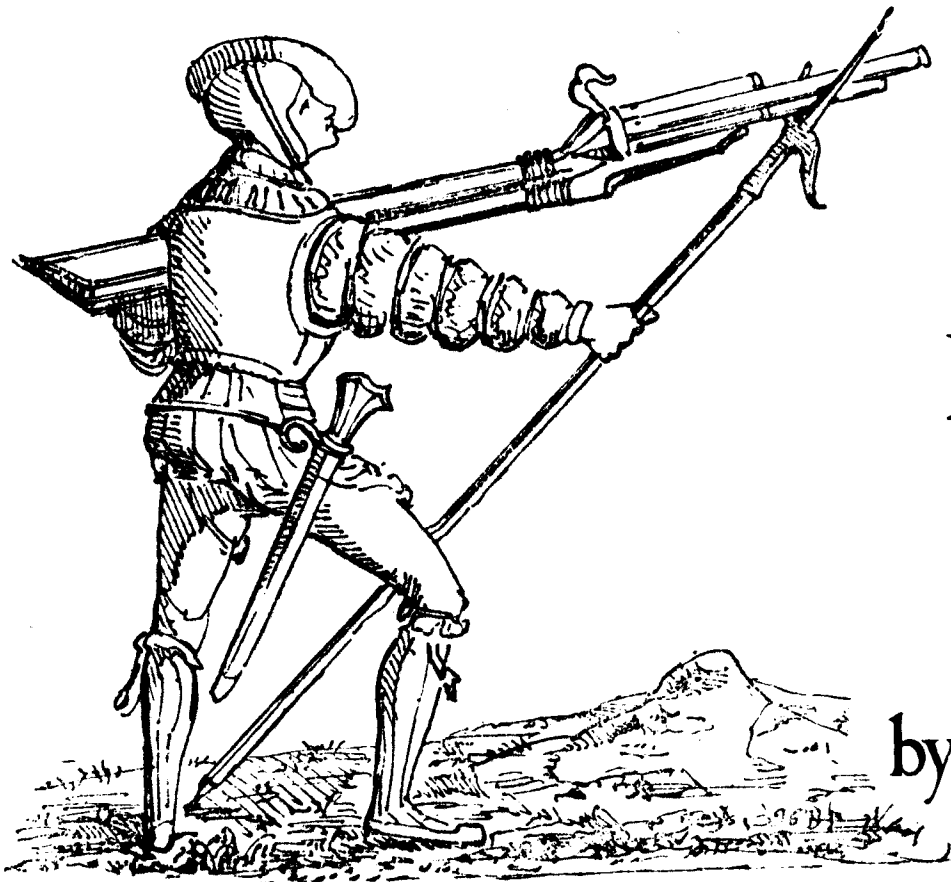
In running these creations of mine, I have found that their alienness and their telepathic powers tend to make parties overcautious, if not downright chicken. The message that “this is a sacred ceremony” also seems to chill delvers. As to what happens if and when the ceremony is completed — I think I’ll keep that a secret. It’s enough to say that if a party fails to stop the ceremony, they fail to return Dyara of Morbelos to her uncle and collect the reward.

I use this quest for Dyara to spice up a run through Greysmoke for those new to its walls. You might be interested to know that no party has ever stopped the ceremony, mainly because initial melee turns went so badly against the delvers that they backed off and ran.

Note also that the scenario for the room is a “nick-of-time” thing — the party finds the object of its quest but must save her within a very short time or lose her. This kind of ploy adds zest to the old rescue-the-maiden mission, and I encourage zest in every tunnel I build.

Until next time you stroll along on an escapade into my world, keep your shields high, your hands off poisoned jugs and your magic potent. And when you meet a dragon, talk! It may save your life . . .

— Larry DiTillio ■



Them Black Powder Blues

by J.E. Coplin

The Pluses and Perils of Cannon

With the introduction of gunnes into the T&T 5th edition rules, your gaming may be undergoing some upheavals, if not actual weapons races. Jim Coplin provides a little perspective on the effects of gunpowder warfare as it occurred in our own history.

As black powder began to belch and thunder across the battlefields of the 14th century, two groups in particular were outraged.

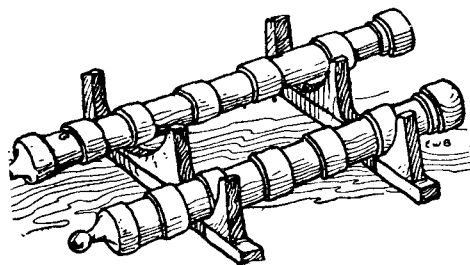
Logically enough, the first included Knights and Barons. It upset them in the extreme to find their previously invulnerable castles could suddenly be reduced to rubble by any band of louts armed with cannon. Adding insult to injury, overnight they were faced with the vulgar prospect of being lethally attacked by mere serfs! It was unnatural and demeaning, as degrading a notion as could be imagined.

No less indignant were the various and sundry Orders of the Art Magical. Wizards in particular were jealous because their thunder had been literally stolen — the consuming

of one's enemies by fire was *their* accepted providence. Yet almost in the blink of an eye, an entire social order was overturned by the simple procedure of mixing saltpetre, sulphur and charcoal, stuffing it into a suitable tube, ramming down a stone and igniting the whole mess. Economically, easily, and expendibly, the most base-born, ignorant imbecile could thus be transformed into a wizard-warrior.

But there you sit, an ambitious and perhaps penny-pinched Captain of War. You are neither hide-bound by tradition nor overly afraid of delving into the Black Arts. These new, infernal fire-breathing engines of destruction intrigue you, but you don't know quite what to expect.

First of all, let's set a few definitions. Also, some reasonable limitations (taken from our advanced viewpoint in time) must be placed. For this purpose, I'd define a "reasonable limitation" as those first, sulphurous "Crankys of War" that overlapped the



Fifteenth century cannons.

age of High Chivalry — roughly those fire weapons spanning the early 14th through late 15th centuries. This includes rudimentary cannon, bombasts and the primitive "hand gounnes". The last would be limited to tubular culvrins, hand cannons, and the earliest representatives of those eye-smarting, ear-shattering, aimable smoothbores, the Matchlocks.

Second, I have no intention of detailing fire ratios and the like, save where they are called for. In the

60A You've beaten the centaurs, and can now collect whatever you can carry from the wreck of the coach. (You may not strip the body of Ruth Toildaughter if Jeremiah Soilson is still alive, and vice versa.)

If you want to rob the cashbox while Montok lives, you must fight her. If you win, or if she is dead, make a third level IQ saving roll. If you succeed, go to 75A. If you miss, go to 55A. If your CON is reduced to zero while fighting her, go to 52A. If you do not want to take the cashbox, go to 47B.

relevant period, the actual killing power weapon-for-weapon (i.e., crossbow vs. hand cannon) is unimportant. In most cases, traditional bladed weapons or bow-sped missiles were vastly superior to powder weaponry, and for individual combat you'd be wise to choose sword, spear, or arrow every time.

With the exception of siege equipment, gunpowder still had far more psychological advantages than practical ones. In addition, powder weapons were blessed with an economic factor that more than offset their deficiencies in the eyes of Captains of War. Like sorcery, more than half their effectiveness was in the terror they evoked. Both these assets are intangibles, but to ignore them destroys the very nature of black powder warfare itself.

To make gunpowder, all you need is a suitable amount of saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal. Any neighborhood alchemist or wizard might instruct you in the proper proportions. Francis Bacon recommended a ratio of 7-5-5, preferring young hazelwood ash for the last ingredient. This was before his better judgement caused him to codify his research so lesser mortals than himself might be prevented from loosing this "Daemon Powder" upon the unsuspecting world.

Once you've acquired and mixed these unarguably sorcerous ingredients, all that remains is finding a suitable container and projectile. The earliest gunners simply used wooden buckets and a rock. The disadvantages were obvious, and others preferred thick ceramic or stone urns. Now, you pour the powder in and loosely pack it, knock a hole through the top, ram the projectile in, ask for heaven's protection and set a spark. If all goes well, your chances are roughly fifty-fifty whether the stone would be sent roaring off towards the target or both impromptu cannon and yourself would be sent into the Great Beyond. This depends on your "guesstimate" of how much charge a given container would take.

But let's assume all went well. Besides ringing ears, you were left with life and limb intact. How much damage could your ball do? If you were very close to the targeted stretch of wall, you could actually do quite a bit of damage.

The crowning glory of even primitive wooden cannon, a property setting it apart from the massive wooden siege machines, was that it fired on a flat trajectory. It could also

be fired as much as three times an hour and, at point-blank range, could batter a respectable breach in the thickest wall by striking the same place consistently. Prudent Captains didn't abandon the tried-and-true Monangals, Trebuchets and Catapults entirely, though — they allowed these far slower and vastly more expensive wooden machines to batter the roofs and upper portions of the walls. But for making a hole at ground level for footmen to enter, cannon was worth the trouble.

Unfortunately, your cannons had to be placed almost within spitting distance of the target to effect a breach. Once you were there it was unnerving! Not only did the erstwhile cannon crew have to stand in terror of their own weapon, but they had to do so with the arrows and stones of the defenders whizzing about their ears.

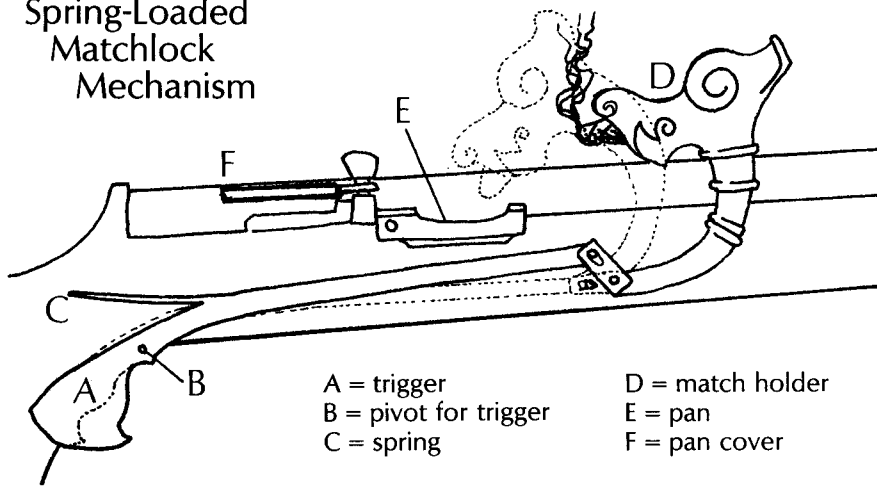
Protective wooden screens on the order of the crossbowman's mantlet solved the worst of the problem, when equipped with a wooden gate that could be raised to fire and lowered while reloading. One still had to lug the cumbersome things and suitable missiles to the site, though, and do considerable carpentering right under the enemy's nose. An early cannon crew's life was neither merry nor long.

