

HUNGER OF THE WOLF

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Hunger of the Wolf

Two dice, a pencil and an eraser are all you need to embark on this adventure, which comes complete with its own elaborate combat system and a score sheet to record your progress. It is up to YOU to decide which routes to follow, which dangers to risk and which foes to fight.

Thanks to Dave Holt for designing this template, Simon Osborne for his advice and to The Oiseau for his excellent Advelh program.

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INTRODUCTION

You are about to take the lead role in an adventure like no other. Before you take part in this quest, you must first determine your own strengths and weaknesses. You use dice to work out your initial scores. On page 9 is an *Adventure Sheet*, which you may use to record details of your adventure. On it, you will find boxes for recording your SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores. You are advised either to record your scores on the *Adventure Sheet* in pencil or to make photocopies of the sheet for use in future adventures.

Skill, Stamina and Luck

Roll one die. Add 6 to the number rolled and enter this total in the SKILL box on the *Adventure Sheet*.

Roll one die. Add 18 to the number rolled and enter this total in the STAMINA box.

Roll one die. Add 6 to the number and enter this total in the LUCK box.

For reasons that will be explained below, all your scores will change constantly during the adventure. You must keep an accurate record of these scores, and for this reason, you are advised to write small in the boxes or to keep an eraser handy. However, never rub out your *Initial* scores, except on those very rare occasions when the text specifically tells you so.

Although you may be rewarded additional SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK points, these totals may never exceed your *initial* Scores, except on very rare occasions, when you will be instructed on a particular page.

Your SKILL reflects your general expertise in fighting and combat; the higher the better. Your STAMINA score reflects your general constitution, your overall will to survive, your determination and overall fitness; the higher your STAMINA score, the longer you will be able to survive. Your LUCK score indicates how naturally lucky a person you are. Luck – and Magic – are facts of life in the fantasy kingdoms you are about to explore.

Battles

During your adventure, you will often come across pages in the book, which instruct you to fight a creature of some sort. An option to flee may be given, but if not – or if choose to attack the creature anyway – you must resolve the battle as described below.

First, record the opponent's SKILL and STAMINA scores in the first empty Encounter box on your *Adventure Sheet*. The scores for each opponent or creature are given in the book each time you have an encounter. You should also make a note of any special abilities or instructions, which are unique to that particular opponent.

The sequence of combat is then:

1. Roll two dice for your opponent. Add its SKILL score. This total is the opponents Attack Strength.
2. Roll two dice for yourself. Add the number rolled to your current STAMINA score. This total is your Attack Strength.
3. If your Attack Strength is higher than your opponent's is, you have wounded it. Proceed to step 4. If your opponent's Attack Strength is higher than yours is, it has wounded you. Proceed to step 5. If both Attack Strength totals are the same, you have avoided each other's blows – start the next Attack Round from steps 1 above.
4. You have wounded your opponent; so subtract 2 points from its STAMINA score. You may use LUCK here to do additional damage (see below). Proceed to step 7.
*AFF players may use the Damage Tables at the back of the book.
5. Your opponent has wounded you; so subtract 2 points from your STAMINA score. You may use LUCK to reduce the loss of STAMINA (see below). Proceed to step 7.
6. Make the appropriate adjustments to either your opponents or your own STAMINA scores (and your LUCK score if you used LUCK – see over).
7. Begin the next Attack Round, starting again at step 1 with your current SKILL score. This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your opponent reaches zero (death). If your opponent dies, you are free to continue with your adventure. If you die, your adventure ends and you must start all over again by creating a new character.

Escaping

On some pages you may be given the option of running away from a battle should things be going badly for you. However, if you do run away, your opponent automatically gets in one wound on you (subtract 2 STAMINA points) as you flee. Such is the price of cowardice! Note that you may use LUCK on this wound in the normal way (see below). You may only *escape* if that option is specifically given to you on the page.

Fighting More Than One Opponent

In some situations, you may find yourself facing more than one person or creature in combat and will either have to fight them one at a time or all at the same time! If fighting them one at a time simply fight the first one on the list as normal. Once that opponent is defeated move on to the next one until they are all defeated. When you find yourself fighting multiple opponents at once, each adversary will make a separate attack on you in the course of each Attack Round, but you can choose which one to fight. Attack your chosen target as in a normal battle. Against any additional opponents you roll the dice for your Attack Strength in the normal way; if your Attack Strength is greater than your opponent's is, in this instance, you will not inflict any damage; you can regard it as if you have parried an incoming blow. If your Attack Strength is lower than your adversary's is, however, you will be wounded in the normal way.

Luck

At various times during your adventure, either in battles or when you come across other situations in which you could either be Lucky or Unlucky (details of these are given in the relevant pages themselves), you may use LUCK to make the outcome more favourable to you. However, beware! Using LUCK is a risky business and, if you are *unlucky*, the results could be disastrous.

The procedure for *using your luck* is as follows: roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than or equal to your current LUCK score, you have been Lucky and the outcome will be in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current LUCK score, you have been Unlucky and will be penalised.

This procedure is known as *Testing your Luck*. Each time you *Test your Luck*, you must subtract 1 point from your current LUCK score. Thus, you will soon realise that, the more you rely on your LUCK, the more risky this procedure will become.

Using Luck in Battles

On certain pages of the book, you will be told to *Test your Luck*, and will be told the consequences of your being Lucky or Unlucky. However, in battles you always have the option of using your LUCK either to inflict more serious damage on an opponent you have just wounded or to minimise the effects of a wound you have just received.

If you have just wounded an opponent, you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are Lucky, you have inflicted a severe wound; deduct an extra 2 points from your opponent's STAMINA score. However, if you are Unlucky, however, your blow only scratches your opponent, and you deduct only 1 point from your opponent's STAMINA (instead of scoring the normal 2 points of damage, you now only score 1).

Whenever you yourself are wounded in combat, you may *Test your Luck* to try to minimise the wound. If you are Lucky, your opponent's blow only grazes you; deduct only 1 point from your STAMINA. If you are Unlucky, your wound is a serious one and you must deduct 1 extra STAMINA point (i.e., a total of 3 points from your own STAMINA). Remember: you must subtract 1 point from your LUCK score each time you *Test your Luck*.

More about your Attributes

Skill

Your SKILL score will not change much during the course of your adventure. Occasionally a paragraph may give you instructions to increase or decrease your SKILL score, but it may not exceed its *Initial* value unless you are specifically instructed to the contrary.

Stamina

Your STAMINA score will change a lot during your adventure. It will drop because of wounds received through combat, or by falling foul of traps and pitfalls; and it will drop after you perform any particularly arduous task. If you're STAMINA score ever falls to zero or below, you have been killed and should stop reading the book immediately. Brave adventurers who wish to pursue their quest must roll up a new character and start all over again.

Luck

Additions to your LUCK score may be awarded in the adventure when you have been particularly lucky or created your own luck by some other action. Details are given, where appropriate, in the paragraphs of the book. Remember that, as with SKILL and STAMINA, your LUCK score may never exceed its *initial* value unless specifically instructed on a page.

Provisions

During your adventure, you may acquire provisions. You may rest and eat a portion of provisions at any time except when engaged in battle. Each portion of provisions you eat will restore up to 4 Stamina points.

Equipment

You will start your adventure with a bare minimum of equipment, but you may find or buy other items during your travels. You are armed with a sword and are dressed in

leather clothing. You do not start with a backpack and you cannot carry provisions until you acquire one. With a backpack you may carry up to ten portions of provisions.

Codewords

Throughout the adventure you will be required to record various codewords to monitor your progress. You can tick these off on the Codeword Checklist on page **10**.

Hints on Play

This adventure is dangerous. You might well fail on your first attempt. Make notes and draw a map as you explore - this map will prove invaluable when making further forays in this adventure, and it will enable you to progress more rapidly to unexplored sections. Remember: when you are travelling through any environment, it is a good idea to make a note of where such encounters lie in the adventure ahead, including useful objects and information to aid you on your dangerous quest.

Be wary about testing your Luck, unless a paragraph instructs you to do this! When it comes to fights, you should *Test your Luck* only to keep yourself alive if an opponent's blow would otherwise kill you. However, be warned! If you decide to use Luck in this way, be certain your adversary is worth it- Luck points are precious!

You start this mission with very few possessions, but will be given opportunities to collect food, weapons, and items. However, choose your equipment carefully - although many are precious or magical, others are red herrings and of no real value at all.

You will soon realise that paragraphs make no sense if read in numerical order. It is essential that you read only the paragraphs you are instructed to go to. Reading other sections lessens the excitement and surprise during play. The only true way to success in this adventure involves minimal risk; even if your character scores are low, you should be able to find magical artefacts and weapons that may increase your chances of victory in battle.



ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL

Initial
Skill=

STAMINA

Initial
Stamina=

LUCK

Initial
Luck=

EQUIPMENT
LIST

GOLD

JEWELS

POTIONS

PROVISIONS
REMAINING

CODEWORD CHECKLIST

Aerial		Merchant	
Ambush		Mind	
Arrow		Parrot	
Bark		Ready	
Coward		Shoot	
Frog		Strong	
Grass		Sword	
Inform		Thrust	
Lost		Will	

BACKGROUND

You struggle desperately against your captors' strong grip on your arm. Your corded muscles tighten from the exertion and for a second you free your arms and smash your fist into the jaw of one of the treacherous scum. It is to no avail however; as two more take his place and grip your arm even tighter. Confidently, they press it against the wood and hold it steady.

'Nail him!' snarls Saul triumphantly. One man is holding a long iron nail and a hammer. You renew your struggle, but your arm is held in a vice-like grip. The nail is placed on your wrist and the hammer is brought down on its head. Your whole body is wracked with pain as the hammer nails your bloody wrist into the wood of the cross. You cry out in agony and can barely put up any resistance at all as the vile conspirators do the same to your left arm. Finally, they turn their attention to your legs. You lash out and succeed in winding one of them in the stomach with your brutish kick.

'Defiant to the end,' says Saul with a bitter smile. 'I would have expected nothing less.'

It does not take them long to hold your legs steady and yet another nail is driven through both your feet into the cross. You tilt your head back and give a scream of impotent rage. Without a word, the traitors attach ropes to the ends of the cross and haul it upright. You

stare down at Saul and his followers. Your former lieutenant looks up at you with glee.

‘So now we see who is the true master,’ he mocks, his yellow eyes bright with delight and his long grey hair flapping in the night time breeze. ‘Your army will abandon you and follow me. I will achieve greatness and be remembered for centuries while you will die and be forgotten. Farewell!’

With this he bows, then he and his co-conspirators mount their steeds and take off into the night. You gaze desperately at the bleak landscape of gently rolling hills surrounding you. No one will come for you out here. You hang your head in dejection recalling how you came to be left crucified by your own soldiers.

A barbarian from north-eastern Allansia, you always had a feeling of wanderlust unusual to your simple people. You had travelled the world seeking your fortune and have seen many sights that your own folk would have doubted existed: the majesty of Salamonis; the villainy and danger of crowded Port Blacksand; the decadent civilizations of the Old World and the towering peaks of Kazan. Your strength and natural charisma soon brought you a crowd of followers who you led to victory against the caravans of fat and greedy merchants. One of your followers, the mysterious Saul, rose quickly to your attention, but you were never particularly fond of him. A natural fighter, who threw himself into combat with the ferocity of a wild animal, you realized his potential and made him your lieutenant. You and he grew bolder in your raids and soon you had a sizeable army of followers. You had your army camped outside the village of Fenmarge on the southern edge of Scorpion Swamp; a place so foul that only the most foolhardy dare tread. It was there that Saul made his move. Pretending that there were some potential new recruits waiting, he and his co-conspirators led you to this place at the edge of the swamp. Before you knew what was happening they were upon you, desperately trying to fix you to the cross that they had left there in preparation.

You raise your head, your lungs straining in the effort to breathe. The moon casts its pale light on your face and with a growl you yell a promise: you will free yourself somehow and will not rest until Saul has died by your hand! Once you have made this terrible vow, you turn your gaze downward and are startled to find you are no longer alone. Standing at the foot of the cross is a powerful looking man with a thick brown beard and dressed in furs. A silver medallion hangs from his neck. He looks up at you, but says not a word.

‘Well, have you come to aid me or to see the mighty barbarian fallen into deepest shame?’ you ask impatiently. ‘I can promise you that I will not beg for your help so expect no satisfaction on that score!’ The man continues to say nothing, but moves a finger in three quick motions. Suddenly the nails supporting your body vanish and you fall to the rough ground on your knees.

Read on...

Turn to **1**

1

You pull yourself to your feet, rubbing the wounds in your wrists (until these wounds are healed you must subtract 2 points from your Skill score).

‘My thanks,’ you mutter to the bearded man as you pull your boots back over your sore feet. ‘And who might you be, my friend?’

The man looks at you silently for a second before replying. ‘I am known as the Master of Wolves, a sorcerer of some note,’ he replies in a deep voice.

‘I have never trusted wizards, but I will make an exception in your case,’ you say with a faint smile.

You scan the area for your sword and find it lying a few feet away from the cross. You walk over on your still tender feet and pick it up.

‘You will follow me,’ speaks the wizard in his slow voice, beckoning you.

All this is very odd. If you want to follow the Master of Wolves, turn to **70**. If you would rather walk away from him, turn to **212**.

2

You prepare to charge them when you hear a snarl as two large wolves come bounding across the heath and leap on the goblins. They throw away their crossbows and try to draw their swords, but they are too slow and the wolves brutally tear them to shreds. The wolves then begin to stare at you, bark loudly and then head back across the heath northwards. Somewhat bewildered by this turn of events, you inspect the two goblin corpses. Their crossbows are too small for you to use effectively, but you can take one of their swords if you require one. Turn to **129**.

3

In the confusion you knock over a flaming torch. The fire spreads over the cloth and hay that litters the hut and soon is raging out of control. You use the distraction to flee from the large hut and race across the mire back to the clearing you were captured in. You take the western trail before the orcs can organize a pursuit. Turn to **16**.

4

The Master snaps his fingers and the tree's arm disintegrates - leaving you to fall painfully to the ground on your head (deduct 2 Stamina points). You leap to your feet, full of rage at your treatment, but the Master of Wolves stops your onslaught with a wagging finger.

‘Enough of that my barbaric friend,’ he says. ‘You gave me your word to aid me and I know enough about your people to know you must keep your word once given.’ You lower your weapon, the wizard's logic quelling your anger. ‘Now follow me’, he says.

With that, he leads you south through the swamp. He says not one word during the journey.

Eventually you reach a wide stream and you prepare yourself for a swim, but the Master simply clicks his fingers and a bridge of ice appears across the stream. Following the Master's lead, you cross this unorthodox bridge and continue to follow the overgrown trail south. You soon emerge into a clearing where a small wooden hut stands at the northern edge.

'My home,' says the Master of Wolves with a smile as he leads you in the front door. Turn to **399**.

5

You give an almighty howl and lead the pack into the clearing. The Master seems surprised, but is quick to react. He rises from his chair and grabs his wand, sending his horde of spiders against you. You leap over the enclosing circle of spiders and leave your pack to battle them while you take on the Master. His wand allows him to do an extra point of damage to you if he wins the attack round.

MASTER OF SPIDERS Skill:9 Stamina:6

If you reduce him to 2 Stamina points or less, turn to **29**.

6

The sergeant-at-arms looks at the scroll you produce critically. He then frowns, furls it up and hands it back to you.

'I guess you had best be brought before the council then,' he grumbles. 'But we're impounding your horse for use by the Ximoran cavalry in the forthcoming battle. Once the emergency is over, it shall be returned to you, providing you both survive of course.'

You have little say in the matter. The sergeant picks two soldiers who lead you to the great palace of the Council of Seven. After waiting an interminably long time, you are escorted into the council chamber. Turn to **308**.

7

You rain your arrows down upon the orcs. There are just about enough of you left to see them off and a couple of archers use flaming arrows to destroy the battering ram. Turn to **208**.

8

'Hail, my followers!' you call, allowing your horse to saunter up to them. You are met by

the wild eyed stares of the soldiers. A few of the more cowardly ones turn tail and flee, screaming that you have returned from the grave for revenge.

One of the men, a man with long fair hair and an eye patch, looks pleased and says ‘I knew the general could not be killed so easily.’

A few nod in agreement, but one rather short soldier who you do not recognize draws his sword and cries, 'We serve only one general: Saul! He will reward us greatly for returning this barbarian dog to the lands of the dead.’

Several soldiers cheer, but another group, led by the man with the eye patch, murmur their disapproval. Swords are drawn and angry words exchanged and soon the soldiers are battling over what to do with you. You seize the opportunity to make an escape. Urging your horse forward, you try to break through the battling throng to safety. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **245**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **253**.

9

You manage to grab his foot and use all your reserves of strength to push him back and topple him hard to the ground. He takes 2 Stamina points of damage. Both of you scramble to your feet and begin circling each other. Will you:

Try a punch in the face?

Turn to **202**.

Try shoulder charging him?

Turn to **97**.

Risk attempting to throw him?

Turn to **168**.

10

Perhaps Poomchukker will provide you with a horse? After all, you did risk life and limb to fight for his entertainment.

You make your way to his home and the goblin serving girl ushers you in without asking for your sword. Poomchukker is once again in his library and he is in the middle of a conversation with a man in a white robe with oily, slicked back hair. On seeing you enter, Poomchukker turns to you and smiles.

‘My friend, what can I do for you?’ he asks.

You say that you desperately need a swift horse, but you lack sufficient funds to purchase one. Poomchukker strokes his chin thoughtfully and then smiles to himself.

‘I’ll gladly buy you a horse if you do me a favour. This man,’ he says, indicating the man in the white robe, ‘is Doctor Flaude; an employee of mine. He has come up with a method of implanting a substance into the human body to make it more capable in battle. This would be of great use to me as it would make the many caravan guards in my

employment a more formidable force. The only problem is we haven't tested it yet and that is where you fit in. Let Doctor Flaude put the strength implants into your body and I'll buy you a horse.'

'Before you decide,' warns Doctor Flaude uncomfortably. 'Be aware that this surgery has never been performed before. It could backfire and make you weaker.'