Perhaps faced with violent protest from the reluctant cannon bearers, Gun Masters were forced to come up with guns that fired a larger ball from a more reasonable distance. It was conceivable but damned expensive to produce cast cannon of bronze. How might the obvious deficiencies of wood cannon be righted without beggaring oneself in the process?

A compromise was made: short, thick metal tubes banded tightly with iron staves. Now one could pound away from a safe distance. But another problem presents itself. It was not possible to use enough powder to fire a stone of several hundred pounds — but boulders that size had a disgusting number of jags, lop sides, and uneven surfaces to catch in the barrel and blow up the cannon. It wasn't feasible to hand-chip these massive chunks of rock into a rough ball. Thus, alongside this new trade of cannon-making grew the founders of lead and metal cannonballs.

Of course, one could always use a cannon called a *bombast*. This was a cannon with a very wide mouth; the barrel receded as it lengthened towards the end. Just about any stone found on a field would fit in somewhere along

Spring-Loaded Matchlock Mechanism



- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| A = trigger | D = match holder |
| B = pivot for trigger | E = pan |
| C = spring | F = pan cover |

the barrel. It was just a matter of determining how much powder to use.

Yet, alas, came another problem. You now had guns capable of firing a respectable distance, and balls of great weight and velocity. But how do you move the damned things from one place to another? And once you got there, who was to lift them up so props could be placed for the desired elevation? Worst of all, how do you keep the recoil of these new monsters from spattering its gun crews like so many bedbugs?

You must now employ Engineer and Carpentry Corps. Previously, small cannon had simply been strapped to a board and *schlepped* about by either manpower or oxcart. When you found a convenient rise in the ground, you laid the cannon down so the barrel was elevated, then secured it with rope and pegs. If the kickback moved the cannon, you simply muscled it back into place.

However, to manhandle a 14,560-pound monstrosity like the Scottish Mons Meg (which easily fired a 560-pound ball) took more muscle than available. Gun carriages were brought into play — but these required trains of oxen to move them, and carpenters to build them and keep them in repair. Engineer Corps were needed to build bridges strong enough to bear these carriages, and to design restraints to hold them in place. Earthworks had to be dug; retaining walls of massive timbers had to be built to keep them from rolling backwards or tipping over. When necessary, you had to impress a good deal of the army to pull the carriages out of the mud, or lift them should a wheel require repair.

You also had to take the conse-

quences should one of these multi-ton devils explode. It would take with it everyone within a dozen square yards — or more, if the powder of neighboring guns was set off with it.

Why did these guns so frequently turn on their faithful attendants? There are a number of reasons. The casting might be flawed, or a sealed hoop might come loose from firing too often. An inattentive gunmate (perhaps unnerved by the arrows whistling about him as he wet-swabbed the barrel between loadings) might leave a bit of smoldering wadding in the muzzle. This would produce extremely unwholesome effects as the fresh powder charge was unexpectedly set off in the powder-bearer's face.

Another peril was an overzealous ramrodder packing the powder too tightly so the spark only set the powder smoldering. An inexperienced gunner would watch the touch hole fizzle out, not suspecting that deep within, probably chuckling maliciously, the powder still burned. All the exasperated gunner need do is try to remove the ball — shifting the powder, allowing enough air in for an explosion. Since the gunner would be directly before the muzzle when the cannon came to life, it was a mistake no one made more than once.

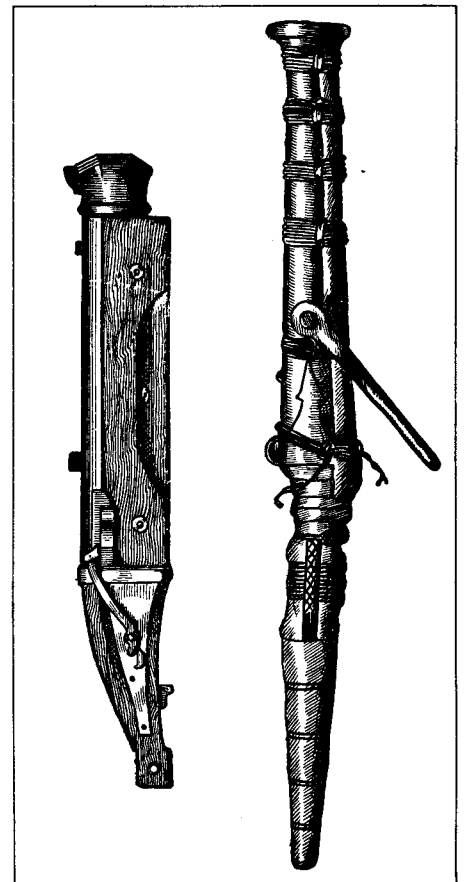
Sundry other reasons took gunners far before their time. Wet weather could retard powder burn, fooling the gunner with the same disastrous effect as mentioned above. Soot and powder cake, the residue of black powder, clogged the barrels of cannon manned by less than fastidious gunners. The highly combustible dust raised when gunpowder was mixed could be set off by a careless touch match or nearby fire. The whims of wet weather or human

error set as many cannoneers to an early grave as enemy fire did.

This might be the point to discuss these curious men who manned early cannon. In those first, perilous days of wooden cannon, they were simply unfortunates pulled from the ranks. It took no intelligence to operate a cannon; in fact, the lack of it was considered a positive boon. Small cannon were cheap — you could buy a dozen for the price of a good crossbow¹, and should your gun and gunner be shattered, another of each was readily available.

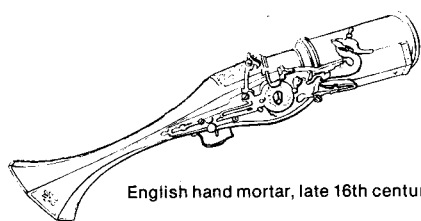
As cannon grew costlier, it behooved their owners to hire specialists to preserve them. Thus sprang up a whole class of veteran gunners, men lucky and observant enough to sense the moods of these unpredictable metal monsters. They were wizard-warriors in the truest sense, mastering the ritual and rites which summoned these devils to life, causing destruction by thunder and fire and not being consumed in the process.

The rest of the army looked upon these strange beings with mixed disdain and awe. Disdain because, like sorcerers, the power they wielded was decidedly unholy and did not spring from the might of manly arms. They were of the army but apart from it, never in the fighting but always in the



rear spreading death, fire and sulphurous fumes over fields where men grappled with clean steel. They seldom pillaged, raped, or looted like proper soldiers. All they seemed to do was attend their infernal machines like demonic familiars. Those that lived long enough were considered in league with the Devil. Black Powder and Black Magic were inseparable to the medieval mind; gunners taken in battle were not uncommonly burned at the stake.

Awe — because Master Gunners were very highly paid, wined and dined in the most regal courts and wooed by noble and City Burgher



English hand mortar, late 16th century

alike. There were relatively few Master Gunners, and theirs was a secret society whose trade secrets were guarded as jealously as any wizard's. Only a select few were initiated into it, and thus their art demanded rich favors and compensations from those Captains who would avail themselves of their services. Like Sorcerers, Master Gunners were proud, thin-skinned, and not overly loyal when a better offer came their way. Not a few indiscrete ones were put to death by their employers at the slightest suspicion they might change sides.

Back to the guns themselves. There were still a few major obstacles to overcome before wooden siege machines could safely be consigned to the bonfires. Castle and Town walls were generally very thick at the base, and tapered up as the height increased. Cannon could do a respectable job by blasting away on the flat at a given point. Yet now, as cannon range increased, cannon accuracy decreased. They were now only on a par with the older means of lobbing stones — or worse, since cannon still fired largely on a flat trajectory.

The engineers finally overcame this. Uprights were built into carriages; slots and pegs were fashioned. Now, using winch and pulleys, the gun could be elevated to fire at the leaner upper walls while supported by timbers placed in the slots. Once again, cannoneers could hurtle balls with all the force of a straight line, against more vulnerable sections of

the wall, and with the old accuracy.

The rumbles of siege machines disappeared from the world, and were replaced by the rumble of gun carriages. Yet one last problem remained to the fire-enthralled Captain of War. Black Powder, or Serpentine as the old mixture of saltpetre, sulphur and charcoal was called, travelled very badly. The heavier ingredients settled to the bottom and layered. It all had to be remixed on the site — an inexact, dangerous procedure. Moreover, as an army moved, its powder wagons left a cloud of inflammable dust that was unpleasant to breathe and needed only a stray spark or static electricity to immolate half the army. Each ingredient had to be shipped separately for safety's sake, and one chafed at days spent mixing Serpentine before a solitary shot could be fired at enemy walls.

Then some clever soul devised Corned Powder. The procedure was very simple. You mixed your Serpentine beforehand, wet it down with water and alcohol, then sieved it into long threads called "worms". These you allowed to dry, and finally repowdered them. Not only did this prevent the separate ingredients from layering, but it increased the blasting powder fivefold!²

All very well in theory. It travelled well. It drastically reduced the powder residue left inside the barrel, too. Guns could now be fired more times between re-scrubbings; they could also shoot larger shot over greater distances. In practice, however, Corned Powder was somewhat less successful. It exploded the guns.

You as a cannon-wielding Captain of War are faced with a problem. You can deem Corned Powder too risky and continue to use Serpentine, with all its attendant nuisance and lack of efficiency. Or you can opt for the considerable advantage in firepower of Corned Powder, accepting the high loss of guns and gunners. Always available are cast cannon of either bronze or iron, but at a staggering price. These will better withstand the blast of Corned Powder, though they can't be guaranteed not to explode. Cast Cannon and Corned Powder give their users a decided advantage — especially if your opponent is using Serpentine in an artillery duel. A Profit and Loss statement would not be uncalled for in such a case, to be sure the Cast&Corned side can afford both the initial cannon and their replacements.

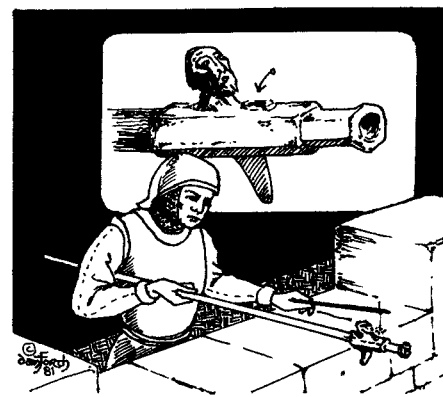
One last word about cannon. If your

opponent uses cannon with a peg-and-slot elevation system, your stone curtain-walled castle is doomed. If you employ a wizard to make it rain, their powder will get wet — but unless he can keep it up indefinitely your only defense is to alter the style of your fortress.

Cannon-proof castles must be low, thick-walled, squat affairs. Build them in connecting circles, so you won't present a vulnerable flat surface. While this offers an inconvenient target for opposing cannon, it is a major drawback should the enemy come within scaling distance. To fend off your enemy, you will probably wish to add cannon of your own, employ lots of bowmen, and invest in a skilled engineer to design moats, ditches, and other obstacles about the castle walls.

Another thing to consider is this: as a siege goes on, two things tend to run out first — arrows and food. Both are indispensable to archers. The first is obvious; the second is almost as disastrous. As hunger weakens your bowmen, you'll note a drop in both their efficiency and range. You may wish to complement their numbers with a squad of hand gunners.

Cannon, as we have seen, was tremendous for battering down your neighbor's walls. Against his men in the field it has noticeably less effect. Some side effects were beneficial

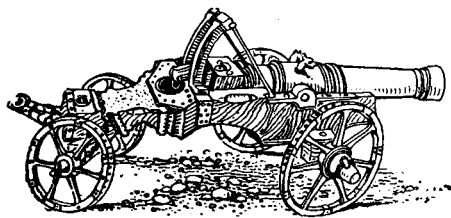


63A A horse falls — the coach slews around and crashes. Make a L3SR on LK for each character in or on the coach. Each character successful in the saving roll takes 2d+1 in damage. If a supplied character dies, it may not be used. If your character misses the saving roll or now has a CON of zero, go to 52A.

The centaurs ride up to you and call on you to surrender. They carry sabres and lances (oxtongues). All surviving characters fight — if you would also fight, go to 78A. If you surrender, go to 20A.

were visited on their small relations, if not quite so dramatically. The tiny gounnes on a stick didn't have the poop to blast you to smithereens. Yet there were many one-handed gunners about, compliments of exploding barrels.

The greatest nuisance was the infuriating necessity to prop the gounne on something before firing. The touch flash required one to keep a respectable distance. Thus, the gun was unwieldy to fire — much less aim — as one wrestled to secure it with one hand and hold the three-foot match in the other. In addition, the hand gounners began to repeat the



Sixteenth century serpentine

grumbings of the early cannoneers. Because of the haphazard nature of blind volleys, a gounner was forced to be suicidally close to his armed target.

How could the hand-gounner keep his distance, yet be able to aim selectively? One solution was to enlarge the gounne slightly and strap it on some burly fellow's back. He could thus stoop down and line up with a target while his confederate lit the touch hole. This was termed "tubular culverin" and worked reasonably well.

The problem was one of footing. The poor fool bearing the gun was often struck deaf as Quasimodo from the roar, and he also had to absorb the recoil. This was especially irksome when firing from the battlements. Robert Held, author of *The Age of Firearms*, comments on the number of unsung "collineators" (the technical name for the man bearing the culverin) who were blown backwards off the wall, hotly pursued by a smoking gun.

The search for a one-man, aimable method continued, until a workable method was found in the Matchlock. A long coil of Serpentine (hemp dipped and dried in a solution of powder) was secured to an S-shaped vice attached to the side of the gounne. The glowing end of the Match, as this coil was termed, was lined to a crater-shaped touch hole atop the gun. One simply placed the butt over the shoulder or against the chest, sighted down the barrel, and lowered the

grip. Off the ball hurled! At last, firearms were on the way to making bowmen obsolete.

The last refinement in this ear was the introduction of a powder pan *alongside* the barrel rather than atop it. It had been noted that those musketeers blinded by the powder flash had less than acceptable aim. Now, a target could be sighted down the barrel. As a small amount of prime powder was ignited, indirectly setting off the prime charge, there was no longer a tower of flame erupting before one's very eyes. This also lessened the nuisance of rain ruining the powder by dripping into the crater-shaped touch hole. A lid could now cover the pan until a flick of the thumb availed it to the match.

The Matchlock is questionable for feudal warfare. By the time it was developed, feudal war had ceased to be. The advantages of fire-armed mercenaries and national armies had proved so superior to unreliable vassals that the institution of knighthood became little more than ceremonial. England, the most staunch of the longbow supporters, abandoned the bow for matchlocks during Elizabeth's reign.

If you decide to allow matchlocks in your dungeons or campaigns, instruct your musketeers to be careful how they wave that match about when priming and powdering. More than one matchlockman accidentally touched his match to his powder pouch while loading — and discovered the Black Powder Blues were not yet over. Also, a glowing match makes an excellent target for a Bowman by night.

Firearmed armies, whether early or using matchlocks, require the services of a Brandsman or Fire Tender. He scurries hither and yon to relight extinguished matches, and is a prime target for enemy fire. He must also take care not to get too close to the powder kegs, and must stay well away from mixing operations. His is not a job to be desired.

If you've dispensed with bowmen, you will have to beef up your halbardiers and pikemen. They create a hedge of piketips to protect the musketeers from being ridden down. There is a minimum of *twelve* motions a matchlockman must go through to load, aim, and fire. If not properly protected, you'll find your own dragoons and cavalry without their screen of firepower.

In closing, I'd say that if you want to employ firearms and still keep them compatible with a world of knightly

deeds and romance, anything more advanced than the top touch-holed, matchlock hand cannon is not what you're looking for. No matter what you decide, watch out for wet weather, keep your barrel clean — and a prayer to Ste. Barbara, the Patron of Cannoneers, is perhaps not out of order.

FOOTNOTES

1. Small cannon (15 — 25 lbs.) were known as *Gunnae Parva*. In 1353 you could buy one for six or seven shillings. A large crossbow cost sixty-six shillings and eight pence, or roughly the same as a *Gunna Maxima*, or a cannon of 250 lbs.

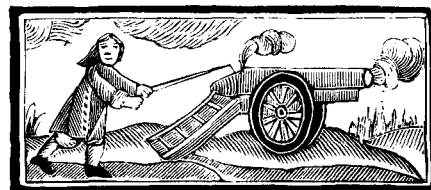
2. Urine was considered an excellent medium for wetting down Corned Powder. As a mark of great favor to a notable Captain, Bishops would often arrive in train at a battlefield or siege and ceremoniously piss on the powder. In a pinch, any passing priest or friar would do. Most simply offered the honor to any soldier in need of relief.

3. The hellish influence of black powder was nowhere more clear to medieval man than when in comparison to the arrow. Arrows were cleanly elemental. God, or so the church explained, had marked them with his special favor, giving them the power of flight through feathers — like the angels.

Lead balls or pellets, on the other hand, were powered by sulphurous fume and fire straight from the Bowels of Hell. And they flew by no human might of arm and with nary a feather to be seen — obviously, an invisible imp rode upon and directed the ball! Also, the imp made the wound fester. That infidels shot at by Christian muskets and firearms suffered the same fate was apparently of no concern to them.

Bibliography

- The Age of Firearms.** Robert Held. © 1978 by Robert Held & Nancy Jenkins. Bonanza Books by arrangement of Harper & Row.
- Artillery Through the Ages.** Maj. Phillip Stevens. © 1965 by Franklin Watts Inc.
- A History of War & Weapons.** A.V.B. Norman & Don Potter. © 1966 by A.V.B. Norman and Don Potter. Thomas Cromwell Co.



65A You are stripped naked and set down in the trough. The blood burns your feet terribly, but you stagger forward. Make *three* L2SRs on LK.

If you miss any of them, you slip and fall into the trench. The burning agony of the blood is cut mercifully short by a lance which severs your spinal cord — go to 52A.

If you make all three SR's, you have made it to the far end. The village shaman heals your wounds, and raises your CON by one point as a side effect. Furthermore, your IQ is raised one point, and, if you are capable of it, you learn to speak Centaur. The villagers return your equipment, present you a jewel worth 400 gp, and give you a ride to a farmhouse. "Go on your way in peace," says the village headman. You gain 225 experience points, and are finished with this adventure.



If You Can't Trust Your Banker, who can you trust?

by Paul O'Connor
(with a lot of help from Steve McAllister)

Cairn the Grim cursed and kicked his horse. It was the third to die under him in less than a week, its back broken by an unfair burden. How was a landless, roaming adventurer to wander, when the weight of his personal fortune — some 178,000 odd gold pieces — was enough to run even the stoutest steed into the ground? If Cairn's attributes featured as many digits as his bankroll, then perhaps there would be no problem. Unfortunately for Cairn, he is still vaguely human, despite his satchel of magic gimmicks.

□ □ □

Imamanagan Flannagan, the intrepid leprechaun explorer, skipped lightly up the cold and forbidding north face of the dreaded Twin Peaks mountain. Excitement grew within his little breast as he came upon the latest entrance to his favorite dungeon, the Blitz Pitz. Oh, boy! Adventure, goblin girls, and yet more untold wealth are but a delve away!

Releasing a shrill whistle between grimy green fingers, Imamanagan excitedly signalled his location to the determined column of native sherpas who negotiated the rocky face below him. This leprechaun is no stooge — he's hired an army to tote his wealth around. Of course, tactics such as these tend to invite full-

scale raids by armies of bandits. Maybe if I wrote 'Laundry' on all my sacks of gold,' thought Imamanagan, 'I wouldn't get jumped so often . . .'

□ □ □

Midwife Magpie collapsed dead of a heart attack in the very midst of the Great Marketplace. After fifty years of loyal service to her no-good delving sons, Jeckle and Heckle, the burden of shopping has taken its toll upon the old hag. Carrying five pounds of food back to the house was never a problem, but hauling around the gold necessary to feed her festering sons proved enough to slay an ox.

□ □ □

There's something wrong with an economy where a day's provisions for a healthy human require payment in a full pound of gold. To feed a family of five, you must tote five pounds of gold to the supermarket each and every day of the year. That's thirty-five pounds of gold a week, one hundred forty pounds a month, one thousand, eight hundred twenty pounds a year. Under the current monetary system, it takes more than half again the combined weight of the

Oakland Raiders' defensive front four in gold to feed a family for a year — and even then you still must account for rent, utilities, delving equipment, medical bills, and the hay to feed half-a-dozen overworked pack mules.

When one takes a close look at this economic system, it suddenly becomes evident why the Tunnels & Trolls world is so startlingly bare of extended campaigns with professional armies. The combined weight of the gold needed to feed and equip an army in the field would sink an entire fleet of Spanish galleons.