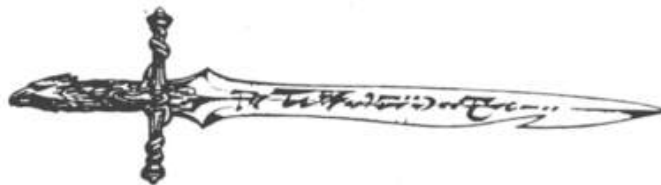
Poomchukker glares at the doctor for a second, but then his smile returns as he turns to you once more. 'What do you say, my friend?' he asks. 'The choice is yours.'

If you agree to let Doctor Flaude experiment on you, turn to **322**. If you decide it might be better trying to get a horse by other means, you excuse yourself and return to the market square. Turn to **30**.

11

'Listen here,' sneers the captain. 'I don't take kindly to demands. And anyway, the Council of Seven has no time to spare with such as you.'

If you wish to tell the captain you *must* see them, turn to **112**. If you wish to say you have some important information for them, turn to **219**. If you want to give up on the thought of meeting the council and instead volunteer to aid in the defence of the city, turn to **125**.



12

There is nothing else of interest in the clearing so you decide to leave via the southern trail as the route north will simply take you back to the Foulbrood River. Turn to **45**.

13

The ranger lies dead at your feet. You are growing hungry and for a second you consider feeding on him. If you have the codeword 'mind' recorded on your adventure sheet, turn to **58**. Otherwise, if you would like to feed on him, turn to **267**. If not, turn to **12**.

14

'Well, you fulfilled your promise perfectly,' he says.

The hairs on your back bristle. What is he talking about?

‘Saul wasn't always as you knew him, you know,’ he continues conversationally. ‘Once he was as you are now - a wolf. The strongest of my wolves in fact. Until one day I turned him into a human for the purposes of some ruse or another. I planned to turn him back, but he decided he'd rather stay human and tried to kill me before escaping from the swamp. I sensed when he had returned to the area and observing him leaving you on the cross, I knew how to achieve vengeance. You would kill him, but I placed a curse on you so that when you did, you would become a wolf - and I would have a replacement even stronger than Saul! And it all went perfectly: I took you from the battlefield and brought you back to my home in Scorpion Swamp. And now you shall be my slave.’

So saying, he raises an amulet with a picture of a wolf on it. You cannot help but look at it and from that moment on, you are a slave to the Master of Wolves. Turn to **216**.

15

The swamp orcs armed with bows let fly with their arrows as you attempt to dash past them. Roll one die and deduct the result from your Stamina. If you are still alive, you race down the westward trail, your powerful legs soon putting the swamp orcs behind you. Turn to **16**.

16

You hear fearful howls coming from in front of you and race forward into a grassy clearing. A wolf is tangled in masses of long grass. Crab-like pincers at the end of the stalks of grass nip repeatedly at him. The wolf will not last long trapped in this crab grass. If you have the word 'mind' recorded on your adventure sheet, turn to **121**. If not, you rush forward to attack the crab grass and save your fellow wolf. Turn to **133**.

17

The birdmen were clearly not expecting so many archers to be waiting for them and their losses are great as they fly towards you. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your current Skill score, turn to **139**. Otherwise, turn to **276**.

18

You growl warily at the eagle, but your animal instincts tell you that it is not a threat. In fact you think it is trying to tell you something. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **240**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **82**.

19

Trails lead to the north, east and south from this clearing. The northern trail leads back

towards the Foulbrood River, so you make for the southern one. The ranger watches you warily, but makes no move to stop you. You follow the trail southward. Turn to **45**.

20

Caius lowers his knife, amazed at how quickly you dispatched his lackeys. The barmaid seizes the opportunity to elbow him in the stomach, wounding him severely. The third man turns round to aid Caius, but as he does so, you swing your sword in a wide arc and cleave his head from his shoulders. As Caius struggles to get his breath back, the barmaid, now broken free, reaches for a pint glass and brings it down on his head, knocking him out cold.

The townspeople flock into the tavern to congratulate you both. It turns out that the barmaid is the Mayor of Fenmarge's niece and you are given a meal fit for a king for saving her life (restore up to 5 Stamina points). The mayor also gives you his prize mare as a thank you. You would love to stop and relax at the town, but you must reach Saul quickly. Turn to **326**.

21

You take the blue cloth and tie it round your arm and put on his cloak, pulling the cowl over your head to disguise your face. You may also take his sword if you need one.

You walk into the camp and nod to the sentries who take no interest in you. All around you, soldiers are milling to and fro, some you recognize, some you do not. In the centre of the camp is a large red tent - no doubt this is Saul's tent. You see there are two guards outside the entrance. You could try to sneak around the back of the tent and eavesdrop on what is being said inside (turn to **115**). If you think that it would be too risky, there is little else to do here and the longer you stay, the greater risk there is of being discovered. You take your leave of the camp and remount your horse. Turn to **199**.

22

You reach the far end of the stream with no further mishap and continue to follow the trail southwards. This part of the swamp is more heavily forested than those you have been in earlier and the ground is a little firmer too. Soon you emerge into a clearing. A hut made of logs stands at the northern end. You are just contemplating whether to explore the hut when you hear barking coming from inside it. Rather than tangle with any attack dogs that may be inside, you decide to follow a trail that leads east out of the clearing. Turn to **332**.

23

There is nothing else of interest in this clearing and you are eager to be off before more of the helmeted men arrive. Three trails lead away from this clearing. The northern one will lead you further away from the Master of Wolves' home so you ignore it. You may take

the trail east, providing you did not come from that direction (turn to **16**) or you may turn west instead (turn to **367**).

24

You stamp at the scorpions and swipe many with your sword, but there are just too many of them. You have been stung several times in the feet and you can barely move as the paralyzing venom takes effect. You topple to the ground and try desperately to swat at the scorpions as they crawl all over you, attacking you with their pincers and stings. Soon you will die - a victim of the scorpions of Scorpion Swamp!

25

You bound towards the bush, but the great bird blocks your way and begins buffeting you with its wings while emitting harsh cries. Eager to escape this bird, you race southwards down the trail, knowing the other wolves will follow you when they can. Turn to **217**.

26

The boulders and flaming pitch continue to whistle past your head, but luckily none land near you. If you have the codeword 'arrow' recorded on your adventure sheet, turn to **7**. Otherwise, turn to **235**.

27

The little fellow mumbles an apology and hurriedly walks off. It is only then that you realize he must have picked your pocket. If you have no gold, you smirk to yourself knowing that the thief's risk did him no good. You head on to Poomchukker's house. Turn to **116**. If you had any gold, it has all been stolen. With a yell of rage you race towards the rapidly escaping pick-pocket. Turn to **266**.

28

'I'm the Master of Gardens by the way,' he says, stroking his chin.

You growl at this, your hairs standing on end - the Master of Gardens is no friend of your master.

'There's no need for that,' he continues, raising his hand. 'Your master and I may not be on the closest of terms, but I have nothing against his followers. In fact, I feel sorry for them. He uses you as slaves. If you wanted, you could come and live with me. I could do with a companion other than my flowers. Or you could continue following the dryad - I doubt she has a more sinister use for you than your current master. It's up to you of course.'

Will you:

Signify that you want to live with the Master of Gardens?
Indicate that you want to return to your current master?
Leave the Master and follow the dryad?

Turn to **159**.
Turn to **81**.
Turn to **197**.

29

Just as you prepare to make the killing blow, the Master of Spiders disappears into thin air! Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill, turn to **69**. If the total is greater than or equal to your Skill, turn to **363**.

30

You are just contemplating what to do next when you hear a woman's scream. The market crowd turn and stare as a middle-aged woman comes running into the square.

‘Please,’ she gasps, obviously out of breath, ‘a giant is attacking the town. Selator is trying to stop him, but he's not having much luck.’

Several townspeople flee into their homes at this news, but a few reach for their weapons and set off in the direction the woman came from. Intrigued, you decide to follow them and soon you set eyes upon the giant. He is large even for one of his species and is raising his spiked club above his head in an effort to squash two men desperately trying to get out of the way. Strangely, both men are identical: from their curly hair and wispy beards, right down to their clothing. Even their movements are identical. The giant's club comes down on one of them, but instead of the sickening crunch you expected, his target simply pops out of existence.

‘Damn you, wizard!’ roars the giant at the remaining man. ‘But you've run out of tricks now. This time I squish you!’ he says, raising his club once more.

The townspeople fidget with their weapons nervously, but make no move to help the wizard.

‘Cowards!’ you cry. ‘A barbarian would not let a man be killed in cold blood.’

With that, you draw your sword and charge towards the giant before he can finish off the wizard. The giant diverts his attention to you and raises his club. This will be a desperate battle.

GIANT Skill:11 Stamina:12

If the giant reduces your Stamina to 2 points or less, Selator will cast a healing spell on you which will restore 5 Stamina points. He can only do this once however. If you defeat the fearsome giant, turn to **177**.

31

He brings his knee hard into your stomach. Deduct 2 Stamina points. You shove him away and you begin circling him, your gaze and his locked on one another. Will you:

Try a punch in the face?

Turn to **202**.

Try shoulder charging him?

Turn to **97**.

Risk attempting to throw him?

Turn to **168**.

32

You knock on the door of the hypnotist's dressing room. The door is answered by the large troll who admitted you into the building.

‘Wot do yoo want, yooman?’ he rumbles.

You reply that you want to talk to the hypnotist about his performance.

The troll is about to tell you where to go, when the hypnotist's voice rings out telling him to let you enter. The dressing room is plainly furnished. The hypnotist walks up to you to shake your hand.

‘Always glad to meet a fan,’ he says. ‘I trust you enjoyed the show?’

‘Indeed I did,’ you reply. ‘But were those people really hypnotised or simply stooges?’

Far from being insulted, the hypnotist seems pleased you asked. ‘Oh, it's all authentic, my friend,’ he says. ‘It is not hard to get those with weak wills to do what they wouldn't normally. There are ways of resisting it however.’

With that, the hypnotist teaches you a technique to strengthen your willpower - focusing on certain things and ignoring others. You think you have got the hang of it. Record the codeword 'will' on your adventure sheet.

‘Now if you'll excuse us,’ continues the hypnotist. ‘My bodyguard and I need to find a hiding place before this accursed battle happens. Whoever wins, it should be easy enough to escape the city with my gifts.’

Somewhat disgusted by the hypnotist's cowardice, you return to the city centre. Turn to **192**, but you may not go to see the hypnotist's show again.

33

All around you is carnage. To your left, a small group of horsemen have been surrounded

by spearmen and, although they are putting up a valiant effort, they are outnumbered and are fighting a losing battle. A group of orcs and men is fighting a desperate battle with some Ximoran knights to your right. All around is the crunch of steel on steel and the cries of the wounded.

But it is the sight ahead of you that takes up all your attention: Saul and Askalo Belgar stand locked in mortal combat. Askalo swings his sword with strength and precision, but he is outclassed by his opponent. Saul parries every one of Askalo's blows with his double-headed battle-axe. He then gives an almighty swing and shatters Askalo's sword and sends the poor general off his feet and onto his back. Saul raises his axe high above his head, intent on finishing off his foe. His long grey hair is flying madly in the breeze and there is a look of feral delight in his slanted yellow eyes. You charge towards them, but before you can get near, an arrow slams into your horse's neck and it topples backwards just as Saul's axe comes down with a sickening crunch. You push your horse's corpse off you and stride towards Saul, your sword naked and ready to feast on the betrayer's blood.

On seeing you, he starts to laugh. 'So the general has returned from the dead,' he mocks.

'Saul!' you bark, 'I will have your head for your treachery and I shall take my army back!'

You charge towards him and he raises his axe, a look of sheer malevolence in his eyes.

SAUL Skill:10 Stamina:14

If you win, turn to **60**.

34

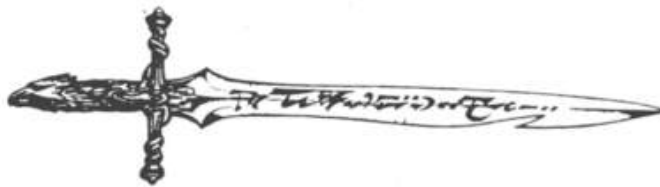
You wait until the time the serving girl had arranged to meet Caius and set off through the now darkened streets of Fenmarge. Several eyes stare at you from the gloom, but none of their nefarious owners try anything. They know better than to mess with someone of your obvious prowess. Finally you reach a sleepy little house at the outskirts of town - Caius' house. You could boldly knock on the front door (turn to **359**) or you could try to sneak in through an open window at the back of the house (turn to **378**).

35

The wizard gives a girlish scream and then disappears into thin air. Confident that he is too wary of your prowess to take you on again, you race up to the pedestal to seize the orb in your teeth before heading back to the southern end of the clearing to join the other wolves. Turn to **128**.

36

Although he is supposed to be your master's ally, the Master of Frogs likes nothing better than to play pranks on him and the other masters of the swamp. You know your master would gladly reward you if you taught the Master of Frogs a lesson. You rush towards him with a snarl, but before you can reach him, he leaps over the railing and into the river with an almighty bound. The alligators rush towards him, but he outdistances them easily as he uses his long limbs to swim eastwards along the river at an alarming rate. You decide to forget about him and cross the bridge to follow the muddy trail south. Turn to **316**.



37

The sky grows darker and the moon is covered by clouds and can shed little light. Realizing it is too dangerous to travel an unknown road in pitch darkness, you decide to make camp. You dismount and tether your horse to a nearby tree stump before lighting a fire. You then settle down into a deep sleep . . .

. . . You see a cross on a hill. A man is pinned to it and is looking down at you pleadingly. You rush forward to help, but find your way barred by a monstrous wolf. You tussle with the beast and eventually throw it to one side and make your way closer to the cross. You are just about to cut the cross down with your sword when you look up at the face gazing down at you and realize it is Saul's. You re-sheathe your sword and make your way back to the wolf and rub his nose. He licks your hand happily and then you both walk away towards a swamp, leaving Saul to his fate . . .

. . . You awaken confused by your dream. Perhaps a civilized person would make more of it, but you shrug it off and focus on the task at hand. The sun has risen and you rise to your feet. You may restore up to 2 lost Stamina points for your rest. You then untie your horse and mount it again, eager to be on the road once more. Turn to **317**.

38

Your squadron is unprepared for an attack such as this and you are hard pressed to fight off the avian attackers who kill many with their cruel arrows and drop their bags of exploding powder on the defenceless infantry below. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your current Skill score, turn to **92**. Otherwise, turn to **329**.

39

You bring your forehead smashing into his skull, but it seems to do you as much harm as good. Both of you take 2 Stamina points of damage. Clutching your heads in agony, you back away from one another and begin to circle each other once more. Will you:

Try a punch in the face?

Turn to **202**.

Try shoulder charging him?

Turn to **97**.

Risk attempting to throw him?

Turn to **168**.

40

You say you have come to aid them in the forthcoming battle.

‘Indeed,’ remarks the sergeant. He motions with his fingers and two burly soldiers grab you by each arm . ‘Escort this person to the city jail. When the captain wishes to talk to you, we will fetch you,’ he continues, turning to you.

You are led to a large stone building nearby. Your weapon, gold and possessions are taken from you (do not cross them off your adventure sheet, but note that you cannot use them again until they are restored to you). You are then marched towards a cell where a man with a great bushy beard languishes. The door is flung open and you are shoved into the dank cell, the door slamming shut behind you. Your new cellmate bursts into laughter and you glare at him.

‘What's so funny, old man?’ you growl.

‘You are,’ he guffaws, ‘a mighty barbarian trapped in this tiny room.’

You fail to see the funny side.

‘Don't worry,’ continues the old man. ‘The captain will release you once he's established you're no threat to the city. Don't expect to be fed though. Emergency rationing has been enforced due to the siege. We mere prisoners don't qualify for food. The name's Ahab by the way: leviathan hunter extraordinaire! I take it you've heard of me?’

You can't say you have. You ask him why a leviathan hunter is doing so far inland.

‘Well,’ he says, ‘I was recruiting a new crew, the old one having died of leviathan-related causes. I tried along the coast, but no-one was interested. So I headed further east into this city only to be clapped in irons for trying to lure capable men and women away in a state of emergency! Say, I don't suppose you want to join my crew? There's great perks.’

You doubt ending your days in the belly of a leviathan counts as a great perk and you refuse.

You sit quietly for a while, wondering when the captain will ask to see you. The old man was right about one thing: they do not feed you. Your stomach aches with hunger (deduct 2 Stamina points). Finally, the door is opened and two soldiers escort you to the captain's office. Turn to **254**.

41

Your willpower is strong and you resist the urge to approach this strange woman. You dash down the southern trail, eager to be away before your willpower breaks down. Turn to **149**.

42

Your common sense is screaming at you that you are being put under some kind of enchantment, but it is muffled by all your other senses, which urge you to approach this strange woman. Turn to **156**.

43

Although you succeed in shooting down several, a couple of soldiers manage to pull themselves over the parapet. You discard your bow and draw your sword, eager for the feel of physical combat once more.

FIRST SOLDIER Skill:8 Stamina:8

SECOND SOLDIER Skill:9 Stamina:5

On these narrow battlements you may fight the soldiers one at a time. If you win, turn to **312** if you have the codeword 'safe' or turn to **85** if you don't.

44

'Remember me?!' you shout at the top of your lungs.

Caius leaps out of his chair and stares at you wide-eyed. Then, before you have a chance to say anything more, he flings open the front door and dashes out into the moonlit street. Roll two dice for Caius and two dice for yourself. If you roll greater than Caius' score, turn to **270**. If you roll equal to it or less, turn to **234**.

45

The grass begins to get thinner and damper again as you follow the trail and the insects return to annoy you. Soon however, their drone is drowned out by the clash of steel on

steel ahead of you. You advance cautiously as the trail widens into a grassy clearing. Two men with long moustaches and winged helmets are engaged in a swordfight, but you can see that they are clearly avoiding hitting each other - they are practising rather than having a serious fight. You decide to try and sneak past without bothering them. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **227**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **327**.

46

Seeing you have no intention of surrendering your sword, the goblin girl screams for the guards. A door is thrown open and six heavily armoured doragors dash in with halberds at the ready. Just one of these half breeds between orcs and trolls is dangerous - taking on six would be suicide. If you wish to flee from them back into the crowded marketplace, turn to **356**. If you wish to surrender, turn to **269**.

47

You have barely recovered from your fight with the leopard before Poomchukker claps his hands again and another section of the wall slides open to release a large, snarling rhinoceros! Steam comes from its nostrils as it lowers its horn and charges at you.