With these problems weighing heavily upon my mind (and my purse), I, a beleaguered adventurer, set forth in search of an equitable solution to my problems. I soon found myself within the hallowed halls of the foremost economic power of the Tunnels & Trolls era: the offices of Pottermans, Incorporated.

For the uninitiated, Potterman began his career as a do-nothing T&T character who lacked the courage (and stupidity) to risk life and limb for the sake of wealth in the dungeons of the

world. He set up a humble loan and venture business, providing gold to fledgling adventurers too poor to afford quality equipment on their own. These loans were, of course, made at a low interest rate — yet Potterman's rates were so reasonable that his business grew and prospered as though it had a life of its own.

Before Potterman fully realized what was happening, he supported offices in every major city on Rhalph, and on many of the planes and worlds beyond his own. Every day, the money poured in from points increasingly bizarre and distant until finally, Potterman simply couldn't keep up with it any more.

So Potterman did what any smart businessman in his position would do: he Incorporated. Potterman truly became one with his business as he transcended the mortal plane and took his place as Ninth of the Lesser Money Gods. At long last, Potterman could personally oversee the operation of his economic empire, in its entirety.

As you can imagine, procuring a face-to-face appointment with a God (even a Lesser one) is no feat to be taken lightly. As I had suspected, Potterman's list of appointments would put me years down on the role-call. Dedicated as I am, I was not prepared to undertake the actions necessary to contact him the "other" way (which involved entering a Temple of the Money Gods and praying to Potterman, plus a small monetary donation, of course). As a result, I was sadly unable to bring my dilemma to the attention of the Shrewd One directly, but found myself forced through alternate channels to the chambers of the High Priest of Potterman's.

The secretary within was most patient when I stated my business. After carefully listening to my problem, he assured me that no direct consultation with the Priest would be necessary, and promptly produced a machine copy of the memo from a large and ponderous file cabinet. Leave it to Potterman to have already thought of everything.

□ □ □

FROM: Farman Smallprint, *Voice of Consul and High Priest of Potterman's, Incorporated (9th of the Lesser Money Gods)*

TO: All Agents and Priests of Potterman's, Incorporated, as well as all Interested Persons on all Worlds, Places, and Continuums

*As of this memo
Potterman's, Incorporated
will issue Promissory Notes.*

By a special blessing of the Greater Money

Gods, it has become possible to provide the public-at-large with a convenient note with which to conduct their daily affairs. This

Potterman's Promissory Note

is understood to be good for payment on demand in gold pieces or the local equivalent.

The size, shape, color and decoration of the

Potterman's Promissory Note

may be determined by the individual branch offices so as to best fit local need. A note to all Agents and Priests: don't miss this opportunity to ingratiate yourselves with the local establishments by picturing the foremost members of said establishments upon your notes.

Certain features, however, must remain constant on all notes. On the facing of the bill shall be stated our motto

Money Speaks all Languages

and upon the reverse,

All Things Have A Price.

In addition, the reverse of each bill will bear the holy sign of the Greater Money Gods. The denomination of the note must be clearly designated on both sides of the bill.

All Potterman's Promissory Notes are protected from damage, defacing, alteration or foul forgery and counterfeiting by the righteous Wath of the Greater Money Gods.

Potterman's Promissory Notes will be made available in both scrip and coin form. Coins will be minted in denominations of .01 g.p. (the copper piece), .10 g.p. (the silver piece), .50 g.p., 1 g.p., 5 g.p., and 10 g.p. Scrip form will be available in denominations of 10 g.p., 50 g.p., 100 g.p., 500 g.p., and 1000 g.p. The denomination of 10 g.p. is made available in both coin and scrip form, due to the common use of this sum. Further denominations may be negotiated by individual branch offices of Potterman's Incorporated as predicated by local circumstances.

The preceding having thus been said, this memo is at an end. In Potterman We Trust.

Farman Smallprint

□ □ □

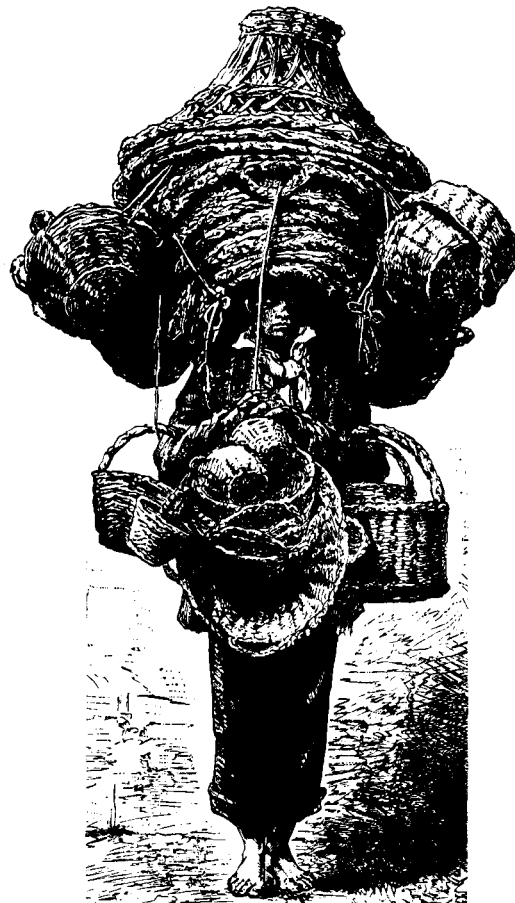
It is important that you understand the distinction between a promissory note and your run-of-the-mill dollar, franc, peso, or whatever. With a promissory note, you are not claiming that the bill is as good as the gold that backs. Rather, you claim that it is instantly redeemable for the amount listed. The promissory note does not take the place of gold, but makes dealing with the precious gleaming stuff that much easier. The promissory note should be easily redeemable at any money-changer's — and with the bankers now taking such an active role in things, can checking accounts, overdraft protection, and day/night tellers be far behind? Of course, one can't expect to be awarded a Bank of Potterman's Guarantee Card without submitting to a credit check, and

perhaps parting with some small handling fee . . .

It should prove easy enough to introduce this standard into your Tunnels & Trolls world. If you have a branch of Potterman's in your land, then you can hand-deliver the memo reproduced herein to the executives in charge. If no such branch exists, then you can announce a similar program by nailing your terms to tavern walls, or by shouting them from tower tops. Have a group of dedicated dwarves blast them into stone, or write them upon the skies with a flight of ambitious fairies.

There's no doubt the promissory note will bring sweeping changes to the marketplace — but should such a system invade the dungeons proper? I think not. The thought of a party of fearless adventurers braving gruesome deaths in tunnels deep within the earth for the sake of a few banker's notes fails to set my imagination on fire. The treasure in dungeons should still be the stuff of gleaming gems, heaps of coin, and waterfalls of liquid diamond. Such treasure is great for effect, but it sure makes lousy pocket change.

So give some thought to making money more convenient in your T&T world. Delvers suffer enough in the dungeons — why give them a hernia every time they don their money belts? ■



ENDGAME

Endgame



Let them beckon you, bright lights and bells (coming to your town *soon*). Slide inside, fingers wrapping a shiny quarter, silver balls ping pavlovian from bumper to rail to gate. Turn it off and lay it back: flow with the tide: cool, oblivious.

But if you tire of detachment, flashings and buzz, why, just slip on out when no one's looking. Out the door, left and left again, drift into the netherworld behind the tents and booths and goldfish bowls —

From a darkened doorway he calls you over. Paunchy, greasy, and somehow familiar. You step inside, pupils dilate, you let your gaze wander lazy as a cat's, betraying no involvement. No trappings here to lure rubes and marks. No one comes here who doesn't know exactly what he's come for. The booths, the black-curtained booths, inviting and mystical as the pages of an open *Arcanum Magnum*.

"Howdy there, son." The Fat Man gladhands you. "Come to play our little game? Your partner's waiting. It's only a quarter — you know the rules."

It's a statement. You nod. Have you been here before? In dream if not in fact. If you've been once you'll come back. Once you've played Endgame, there's nothing else.

You flip the man his coin. Black-nailed fingers grab it from the air like a frog tongue-snatching a fly. The curtains part and you climb into the velvet womb. Accustomed hands find the proper buttons. With your weight on the single seat a headset drops, settles over your eyes and ears and being.

The goggles light. A pinball table the size of the world stretches before you, pins and bumpers and flashers, hologram figures in familiar array: the Dancing Devil, the gaunt Jester with gaping toothy jaws, the Seven Virgins. All there waiting, points and plays and penalties — especially the penalties; this is Endgame. Hovering on the edge of infinity the suggestion of a face, your opponent, destiny linked to yours by the spending of a quarter.

A light blinks on. First ball of five. Tremor of anticipation, you pull back the slide and let it roll. It comes out white. Far away the other player's ball boils forth black, a good omen? You never know. That's the only constant, for this is Endgame.

Your ball bounces around on your side of the centerline. A plastic mushroom glows alive, five hundred points. Green numbers float in air to your right. You flex your hands in small triumph, electronic flipper/finger surrogates salute you. You

hit the white ball, send it ricocheting, racking up tens and singles. Aim for the Jester's grin — those seven teeth are worth a thousand each as a ball's magnetic field blanks them, ten thousand extra for whoever fades the last.

Your number climbs past a thousand, two, five thousand. It's a good run and you can feel it. Four teeth gone and three to go.

You feel the click in your bones as the black ball spins yours away. It rebounds and the last three teeth disappear. Sensors read its charge, and on the left your opponent's score goes up ten thousand, fire red. No matter you sank the first four. In Endgame winning's all that counts. Last man takes all.

You grit your teeth in fury turning to fear as your ball comes skidding back at you. Flippers reach but it passes, into the pit, lost forever. First down.

Sweat tickles your pores as you watch the black ball roll the course. The Jester's teeth snap back for double score, the Talisman glows, the Dancing Devil who is the image of the Fat Man capers obscenely, all awaiting the touch of the whirling globe.

Those red, red numbers grow. Then he gets overconfident, flipper-punches his ball too hard. It rebounds off your backboard and goes laserstraight between the spread, painted thighs of the Queen of Hearts. You feel his (her? you never know) annoyance tingling in your nerve ends like the kiss of a cattle prod as you wait for the next round.

With a click you're set. Black this time, your ball shoots through the three-dee gauziness of a Virgin for a quick three grand, a lucky start. The white ball scuds out from the other side, racks up a measly ten, a hundred, bounces bad; you catch it with your flippers and fire it into a side channel. Your opponent gets a thousand but loses the ball.

He seethes while you play out your run. Your score rises past the other's before a slow flipper-flick — is it you or the solenoids? — loses your midnight sphere.

Number three, white again, he's black, you stay out of each others' way, slow and unspectacular, grinding up the points. You hit a pin that opens a gate in the left channel that'll give you back your ball if it goes there. Instead it goes down the right, agony of frustration, no good, irretrievable. Gate snaps shut.

His ball's gone too. You're neck and neck, forty-two grand to his forty-five, as the fourth ball pops into the firing tube. You let it out easy this time. It's getting down to the wire. The one who pulls ahead this round could take the prize.

You bite your lip. Your heartbeat flickers like eyelashes behind your ribs. This is Endgame.

The other guy leaves you alone, going for the big scores. In a couple of shots the Jester has cavities again, but you roll down the last tooth, turnabout-fairplay for the first ball. Then your opponent's ball, white this time, hits the silvery sphere trapped in the Desolation Row slot, slams it alltheway for twelve big ones. You moan, lights flash, he has a crack at Same Player Shoots Again. If he gets it you're finished.

Your teeth itch as his ball rams yours. You save it with flippers but he's in your backfield, raking in double points. You get yours in his backfield then. His flippers bandy your black ball about, turning you a profit of several grand as he tries to get rid of you. Finally he gets a bankshot into one of his side channels and off. Even that nets you two thousand.

You catch him and spit him out of your territory. He scoops it up. Goes crazy in the gravid middle ground. The Jester at double-score, the Seven Virgins, the Barbarian — you watch and marvel aghast. What a run! Your eyes fill with stinging water but your throat is parchment. He's fiftyfynowsixty thou ahead — can you catch up in that one last shot?

All good things end and bad ones too. A foul flip backspins the white ball into a gutter. Number five pops up, ready.

A wordless mantra moves your lips as you draw back the spring-slide for that final shot. His black ball spurts out and that already-staggering score to your left climbs a thousand. You shoot white.

He bats black at you for an early kill. It clicks true and you gasp. He's done himself out, this one — you watch tranced as white rolls into the plastic confines of Hard Rock Cafe and in among the shadow tables.

Green numerals spin madly. Hard Rock is one of the biggies. Translucent patrons disappear as they're run down, a thousand points apiece normally, but last round everything doubles. Ten go in a flash, twenty grand, all you have to do is breathe.

The opposition's rattled. His unbelievable lead melts in the air before his eyes. His own ball flits like flame all over his safe home ground, getting him nothing. It's one of those rounds where you can't make a score to save your life.

White settles in Hell's Kitchen. It vomits you forth to the tune of fifteen thousand. You're on the other guy's tail and it's his turn to sweat. Frantically, black arrows sharklike to sink you, finish you. His luck's run dry. He misses, you flick both balls into his backfield. He barely misses losing his, wings yours. White spins uncontrolled.

Then you both cry out. Your ball has rolled through the tiny Gateway to Judgement, that opens only on the fifth round of play. It's the ultimate. The ball settles in one tray of the counterbalanced scales. In the other squats a cowed, fanged demon, a holographic projection. The world hangs in the balance, your reality against his, and then it tips.

For a nanosecond the scale threatens to drop you down the Chute, for zip and Endgame. Instead you roll into Paradise. A billion lights explode. Triple Bonus, twenty thousand points times three, you deflower the Virgins, defang the Jester, rub out the pirouetting Devil, your ivory ball gleaming with a motley of reflected light. Your opponent's flippers work spastic and untimed. Almost as an afterthought your ball hits his and sinks it into the Queen of Hearts. He gets four thousand useless, ironic points, and white letters as high as the Universe proclaim:

ENDGAME!

Actinic brilliance. A scream hangs on the holosky. Your vision is speckled with drifting shards of afterimage. Every muscle spasms with orgasmic release, holds you in a giant's grip, drops you slumping, unable to believe.

After a week of eternities you raise yourself from the seat. It's clammy and your pants legs are sweatglued to your thighs. Fishwhite hands part curtains. Even the gloom of Endgame Pavilion dazzles your eyes.

Your breathing has a catch and your heart races like a demented clock. But you welcome these as signs of life, the victor's laurels. You're the One who Walks Away.

Burnstench and ozone are wisped away by straining fans. Sprawled in his booth (her booth? A black mummy inside, sexless and char) your fellow player and opponent, who purchased death for a quarter.

"Come back next week," the Fat Man grins. "Going down to ten cents. Population index's up again."

Noncommittally you grunt, swing out into the brightness of day . . . ■

VICTOR MILÁN

THE TOMB of AXTON

*a Tunnels & Trolls
Game Master Dungeon*

by Paul Ryan O'Connor



This Tunnels & Trolls GM dungeon was designed to provide an evening of entertainment for two or three players, each running a couple of low level characters. More than six or seven characters shouldn't venture inside this dungeon, as the Tomb is a rather small place. They would probably tilt the balance of the adventure too much to the players' side.

Don't let the size of this dungeon fool you — it might take longer to explore than you expect. The Tomb's entrance remains open after the characters enter, which might encourage some parties to make several individual forays into the dungeon — returning to town frequently for specialized supplies — rather than attempting to clean the place out all at once. Finding the entrance shaft to the King's Level may take some time, too. For a faster game, you can threaten the characters with the arrival of a large force of nomad barbarians from the tundra, or give some clues as to the location of the entrance to the second level. Both should speed the players along.

Most of all, remember that this is now your dungeon. Feel free to make any modifications or additions to the Tomb that you deem appropriate. Happy pillaging!

THE LEGEND

But half a century ago, as men Breckon time, the then-great Horse Clan of the Tundra and the civilized Men of the Cold Lands clashed in the

Battle of Broken Lance. This was the climactic battle in the six-year war waged between the two groups. The Men of the Cold Lands were routed, and the very seed of northern civilization lay bare before the ravaging hordes of the Horse Clan. But that great barbarian leader, King Axton, had fallen in battle. His forces rapidly disintegrated into disorganized tribes again.

Powerful shaman priests erected a cairn to Axton at the site of the battle, and the various tribes disappeared into the Tundra. They soon returned to the petty in-fighting that had kept them powerless nomads for centuries. Over the months that followed, they plundered scattered outlying settlements of civilization — but the expected hammer-blow to the heart of the Cold Lands never came to be. Civilization in the north was safe, for now.

As years passed, Axton's simple cairn grew into a complex burial chamber. Members of the former King's family were entombed with him when they died. The tribes of the Tundra continued their nomadic ways — but civilization in the Cold Lands has matured and spread. Caravans now cross the wild Tundra with rough regularity, and are only occasionally harassed by the Horse Clan.

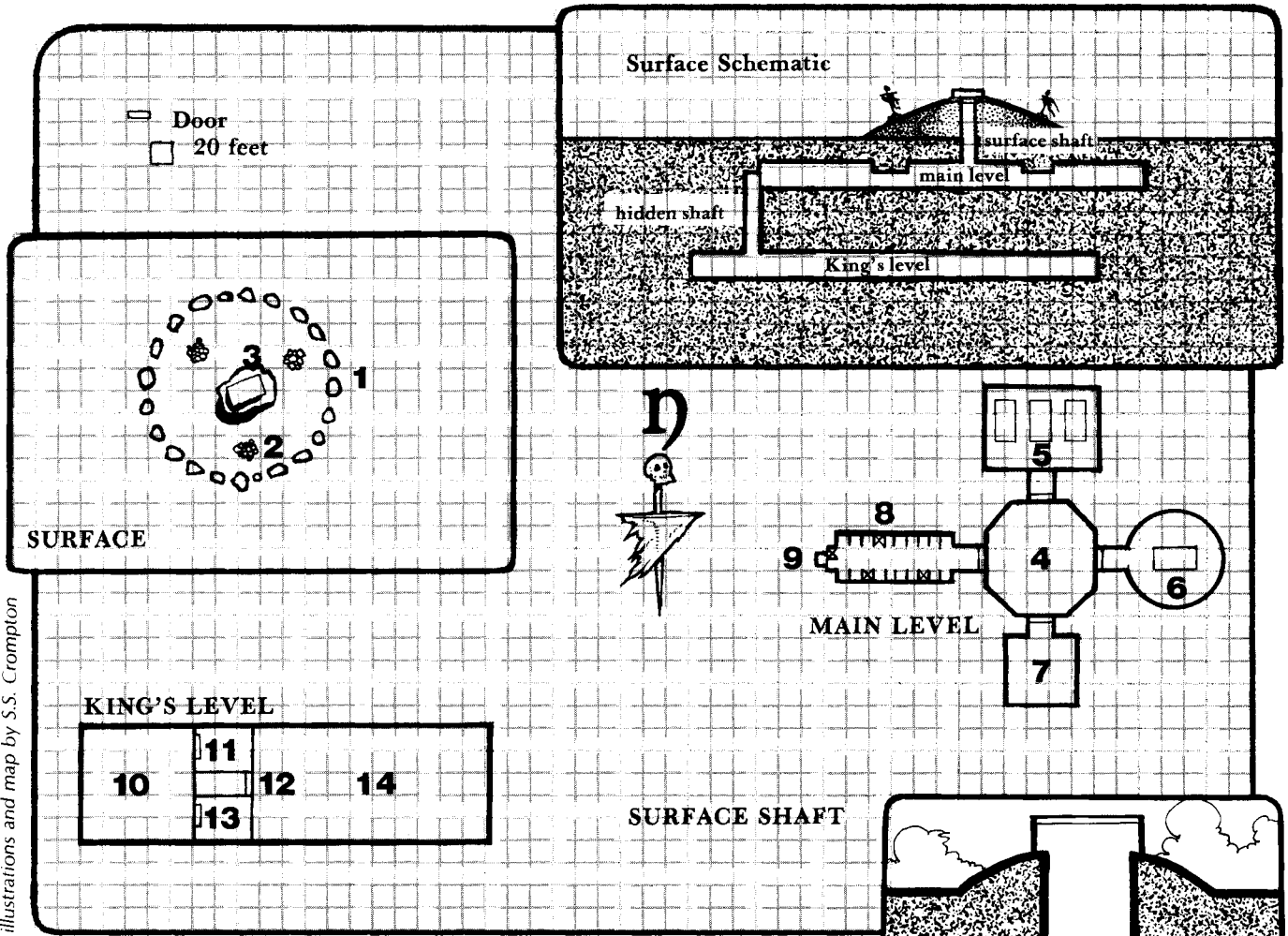
Legend has it that when a caravan

passes the Demon's Rock, the Tomb of Axton is within a day's march for an able-bodied man. Many adventurers have searched for the Tomb in just this way, drawn by tales of massive treasures buried inside. But those few who have returned from such a quest are loath to speak of their discoveries, doubtless fearing that some curse of Axton will claw its way from the grave to claim them for its own . . .