RHINOCEROS Skill:10 Stamina:11

If you win, turn to **186**.

48

As you are inspecting your new steed, a hand taps you lightly on the shoulder. You turn round to face the red-haired barmaid who is grinning at you playfully.

'I know something you want to know,' she teases.

'Tell me!' you demand gruffly.

'Not so fast, barbarian. I want a memento of the hero who saved our town from the giant. Give me your sword and I'll tell you where the army that was camped nearby has headed.'

Reluctantly you pass her your sword. She giggles and then tells you that the army is headed for Ximoran and plans to take the city.

'I was told not to tell you,' she adds. 'But since when have I done what I'm told?'

'I wonder,' you retort. At any rate, you know where Saul is headed, even if it has cost you your sword (reduce your Attack Strength by 2 points until you find another). Turn to **326**.

49

You chop as hard as you can on his neck, but it is tough and sinewy and you succeed in doing only 1 Stamina point of damage to him. What's more, the man-orc brings his fist down on your nose as you do so. Deduct 2 Stamina points. Finally you push him off and he staggers up. As you rise, will you:

Try to uppercut him in the face?

Turn to **73**.

Headbutt him?

Turn to **39**.

50

The wolf you send leaps into the centre of the clearing and the eyes of the Master and his spiders are all upon him. They converge on the unfortunate wolf. You race towards the pedestal and are just about to pluck the orb from it when a gigantic spider drops to the clearing floor in front of you. It widens its pincers and rushes towards you, its multiple eyes fixed upon you.

GIANT SPIDER Skill:7 Stamina:6

If you defeat the spider in three attack rounds or less, turn to **142**. Otherwise, finish the fight and then turn to **300**.

51

You reply that you know the leader's name is Saul and the army are a group of opportunity seekers, whose mutual love of plunder is their only thing in common.

Askalo stands to his feet, clearly angered. 'You waste our time with trivial matters such as this?' he roars.

If you have the codeword 'inform', turn immediately to **198**. If not, read on.

Jalia Nillaire puts a restraining hand on Askalo's shoulder and turns to you.

'I think you had best leave, barbarian,' she says in a calm voice. 'But you look a capable warrior. You shall fight with the infantry tomorrow - Unicorn Squadron. Report to them tomorrow morning.'

You are ushered out by two soldiers before you can say anything more. Record the codeword 'sword' on your adventure sheet before turning to **192**.

52

Fast as lighting, you extend two fingers and jab him in the eyes. He releases his grip on

your throat and clutches his eyes in pain. Will you:
Try to uppercut him in the face?
Try to get him in a headlock?

Turn to **73**.
Turn to **397**.

53

An orc riding on the back of a monstrous wolf strides across the already bloody battlefield towards you. He swings a mighty battle-axe through the air as he closes on you to do battle.

ORC Skill:9 Stamina:6

If you win, turn to **306**.

54

With the proud war cry of your homelands, you draw your sword and charge towards the beast. As you near it, it lets fly a series of barbs from its tail straight at you. Roll one die and deduct the result from your Stamina score. Then, with an almighty roar, the manticore descends to do battle.

MANTICORE Skill:10 Stamina:14

Each time the manticore hits you, roll one die. If you throw a 5 or a 6, he has struck you with his scorpion tail, doing 6 points of damage to your Stamina. If you somehow prevail against this beast, turn to **286**.

55

The trail here is heavily overgrown, but you find you can make your way along it without too much difficulty. The path widens and soon develops into a clearing dotted with several pink flowers. The path bends to the east here, but as you move to press on, you see a sudden vision of yourself being decapitated by Saul's axe. You shake your head and take another step forward, but another vision assaults you. You see yourself being devoured by enormous serpents like the one you fought earlier. Their beady eyes stare up at you as they consume your legs. The vision then disappears as suddenly as it started. Clearly there is sorcery at work here. The seemingly innocent pink flowers that dot this clearing are actually fear flowers that produce feelings of terror in passers-by, which cause the victims to collapse in fright so that the carnivorous flowers can feed off their flesh. But they have never used their magic against a barbarian before! Fear is something your people discard with childhood and you laugh as the flowers send one image after another against you in vain. Confidently, you stride out of the clearing and head east. Turn to **342**.

56

You reply you have no further information for them.

Jalia Nillaire flicks back her long blonde hair away from her green eyes and smiles at you. 'Your advice may turn the tide of this battle,' she says.

'Indeed,' agrees Askalo enthusiastically. 'What position are you best suited to?'

If you have a longbow, Askalo suggests that you fight amongst the archers on the battlements. If you wish to fight as an archer, Askalo tells you to report to the Lion Squadron tomorrow morning (record the codeword 'shoot'). If you do not have a bow or do not wish to fight as an archer, the alternative is to fight in the infantry: Askalo tells you to report to the Unicorn Squadron tomorrow (record the codeword 'sword'). Once you have decided, you are dismissed from the council chamber. Turn to **192**.

57

You hit the ground with a thud and a great deal of pain to your arm and back. Deduct 1 Skill point and 5 Stamina points. If you are still alive, you manage to struggle to your feet to find the manticore has lost all interest in you. Your poor horse failed to make its escape and has been slain by the monster that is now busily devouring it. Before it finishes its meal, you decide to make yourself scarce. Still in a great deal of pain, you sprint off to the south. Turn to **67**.

58

The very thought of eating a fellow human-being, even when you are in this form, disgusts you. You ignore the northern trail as it will take you back to the Foulbrood River and you head south instead. Turn to **45**.

59

You try to break through the confused rabble of orcs. Most flee in terror, but some reach for swords and bows and try to block your escape from the hut. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **3**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **175**.

60

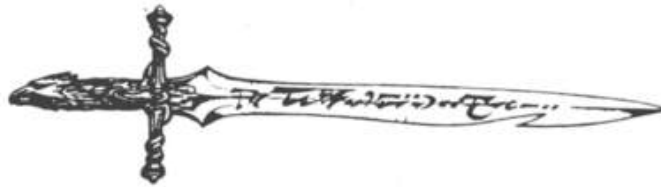
Your last blow knocks the traitor's head from his shoulders. You step back and gaze at his corpse, the taste of revenge sweet indeed. But what is this? The body begins to jerk violently, its armour falling away. The body twists and turns and sprouts grey hair everywhere. The arms turn to short lean legs and a tail springs out of the backside. Before you is the headless body of a wolf. Turning to look at Saul's head, you see that of a wolf, its yellow eyes staring wildly at nothing.

'What sorcery is this?!' you cry, but before you can say any more, you clutch desperately

at your throat as it wells up with pain. You drop to your knees, choking in agony, your coughs and splutters getting louder and hoarser until they sound more like barks. Your whole body tingles and you gaze in horror as grey hairs sprout all over your body. Your skull aches as portions of it expand while others contract. You howl in mind melting pain as your chest closes inwards and your arms and legs crack into a new shape, your elbows and knees inverting with a wrenching of bone. You crawl out of your torn clothing and collapse on your side, panting heavily. Stunned faces of nearby soldiers stare in amazement at you: for once where there stood a human being, there is now the body of a wolf! You black out . . . turn to **108**.

61

The orcs bring forth a great battering ram and send it smashing into the gates repeatedly. The archers on the battlements rain down arrows upon the orcs manning the ram, but the orcs are keeping them distracted by letting loose with boulders and flaming pitch fired from siege catapults. If you have the codeword 'arrow' recorded and do *not* have the codeword 'strong', turn to **126**. If you do not have the codeword 'arrow' or you do have the codeword 'strong' recorded, turn to **189**.



62

The man pockets the coins and then leads you to his horses. He selects his most mangy beast and hands its reins to you. Then, without a word, he walks back into his cabin, slamming the door behind him. You mount your new horse and ride southwards, cursing the mantichore who robbed you of the fine mare you had beforehand. Turn to **143**.

63

You are just managing to fight the infantry off when you see a sight that chills your blood. A brigade of armoured knights armed with lances is charging through the gateway into the city . . . and you are right in their path! If you steel yourself and face them, turn to **334**. If you would rather duck down a nearby alleyway, turn to **200**.

64

The devilish trees have been hacked to pieces. You stand panting at the difficulty of the fight. But are your sweat drenched eyes deceiving you or did one of them twitch? The slash you gave another one across its bark is healing right before your eyes! The trees are

recuperating at an incredible rate. You must leave this clearing quickly. Apart from the trail you entered by, there are two exits from this accursed clearing: a trail to the west and another to the south. To go west, turn to **180**. To go south, turn to **328**.

65

The hornets' crushed little bodies lie scattered in front of you. If you want to try eating them, turn to **383**. If not, you decide to leave this clearing by following the southern route. Turn to **343**.

66

The archers rain their arrows down upon the attackers and any who do manage to climb onto the battlements are soon hacked to pieces. The assaulting force backs away from the walls. Your commanding officer gives the signal for the gates to be opened so you can charge into the attackers. You steel yourselves as the heavy wooden gates swing open. If you have the codeword 'thrust' recorded on your adventure sheet, turn to **381**. If not, turn to **296**.

67

You run across the scrubland for as long as you can endure. Finally, you surmise that you are probably a safe distance from the manticore now and you collapse into an exhausted heap (deduct 1 Stamina point). Once you have recovered, you rise to your feet and begin to trek southwards.

About an hour later, you see something that perks up your spirits. Ahead of you is a log cabin and outside the cabin, three horses are tethered. You desperately need a horse if you are to make it to Ximoran in good time. If you wish to knock on the door of the log cabin and ask the owner if you can have use of one of his horses, turn to **364**. If you want to try and steal one, turn to **158**.

68

The trees have been defeated again. Now well aware of their amazing restorative powers, you take the trail south as quickly as possible. Turn to **328**.

69

Without wasting a second, you bound across the clearing and seize the orb in your teeth. You then race back to the southern end of the clearing to rejoin the rest of the wolves. Turn to **128**.

70

Your mysterious guide leads you silently through the countryside as the sun begins to rise

over the horizon, filling the sky with a dull red glow. The ground gets boggy and it is clear he is leading you into Scorpion Swamp. You are just contemplating whether this is such a good idea when a wolf comes bounding out of the sickly trees towards you. It stops by the wizard, wagging its tail obediently. The master of Wolves bends down and strokes the back of the beast's head while whispering something in its ear. The wolf scampers away and the Master motions for you to follow it. The two of you pursue it into the swamp proper. It is a mire of sinking ground, dying vegetation and noxious vapours. The trees are so thick above you that you can barely see the daylight above. The wolf patiently leads you through this foul place until finally you emerge in a clearing. A solitary wooden hut stands at the far end of the clearing. Several wolves pace around its perimeter.

'My home,' says the Master of Wolves with a smile. He then leads you into the hut by the door. Turn to **399**.

71

The serving girl gives you a critical eye as you saunter up to the bar. You ask her if she knows where the army camped nearby has gone and she replies with a canny smile.

'I might not know,' she says flicking her long red hair back from her face, 'but I know someone who does.' You press her for further on the subject but she remains tight lipped.

'Two gold pieces might convince me to help you,' she says, a twinkle in her mischievous brown eyes.

If you want to offer the wench two gold pieces, turn to **150**. If not, you can buy a drink here for one gold piece and this will restore one lost Stamina point. Now, if you want to talk to the soldier, turn to **83**. To talk to the bearded man, turn to **215**. Alternatively, if you have somewhere else to go, turn to the appropriate section.

72

Three swamp orcs discard their bows and draw short swords. You must fight all three at the same time.

First SWAMP ORC Skill:6 Stamina:5
Second SWAMP ORC Skill:6 Stamina:4
Third SWAMP ORC Skill:6 Stamina:6

If you win, turn to **164**.

73

Your fist crashes into his jaw and he staggers backwards. You have done 2 points of damage to his Stamina. He gives a snarl and charges into you, sending you crashing

against one of the wooden crates that form the wall of the makeshift arena. Deduct 2 Stamina points. You struggle to get the man-orc off you. Will you:

Try chopping his neck?

Turn to **49**.

Try kneeling him in the groin?

Turn to **389**.

74

You manage to pull your way out of the net just as the swamp orcs toss in the creature that you are to fight for their entertainment. The brute clambers to its feet and turns to face you with a snarl. It is a monstrously large wild boar and it thunders towards you, its tusks lowered.

WILD BOAR Skill:8 Stamina:10

If you win, turn to **229**.

75

You join up with the rest of Unicorn Squadron by the city gates. The overweight commanding officer does a quick roll call to see everyone is here.

‘Right,’ he says afterwards. ‘Unicorn Squadron is the principal infantry group. If the enemy manages to get into the city, it is us they're going to come against first. We also may advance out into the field if the battle is going well.’

You all ready your weapons in anticipation. You can hear the movement of large groups outside the gates and your body tingles knowing that the enemy is so near.

Suddenly you hear several angry squawks above you. If you have the codeword 'arrow', turn to **178**. Otherwise, turn to **265**.

76

No further bears rush out of the trees so you decide it is now safe enough to explore the clearing. Looking inside the hole in the hollow tree, you find a large amount of honeycomb there. Obviously this was the bears' den. You take a handful of the honeycomb and devour it greedily (restore up to 399 lost Stamina points). You decide it is now time to press on. The way north is covered with spider webs, some of them worryingly large, so you decide not to take that route. The way east looks very boggy indeed and you very much doubt that it will lead out of the swamp. You decide that your best bet is to head back west and take the southern trail from the clearing where you fought the swamp orcs. Turn to **211**.

77

You leave the tavern and make your way through the dusty streets to the far side of town where Poomchukker's house is located. All about the town people are setting up stalls. As

you gaze longingly at a particularly fine sword, a rather short individual, wrapped from head to toe in a green cloak, bumps into you. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **96**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **27**.

78

A particularly small spider notices you and lets out a sharp whine. Suddenly all eyes are upon you. The spiders rush at you at their master's bidding. Fight them all as one enemy.

SPIDERS Skill:7 Stamina:12

If you win, the Master of Spiders rises from his throne and advances on you with his wand. The wand allows him to do an extra point of damage to you if he wins the attack round.

MASTER OF SPIDERS Skill:9 Stamina:6

If you reduce him to 2 Stamina points or less, turn to **35**.

79

The apples taste as delicious as they look and you devour them greedily. Regain up to 3 lost Stamina points. Once you have had your fill, you wipe your mouth with the back of your hand, remount and continue south. Turn to **143**.

80

A quick search through the hobbit's belongings reveals your stolen gold plus an extra six gold pieces. You pocket them hurriedly and leave before the town militia arrive and start asking questions. Turn to **116**.

81

‘As you wish,’ he says. ‘I suppose you cannot help that your loyalties still lie with him.’

He leads you out of the trees and back to the crossroads. You take the southern trail, eager to return to your master. Turn to **149**.

82

You cannot understand the eagle. Its squawks and screeches begin to get on your nerves and you start barking loudly at it. It gives one last squawk and then soars into the air and grasps you in its talons. It sets you on the ground by the great tree before returning to its nest. You bark angrily at it, annoyed to be treated in such a manner, but relieved to have your paws back on firm ground. Turn to **134**.

83

You take a seat opposite the soldier. He raises his head slowly - he is obviously the worse for drink. But he sobers up immediately on seeing you.

‘You!’ he cries in wide-eyed amazement. ‘I thought you were dead. Saul told us as much. A few of us stood up for you, but Saul tried to have us all killed. I barely escaped with my life. The others . . . Saul and his cronies got them all.’

You thank the soldier, an infantry man named Bartolo if your memory serves. You ask him if he has any idea where the army has gone, but he shakes his head.

‘All I know is they left at dawn, but I don't know where. I've been lying low here, but I've run out of money and that punk refuses to give me credit,’ he says, indicating the barmaid. On seeing the two of you looking at her, she sticks out her tongue at you.

If you have a gold piece and wish to buy Bartolo a drink, turn to **102**. If not, you bid the soldier goodbye and go either to speak to the barmaid (turn to **71**) or the bearded man (turn to **215**). Alternatively, if you know a lead on where to go, turn to the appropriate paragraph to follow it up now.

84

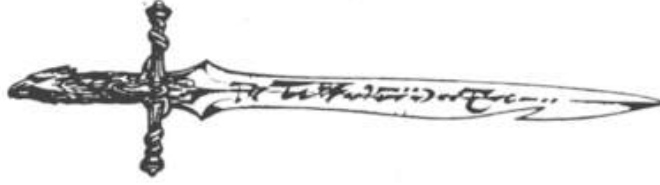
You sink low and creep around the edge of the clearing towards the orb. Spiders have many eyes and it will take only one of them to look in your direction for you to be discovered. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **362**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **78**.

85

You hear a commotion to your right and turn round to see a shocking sight. One of the soldiers stationed in the gatehouse has murdered his fellows and is setting about opening the gates to let the attacking army in. Knowing he must be stopped at all costs, you raise your bow, take aim and fire at the traitor. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill, turn to **256**. If you roll equal to it or higher, turn to **298**.

86

On seeing how effectively you dealt with their comrades, the other swamp orcs decide you are not worth the hassle and stalk off northwards. You take the trail heading west. Turn to **16**.



87

You do not have to wait long before your next opponent is thrown in. It is a large ram and it lowers its head and charges towards you.

RAM Skill:7 Stamina:9

If you win, turn to **261**.

88

Eventually the gates are closed again by an alert sentry and the soldiers who gained entry to the city are all defeated. But the defenders' numbers and morale are greatly depleted. And it is not over yet: a brigade of orcs has just broken out of their hiding place in the nearby woods and is advancing on the city menacingly. Turn to **384**.

89

You are still battling when several horsemen encircle you. You are trapped! Before you can make a move to fight your way clear, one of the horsemen throws a weighted net over you. As you struggle to free yourself, several soldiers leap upon you, raining blows down on you. Finally, you succumb to their endeavours and close your eyes for the final time.

90

As you re-enter the copse, you are stunned to see a strange beast about to attack your poor horse and make it its next meal. The creature's body from her waist up is that of a woman. She has a mass of brown hair and golden skin. From the waist down she has the body of a lioness with four powerful legs and golden brown fur: she is a felinaur. On seeing you enter the copse, the creature backs away from your horse and draws a scimitar, ready to do battle.

FELINAUR Skill:9 Stamina:8

If you defeat the felinaur, you untie your horse and mount it, preparing to head straight for Ximoran. Turn to **199**.