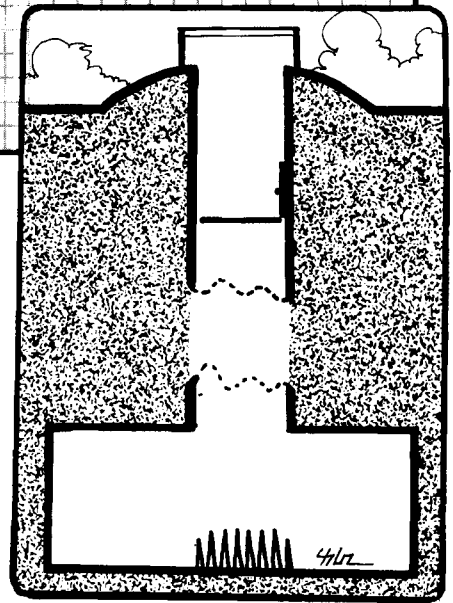
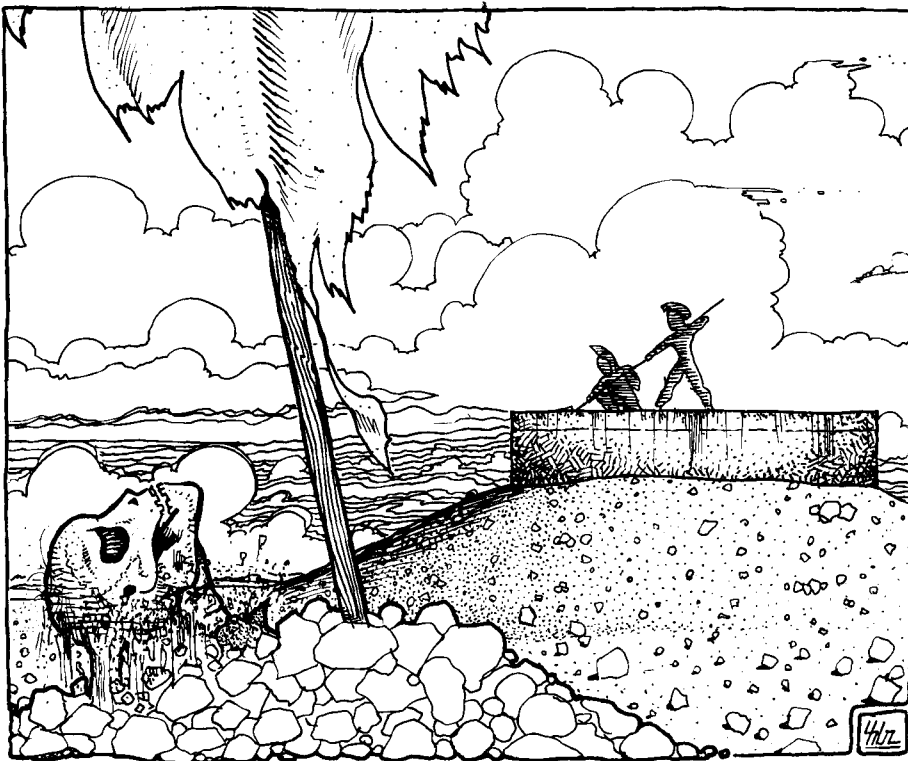
THE SURFACE

General Notes: Characters will arrive at the Tomb after a day of uneventful travel across rocky ground. The Tomb is situated at the edge of a seemingly endless expanse of tundra, and is just barely visible through the growing dusk.

The Tomb is holy ground to the tribes of the area, and a number of these nomads will guard Axton's burial place at all times. The GM should take the party's overall strength into consideration when determining the total number of tribesmen present — but the characters should never be outnumbered by a factor of more than two to one. Each tribesman is armed with broadsword and buckler, and wears leather armor with a steel cap. At least one barbarian will be armed with a medium self bow. Their attributes are straight 15's, which gives each nine



The sacrificial altar (3)



The Tomb of Axton

personal adds in combat. The tribesmen will fight with a fanatical fury in defense of the tomb, and will go berserk if possible.

The tribesmen will have no treasure, but each has a horse tethered about the remains of a smoldering campfire just outside 1, the Ring of Stones.

1. *The Ring of Stones*

A circle of irregular rocks of all shapes and sizes, marking the limits of the actual burial mound.

2. *The Mastheads*

A pile of rocks supporting a grim, mast-like device of wood and canvas, crowned by a human skull. There are three, in all.

3. *Altar and Shaft*

A sacrificial altar, crudely constructed of several stone slabs which are badly bloodstained. The altar stands upon the peak of the mound, about 15' from ground level. Darkened, foul-smelling stains mark where the blood of victims has run down the mound and onto the frozen earth below.

An inspection of the altar will reveal that it is obviously hollow, and that the top can be slid away without undue effort. The moment characters begin to tamper with the altar, any horses tethered nearby become extremely uneasy, and might even break free to run off across the tundra. This is because moving the altar top calls up the undead guardians of the Tomb. From the stone supporting each gruesome masthead will erupt a single skeleton. Each of the three skeletons has a MR of 35, carries a human thigh bone for a club, and bears a shield constructed of canvas stretched over a joined set of ribs.

Any character standing near one of the mastheads must make a first level saving roll on Luck to avoid taking the full damage of a surprise attack from one of the skeletons. In regular combat, the skeletons will prove to move with lightning speed, and characters will have to make a L1-SR on DEX each round, to score hits on the skeleton's MR. If the roll is failed, then the character's combat roll may be used to provide defense, but no damage will be scored on the skeleton.

After the skeletons have been defeated, the characters will return their attention to what lies beneath the altar. A 10' x 10' stone shaft runs 50' straight down into the mound from beneath the place of sacrifice. The sides are smooth-cut stone, and characters will have to anchor some sort of rope to climb down.



Twenty feet down the shaft, a thin canvas painted to resemble a stone floor is pulled taut across the chute. A mock-up of an iron door is set in the wall of the shaft, resembling the beginning of an obvious passageway from the "floor" of the shaft. At this point, any character hanging above the canvas on a rope or other contrivance should attempt a L1-SR on IQ. If made, the GM should inform the player that something "seems wrong." By no means should you pinpoint the problem — if the character doesn't follow through on his "hunch" and further investigate his situation, then he fully deserves to plunge through the thin "floor" to a painful death on the spiked floor some fifty feet below. (The GM may choose to make this death automatic, or to assign a certain number of dice damage. A plunge like this should kill any average character.)

The Main Level

4. *The Entrance Room*

The surface shaft ends here, opening from the approximate center of this room's 20' high ceiling. Upon the floor directly beneath the shaft's opening are set several crude stone

spikes, littered with the remains of previous adventurers. The floor of this room lies beneath an inch of dust; cobwebs clog the corners, and maggot-ridden corpses in rotting armor are strewn about in various horrible positions. The walls of this chamber are painted with primitive frescoes depicting the Battle of Broken Lance. The room is otherwise featureless.

A single door, ornately worked in silver, is set in each of the four walls. Each door is operated by a single crystal doorknob in the center. (Attempting to scrape the silver free will leave the character with a number of near-worthless shards, but each crystal knob could probably fetch a price in the neighborhood of 35 gp.) Each door bears a different runic symbol, semi-indigenous to the area. There is a chance that a given rune will be known by any character native to the north. Such a character must make a L3-SR on IQ to recognize a given rune and be able to translate it. The runes read: (north door) "Flesh of the Flesh", (east door) "Queen's Chamber", (south door) "Offerings", and (west door) "The King".

Each door is locked. A magic-user may open a door if he casts a *Knock Knock* spell and can successfully make a L1-SR on

Luck. Any other type of character can pick the lock with a successful L2-SR on DEX. If either of these attempts fails, or if any sort of physical attempt to force the door is made, the Guardian appears.

The Guardian is a demonic, pig-snouted ogre with a multitude of eyes and mouths. It has been plucked from some secret hell by the shaman priests, and is bound to the protection of this part of the tomb. This ogre has a monster rating of 90, and fights with his bare, taloned hands.

The Guardian will fight until all characters are slain, or until he himself is killed. In any event, the ogre (dead or alive) will return to limbo one minute after the end of the fight. He has no treasure — but if searched, a dull bronze key will be found on a chain about its neck. This key will open any of the four doors from this room. After each use of the key, the GM should roll a die; a 1 or 2 indicates that the key has vanished, following its keeper into limbo.

5. The Children's Tomb

This room contains the mortal remains of Axton's three sons. The chamber appears to have been entered in the past, but there are no obvious signs of looting. The north, east, and west walls of this room are each hung with a single tapestry — the crude tundra equivalent of each son's coat of arms (in reality, a battle banner).

Three stone sarcophagi entomb the bodies. Viewed from the south, the coffin on the left contains a normal rotting skeleton. However, located in a secret hollow beneath the coffin bed is an offering of 4288 silver pieces. If the characters bother to search, they must make a L1-SR on Luck to find the silver.

The center coffin is secured by a large, heavy chain wrapped about its width. It can be broken with almost any sort of weapon — but some sort of hammer is the best item for the job. The chain can take a combined total of 25 hits of damage. To break the chain, a character must generate this total or more in his "attack" against the chain. Only one character at a time should work on the chain (or rather, if the party attempts to "melce" against it, treat each "attack" individually). The purpose is to snap one link, not "kill" the chain.

If the character scores a full 25 hits in a single roll, the chain breaks without difficulty. If the character generates less, however, subtract his total from the overall rating of the chain — and then tell the character that it will take further cutting to get through. The

catch is that each time a character hits the chain without completely breaking it, damage is done to his weapon. To reflect this, apply the difference between the character's roll and the chain's strength to the weapon used as permanent, negative adds. A weak character may go through several weapons before opening this coffin . . .

The corpse within the middle coffin was buried with a magical glowing great axe. This axe will provide roughly half the light of a torch, and allows the wielder to cut through such things as bars and chains with relative ease. (Normal requirements of ST, DEX, etc. apply.)

The sarcophagus on the right is set to release poison gas in a 10' x 10' x 10' cloud when opened. A character opening this coffin should be allowed a L1-SR on LK to spot the trap, and then a L2-SR on DEX to disarm it. Anyone caught in the cloud will suffer 3—18 (three dice) hits directly to his CON. The body in the coffin wears a finely worked back-and-breast of silver and steel worth 400 gp. Using this armor in combat will decrease its worth.

6. The Queen's Chamber

This chamber is fresh, untouched, and unlooted. Velvet hangings cover the walls (*weight: 250; approximate value: 350 gp*). A huge 20' x 40' x 10' block of stone sits in the middle of the room — this is the Queen's burial place. The block itself is ornately carved, and upon its top crouches a very convincing statue of a polar bear. A 4' x 4' silver-plated door, five feet up the west face of the block, is the actual access point to the body within.