91

You decide to head for the barracks at the edge of town, knowing that since you are now

fighting for the city you are entitled to bed and board.

You enter the low wooden barracks and give your squadron name to the barracks officer. You are directed to a group of soldiers at the far end of the barracks and are given some sloppy grey gruel to eat. It barely nourishes you at all (restore 1 Stamina point). Once you have eaten this pitiful meal, you climb into the sleeping bag provided and close your eyes. Turn to **323**.

92

While your squadron is overwhelmed, your keen eye and steady hand allow you to stay relatively safe from the birdmen. You get away with a small flesh wound from a stray arrow (deduct 2 Stamina points). Although your squadron has suffered severe casualties, eventually you succeed in battling the birdmen off. Turn to **297**.

93

You serve the Master of Wolves faithfully, completely devoted to him and his causes, until one day an adventurer confronts him at his home and you give your life protecting him.

94

One of the trees knocks you to the ground with a vicious swipe of its sword. As you struggle to get to your feet, one of the other trees grabs your foot and hauls you upside down into the air. You struggle and lash out with your sword, but you cannot free yourself from the tree's vice like grip. One of the trees raises its sword and you prepare yourself for the final blow . . . but it never comes. The tree's arm has frozen, the sword inches from your head. You gaze about and all the trees are similarly halted. A low chuckling comes from below you and you look down to see the Master of Wolves looking up at you, his face full of mirth.

‘Well my friend, it seems you are at my mercy for a second time,’ he mocks. ‘But this time I shall not be so merciful. Give me your word that you will aid me and I shall release you from this predicament.’

If you agree to the wizard's demand, turn to **4**. If not, turn to **273**.

95

The tentacle retracts into the mire, dragging the unfortunate wolf with it. Saddened by the loss of a comrade so early in this venture, you beckon the pack to head further east before anything more untoward happens. Record the codeword 'lost' on your adventure sheet before turning to **375**.

96

Suddenly you realize what the little gentleman is doing: he is attempting to pick your pockets. With lightning-quick reflexes, you grab his arm and twist it back, nearly breaking it. The little fellow squeals in pain and you pull his hood back to reveal the curly-haired head of a hobbit. You stare coldly into his terrified eyes before releasing him. You watch in amusement as the would-be thief runs for an alleyway as fast as his little legs can carry him before you continue your journey to Poomchukker's house. Turn to **116**.

97

Your shoulder smashes into him and sends you both flying to the ground. You do 2 Stamina points of damage to him. As you try to get off him, he grabs your shoulder and sinks his sharp teeth into it. Deduct 1 Stamina point. You both struggle to your feet. Will you:

Try to kick him in the face as he gets up?

Turn to **304**.

Try to get him in a headlock?

Turn to **397**.

98

You advance cautiously, but Caius is clearly panicked. Before you can say anything, he draws his knife across the girl's throat and her head slumps forward as the breath goes out of her. Caius then flings her corpse aside and discards his knife in order to draw his sword. You rush forward to battle him, angry at his cowardly deed and your mishandling of the situation.

CAIUS Skill:9 Stamina:11

If you defeat him, turn to **275**.

99

As the knight falls from his mount, dragging the poor creature down with him, he uses his last ounce of strength to slash out at your horse's neck with his sword, silencing the beast forever. You manage to leap off the dying animal before it falls and crushes you.

Looking around, you see most of the knights have been defeated and the city gates have been closed once more. You rejoin your squadron just as the lookout on the battlements announces that a battalion of orcs has broken out of their hiding place in the nearby woods and are advancing menacingly on the city. Turn to **61**.

100

One rider spurts ahead of the others. He draws his sword and brings it smashing into your

back, tumbling you from your saddle. Before you can rise to your feet, the other two horsemen reach you and all three begin hacking you to pieces. Your adventure ends here, in front of the great gates of Ximoran.

101

You charge your horse through the open gates of the village and observe the pandemonium around you. Several houses are on fire and those which are not soon will be. People flock to and fro in panic. Some of the quicker witted individuals have started a bucket chain going in an effort to put out the raging fires, but it is having little effect. To your left, a mother is crying for her baby who is still trapped inside a burning house, while to your right, you hear the surprising sound of merry laughter. If you wish to aid the distressed mother, turn to **301**. If you would rather investigate the raucous laughter, turn to **218**.

102

Bartolo heartily slaps you on the back as you bring him his mug of ale. He drains the mug in short order and wipes the foam from his mouth with the back of his hand, a contented smile now fixed firmly on his face.

‘I wish you the best of luck,’ he says. ‘Saul won't know what hit him.’

You say goodbye to Bartolo, pleased to find that at least some of your troops remained loyal. Restore 1 Luck point. Now if you want to talk to the bearded man, turn to **215**. If you would rather talk to the barmaid, turn to **71**. On the other hand, if you have a lead you want to follow up, turn to the appropriate section.

103

You are startled by the sound of hooves coming from behind you. You spin round to face a knight astride his steed and wielding a heavy mace galloping towards you. With a savage war cry, you raise your sword and race forward to fight him.

KNIGHT Skill:11 Stamina:8

If you win, turn to **339**.

104

With their leader dead, the poorly disciplined orcs panic and run around in terror, all thoughts of catching you gone from their minds. You dash out of the large hut and race across the mire back to the clearing you were captured in. You take the western trail before the orcs decide to pursue you. Turn to **16**.

105

An image flashes in front of your eyes as you look at the bird. It is that of a beautiful woman with long brown hair. Part of you feels instant fear and hatred of the face, but another part of you feels that this is the face of a friend. The great bird is now rapidly descending on you. The other wolves have fled to the cover of some bushes to your left. If you wish to join them, turn to **25**. Otherwise, turn to **345** to face the giant eagle.

106

You grab him under his knee and throw him into the air so he lands flat on his back doing 2 Stamina points of damage to him. He rolls away from you and scrambles to his feet.

You begin circling each other warily once more. Will you:

Try a punch in the face?

Turn to **202**.

Try shoulder charging him?

Turn to **97**.

Risk attempting to throw him?

Turn to **168**.

107

You reveal to the council that after the city fights off the first wave, a band of orcs will attack them immediately.

‘The orcs must have hidden in the nearby woods overnight,’ says Askalo, stroking his chin thoughtfully. ‘But we shall be ready for them.’

Erase the codeword 'ambush' from your adventure sheet and replace it with the codeword 'ready'.

‘Do you have other news for us, young warrior?’ asks the wizard Kolgor.

If you have the codeword 'aerial', turn to **392**. If not, but you have the codeword 'coward', turn to **132**. If you have neither, turn to **56**.

108

You awake to find yourself in a cramped cell. You are lying on a bed of straw and ahead of you is a door of steel bars. All around you are unfamiliar smells. Your sensitive nose takes them in and they seem oddly pleasant. You rack your brain in an attempt to remember how you got here and your mind starts to panic. You feel different somehow, but you have no idea why. Your cage door opens and a bearded face peers in. He looks familiar, but you cannot place him. You snarl at him as a reflex, but in a way you feel like you can trust him.

Cross off all the equipment on your adventure sheet. Change your Current and Initial

Skill score to 10 and your Current and Initial Stamina to 14. You must use these new totals for the rest of the adventure. Any bonuses or penalties you have incurred no longer apply.

Now turn to **14** if you have the codeword 'bark' recorded or to **140** if you do not.

109

You drop the orb of destiny at the Master of Wolves' feet and he rubs your head soothingly.

‘You have fulfilled my every expectation,’ he says with a smile.

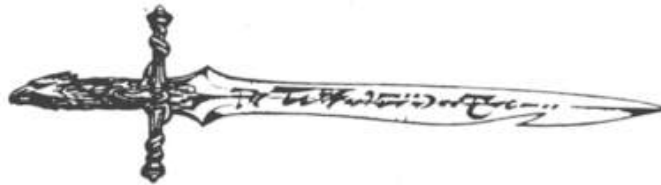
Turn to **93**.

110

You bark repeatedly at the ranger and make numerous gestures with your head and tail. If you do not have the codeword 'mind' recorded on your adventure sheet, turn to **157**. Otherwise, *test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **302**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **157**.

111

One boulder smashes into the battlements right next to you, sending you and several other archers flying. Some fall to their deaths, you merely collide with a stone buttress (deduct 6 Stamina points). If you survive, turn to **235**.



112

‘I warned you,’ says the captain, clicking his fingers.

You are grasped by several strong hands and although you try to struggle, and even succeed in breaking the nose of a guard, you are escorted roughly back to your cell.

Ahab once again chuckles at your plight. He is released a few hours later and that is the last time you ever see another human face. Your adventure ends here.

113

The man glances up as you approach him.

‘Well,’ he says, lowering his pipe, ‘if it isn't one of the Master of Wolves' servants.’ He looks deeply into your eyes.

If you have the codeword 'mind' recorded, turn to **338**. Otherwise, turn to **28**.

114

You shout up to the portly sorcerer that you agree to his terms.

‘I thought you would,’ he smirks. He then closes the trapdoor and you are once again left in pitch darkness.

After a few minutes, a section of the wall slides open and you step through into a massive underground arena. Seated high above you in a balcony is Poomchukker and a man and two women in similar garish clothing. Your sword is lying in the centre of the arena and you stoop over to pick it up. As you do so, Poomchukker claps his hands and another section of the arena wall slides open. A fearsome leopard stalks out growling softly. Its almond eyes narrow on you as it charges.

LEOPARD Skill:9 Stamina:9

If you win, turn to **47**.

115

You wait until no-one is looking and then stalk your way to the back of the tent. If you are wearing soft boots, turn to **167**. If not, *test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **167**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **385**.

116

You reach Poomchukker's impressive home. Clearly he is a man of great means; his house stands out from all those nearby. You walk up to the large front door and knock loudly. The door is opened by a rather repulsive looking goblin serving girl.

‘Yes?’ she asks.

‘I have a favour to ask of the wizard Poomchukker,’ you say boldly. She looks you up and down.

‘Leave your sword here and you can go up and see him. You can get your weapon back afterwards,’ she adds, seeing the doubt in your eyes.

You have little liking for wizards and are rather dubious about having to face one

defenceless. If you agree to leave your sword with the girl, turn to **118**. If you refuse, turn to **46**.

117

As you plunge your sword into his chest, the creature grabs your shoulder and, with a small dagger he had concealed in his other hand, he carves a crescent shape on your bare shoulder (lose 1 Stamina point). Then the creature slumps back, a blissful smile on his dead face. Puzzled by the swamp orc's actions, you decide to head back east, this clearing being a dead end. Turn to **147**.

118

The girl ushers you to a large library where a strange looking man sits. He is immensely tall and fat with a bald, egg-shaped head. From his chin grows an elaborately braided blond beard. Clearly this is Poomchukker. The goblin girl leaves and Poomchukker looks at you expectantly. You say that you need to know where the army that camped nearby recently was headed and you have heard that he may know.

He speaks to you in a low rumbling voice: 'Indeed I do, barbarian, but I see little reason why I should share this information with you.'

If you want to threaten the portly wizard into helping you, turn to **171**. If you wish to hear him out, turn to **220**.

119

Along the highway you pass a wooden shack. It has been burnt to the ground and a woman and her two daughters are sheltering from the rain in the debris. You ride up to them and ask them what happened here. One of the daughters, a girl of about seventeen winters with ash blonde hair, tells you that an army passed this way and tried looting the house. Her father stood up to them and was beheaded for his efforts. They then took all the food and burnt the house to the ground.

You feel bad that an army you raised could do such a thing to innocent people. You are warriors, not animals! You feel inclined to help the family. If you wish to give them either three portions of your provisions or three gold pieces, turn to **190**. If you cannot, or will not, turn to **282**.

120

The arrows miss you by inches. You spot your enemies hiding behind the rocks. They are small, warty and brown skinned - swamp orcs. These creatures are nasty pieces of work, but not completely devoid of reason. If you wish to try to parley with them, turn to **320**. If you would rather charge into them, before they have a chance to fire again, turn to **72**.

121

Since you are no longer under the Master of Wolves' control, you no longer have any sense of loyalty to the other wolves of the swamp, but you hate to see a creature suffer so. If you want to try and save the wolf from the crab grass, turn to **133**. Otherwise, turn to **386**.

122

Both arrows fly into the target. From this distance they look equally close to the bull's-eye. The announcer saunters over and measures the distances. He then declares your opponent the winner by the narrowest of margins. You mutter your congratulations and then barge your way through the crowd to the market stalls. Turn to **160**.

123

The crossbow bolt zips past your head and the horse soon increases its speed, leaving the disgruntled rancher shaking his fist in impotent rage. Turn to **143**.

124

Somewhere in the raging battlefield you hear someone calling your name. You wheel your horse round to face a tall, clean-shaven man coated head to toe in scale armour and wielding a two-handed sword: he is Sthenelaidas, one of the most honourable soldiers in your army.

He raises his sword in salutation. 'I am pleased you yet live, General,' he says. 'You deserved better than to be murdered by traitors.'

'You seem happy enough to serve Saul,' you respond darkly.

He spits in disgust. 'Saul is a dog,' he says. 'But a man cannot become renowned unless he serves in an army. And serving Saul has put you and me on opposite sides which gladdens my heart. I would feel I had missed something if I were not to cross swords with you once in my life.'

You nod and charge your horse towards him. As you are on horseback, you may add one to your Attack Strength for this combat only.

STHENELAIDAS Skill:10 Stamina:8

If you win, turn to **33**.

125

‘Well, I suppose your dramatic entry to the city proves you are no friend of the horde outside. And Telak knows we need as many able-bodied men and women as possible. Very well: you shall be released. Report to the Unicorn Squadron light infantry tomorrow morning.’

With that, your possessions are returned to you and you are escorted out of the guardhouse. Record the codeword 'sword' before turning to **192**.

126

Luckily there are enough archers for the job and they manage to send the orcs scattering while several shoot flaming arrows at the ram itself, burning it to a useless husk. The orcs flee to a safe distance, their assault defeated for the time being. Turn to **341**.

127

The scorpions make no move to follow you eastwards. The canopy of trees above you grows denser and the trail you are following is covered with thick routes meaning you have to advance very slowly and cautiously.

Eventually, you emerge into a small overgrown clearing. Two trails lead further into the swamp. The eastward trail will take you further from the Master of Wolves' home so you ignore it and turn your attention to the southerly route. It is only then that you hear a faint buzzing coming from the trees to your left. If you wish to investigate, turn to **355**. Otherwise, turn to **343**.

128

With the still surviving wolves, you head back towards the Master of Wolves' hut. Suddenly, there is a piercing cry from above you and a gigantic eagle with its cruel talons outstretched flies from the treetops straight towards you. If you have the codeword 'parrot' recorded, turn to **105**. Otherwise, turn to **358**.

129

At last the rain eases off and you shake the moisture from your soaking hair. The road you are following joins the King's Road and you turn south-west along it in the direction of Ximoran. You have yet to come across the rear guard of the army. It is now getting quite dark and you will only be able to ride for a couple more hours before you will have to make camp for the night.

Fifteen minutes of riding later, the road passes a small wood to the east. It is possible that the army may have camped in there in order to take shelter from rain so it might be worth exploring. On the other hand, it might be a waste of time and energy. If you want to investigate the wood, turn to **146**. If not, you continue along the highway. Turn to **37**.

130

You have not been following the new tunnel for very long when you espy sunlight in the distance. You guide your horse towards it and emerge out of a cliffside into the open. You can see no sign of the manticore and you quickly mount your horse and ride south before the vile monster works out where you have gone. Turn to **184**.

131

You guide your horse into a nearby copse of trees and tie its reins to one of them. From your hiding place, you can see several soldiers coming back and forth. Each wears a piece of blue cloth tied round their arm to distinguish themselves as part of the army. If you want, you could ambush a soldier and steal his blue cloth in order to bluff your way in. If you wish to attempt this, turn to **310**. If you would rather just try to sneak into the camp as you are, turn to **288**. If you wish to give up on this idea and ride into the city instead, turn to **199**.

132

You inform them that the first wave of soldiers who will attack this city are made up of those least loyal to Saul.

‘Good,’ enthuses Howe Glockheed, rubbing his hands together eagerly. ‘A strong assault will send them scattering.’

‘Indeed,’ says Askalo.

Erase the codeword 'coward' and record the codeword 'thrust' on your adventure sheet.

‘Do you have any more information?’ asks Felicia.

If you have the codeword 'aerial', turn to **392**. If not, but you have the codeword 'ambush', turn to **107**. If you have neither, turn to **56**.

133

You dive into the crab grass and tear at its thick stalks with your teeth. In response it tightens around you and tries to choke the life out of you while its pincers snap furiously at you. You must deduct 1 Stamina point every other attack round regardless of what else happens in that round as the crab grass is constantly trying to crush you in its tendrils.

CRAB GRASS Skill:6 Stamina:16

If you win, turn to **353**.

134

You are far to the north of the Master of Wolves' home. You leave the clearing and head southwards along a narrow trail of moist ground.

You haven't travelled far before you reach the Foulbrood River which flows across the width of the swamp. You know from previous experience that the waters are swarming with alligators and a swim is therefore suicidal. Thankfully there is no need for you to attempt this as a stone bridge directly ahead of you spans the river and connects to the far bank where a trail leads further south. But a decidedly odd creature is waiting for you on the bridge, leaning on the stone railing with his arms crossed. He is a short, stout man with a squat head, a wide mouth and large eyes - he looks like a frog! He is dressed in a plain yellow tunic, but his silver medallion in the shape of a frog reveals he is a powerful wizard - the Master of Frogs, one of the five wizards who call Scorpion Swamp their home. He gives you a mischievous grin. If you have the codeword 'mind' turn to **365**. Otherwise, turn to **36**.

135

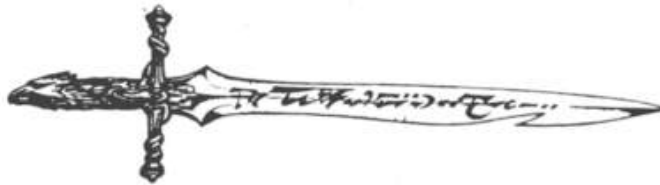
'You have yourself a deal,' you say with a grim smile. He grins enthusiastically.

'But you won't be up to killing anyone in the condition you're in,' he says. 'Here, let me heal your wounds.'

He places his hands on your wrists and feet and you can feel the wounds close (restore the 2 points lost from your Skill score). Turn to **285**.

136

You cannot afford to spend too much longer in Fenmarge. Your blood lusts for vengeance and you must find Saul to satiate it. If you have either the codeword 'grass' or the codeword 'merchant', turn to **183**. If you have neither codeword, turn to **30**.



137

The three swamp orcs seem surprised when you bear down on them. Fight all three at the same time.

FIRST SWAMP ORC Skill:7 Stamina:6

SECOND SWAMP ORC Skill:6 Stamina:8

THIRD SWAMP ORC Skill:7 Stamina:7

If you defeat all three, turn to **86**.

138

‘So, you return to the scene of your crime,’ screeches the Master of Spiders as he spots you from the corner of his eye.

His spiders surge forward to attack you. Fight them all as one enemy.

SPIDERS Skill:7 Stamina:12

If you win, the Master of Spiders advances on you with his wand at the ready. The wand allows him to do an extra point of damage to you when he wins an attack round.

MASTER OF SPIDERS Skill:9 Stamina:6

If you reduce him to 2 Stamina points or less, turn to **197**.

139

Your aim is true and you take down many of the avian menaces. Your fellow archers fight with similar skill and in the end the birdmen are forced to flee. You all cheer at this first minor victory. Turn to **264**.

140

The bearded man starts to laugh. ‘I must say I was worried when you left me after I freed you from the cross, but, as I hoped, you had made a promise to yourself to kill Saul.’ Turn to **14**.

141

Your eyes open to see Poomchukker and Doctor Flaude's decidedly worried faces. You start to move . . . and grasp your shoulder in pain!

‘The operation didn't go as well as we hoped,’ says the doctor in a worried voice.

With a roar, you leap to your feet, intent on strangling the bumbling doctor who cowers behind Poomchukker in abject terror. The large sorcerer raises a hand to stop you.

‘That's enough!’ he booms. ‘You knew the risks before you agreed and your horse is ready and waiting outside.’

His words calm you down and you admit he is right. You leave his house to find a fine

mare tethered outside. It is saddled and ready to go. You rub your shoulder which is still very sore. Deduct 1 Skill point. Cursing the wizard and the inept doctor, you approach your new steed. Turn to **326**.

142

Before you are discovered, you quickly grab the orb with your teeth and dash across the clearing to join your fellow wolves. Turn to **128**.

143

A short time later, you reach the highway once more and follow it south-west. Turn to **395**.

144

You tumble off the horse and land on the hard ground. Before you can struggle to your feet, you are trampled into pulp by the hooves of several horses.

145

The building is surprisingly full of people eager to see the hypnotist's show. Clearly they want to see something to put thoughts of war out of their heads. You take a seat at the front of the hall and watch as the hypnotist; a young man with white hair which sticks up at odd angles and dressed in black leather, asks for volunteers for him to use his art on. He gets one man to bark and scratch like a dog, another to fall asleep and a woman to prance about on stage making monkey noises.

The show ends after a mirthful hour and the hypnotist retires backstage, sent off by thunderous applause. You must say the hypnotist did impress you, but you are not fully convinced that the hypnotized "volunteers" were not in fact stooges. If you wish to go backstage and ask the hypnotist, turn to **32**. If not, you take your leave of the building. Turn to **192** and visit somewhere else, but you cannot see the hypnotist's show again.

146

You find a thin trail snaking through the woods and notice several footprints along it: many people have been here recently. Following the trail through the dark trees, you eventually emerge into a clearing where you behold a truly gruesome sight. Hanging by his neck on a rope tied to a solitary oak in the centre of the clearing is a man in the garb of a minstrel. He looks like he has been dead for about a day and you are just about to cut him down, when you hear a shout from the trees. Two brawny orcs emerge into the clearing, swinging wickedly serrated swords over their heads. You may fight them one at a time.

FIRST ORC Skill:7 Stamina:5
SECOND ORC Skill:6 Stamina:6

If you win, turn to **283**.

147

Warily, you re-enter the clearing of the sword trees, your sword gripped tightly in your hand. Your caution is well placed as the trees have already re-grown and are converging on you. Once again you must battle these deadly plants of the swamp.

SWORD TREES Skill:9 Stamina:12

If you lose 2 attack rounds in a row, turn to **94**. If you defeat them before this happens, turn to **68**.

148

As you prepare to follow the trail heading west, a mass of swamp orcs leap out from their hiding place in the foliage. Three of them rush you with their swords while several more ready their bows to shoot you down. If you want to fight the leading swamp orcs, turn to **137**. If you would rather try to flee down the western trail, turn to **15**.

149

The southern trail gets very narrow and boggy and it is hard work making your way along it. Eventually it widens into a small clearing. The clearing is dotted with small, greenish trees. Each of their gnarled limbs ends in what looks like a sword and their trunks have faces with wide grins. These strange creatures are sword trees and you have faced them before. You know they find it hard to bend downwards so you crouch low and dash past them. They are used to opponents both taller and slower than you and so the swings of their swords do not even come near you. Triumphantly, you follow a trail heading south. Turn to **379**.

150

She pockets the two gold pieces and gives you a dazzling smile.

‘It just so happens that I was meant to meet someone tonight. One of the lieutenants in the army. He’s staying behind a day. Goes by the name of Caius.’

Your blood quickens at the mention of this name. Caius was one of the ones present at your crucifixion. You never liked the man - a braggart who declared much and accomplished little. The wench gives you directions to the house Caius is staying in. Whenever you wish to track him down, turn to **34**. If you wish to talk to the soldier in the corner, turn to **83**. If you would rather speak to the bearded man, turn to **215**. If you wish to follow up that lead now or you have another you wish to follow up, turn to the

appropriate section.

151

Your investigations are fruitful indeed. You find a nice lump of honeycomb in the tree and tuck in greedily (restore 4 Stamina points). Satisfied with your meal, you leave the clearing, following a trail that snakes westwards through the swamp. Turn to **330**.

152

The hornets are territorial creatures and therefore make no effort to pursue you as you rush down the southern trail. Turn to **343**.

153

You walk along the many narrow streets looking for an inn. All you pass appear to be full, filled to the brim with visitors to the city who are now trapped by the besieging army.

While you are searching, you hear whispered voices coming from an alley to your right. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **277**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **324**.

154

The man seems unsurprised when you move to attack and he draws a hatchet from his belt.

RANCHER Skill:8 Stamina:8

If you reduce him to 2 Stamina points or less, turn to **258**.

155

Your aim is true and the javelin pierces the man's armour, penetrating his heart. As you had hoped, the knights are at a loss without their leader and are soon overcome by the disciplined defenders. You rejoin your squadron just as the lookout on the battlements announces that a battalion of orcs has broken out of their hiding place in the nearby woods and are advancing menacingly on the city. Turn to **61**.

156

You pad over to the green woman and she strokes your chin as you lick her hands. She then leads you through the foliage into a corridor of trees. All around you hear melodious singing. As you are following the woman faithfully, your eyes catch sight of a blond man sitting on a log down a little trail to your right. The man is smoking a pipe and looks deep

in thought. The green woman does not seem to have noticed him. If you want to follow the trail and visit the blond man, turn to **113**. If you would rather continue following the beautiful green woman, turn to **194**.

157

He cannot understand you, but he understands that you mean no harm and he leaves the clearing via the northern trail. You decide to take the southern trail as this is the quickest way to the Master of Wolves' home. Turn to **45**.

158

You untie one horse and mount it. It gives off a loud whinny as you urge it south. It is just breaking into a trot when the door of the log cabin is thrown open and a man holding a crossbow dashes out and takes aim at your rapidly retreating form. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **123**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **313**.

159

The Master of Gardens takes you to his home in the northern edge of the swamp. You forget your loyalty to the Master of Wolves and live out the rest of your days as the Master of Gardens' friend and faithful companion.

160

The market has several interesting articles for sale. You may also sell some items you have found for the appropriate amount of money.

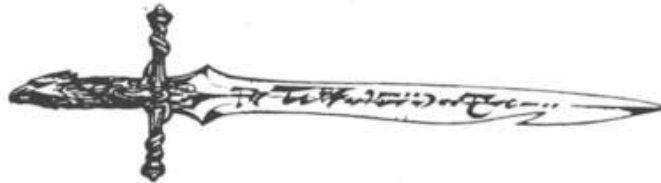
<u>Item</u>	<u>To Buy</u>	<u>To Sell</u>
Provisions	Two for 1 gold piece	-
Horse	30 gold pieces	-
Potion of Skill	9 gold pieces	-
Potion of Strength	9 gold pieces	4 gold pieces
Potion of Fortune	9 gold pieces	-
Longbow	7 gold pieces	4 gold pieces
Soft boots	5 gold pieces	-

Your backpack cannot hold more than ten provisions. A horse will be essential if you want to catch up with Saul. A potion of skill will restore any lost Skill points. A potion of strength will restore any lost Stamina points. A potion of fortune will allow you to increase your initial Luck score by 1 point and restore your current Luck to this new initial score. These potions can only be used once each and the market only sells one of each kind. The longbow comes complete with a quiver of arrows of which you can assume you have an unlimited amount. The soft boots will allow you to walk making far less noise than with your current boots.

When you are finished, turn to **136**.

161

The bird seems to be trying to communicate with you. And when you strain your ears you find you can understand it! Turn to **274**.



162

You stay where you are and lower your sword. A grin appears on Caius' face as he drags her towards the doorway into the back room. Suddenly, there is a crash and Caius' expression turns blank before he topples forward, releasing his hostage. Behind Caius is a large bald man holding the smashed remains of a glass bottle. Obviously he must have brought the bottle down on Caius' head. He helps the serving girl to her feet and gives the unconscious Caius a swift kick in the stomach.

‘No-one takes my daughter hostage,’ he grunts.

He and his daughter thank you profusely. He introduces himself as Ragos and his daughter is Alia. He was apparently asleep in the back room when all the commotion disturbed him. He saw Caius with his knife to his daughter's throat and reached for the nearest thing to hand to lay Caius out cold.

‘I never did approve of your consorting with him,’ he says, glaring at Alia who merely grins back.

Ragos buys you a meal at the tavern which you devour greedily (regain up to 4 lost Stamina points) while several townspeople crowd in to shake your hand. Ragos is the Mayor of Fenmarge's older brother and has considerable sway in the town. He arranges for the finest mare in the town to be saddled and given to you. You thank him and say goodbye to Alia, thoughts of Saul once more in your head. Turn to **326**.

163

To the utter dismay of everyone, the heavy wooden gates swing open and the assaulting force pours in. A traitor must have opened the gate for them! You draw your sword and get ready to battle the warriors hurtling towards you, knowing that if the gate is not

closed soon, the whole city will be overrun!

FIRST SOLDIER Skill:7 Stamina:5

SECOND SOLDIER Skill:8 Stamina:4

THIRD SOLDIER Skill:7 Stamina:7

Fight the soldiers one at a time. If you win, turn to **63**.

164

Inspecting the orcs' bodies, you find three portions of provisions (you can only take these if you have a backpack to store them in) and five gold pieces which you place in your belt pouch. The orcs' longbows were all broken in their desperation to discard them and so are of no use to you. Looking around this clearing, you see there are two ways forward. To head east, turn to **263**. To take the southern trail, turn to **211**.

165

Although you can barely see in the smoke infested house, you can just about hear the baby's frantic cries over the roaring flames. Finally, you find the baby, scoop her up in your arms and leap through a nearby window to the safety of outside. You pass the baby to her mother who gratefully presses ten gold pieces into your hand. Gain 1 Luck point. You then retrieve your horse and head in the direction of the raucous laughter. Turn to **218**.

166

You start to move towards the southern trail, but you can feel the woman's soft eyes gazing at you. You cannot resist turning to look at her once more and she gives a coy smile as she beckons you to her with a finger. Roll one die. If you have the codeword 'will' recorded, you may add one point to your roll. If the result is:

1-3

Turn to **42**.

4-7

Turn to **41**.

167

You reach the back of the tent and hear two voices. One you recognize as Saul's and you have to control yourself to keep from going into a barbaric rage there and then. The other voice is that of Sthenelaidas, a noble soldier who seeks to be known as the greatest swordsman ever. They are discussing battle plans.

‘The first wave will rush on to the walls of Ximoran. Doubtless they will be repelled, but they will soften the city up for the second wave,’ says Saul.

Sthenelaidas replies, ‘Even so, we may lose a great deal of men with this tactic.’

Saul sneers. 'I have considered this. The first wave will be made up of soldiers that are less committed to me and my goal. Their loss is of little importance.'

Just then another voice enters the tent and interrupts them with trivial matters. You decide it would be too risky to try and get revenge now and you make your way back to the copse. You may have discovered important information here. Gain 1 Luck point and record the codeword 'coward'. Turn to **90**.

168

You charge at the fearsome man-orc and grab him by the waist in an effort to hoist him above your head. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill score, turn to **335**. If it is equal to or greater than your Skill score, turn to **224**.

169

Still astride your horse, you loose an arrow and send it flying into the neck of a soldier. The camp is suddenly chaotic as dozing soldiers leap to their feet in panic. You send three more arrows screaming into the throng and watch as the soldiers scatter away from the road to take cover in Shakista's ruined buildings. You quickly urge your horse along the road and are across the bridge before the bewildered soldiers know what is happening. They shake their fists futilely as you gallop along the highway south-westwards. Turn to **395**.

170

The meat is roast beef - extremely delicious (restore up to four lost Stamina points). While you are busy devouring it, a weighted net is suddenly thrown over you! You panic as you witness dancing swamp orcs surrounding you and bounding up and down in glee. They draw the net tight around you and raise you off the ground, then carry you off the track and through the worst parts of the swamp. Anyone else would surely plunge their foot into a sinkhole and be lost forever, but the swamp orcs seem to know exactly where they are going.

Soon, a small timber village becomes visible through the murk of the swamp. The orcs carry you into the village and enter a large central hut. In the middle of the hut is a dirt arena. It is sunken into the floor so the animals made to fight in it cannot escape and the swamp orcs can watch from above in safety. Your net is loosened, but before you can struggle free, you are dumped unceremoniously onto the floor of the arena. Turn to **74**.

171

You demand he tell you where Saul is headed or else. He rises from his armchair and gives you a menacing look. If you wish to charge him, turn to **244**. If you want to apologize for your audacity, turn to **376**.

172

You wipe the serpent's foul blood from your sword and gaze about, trying to decide what route will take you to more open ground.

'Follow me,' you hear from above you and you look up to see a red and blue parrot perched on a nearby branch. 'Follow me,' it repeats and flies to another tree further away where it stops and looks at you expectantly.

If you want to follow the parrot, turn to **372**. If you would rather make your own way through the undergrowth, turn to **55**.

173

You raise your arm and call out that you submit. The man-orc punches the air in celebration and the crowd cheer him. You wipe some blood from your mouth and grin to yourself: it is unusual to see people tolerating a man-orc let alone cheering one. You stagger over to the dwarf who slaps you on the back.

'No shame in it,' he says. 'You put up a good fight.'

He gives you a potion to drink and calls for your wounds to be patched up. Restore 4 Stamina points. You then rise to your feet and leave the ring. Turn to **213**.

174

You throw your gold to the goblins and one of them catches it greedily with his eager hands. They then run off into the heath to the north, turning round every now and again and training their crossbows on you to make sure you do not try to follow them. You have wasted enough time and you urge your horse on to follow the highway south-east. Turn to **129**.

175

You cannot possibly break through all the angry orcs. You are torn to shreds by their cruel swords and arrows.

176

If you have the orb of destiny, turn to **109**. Otherwise, turn to **230**.

177

Finally the mighty giant falls to his knees and breathes his last. Selator picks himself off the ground and dusts himself off.

‘Well done,’ he says. ‘I think it would have been the end of me if you hadn't shown up when you did. That brute was smarter than he looked - most of his kind would have been pretty confused by that mirror image of myself I created.’

He shakes you by the hand and looks deep into your eyes.

‘I sense great anger in you,’ he says worriedly. ‘Perhaps it would be better if you just let that anger go - it will bring you nothing but ill fortune. However, I can see you are not going to do that. In which case I have a gift for you.’

With that, he walks off. You are about to follow him when you are suddenly surrounded by cheering townspeople. They all reach out to shake you by the hand. The crowd lead you into the tavern where you are given food and drink fit for a king. Regain up to 6 lost Stamina points. Once you have had your fill, you rise from your seat and decide you must be on your way. Before you can leave, you feel a firm hand on your shoulder and you turn round to see the grinning face of Selator.

‘As a thank you, I've left a gift for you outside,’ he says mysteriously.

Curiously, you leave the tavern and see a fine mare waiting for you outside, saddled up and ready for action. You turn to thank the wizard, but he is nowhere to be seen. If you already bought a horse earlier, you can sell that one for fifteen gold pieces in the market square. Now, if you have the codeword 'merchant', turn to **326**. Otherwise, turn to **48**.

178

A vicious squad of birdmen fly over the wall. They let fly with barbed arrows and throw bags of exploding powder at the city's defenders. The extra archers put on the battlements on your advice mean that these flying menaces are fought off relatively easily however and they soon take to the skies in flight. Turn to **292**.

179

Two soldiers wearing plate mail and wielding vicious looking pikes confront you. You must fight both at the same time, but you may add one point to your Attack Strength for this combat only as you have the advantage of being on horseback.

FIRST SOLDIER Skill:7 Stamina:10

SECOND SOLDIER Skill:8 Stamina:9

If you win, turn to **33**.

180

The trail west begins to narrow and you have to avoid numerous quagmires that lie on to

the path. Monstrous noises come from the swamp in all directions. This is clearly not the way out of the swamp. You are about to turn back when you hear a pleading moan ahead of you. Cautiously, you venture forth and emerge into a small clearing. A small humanoid creature with brown warty skin and black greasy hair lies on the ground. On top of him is a creature like a gigantic bat. This creature is quite dead and you kick it off the swamp orc. He looks up at you with unfocused eyes.

‘Thought it could have me for lunch,’ he gasps, obviously in a great deal of pain. ‘But I showed it,’ he continues with a grimace. ‘It won’t trouble my people again.’

Suddenly he grips your leg tightly with a clammy hand. ‘Stranger,’ he pleads, ‘I don’t want to die slowly in this swamp. Kill me, and give me a proper death.’