A L2-SR on DEX is required to open the portal without awakening the polar bear from his enchanted slumber in stone. Once animated, the polar bear will fight with a MR of 150, and will take 10 hits on his thick fur as armor. The bear will fight to the death, and magic has only half effect upon him.

The mummified body of the Queen, resting within the block, wears a necklace worth 450 gp. She holds a silver dirk which, when carried, will make its holder impervious to the effects of cold or frozen temperatures.

7. The Offerings Chamber

The entrance to this chamber is blocked by heavy cobwebs which have been spun by the four giant frost spiders lurking inside. The frost spiders are a snowy white and have glowing red eyes; they are almost impossible to spot in the forest of silky webs. A peculiar frost

spider talent is the ability to radiate a field of damp, freezing cold about its body — which can cause damage to exposed flesh or snuff out a localized fire. Characters who heave torches into this room to rid themselves of the spiders are in for a nasty surprise when the frost spiders emerge unscathed . . . (The webs may burn convincingly, but the spiders will survive.)

In combat, each spider has a MR of 40. A character who fights a frost spider must make a L1-SR on CON each round; if he misses, he must take the difference in hits due to the field of cold generated by the spider.

The room itself is a shambles, apparently due to previous looters. Smashed vessels litter the floor; broken, rotting shelves hang upon the damp walls. As this room was primarily used for the storage of perishable offerings, nothing of value will be found here.

8. The King's Guard

This is a catacomb designed to hide and protect the approaches to the King's Level. The floor is very dusty; cobwebs cover — and in some cases, totally obscure — the niches along the north, west, and south walls of this room. In each niche stands the rotting corpse or skeleton of one of the King's former honor guard. Niches marked with an 'X', however, each contain a single zombie.

The zombies will erupt from their niches and attack as soon as a member of the party advances 40' or more into the room. The zombies fight with a standard MR of 40 each, but take damage according to a special set of rules. The only way to kill a zombie is to score at least ten hits on it in any one round — anything less has no effect on the zombie's MR or fighting ability. The dead cannot die — you have to do *serious* damage to a zombie all at once if you hope to stop it (and even then, the dissected parts of the zombie are likely to flop against your feet). There is no treasure here.

9. The Hidden Shaft

This is the shaft leading from the Main Level to the King's Level. It is accessible through either of the two niches along the west wall of room 8. This shaft is located behind a few loose blocks in the wall; anyone searching that particular stretch of wall must make a L1-SR on Luck to locate it.

The shaft itself is roughly 5' x 5'. Although it can be negotiated without mishap by employing the proper

equipment, it is possible to attempt the chute barehanded. To do this, a character must successfully make a L2-SR against his ST, LK, and DEX to avoid falling to a horrible death (and disappearing through the trap door described in 10, "The Anteroom"). Successfully climbing down the shaft without ropes or other equipment is worth 300 experience points. The shaft ends by opening out of the ceiling of room 10.

The King's Level

10. The Anteroom

The floor of this room is thick with dust, obviously untouched. A hidden trap door is located in the floor directly under the place the Hidden Shaft ends. Any character who jumps down hard upon this section of floor will almost certainly activate the trap — to avoid falling through when one merely stands upon the door requires a L2-SR on Luck.

The pit drops into a 15'-deep well of extremely chill water, and snaps shut almost immediately after admitting the character. Any character caught in this trap without someone to pull him out is a goner — as it is, the GM should request a high level saving roll (on or above 4th level) for the character to merely stay alive in the water long enough for his friends above to figure out how to rescue him.

Against the west wall of this room, standing upon a 5' x 5' x 5' pedestal, is a 10' statue of King Axton. He is rather wild-looking, with a long beard and streams of unkempt hair bursting from beneath a twin-horned helm. Axton bears shield and lance, and has a double-edged axe strapped at his waist.

The statue is carved from the very rock of this dungeon, and is joined to the stone flush at its back. In the center of its chest is set a large, round, thin and flat ruby, easily worth 700 gp. The ruby can be removed from the statue without undue effort; doing so will reveal a sort of small tunnel running from behind the ruby, down through the statue, into the bowels of the earth. From this tube comes a blast of wet heat, followed by a distant rustling.

Unless the characters plug this hole immediately, four albino blood bats will burst through the breach, starving for slaughter after a long imprisonment in the earth. Each bat has a 35 MR, and fights by a special set of rules.

Each bat will fly straight for a different member of the party. A character under attack may attempt a L2-SR on DEX — if made, the bat is

brought to combat under normal T&T rules. If the roll is missed, however, then the bat has managed to dodge the character's defenses, and fastens itself to some exposed part of the character's body. This causes the character to immediately take 2—12 (2 dice) in direct hits, as blood is drawn from his body. A further 2—12 hits will be struck each round until either the character or the bat is killed.

A character being drained by a bat will probably be in too much pain to do more than scream (and perhaps also do roughly one-fourth normal damage to the bat, if he's really determined). A bat will not defend itself while feasting, but any character attacking a bat in this situation must make a L1-SR on Luck to avoid missing the monster and hitting his friend accidentally. Any bat that completely bloats itself by draining a character will be content to fly back through the statue into its lair — unless the remaining characters force the issue.

11. The Ice Ghouls

This is another room intended to house perishable offerings (such as breads and meats) to the King. However, it has been broken into and



despoiled by a group of ice ghouls who inhabit burrows beneath the mountains west of the tomb. The total number of ice ghouls present in this room at any one time is subject to the GM's discretion.

Each ice ghoul has a MR of 98, and fights with tooth and fang. The ghouls are frequent carriers of horrible diseases — any character who takes hits from one must immediately make a L2-SR on CON. If he misses, he acquires a lingering plague that will kill him within a week if a magician cannot be located to administer a "Healing Feeling" spell.

A search of this room will reveal some bones and other grisly remains, but nothing in the way of treasure. A crude tunnel leading to the ghouls' territory leads from the north wall into the earth beyond, but it is foul enough to keep away all but the most, ahem, ghoulish of fellows.

12. The Cave-In

This hallway is the final approach to Axton's resting place. The floor of this room is a carefully-designed pressure plate. Any number of characters may step upon it, and the plate will register the total weight it supports. When any of this weight is released, however, the collapse of the ceiling above is triggered. Thus, when the party crosses the hall and opens the door into the King's Tomb, the first person to step off the plate and into the next room will do so safely — but the party behind him will be crushed beneath tons of earth as the roof comes down (unless each member can make a L3-SR on Luck to clear the hall in time, that is).

The character who actually makes it into the main chamber, meanwhile, will find himself every bit as entombed as Axton himself — the corridor behind him is irrevocably blocked. The character can probably dig his way through one of the walls separating the main chamber from either room 11 or 13, but you needn't tell him that. The fear of entrapment may very well lead him to do something rash — for instance, tunneling back through the blocked corridor, where the soft earth will almost certainly shift and smother him with the rest of the party.

75A You suddenly realize that if you steal from Trollways, a demon may be sent to rip your heart out. After all, they have some of your blood . . . Go to 47B if you decide to leave the cash. If you take it anyway, go to 55A.

13. Vermin

This room is filled with various unadorned storage receptacles and crates that contain various worthless possessions of the King (mostly personal items and aged tundra clothing). Lurking in the shadows, however, is a nest of about twenty out-sized vermin (MR 20 each); the largest is roughly the size of a German Shepherd. These rats rush forward to any light or smell of food, and will quickly overwhelm any small number of characters who simply stand and fight.

Once alerted, little will deter the rats — they will even gnaw through rotting dungeon doors. Also, while the rats can't pursue characters back up the Hidden Shaft, they might move up to the Main Level through their own series of tunnels and shafts, to ambush the characters just when they believe they've gotten away.

14. The King's Tomb

The mummified body of King Axton rests here upon a huge mound of offerings: chests, bags, open heaps, and all manner of urns and vessels. The rest of this chamber is as simple as it is massive. Rich tapestries cover the walls, and a thick film of dust lies over all.

Close inspection will show that Axton

actually rests on a raised stone slab, with the treasure heaped all about him. The loose-coin loot consists of about 30,000 c.p., 15,000 s.p., and 3,500 g.p. Players should roll four times on the gem and jewel chart in the rulebook to see what precious stones are available.

Against the head of the platform rests a giant double-bladed broadaxe — King Axton's totem of ruling authority. Obviously magical in nature, it is worth a full 15 dice + 10 adds in combat. The axe weighs 250; a character must have a ST of 30 and a DEX of 15 to wield it. While using this magical axe, any hits you score against an opponent in combat are taken straight from his CON, regardless of armor or magical protection. This axe cannot be further enchanted by mortal magic, nor mithril-edged or coated, or otherwise made into a more horrible weapon than it already is. After every use or every adventure (GM's discretion), the axe's owner should roll two six-sided dice. If he rolls snake-eyes, the magic has worn off the axe and it crumbles into dust.

Axton himself wears a diadem worth 500 gp. Amidst all this wealth is something very likely to escape notice

(and is thus of capital importance). Upon his left hand, Axton wears a small bronze ring crafted into the form of a salamander biting its own tail, which gives its wearer magical protection against all flames and fire. This mummy won't torch easily . . .

In no way will Axton hinder the removal of any of the material wealth about him — not even his diadem (or, should the characters be lucky enough to notice it, his ring). If his axe is touched, however, he very suddenly and violently comes to life.

Axton has a MR of 280, and will fight at that strength, regardless of damage taken, until he has taken 300 or more hits. Only then will he collapse into dust. Normal weapons have only half effect against Axton, but spells and magic weapons will do standard damage. If it can be snatched by the party, Axton's double-bladed axe will cause double damage when used against him.

Axton is a tough adversary, and characters deserve what they get if they can't handle him. After all, you can't expect the man who single-handedly unified the northern barbarians into one of the most powerful armies in recorded history to be a pushover . . .


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T.M. applied for

TROLL TEASERS

(answers from issue 8)

George and the Four Doors

If George the Nerd has made his IQ saving roll, he knows that:

- 1) The sleep charm and the vampire are behind the Red door
- 2) The fire-breathing dragon lives behind the White door
- 3) The silver cross and the Troll are behind the Blue door
- 4) The sword named Troll-Killer is behind the Green door.