He then pulls the leather armour from his chest and indicates that he wants you to plunge your sword in there. If you agree, turn to **117**. If you refuse to kill the dying swamp orc, turn to **203**.

181

Having dispatched your enemy, you seize the reins of his horse, draw your sword and cut through the knights ahead of you. The last thing they expected was an attack from behind and they fall quickly to your sword. One knight manages to wheel round his steed and charge at you.

KNIGHT Skill:8 Stamina:8

If you win, turn to **99**.

182

The rain continues unabated and you are just getting into a very bad mood when two goblins spring out from behind a mass of rocks and point their crossbows at you.

‘Your money or your life!’ one of them screeches.

You could do without this. If you wish to just hand over your gold so you can move on quickly, turn to **174**. If you have no money or do not wish to give them any, turn to **2**.

183

You know that Saul is headed for Ximoran. You must therefore catch him quickly for if you cannot reach him before he has taken the city, he will be too well guarded for you to get near him. If you have just bought a horse, you can set off immediately by turning to **326**. If you have not bought a horse, turn to **319** if you have the codeword 'grass' or turn to **10** if you have the codeword 'merchant'.

184

Not long after your encounter, you come across an idyllic scene. Ahead of you is a large orchard of apple trees. Even from this distance you can see that the apples look ripe and succulent. If you wish to head towards the orchard and eat a few, turn to **79**. If you wish to pass by and continue south, turn to **143**.

185

You manage to creep past him and leave the clearing by following a trail heading south. Turn to **217**.

186

You kneel panting with exhaustion. The mighty rhinoceros lies dead before you. Poomchukker nods his approval and claps his hands. A section of the arena wall slides open to reveal a tunnel leading up.

‘Follow the tunnel and you will have what you seek,’ says the wizard.

You eye him suspiciously for a second and enter the torchlit tunnel.

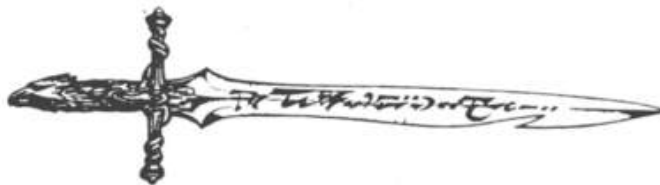
You follow it a long way before you reach a door at the end. You open it and find yourself in a large room in a ramshackle house. In the centre of the room is a table and on it are a scroll and a wooden box. You unfurl the scroll and read it:

My Friend,

I knew you would prevail. The man you seek plans to lead his army against the city of Ximoran. In the box is ten gold pieces. Use them as you see fit.

Poomchukker

You frown at this information. Surely Saul cannot hope to take the walled city with his meagre force? Perhaps he has made some allies. You open the box and put the gold in your pocket. You then leave the house and decide to make your way to the centre of town. Record the codeword 'merchant' and turn to **318**.



187

You awaken to find Poomchukker and the doctor staring intently at you. You sit up and

flex your muscles. They feel a little tender, but they also feel stronger and more responsive. The doctor and the wizard both seem pleased by the results and they will also be beneficial to you. You may add one to your Attack Strength in battle from now on.

Poomchukker tells you that a horse is waiting for you outside. You bid farewell to the two of them and leave the house to find a particularly fine mare tied up outside, saddled and ready for action. Turn to **326**.

188

You hold the point of your sword to the man's throat.

‘Wait general!’ he cries. ‘I served you loyally for several months.’

‘Speak dog, if you want to live,’ you command. ‘What are Saul's plans? How does he intend to take Ximoran?’

The terrified soldier replies that he does not know the entire plan, but Saul intends to send some birdmen he has allied with to attack the archers on the city's battlements. Record the codeword 'aerial'.

Satisfied with this information, you smash your fist into the man's skull, rendering him unconscious. You will leave it up to the villagers to punish him and you very much doubt they will show any mercy. Turn to **331**.

189

The archers make a valiant attempt, but there just aren't enough of them to destroy the ram and scatter those manning it - whenever one falls, another quickly takes his place. The gate creak and groan and then split open, allowing the orcs inside the city. You draw your sword as three orcs surround you. Fight all three at the same time.

FIRST ORC Skill:8 Stamina:5

SECOND ORC Skill:9 Stamina:4

THIRD ORC Skill:7 Stamina:6

If you win, turn to **193**.

190

The three women thank you profusely. Gain 1 Luck Point. The mother presents you with a finely made sword - Fangthane steel, if you are not mistaken. This sword is very effective in battle and if you roll a double 6 while calculating your Attack Strength you will defeat your enemy instantly - use it well.

‘This was my husband's,’ she says mournfully. ‘But it will do you more good than us.’

You thank her and sling the sword over your shoulder.

‘You shall be avenged,’ you declare heroically and then you urge your horse along the highway south-east. Turn to **129**.

191

The arrow thuds into your flank and you give a snarl of rage (deduct 2 Stamina points). The wolves advance on the spot where it came from, but the stench of the swamp orc fades quickly. Clearly he decided to make his escape before he was surrounded. Some of the wolves are eager to give chase, but you silence their yelps with a harsh bark. You continue north. Turn to **361**.

192

You head into the city centre. It is now well into the evening, but the streets are still crowded with panicking people preparing for war. A few market stalls are still set up, offering last minute supplies at extortionate prices. A sign outside a low stone building boasts that Imvesso, the greatest hypnotist in Khul, is performing for one night only (probably because by tomorrow there might not be any people left to see the show). In the corner of the city square, several blacksmiths are hammering away on suits of armour.

Will you:

Go to a market stall?

Turn to **311**.

Go watch the hypnotist's show?

Turn to **321**.

Pay a visit to the blacksmiths?

Turn to **249**.

Find a place to rest for the night?

Turn to **153**.

193

No sooner have you bested your adversaries than you turn to face your new foe: an orc chieftain wielding a mighty two-handed warhammer which he is smashing into the city's defenders with great enthusiasm. Your body quivers with the rush of adrenalin as you charge towards this fearsome opponent.

ORC CHIEFTAIN Skill:9 Stamina:11

If you win, turn to **325**.

194

The woman leads you into a glade filled with flowers of all sorts and other women just like her.

‘Sister dryads,’ she speaks in an almost musical voice. ‘I have found us a guard dog. Now we have someone who can guard our flowers while we commune with the trees!’

The other dryads cheer and rush forward to rub your head. You want nothing else but to serve these beautiful creatures and you spend the rest of your life in perfect happiness, guarding the flowers of the lovely dryads.

195

Your sharp teeth sink into the fleshy tentacle. It releases the wolf from its grip and drops him on the soft ground, before retreating back into the sinkhole. Quickly, you beckon the pack to head further east before anything more untoward happens. Turn to **375**.

196

Three of the arrows bury themselves into your shoulder (deduct 6 Stamina points). With a barbaric howl, you tear the arrows from your body and cast them to the ground. Then gripping your sword tightly in both hands, you charge towards your enemies - three extremely startled swamp orcs - in a true berserker fury. They will pay with their audacity with blood. Turn to **72** to fight the swamp orcs, but you may add one to your Attack Strength in the battle due to the ferocity of your attack.

197

He lets out a womanly screech and disappears in a puff of smoke. You leave the clearing by the southern trail as fast as your legs can carry you. Turn to **217**.

198

‘Captain!’ bellows Askalo furiously.

The captain opens the double doors cautiously and peers in.

‘It appears this person has lied to you,’ Askalo continues. ‘Make sure I never set eyes on this barbarian dog again.’

Four burly soldiers pull you away. Once again you are stripped of your possessions and thrown in a cell. This one is empty however and you never see another human face for the rest of your life - which isn't very long anyway!

199

You take a deep breath to steady yourself and then urge your horse to race past the army camp. There are cries of alarm as you race past the tents and several arrows are fired at you: roll one die and deduct the result from your Stamina score. If you are still alive, you ride your horse out into the open, but you hear sounds of pursuit behind you. You turn your head to see three riders charging towards you. You shout encouragement to your

horse, but their mounts are fresher than yours and they begin to close the gap. If you have a sword, turn to **369**. If not, turn to **100**.

200

You just manage to reach the safety of the alleyway before the knights charge past and nearly mow you down. One horse comes trotting past your hiding place, the rider unaware that you are there. If you wish to leap onto the horse as it goes past, turn to **371**. If you would rather stay hidden, turn to **103**.

201

Your arms shoot out to grab his foot, but will you be quick enough? Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill score, turn to **9**. Otherwise, turn to **366**.

202

You smash your fist into his jaw doing 2 points of Stamina damage to him. He staggers backwards slightly and his arm shoots forward as he seizes you by the throat, squeezing hard. Deduct 1 Stamina point. His gnarled face bursts into a grin as he tightens his grip. Will you try:

Poking him in the eyes?

Turn to **52**.

Hammering his arm to make him let go?

Turn to **246**.

203

‘Curse you, stranger!’ cries the creature pathetically as you head back east (deduct 1 Luck point). Your head hung low, you follow the trail eastwards. Turn to **147**.

204

You are waiting for what seems like hours but may in fact be minutes, when the trapdoor above you is opened. You blink at the bright light which floods into the darkened pit and look up at the smiling face of Poomchukker.

‘Well, my barbaric friend,’ he gloats. ‘We made quite a fool of ourselves, didn't we? I give you an offer. Entertain my friends and I by battling wild beasts in my arena and I'll give you the information you seek.’

If you agree, turn to **114**. If not, turn to **280**.

205

The crowd cheer and you are led away with the three others who succeeded in hitting the bull's-eye. You are taken to the edge of the square where a tree holding a few apples

stands.

‘The second round,’ continues the announcer, ‘is to shoot an apple from the tree with one shot.’

You are the first to take a shot and you take careful aim at the hanging apple. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill score, turn to **294**. If not, turn to **394**.

206

Suddenly, a massive wooden beam gives way above you and smashes onto your back, knocking you to the floor. Deduct 3 Stamina points. If you are still alive, you struggle to your feet and step back away from the nearby flames that threaten to lick your face. If you wish to press on into the house to rescue the baby, turn to **165**. If you think the situation is getting too dangerous and you wish to retreat out of the front door, turn to **315**.

207

The land begins to slope downwards and it soon becomes clear that the Master of Wolves was not lying when he warned you that this way would take you to the swamp. Before you stretches the foul mire, the heavy foliage of its sickly trees keeping it in an impenetrable gloom. The ground beneath your feet is already becoming soft. As the sun rises above the swamp, you contemplate whether it would be worth turning back, but you dismiss the idea from your head. You are not some weak civilized fool who flees at the first suggestion of trouble - you are a barbarian! Determined, you march into the swamp.

The trees are thick and tangled and you have to work your way past them with care. Flies buzz around your face and you swipe at them futilely with your hands. Once you step into a sinkhole and only just save yourself from an ignominious death by pulling yourself out with a strong vine. You lean back on a thick tree trunk and breathe heavily as the sweat pours off you.

Suddenly, you see an almost imperceptible movement to your right. You grip your sword tightly in your hand, ready for whatever the creature is. Bursting through the foliage comes the fanged face of a gigantic serpent. It moves towards you with great alacrity, trying to crush you in its coils. You must fight it.

GIANT SERPENT Skill:6 Stamina:7

If you win, turn to **172**.

208

As you are using this brief respite in the battle to help the wounded and shift some of the debris created by the catapulted boulders, you espy Askalo Belgar, general of Ximoran's

armies speaking to an officer below you. You cannot resist taking this opportunity to give your advice.

‘General,’ you bellow. ‘You should strike now while they're trying to regroup. If we wait in the city, they'll destroy us with their siege weapons.’

Askalo looks up at you in utter outrage that you would give advice to one his status, but his features soften as he thinks over what you've just said.

‘You are right, barbarian,’ he says. ‘You shall join us for this final charge.’

You are provided with a horse and find yourself at the head of a column of cavalry. The city gates swing slowly open . . . turn to **388**.

209

The stream is deep and goes up to your chin, but you are a naturally strong swimmer and you make it across without anything untoward happening. You follow the trail southwards.

As the ground gradually gets firmer and your surroundings more heavily forested, you realize that you are approaching the clearing where the Master of Wolves has his hut. Turn to **279**.

210

You travel many miles to the west through rough scrubland before you find a part of the river shallow enough for your horse to wade through. Once across, you urge your horse in a south-easterly direction, hoping to rejoin the road.

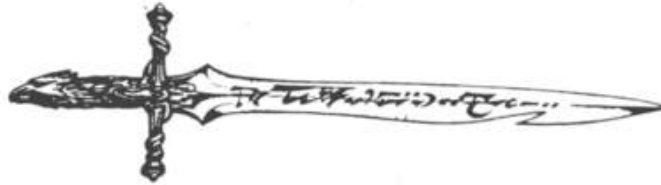
After about an hour, you gaze upon a sight that makes your heart freeze. Flying in the sky a short distance to the north is a mantichore - a vicious creature with the body of a lion, the large leathery wings of a gigantic bat, the bearded face of an old man and a tail like a scorpion's, which can fire poisonous spines. The creature has clearly seen you too as it is flying straight towards you. If you wish to ride into battle against the nightmarish monster, turn to **54**. If you would rather flee to the south, turn to **374**.

211

As you progress south, the trees begin to thin out. No longer is the sky hidden by their thick canopy. You get the impression that you have reached the edge of the swamp and you are proven correct as the last of the sickly trees gives way to rolling green hills. You give a long sigh, thankful to be free of the dreadful swamp. Clearly a civilized adventurer would never have found their way to freedom, but you - a barbarian - could find your way out of any labyrinth. About a mile ahead of you, you can see the town of Fenmarge.

There you should be able to find where Saul and the army are headed. Just as you are about to set off, you notice a skeletal arm hanging out from a nearby bush. You walk over to inspect it and see the skeleton of what must have been an explorer of the swamp. His body has been picked clean by scavengers. His only possessions are a rusty sword and a backpack. The sword is not worth taking, but if you require a backpack you can take this one. It will allow you to carry provisions and other objects. Pleased that you did not suffer the same fate as this unhappy traveller, you whistle cheerfully as you walk towards the town.

Upon arriving in the ramshackle town, you decide that your best source of information would be the local tavern. You soon find a promising looking place in the centre of the town. A badly weathered inn sign tells you the place is called *The Three Bottles*. You push open the heavy oak and look around the tavern. It is still before noon and the tavern's usual clientele have not yet flocked to it. A bored looking serving wench is resting her head on the bar. A man wearing leather armour is seated at a wooden table at the far end of the tavern. His head is drooped so you cannot see his face. It is possible he is a member of your former army, but you cannot tell from here. Lastly, a short man with a black beard sits supping his mead at a table at the centre of the tavern. He looks up at you as you enter and then returns to concentrating on his drink. If you wish to talk to the serving girl at the bar, turn to **71**. If you would rather talk to the soldier in the corner, turn to **83**. If you think the bearded man might know something, turn to **215**.



212

The Master of Wolves seems taken aback when you begin to walk away from him.

‘That way will take you into the depths of Scorpion Swamp,’ he says. ‘I mean you no harm. Come, follow me.’

If you wish to change your mind and follow your rescuer, turn to **70**. If you would rather continue in the direction you were travelling in, turn to **207**.

213

It is now getting late and after all your ordeals you could use a good sleep. If you have two gold pieces, you can pay to stay at the inn if you wish (turn to **398**). If you do not or if you wish to save your money, you find a quiet spot in an alleyway and settle down to sleep there. Turn to **303**.

214

‘The Mistress of Birds seems to think that you may have something sinister in mind,’ you reply cautiously.

‘Don't tell me you ran into her,’ he scoffs. ‘She and the other masters of the swamp are meant to be my allies, but I would wager all of them would take any opportunity to undermine my plans. Pay no attention to her.’ You nod slowly, not fully convinced.

‘At any rate,’ he says in a more relaxed tone, ‘you intend to kill Saul anyway and I doubt very much her advice is going to effect your goal.’

You smile at him. ‘Very well,’ you say, shaking him firmly by the hand. ‘I'll do it.’ Turn to **285**.

215

The man seems unsurprised when you sit next to him.

‘What brings you here, stranger?’ he asks, taking another draught from his mead.

‘Vengeance!’ you declare, anger reflected in your eyes. You ask the man if he knows where Saul and the army are headed. The man strokes his bearded chin as he considers your question.

‘I know of someone who will definitely know,’ he says. ‘The sorcerer Poomchukker knows all that happens in these parts. He lives in a large house at the end of the market - you can't miss it.’ You thank the man and stand up to leave, but he restrains you by grabbing your arm.

‘Beware stranger,’ he says. ‘No-one gets anything for free from Poomchukker. It might be an idea to find an alternative source of information.’

Whenever you wish to leave the tavern and seek out Poomchukker, turn to **77**. You can do this now or stay a bit longer if you like. If you wish to talk to the barmaid, turn to **71**. If you would rather talk to the soldier sitting in the corner, turn to **83**. If you have another lead you wish to follow up, turn to the appropriate section.

216

You spend the next few months doing the bidding of your new master in the vile swamp. As the most powerful and intelligent wolf in his service, you soon become the leader of the pack. You know every inch of the swamp's trails and many of its dangers. You serve your master faithfully and are never happier than when he congratulates you for a job well done. You remember nothing of your former life.

One day, the Master of Wolves gives you a new task - one that will test you more than

any previous one you have been assigned to. The Master of Spiders, another wizard who lives in the swamp and is a rival of your master, has gotten hold of a powerful orb of destiny. Your master desires the orb and you are to lead a pack of five wolves to the Master of Spider's clearing and steal the orb. You lead your pack away from the wooden lodge he lives in and head eastward through the swamp.

You haven't travelled far through the dank swamp when there is a frightened yelp from behind you as a monstrous tentacle comes out of a sinkhole and wraps itself around the smallest of the five wolves, raising him high into the air. You race towards the tentacle, eager to rescue your comrade.

TENTACLE Skill:8 Stamina:6

Fight this battle normally, except when the tentacle has the higher Attack Strength do not subtract any points from your Stamina score; the tentacle has merely avoided your blow. If you defeat the tentacle in three attack rounds or less, turn to **195**. Otherwise, turn to **95**.

217

You emerge into a clearing with firmer ground. Several large flat stones are clustered about it, but you are more interested in the hollow tree with a massive hole at the base that stands in the centre of the clearing. You know from past experience that bears often use the hollow tree as a den and to store honeycomb in. You could investigate the tree to see if there is any honeycomb inside although the longer you stay here, the greater the risk of running into bears. If you want to risk it, turn to **151**. Otherwise, you leave by following a trail that snakes through the swamp to the west. Turn to **330**.

218

You guide your horse towards the sound of the laughter and are disgusted by what you see. Two soldiers are standing in the village square killing any villagers who go near them as they flee from their burning houses. The two soldiers are in bouts of laughter at their sadistic little game. You cannot stand by and let this cruel sport happen. You charge at the cowardly soldiers.

FIRST SOLDIER Skill:9 Stamina:6

SECOND SOLDIER Skill:8 Stamina:9

Fight them one at a time. Since you are on horseback, you may add one to your Attack Strength for this combat only. If you reduce the second soldier's Stamina to 3 or less without killing him, you can choose to spare him by turning to **188**. If you want to fight on and win, or if you kill him before his Stamina falls to 3 or below, turn to **331**.

219

‘Important information, eh?’ says the captain, stroking his chin. ‘And you can't tell me it I suppose?’

You reply that the information is very sensitive and only the council should hear it.

He eyes you cautiously for a second, no doubt suspicious of your intentions. Finally he agrees to let you see the council. Your possessions are returned to you and the captain and two soldiers escort you to the illustrious palace in the centre of the city.

You are led up a flight of stairs and are told to wait on a plush chair while the captain disappears behind a pair of gilded double doors. A few minutes later, he returns.

‘Go on in,’ he says. ‘But make it good.’

You open the double doors. Record the codeword 'inform' on your adventure sheet before turning to **308**.

220

‘I can help you if you do something for me,’ he continues in a leisurely tone. ‘I have many friends who are interested in sophisticated forms of entertainment. Specifically the battling of wild animals in an arena. You look a strong individual. If you fight for me in my personal arena, I will reveal to you Saul's plans.’

If you agree to these terms, turn to **271**. If not, there is nothing to do but leave. Turn to **382**.

221

The fireball slams into you, consuming you with its sorcerous green fire. In a few seconds all that is left of you are a few ashes on the ground.

222

Your horse falls under you and you land badly on the ground. Deduct 2 Stamina points. If you are still alive, you find yourself grabbed by several rough hands and propped up against an old pillar. Your sword lies mere inches away from your hand, but you know that the second you try to reach it you will be run through by several eager swords.

As it is, the soldiers seem unsure of what to do with you. A small weasly soldier says they should just kill you and Saul will reward them, but a proud warrior with long fair hair and an eye patch claims that the fact you are still alive proves you are a stronger warrior than Saul and they should support you once more.

Soon voices are raised in argument as two factions emerge in the soldiers and before long

they are trading blows. Using this as a distraction, you grab your sword and leap to your feet. You run over to where a horse is tethered, cut it loose and mount it and urge it through the warring throng to the bridge. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **245**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **253**.

223

You bend down towards the fish and lick your lips in anticipation. But before you have taken your first bite, an acorn bounces off your head. You turn round to see the little dwarf has picked several acorns from the tree and is now pelting you with them. You bark angrily at him, but he just continues his assault (deduct 1 Stamina point). You decide the fish are not worth this aggravation and you prepare to wade across. Turn to **209**.

224

As you are trying to lift him, he brings his elbow smashing into your face, forcing you to let go. Deduct 2 Stamina points. As you are recovering, he brings his leg up to try and kick you in the stomach. Desperately you try to stop him. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill score, turn to **106**. If it is equal to or greater, turn to **31**.

225

You hurry from your sleeping quarters, eager to join the squadron you have been assigned to. If you have the codeword 'sword', turn to **75**. If you have the codeword 'shoot', turn to **352**.

226

The scorpions make no bid to chase you along the trail and you slow your pace down. After travelling westwards for but a few minutes, you emerge into a clearing that seems out of place in the foul swamp. The ground is firm, the grass green and lush. The clearing is ringed with old oak trees and there are fewer insects. The clearing is not uninhabited however. A man with tousled blond hair and piercing blue eyes watches you warily. He is clad in forest green clothing and is fingering the hilt of his sword in anticipation: he is a ranger. The rangers who serve Scorpion Swamp are no friends of your master and are therefore suspicious of all wolves.

Will you:

Attack him?

Turn to **368**.

Try to communicate with him?

Turn to **110**.

Try to walk past him and leave the clearing?

Turn to **19**.

227

You sneak around the two fighters, who are too rapt in their sword practice to notice you.

Three trails lead on from this clearing. The northern one will take you further from the Master of Wolves' home so you ignore it. You may head east, providing you did not come from that direction (turn to **16**), or you may head west (turn to **367**).

228

You are just about to grab him round the neck when, without turning his head, Caius stabs at you with a dagger which plunges into your chest. Lose 2 Stamina points. Caius then leaps to his feet and draws his sword.

‘Time to die again, spectre!’ he cries. You have just enough time to draw your own sword before he is upon you.

CAIUS Skill:9 Stamina:11

If you reduce him to 3 Stamina points or less, turn to **370**.

229

You pant from the exertion of your battle. The wild boar lies dead at your feet. Looking around the arena, you think it would be possible to leap out and try to escape. If you want to risk it, turn to **390**. If you would rather bide your time and wait for a better chance to escape, turn to **87**.

230

The Master looks annoyed that you returned with neither the orb of destiny nor the rest of your pack.

‘Perhaps I was wrong about you,’ he grumbles. ‘Fenris may be more suited to your position as leader.’

Fenris gives you a superior look and you snarl in response. You vow to yourself that you will find a way to prove that you are a better choice for pack leader. Turn to **93**.

231

The wolf you saved from the tentacle leaps into the path of the fireball and is consumed by the sorcerous green fire. The Master of Spiders curses and begins to conjure another fireball. Not wanting the unfortunate wolf's sacrifice to be in vain, you pluck the orb from its pedestal with your teeth and race back south to join the remaining wolves. Turn to **128**.

232

You rush back west. No bears seem to want to chase you - no doubt they think protecting their territory from further intrusion is more important. You soon return to the clearing where you fought the swamp orcs and this time you take the southern trail. Turn to **211**.

233

Although casualties are high, your squadron manage to battle the orcs off, the heavy gates closing quickly behind you as you return to the city. The orcs will not give up so easily though. Turn to **61**.

234

Caius was always fleet of foot and manages to lose you in the networks of alleyways that make up the edge of town. Deduct 1 Luck point. Cursing, you make your way back to the centre of town. Turn to **318**.

235

There just aren't enough archers to shoot down all the orcs. The gates buckle and groan before the battering ram blasts them open. The orcs pour into the city, some of them climbing up the battlements. You discard your bow and draw your sword to fight off two of them.

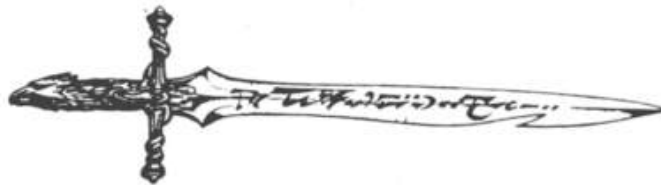
FIRST ORC Skill:7 Stamina:7

SECOND ORC Skill:8 Stamina:6

Fight them one at a time. If you win, turn to **262**.

236

The commanding officer has been informed of the orcs in hiding ready to ambush the soldiers of Ximoran. He motions for the squadron to fall back to the city. As you retreat, you witness the brigade of orcs break free from the nearby trees they were hiding in and charge towards you, cutting down any of their fleeing allies who get in the way. Before they can reach your squadron however, you all manage to get back inside the safety of the city walls and the heavy gates are closed behind you. Turn to **61**.



237

You and six others announce you want to enter. There is a cheer from the crowd and the announcer ushers you forward. You are told that the contest consists of three rounds. The first requires you to hit the bull's-eye of the target. You each get five shots. You are the fourth person to take a turn. So far, two of the other contestants have managed it, another has failed and is out of the competition. You ready your bow and take aim. Roll two dice. If the two numbers match, you have hit the bull's-eye. If not, you may try again up to four times. If you manage to hit the bull's-eye in five tries, turn to **205**. If not, turn to **252**.

238

Before you can finish off the chieftain, you are set upon by half a dozen orcs who tear you to pieces for daring to attack their leader.

239

You blink in the bright morning sunlight and see some sort of commotion is taking place. An archery competition is about to begin and a man with a pencil-thin moustache is inviting anyone with a bow to take part. If you have a bow and wish to enter, turn to **237**. If you do not, you may either watch the contest (turn to **260**) or ignore it completely and see what the market has to offer (turn to **160**).

240

You concentrate on the bird's squawks and gyrations and it reminds you somewhat of the methods you use to communicate with your fellow wolves. You think you can sense a pattern in it and can get the gist of what it is trying to tell you. Turn to **274**.

241

Suddenly an arrow whistles through the air straight into your opponent's neck. He topples backwards out of his saddle. Another arrow flies into one of your pursuers' horses which tumbles to the ground, crushing its rider. The third pursuer decides you are not worth the danger and rides back to the camp. The arrows came from the city walls and as you look up, you see several archers have their bows trained on you. They do not fire however - they have observed you fighting your pursuers and therefore know you to be no friend to the army. A small door in the main gate is opened for you. You dismount and lead your horse through it. Turn to **357**.

242

The orcs look at one another, unsure of how to deal with you. Finally one of them steps forward.

‘You must leave our swamp,’ he says. ‘Take the trail south and do not return.’

Having no wish to return to this godforsaken place anyway, you nod to the orcs and

follow the trail south. Turn to **211**.

243

You manage to keep up with the little man and are almost upon him when he runs straight into a dead end. The thief spins round to face you. His hood has slumped back to reveal the curly haired head of a hobbit. The thieving hobbit draws a dagger from the folds of his cloak - he is prepared to fight to the last.

HOBBIT Skill:5 Stamina:5

If you win, turn to **80**.

244

With a roar you rush towards the sorcerer, but when you are almost upon him the floor gives way beneath you. You fall down a dark pit and hit the hard ground with a thump. Deduct 3 Stamina points. Above you, you hear the trapdoor closing and you watch as it shuts away the only light source in the pit, shrouding you in complete blackness. Turn to **204**.

245

You guide your horse among the feuding soldiers, most of whom have forgotten why they are fighting in the first place and pay you no heed. One soldier who still has his wits about him hurls a throwing axe at you, but the axe is parried away by a sword swipe from the warrior with the eye patch. He winks at you with his good eye then returns to the fray, his sword weaving in an arc of death. You spur your horse across the bridge and follow the road south-west. Turn to **395**.

246

You hammer his arm repeatedly with your fist, but his grip remains unshakeable. He tightens his hold and you begin to cough up blood. Deduct 2 Stamina points. Finally he loosens his grip and throws you to the ground. You barely have a second to recover before he raises his foot to stamp on your head. Will you:

Try to grab his foot before he can do so?

Turn to **201**.

Try to sweep his other leg from under him with your leg?

Turn to **281**.

247

These two soldiers may now be dead, but you can hear many more making their way towards you. Quickly, you run to your horse, untie and then leap into the saddle. You must get to Ximoran before you are surrounded. Turn to **199**.

248

With panther-like movements, you stalk towards your former sub-ordinate. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **344**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **228**.

249

You approach one blacksmith who does not seem to be as busy as the rest. You ask him if he can sharpen your sword for you. He replies that he has a heavy workload to get through, but he can do it for the right price: fifteen gold pieces!

If you are not willing to, or cannot afford to pay this extreme price, you take your leave of the blacksmith (return to **192** and choose again).

If you wish to pay for this service, cross off fifteen gold pieces. The blacksmith takes the sword and, after a couple of minutes of frantic work, he passes it back to you. You can now add one point to your Attack Strength in battle when using this sword. You thank the blacksmith and take your leave of him. Return to **192**.

250

In the late evening, you round a hill to your right and come in sight of your destination: Ximoran! The great walled city, capital of the Ximoran Protectorate which replaced the Kingdom of Klarash after the fall of the monarchy. The wise Council of Seven is said to rule this city fairly if strictly, but that rule could soon be coming to an end: Between the city and yourself is the camp of Saul's army. Hundreds of pitched tents and wagons hold weapons to kill and men eager to do so. Ximoran will need to put up a spirited defence indeed to save itself. Two options present themselves to you if you are going to defeat Saul. You could try to sneak into the camp and battle him there, but that would be very risky. Or you could try to enter the city and offer your aid in its defence and therefore give yourself an opportunity to engage Saul when he tries to take the city. If you want to try sneaking into the camp, either to kill Saul or to spy on the enemy army, turn to **131**. If you would rather skirt the camp and ride for the city before you are spotted, turn to **199**.

251

On seeing you dispatch his lackeys, Caius tightens his hold on the barmaid and he drags her towards the back exit of the tavern. You start to move towards them, but he yells at you to stay where you are.

‘You might have come back from the dead, barbarian, but I doubt she will,’ he laughs.

This is a dangerous situation. If you panic him, Caius might just slit the girl's throat, but if you let him escape out the back, he may choose to kill her anyway once a safe distance

from the town. Will you:

Try to close in on him and his hostage?

Turn to **98**.

Stay where you are and let him move closer to the exit?

Turn to **162**.

252

You fail to hit the bull's-eye and the announcer proclaims you out of the competition. You cannot be bothered watching to see the outcome of the contest and so you decide to make your way to the market stalls. Turn to **160**.

253

You guide your horse among the feuding soldiers, most of whom have forgotten why they are fighting in the first place and pay you no heed. One soldier who still has his wits about him hurls a throwing axe at you. You try to dodge, but it strikes you hard on the head and you topple from the saddle. As you struggle to get to your feet, the short soldier who advised killing you rushes over and brings his sword down into your chest. Your adventure ends here.

254

You are led into a dusty room. A wooden desk covered in papers occupies most of the room and sitting at it is a man with a bald head and sour expression. This must be the captain of the guard. He looks up as you enter.

‘What brings you to this city in these dark days, barbarian?’ he asks in a gruff voice.

How will you reply? Will you:

Say you have important information that the council must be made aware of?

Turn to **219**.

Volunteer to join the city's defenders?

Turn to **125**.

Demand to be taken to the council immediately?

Turn to **11**.

255

The minstrel stares at you without saying anything. You are about to leave him and ride on down the highway when he says one word in a soft voice: 'woods!'. You are not sure what he means by this, but you mutter your thanks anyway and continue to ride along through the rain. A few seconds later, you turn round to look back at the minstrel . . . but he has vanished into thin air! You shudder and kick the flanks of your horse hard, eager to be away from this place. Turn to **129**.

256

Your aim is true and your arrow flies into his neck. He gargles in pain, clutching desperately at the arrow, and then topples back, never to rise again. Gain 1 Luck point. You return to firing at the climbers and in the end they back away from the walls. The gates are flung open as the infantry charges into them and sends them fleeing.

Just then, a brigade of orcs burst from their hiding place in the trees and charge towards the city, cutting through their fleeing allies to get there. The city gates are closed in the nick of time, but the orcs are not going to give up so easily. Turn to **384**.

257

You are given a large meal of roast duck which you devour greedily (restore up to 4 lost Stamina points). When you have finished your meal, you are about to stand up and go to bed when a gaudily dressed figure sits next to you.

‘I say,’ he remarks in a voice gushing with enthusiasm, ‘a barbarian! How quaint. My name is Lord Lysandros by the way. Doubtless you've heard of me. I'm sure you savages delight yourselves with tales of my illustrious deeds. Let me assure you - I am equal to the legend. Why, I remember this one time Gravy - that's my little nickname for Lord Gravesdane; a capital fellow, if not quite as glorious an individual as myself. But then, who is? Anyway, where was I? Ah yes, Gravy and I were hunting a wild boar - vicious little things, don't you know - and Gravy fell off his horse and broke his leg. It looked shocking. A man of weaker constitution than myself would surely have fainted at the sight of it. Anyway, he wasn't able to ride his horse back to his castle and he needed help. With great generosity, I commanded my serf Kubhla - a huge man from Kazan, nearly as barbaric as yourself - to carry Gravy home. Gravy's father heralded me as a hero! But all this talk is making me thirsty. Would you care for a drink, my barbaric chum? I doubt they sell mead in the skulls of defeated enemies as you're no doubt accustomed to, but I've heard they do an excellent red wine.’

If you wish to accept this offer of a drink, turn to **349**. If you would rather excuse yourself and stagger off to bed, turn to **278**.

258

The man throws down his hatchet and drops to his knees, raising his hands in surrender. He says that you can take any horse you wish. You nod and make your way to the horses. You select a particularly powerful looking stallion, mount up and ride southwards at a swift pace.

Part of you cannot help but feel bad about taking advantage of the poor rancher (deduct 1 Luck point). Perhaps you have been spending too much time around civilized folk? You push it from your mind and concentrate on your journey south. Turn to **143**.

259

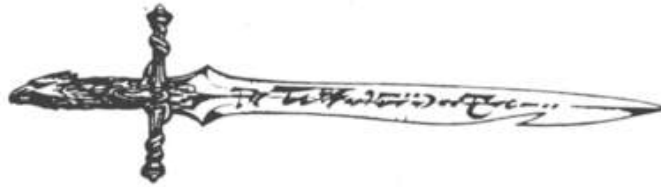
You race down the trail, leaping over the marshy ground that appears sporadically along the path. Eventually you take a glance behind you and are relieved that the scorpions are not pursuing you. Taking a deep breath, you continue to follow the path at a more dignified pace. Turn to **307**.

260

If you wish, you may place a bet on the outcome of the contest. There are six entrants. Choose a number between 1 and 6 and decide how many gold pieces you wish to bet on that person. Then roll a die. If you roll the same number you picked, you win four times your stake. If not, you lose your stake. Once the contest is over, you make your way to the market stalls. Turn to **160**.

261

The ram is defeated and the orcs let out a cheer. It is clear that they will keep throwing wild beasts at you until you die. You must try and escape now. Turn to **390**.



262

Although they manage to kill many, the orcs are subdued by the well-trained city infantry. Soon all are either driven out or killed and several soldiers shove the gates closed as best they can. Turn to **208**.

263

The ground gets firmer as you head east. Finally you arrive at a clearing. Several large, flat stones lie about the clearing and in the centre of the clearing is a large tree. It is clearly hollow as you can see a gaping hole at the base. You are just deciding whether to look inside this hole, when you hear a growl to your left. A large brown bear comes out of the trees. You have invaded its territory and it is going to make you pay.