Hink Pink (Fantasy Riddle Quiz)

1. Lizard wizard
2. Droll troll
3. Ghost toast
4. Mince prince
5. Meany jinni
6. Narrow Pharaoh (Ancient Egypt was called the Two Lands, and the Pharaoh wore a double crown)
7. Gollum column
8. Elf shelf
9. Dragon wagon
10. Armor charmer
11. Blade maid
12. Mouser rouser (probably Fafhrd, most of the time)
13. Loanin' Conan (A process, with apologies to Henny Youngman)
14. Fur-laid mermaid
15. Zero hero (nothing = zero) or Thomas promise (as in Covenant)

Take a few moments to score yourself. If you got all 15 right, you are a fantasist *par excellence* and a pretty mean poet. 10 — 14 indicates that you are sharp and well-read. 6 — 9 is a fair score, but a doggerel poet you will never be. 5 or less indicates you need to do some reading, or at least stay away from Hink Pinks from now on. Hope you enjoyed solving them as much as Ken did writing them . . .

“TROLL TEASERS” will return next issue — if enough readers show their interest by sending us more puzzles! (How about some more “Hink Pinks”?)

78A Each of the three centaurs has 25 combat adds and a CON of 33. Each is about 7'6" tall, from hoof to crown. If you kill all the centaurs, go to 60A. If you surrender, go to 20A. If your CON is reduced to zero, go to 52A.

The 500th Annual Attitude Survey in Khazan

Imagine, if you will, that you are an inhabitant of Khazan, that city of monsters where Lerotra'hh, Goddess of Death, rules. Once a year a brief questionnaire is circulated to the populace — why? No one knows.

There are twenty statements below. If you agree strongly with the statement as given, rate it at 5; if you disagree strongly, rate it at 0. Other grades of emotion can be indicated by one of the other numbers along the scale. When you have finished, total the points for your answers to see what Lerotra'hh has learned about you.

- 1. Dwarves look good in high heels and elevator shoes.
- 2. Some of my best friends are Orcs.
- 3. It's hard to be a Troll.
- 4. I am often flabbergasted by yataghans.
- 5. A purple yak is better than no yak at all.
- 6. Rhalph is the best of all possible worlds.
- 6. Dragon is my favorite flavor.
- 7. It is better to pay a witch with silver than to love her. (Females may substitute the word 'wizard' for witch and 'him' for her.)
- 8. It is wise to walk softly and carry Vampire repellent.
- 9. The only good Elf is a dead Elf.
- 10. Broadswords make good toothpicks.
- 11. I'd rather marry a Lamia than work in a stable.
- 12. Flying is for the birds.
- 13. It's always darkest just after your eyes are gouged out.
- 14. All cats are black at night and white in a snowstorm.
- 15. Gremlins work too hard.
- 16. Living in Khazan is better than a kick in the teeth.
- 17. I like gold, jewels, silks, fast women (or men), and rattlesnake ice cream.
- 18. Dungeon delving (i.e. looting, killing, cheating, and living by one's wits) is the noblest occupation a being can undertake.
- 19. If I wasn't already perfect, I'd try to improve myself.
- 20. Lerotra'hh is the wisest, most beautiful, most benevolent queen and woman in the entire world. (Scale begins at 10 for this question)

Add up your score and look for it on the table below.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 100 - 105 | You're either a true hero or a great liar. Either way, Lerotra'hh can use you — consider this a summons to the palace. |
| 90 - 99 | You are well-adjusted and thoughtful. Your taxes are due. |
| 80 - 89 | Your mother drives a beer wagon. |
| 70 - 79 | You are sincere, greedy, affable, ugly, and carcinogenic. |
| 65 - 69 | If you wear a bag over your head you won't get in as many fights. |
| 66 | Get away from me, you pervert! |
| 60 - 65 | Several large ugly thugs are looking for you. |
| 50 - 59 | You have hair on your palms. |
| 49 | If a balrog invited you over for supper, you'd go. |
| 11 - 48 | You are currently suffering from terminal dullness. |
| 10 | You are very wise, but also very anti-social. |
| 1 - 9 | I hope you like dying in the Arena. |
| 0 | How'd you do that? |

Negative numbers: You must be a mathematical 37th level wizard!

(transcribed by Ken St. Andre)

Puzzle Contest RESULTS

The contest is over and a winner has been chosen, although if this were a courtroom I'm sure a mistrial would have been declared. You see, we never actually came right out and said that “SA8” (where the puzzle appeared) was *not* a legal answer . . . an error of omission. It seemed implicit at the time, and was apparently obvious to 24 of the 27 entrants. However, Molly Munn, Michael Braymen, and Jerry Epperson felt it was worthwhile to follow the letter of the contest laws without going for the spirit of the thing. Therefore:

The Booby Prize goes to me, for missing something which should have been obvious.

The Grudging Fudging Award goes to the three listed above, in honor of your ability to slip through loopholes. Thank you, and I'll know better next time! The judge's decision is final . . .

The official winner of the contest, however, is **Stefan Jones** of Locust Valley, New York. He correctly identified all but one of the original appearances of the illustrations of the contest (aside from their appearance in SA8!). He was nearly right with ‘Z’ — he followed his first listing with an appended “also Supernova”.

Supernova (#31) was the correct answer to ‘Z’, but only his first answer was permissible. Unfortunately for Stefan, this was a trick question. The basic drawing was the same in both cases, but before the illustration was printed in *City of Terrors*, additional shading and drawing was done. Furthermore, it was printed its original size in *COT*, while the illustration in *Supernova* was reduced in size. Contest rules specified that no contest drawing had been altered in size or makeup. Of all the entrants, only Ron and Michael Britton caught the difference; honorable mention must go to them for it.

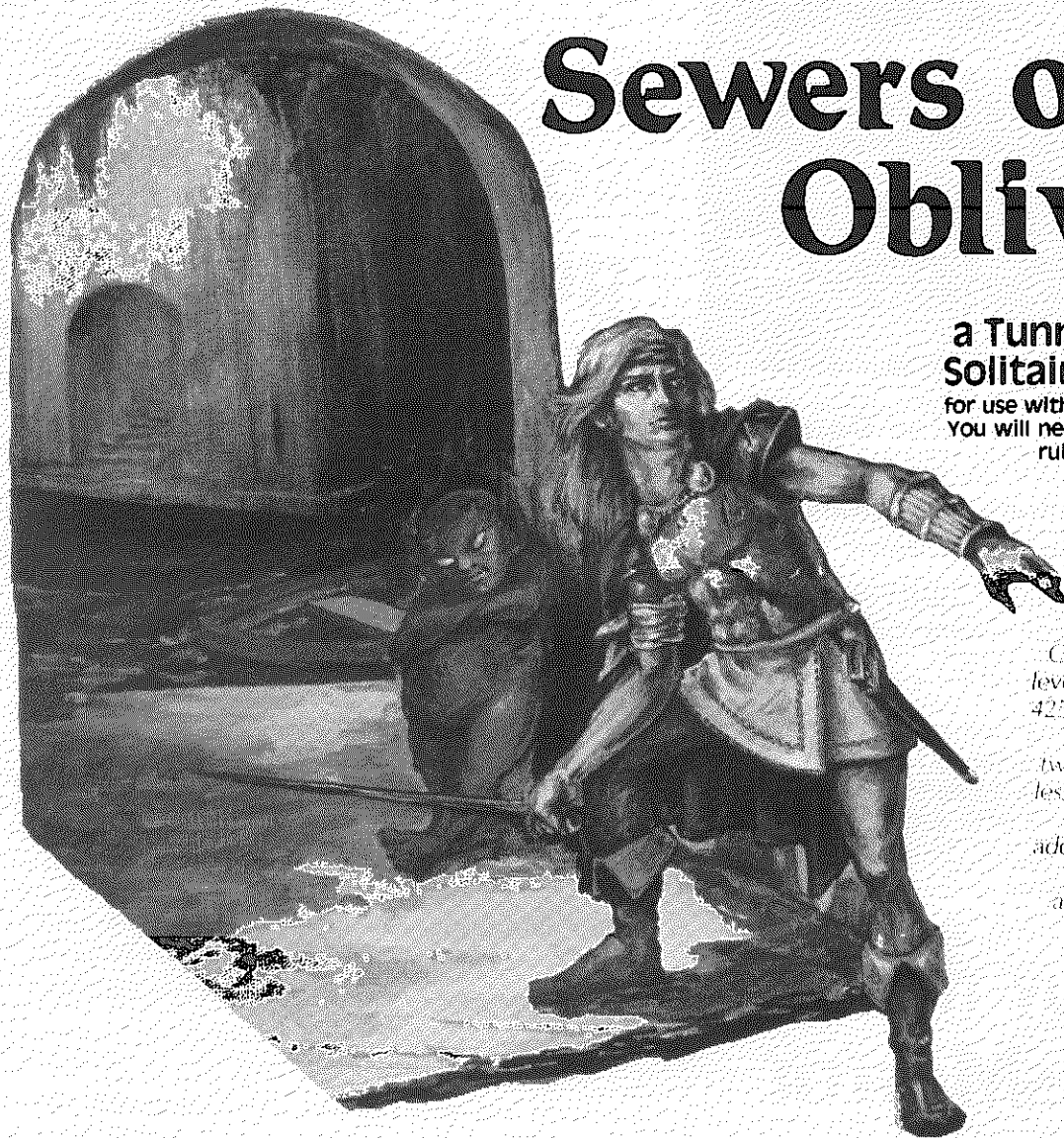
Thank you all for entering the contest; below you will find the correct answers and the artist credits.

- Abyss (Stephan Peregrine)
- City of Terrors (Rob Carver)
- Deathtrap Equalizer (Liz Danforth)
- Dungeon of the Bear, L3 (Rob Carver)
- Monsters! Monsters! (Liz Danforth)
- Overkill, 1st edition (Sandra Brines)
- Sorcerer's Apprentice #7 (Bob Barger)
- T&T Rules, edition 1—4 (Rob Carver)
- Arena of Khazan (Peter Laird)
- Buffalo Castle (Liz Danforth)
- Starfaring (Ernest Hogan)
- Sorcerer's Apprentice #1 (Liz Danforth)
- Beyond the Silvered Pane (Liz Danforth)
- Overkill, 2nd edition (Chris Carlson)
- Beyond the Silvered Pane (Liz Danforth)
- Sword for Hire (Brian McCrary)
- Supernova #27 (Liz Danforth)
- Sorcerer's Apprentice #4 (Liz Danforth)
- Uncle Ugly's Underground (Ugly John Carver)
- Sorcerer's Apprentice #3 (Peter Laird)
- 1980 T&T Calendar (Liz Danforth)
- 1979 T&T Calendar (Brian McCrary)
- Sorcerer's Apprentice #2 (Liz Danforth)
- Naked Doom (Rob Carver)
- Sorcerer Solitaire (Mike Leone)
- Supernova #31 (Liz Danforth)

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