BEAR Skill:9 Stamina:8

If you *Escape*, turn to **232**. If you kill the bear, you barely have time to recover before the another bear comes bounding out of the foliage to avenge her mate.

FEMALE BEAR Skill: 8 Stamina: 8

If you *Escape*, turn to **232**. If you fight on and win, turn to **76**.

264

You have no time to celebrate however. The first wave of attacking soldiers has used the distraction of the birdmen assault to reach the city walls and is now hurriedly trying to climb them with siege ladders and ropes and grapples. You and your fellow archers rain arrows down upon them. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill score, you have shot and killed one of the soldiers clambering towards you. Otherwise you have missed. Repeat the procedure nine times. If you manage to kill six or more, turn to **347**. If you kill only five or less, turn to **43**.

265

A vicious squad of birdmen fly over the wall. They let fly with barbed arrows and throw bags of exploding powder at the city's defenders. The archers on the battlements are hard pressed to shoot down these fast moving enemies and many are felled by the cruel arrows of these foul creatures. What's worse is that the birdmen are now dropping their exploding powder on the infantry stationed by the gates. One bag falls in the middle of your squadron sending several members of it, including yourself, flying (deduct 5 Stamina points). If you are still alive, you rise to your feet and dust yourself off. Other members of your squadron are not so lucky: all around you are dead soldiers. Your commanding officer keeps a cool head however and rallies you back together. Soon the archers on the battlements succeed in chasing the birdmen off. Turn to **292**.

266

The little man whimpers in alarm as you thunder towards him and he ducks into an alleyway hoping to give you the slip. Roll two dice. If you roll less than your Skill score, turn to **243**. If you roll equal to or greater than your Skill score, turn to **391**.

267

You greedily devour the body of the fallen ranger (restore up to 4 lost Stamina points). Once you have had your fill, you decide to head south as the northern route will take you back towards the Foulbrood River. Turn to **45**.

268

You ride your horse through the gorge, desperately hoping it will grow narrower so that the manticore will not be able to get at you. You turn a corner to face the sight you were dreading: the path you have been following leads up out of the protection of the gorge and into the open. You shout words of encouragement to your steed and race out onto the open ground. You dare not look back as you hear the flapping of the manticore's wings just behind you and feel its hot breath on your back. Suddenly, your shoulders are

grasped by two strong paws. The manticore hoists you out of your saddle and carries you into the air. It flies a short distance ahead and then releases you. You plummet towards the hard scrubland. Roll a die. If you roll a one, turn to **373**. If you roll anything else, turn to **57**.

269

The doragors grab you roughly with their calloused hands and march you across the market square to the town jail. People stop and stare at the odd sight of six monsters marching a barbarian into jail and it makes your blood boil to hear their titters. The jailor allows the doragors to put you in a cell, but keeps his distance from these temperamental creatures. You are given a meal of stew and some comfy straw to sleep on, so all in all it could be worse. Restore up to 2 lost Stamina points.

The next morning you are released and your sword and backpack are returned to you. Any gold you had however, is taken by the jailor to pay for your expenses. Stretching your stiff muscles, you exit the jail and enter the town. Turn to **239**.

270

You are almost upon him when he stumbles on a cobblestone and struggles to regain his footing. Before he can do so, you leap on his back and bring his head down on the hard cobblestones. You stand up and gaze down at his still form. At first you are worried that you may have killed him, but then you notice he is breathing shallowly. With a prod of your booted foot you spin him round on to his back and leave your sword hovering over his throat. His eyes blink open.

‘Well Caius, are you going to tell me where Saul is or not?’ you sneer.

In a slow voice, Caius tells you that Saul plans to lead the army against Ximoran, the capital city of the kingdom. You start at this information - surely Saul doesn't have the audacity to lead such a small army against a walled city like Ximoran. Record the codeword 'grass' on your adventure sheet.

‘How did you survive the cross, barbarian?’ gurgles Caius.

‘Because I'm made of sterner stuff than you, Caius,’ you laugh before heading back towards the centre of town. Turn to **318**.

271

‘Excellent,’ says the sorcerer.

He summons the goblin serving girl and tells her to return your sword to you. She does so and then Poomchukker rises from his seat and pulls a book from a shelf. The book was

clearly a disguised switch as a section of the bookcase slides back to reveal torchlit stone steps leading downward. Poomchukker beckons you to follow him and you do so, although you are still somewhat suspicious of the wizard. Eventually you emerge on to the balcony of a stone arena. Poomchukker takes a gem from his pocket and points it at you. There is a bright flash of light and suddenly you find yourself in the centre of the arena.

‘You wait here,’ says the sorcerer. ‘I wish to fetch my friends.’ He then heads back up the stone steps. You wait anxiously for his return. You cannot see any way of exiting the arena and you doubt you could climb the smooth walls.

About half an hour later, Poomchukker returns accompanied by a man and two women much like himself: overweight and garishly dressed. They take their seats in the balcony and Poomchukker claps his hands. A section of the arena wall slides open and a massive rhinoceros charges through, steam billowing from its nostrils and its horn pointed at you.

RHINOCEROS Skill:10 Stamina:11

If you win, turn to **186**.

272

You hunch your shoulders and growl at the Master. He looks alarmed and draws his sword as Fenris growls back at you and bars your way. If you have the codeword 'frog' recorded, turn to **387**. Otherwise, turn to **354**.

273

‘As you wish,’ says the wizard. He claps his hands and the raised sword of the tree swoops down towards you. It is the last thing you ever see.

274

From what you can make out, the bird seems to be squawking about your past and a control which you need to fight off. You strain your mind, trying to think of your earlier life. You cannot remember being a cub. You cannot even remember your life before three months ago. You start to panic and bark loudly. If you have the codeword 'will' recorded, turn to **314**. Otherwise, turn to **340**.

275

No sooner have you killed Caius than a heavy blow hits the back of your head and you black out.

You open your eyes to find yourself tied to a stake in the town square. You are

surrounded by angry townspeople, most of whom are carrying large stones. The murdered serving girl was the Mayor of Fenmarge's niece and the townspeople blame you for her death. Realizing they plan to stone you as punishment, you struggle desperately to free yourself from your bonds. You have made little progress when the first stone smashes into your head and you lose consciousness, never to regain it.

276

While you bring down many of the birdmen, a few manage to slip past you and wound you with their arrows and swords (deduct 4 Stamina points). But in the end, the birdmen cannot continue their assault on such skilled marksmen and they flee into the distance. Turn to **264**.

277

Listening closely to the voices, you hear one of them asking how much he is being paid while another assures him he will be well rewarded if he opens the gates as agreed. They are plotting to open the city gates so the attacking army can pour into the city! Without wasting a moment, you draw your sword and charge down the alley towards them. One is a dwarf and the other is a man wearing the armour of the Ximoran infantry. They look surprised to see you and draw their weapons. In this narrow alleyway you can fight them one at a time.

SOLDIER Skill:8 Stamina:5

DWARF Skill:7 Stamina:7

If you win, turn to **393**.

278

The bed in your room is very comfortable and you soon drift off into a deep sleep . . .

. . . You see two wolves growling at each other. Finally one leaps at the other and tears out its throat, silencing it forever. The victorious wolf has no time to celebrate however before it is confronted by a much bigger wolf. The wolf growls at this newcomer, but the new wolf merely barks once. The smaller wolf stops growling and begins wagging its tail happily. The larger wolf then stalks off and the smaller one follows it obediently . . .

. . . You are awakened by a cock crowing in the distance. You may restore up to 3 lost Stamina points for your rest. Pushing the dream to the back of your mind, you leap out of bed, already looking forward to the battle you know will come today. Turn to **225**.

279

You find the Master of Wolves leaning against the wall of his log cabin. A large black wolf sits loyally by him. This wolf is called Fenris by the Master and he is second only to you in terms of strength.

The Master sees you return. 'You took your time', he says in his gruff voice. 'I was getting worried.' He raises his hands and mumbles some words and you find yourself instantly rejuvenated (restore your Stamina score to its Initial level).

If you have the codeword 'mind' recorded on your adventure sheet, turn to **272**. Otherwise, turn to **176**.

280

'Have it your way,' the portly sorcerer rumbles. 'You can stay here and rot.'

With that, he closes the trapdoor, enclosing you in darkness once more. Only this time the darkness will never end.

281

You quickly swing your leg in an arc and fiercely knock his leg out from under him. He falls to the ground with a crash doing 2 Stamina points of damage to him. The crowd applaud your resourcefulness as you scramble to your feet. The man-orc has also risen and is circling you warily. Will you:

Try a punch in the face?

Turn to **202**.

Try shoulder charging him?

Turn to **97**.

Risk attempting to throw him?

Turn to **168**.

282

There is nothing you can do except mutter that you will avenge them. They nod at you, but it is clear that they think you are just spouting empty promises. You urge your horse along the highway south-east, disappointed that you could do nothing more. Deduct 1 Luck point and turn to **129**.

283

You have decided you have wasted enough time in this clearing, when you hear a voice crying out for you to wait. You turn round to see the head of the dead minstrel raised and his eyes staring right at you! You draw your sword, wondering what black magic has enabled the dead to speak. The minstrel, unfazed by your sword, begins to speak in a chilling whisper:

'In life I was known as Gerhardt. I was an accomplished lute player and was respected by men and admired by women. I had arranged to meet one such woman in these woods. But as I was waiting for her, I heard approaching voices and hid in the bushes. A group of

men and a group of orcs met in the clearing and the orcs agreed to aid the men in a battle. They will hide their forces until after the first assault and then attack. I was still hiding when I got an uncontrollable urge to sneeze. I couldn't stop myself and I was discovered and grabbed by many orcs who left me as you see me now. Please, noble warrior, give me a proper burial.'

You nod and the minstrel's corpse grows quiet and still once more. You cut him down and bury him with reverence in the clearing.

Before you leave, you search the orc corpses and find enough food for two provisions and you may take one of the swords if you need one. Record the codeword 'ambush' before turning to **37**.

284

Your squadron is still celebrating its minor victory when a brigade of orcs break from their hiding place in the nearby woods and charge towards you, cutting down any of their fleeing allies who get in their way. Your commanding officer urges you to fall back to the city, but the brigade of orcs fall upon the squadron before you can do so. You must fight three orcs one at a time.

FIRST ORC Skill:7 Stamina:5

SECOND ORC Skill:8 Stamina:6

THIRD ORC Skill:6 Stamina:7

If you defeat the orcs, turn to **233**.

285

The Master fits a sturdy backpack on your shoulders (this backpack contains enough salted pork for five meals). The Master then leads you out of his home and you blink as you emerge into the morning sunlight.

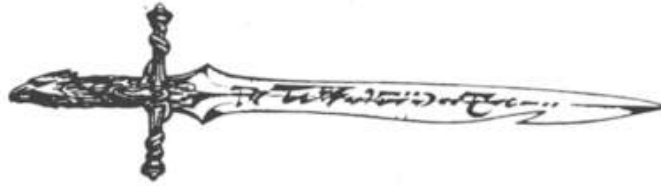
'Good luck, my friend,' he says. 'Take the trail east and then head south and that should take you to the village of Fenmarge. They're a bunch of foolish yokels there, so you should have no trouble finding out from them where Saul and the army are headed.'

He then gives you a hearty slap on the back and re-enters his hut. You shake your head at the circumstances that led you to have such an undesirable ally before leaving the clearing via a trail heading east. Turn to **332**.

286

Gain 1 Luck point for defeating this mighty opponent. You decide to sever the manticore's head from its body and to store it in your backpack for safe-keeping: a grisly trophy, but proof of a truly mighty deed.

Once you have taken a few seconds to get your breath back after your ordeal, you direct your horse southwards, hoping to rejoin the road soon. Turn to **184**.



287

As you progress south, you notice the small unhealthy-looking trees have several silky strands attached to them. These webs get increasingly larger as you continue southwards - you are approaching the Master of Spiders' clearing.

You reach the edge of the clearing and espy the Master sitting on his silver throne, conversing with his arachnid minions. He certainly will not be pleased to see you again. Crouching low, you stick to the edge of the clearing and creep southwards. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **185**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **138**.

288

Stealthily, you make your way to the edge of the camp without being seen. You are about to progress further inwards when a squad of soldiers starts heading in your direction and you have to duck behind a rack of weaponry to avoid being seen. You realize it would be suicide to try exploring the camp and you decide to head back to the copse. You may take a sword from the rack if you need one however before you take your leave. Once you have crept back towards the copse, you untie your horse and remount. Turn to **199**.

289

The chief yells for his subjects to protect him as you leap on him.

SWAMP ORC CHIEF Skill:9 Stamina:8

If you defeat him in six rounds or less, turn to **104**. If he is still alive after six rounds, turn to **238**.

290

Your last blow knocks him off his feet and sends him rolling backwards . . . straight into a muddy sinkhole. He desperately tries to pull himself out, but the pressure of the sinkhole drags him down further and further until only his outstretched hand remains, groping futilely at thin air until that too goes under.

'It is over,' says a soft voice behind you. You turn round in alarm.

Turn to **400**.

291

The cave entrance is too narrow for the manticore to enter and you breathe a sigh of relief as you see a dark tunnel leading from the cave.

As you follow the tunnel, the ceiling begins to get lower and lower and you are forced to dismount and to lead your horse by its reins. You are just guiding your steed around some stalagmites when you see two emerald eyes staring at you from the darkness. You barely have time to draw your sword before you are accosted by a spindly creature covered in grey fur with a long head and cat-like eyes. The creature is a N'yadach, a remnant of a once powerful race that has now become feral. It wields a vicious spiked club and bares its poisonous fangs at you.

N'YADACH Skill:6 Stamina:8

Because it is so dark in the cave, you must subtract one from your Attack Strength for this combat only. If you win, turn to **350**.

292

No sooner have the birdmen fled than you hear a great deal of action outside the walls. Grappling hooks are thrown over the ramparts and siege ladders placed up against the walls: the enemy soldiers have used the distraction of the birdmen to approach the city walls! The archers do their best to shoot them down before they can pull themselves up, but you stand ready in the off-chance that any find their way down to you. If you have the codeword 'safe' recorded on your adventure sheet, turn to **66**. If not, turn to **163**.

293

While you get your breath back after that gruelling battle, you perceive that the city's defenders are managing to put their superior numbers into effect and are prevailing against the now leaderless knights. Soon the remaining knights are defeated and the city gates are closed before any more can join the fray. You rejoin your squadron just as the lookout on the battlements announces that a battalion of orcs has broken out of their hiding place in the nearby woods and are advancing menacingly on the city. Turn to **61**.

294

You and one other contestant succeed in shooting an apple from the tree. The crowd applaud your marksmanship as the announcer leads you both to the final target. Both of

you are told to halt fifty feet away from it and to fire simultaneously. Whomever gets the nearest to the bull's-eye wins. Sweat appears on your brow as you draw back your bowstring to make the final shot of the contest. Roll two dice and add the total to your Skill score. Then do the same for your opponent who has a Skill of 9. If your overall total is equal to or higher than his, turn to **299**. If it is lower, turn to **122**.

295

The chainmail fits snugly and will protect you in future combats. While you are wearing it, you may add one to your Attack Strength in battle. Pleased with your new armour, you guide your horse out of the cavern and down a new tunnel. Turn to **130**.

296

Your squadron ventures forth on to the battlefield, but does not move far enough away from the open gates as to leave them exposed. You manage to cause some damage to the enemy, but do not succeed in driving them off. Your commanding officer gives the signal to return inside the walls and the great gates are closed behind you.

Suddenly, there is a cry from a soldier on the battlements. A group of orcs that had been hiding in the nearby woods have joined forces with the attacking horde. Their combined forces will not be easy to beat. Record the codeword 'strong' on your adventure sheet before turning to **61**.

297

You are just recovering from the assault of the birdmen when a fresh emergency arrives. The first wave of attacking soldiers has used the distraction of the birdmen assault to reach the city walls and is now hurriedly trying to climb them with siege ladders and ropes and grapples. You and your fellow archers rain arrows down upon them, but given the losses you sustained against the birdmen, you will each have to take down many soldiers indeed. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill score, you have shot and killed one of the soldiers clambering towards you. Otherwise you have missed. Repeat the procedure nine times. If you manage to kill eight or more, turn to **347**. If you kill only seven or less, turn to **43**.

298

Your arrow whizzes past his ear and before you can take another shot, he succeeds in opening the gates. As they creak open, the attacking soldiers pour in. Most go for the infantry waiting for them, but some race up to the battlements to attack the archers. You try to shoot down as many as possible before they reach you. For each enemy soldier listed below, roll one die. If you roll 4-6, you shoot the soldier and kill him, otherwise you miss. You must then fight all the soldiers you missed one at a time.

FIRST SOLDIER Skill:7 Stamina:7
SECOND SOLDIER Skill:8 Stamina:3
THIRD SOLDIER Skill:7 Stamina:8
FOURTH SOLDIER Skill:9 Stamina:5
FIFTH SOLDIER Skill:8 Stamina:5
SIXTH SOLDIER Skill:7 Stamina:6

If you kill them all, turn to **88**.

299

Both arrows fly into the target. From this distance they look equally close to the bull's-eye. The announcer saunters over and measures the distances. He then declares you the winner by the narrowest of margins. You are presented with your prize - twelve gold pieces. You pocket them and then make your way past the cheering townspeople to the market stalls. Turn to **160**.

300

The decoy wolf has been killed and the Master of Spiders now turns his attention to you. He raises his right hand and a green ball of fire forms in it before hurtling towards you. If you have the codeword 'lost' recorded, turn to **221**. Otherwise, turn to **231**.

301

You dismount and pass the reins of your horse to a nearby villager to hold before charging in the front door of the burning house. The inside is like a nightmare. Smoke is in your eyes and flames leap up at you. All around you hear the groaning of timbers as the fire ravages the house's infrastructure. You hear a baby crying from the back room and stagger through the intense heat towards it. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **165**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **206**.

302

The ranger can't understand what you are trying to tell him, but he senses that you need his help and that you may be under some sort of enchantment. He takes an amulet from around his neck and hangs it on your own. This amulet allows you to add one point to your Attack Strength in all future battles. The ranger rubs your head and then leaves the clearing heading north. You decide to take the southern trail as this is the quickest way to the Master of Wolves' home. Turn to **45**.

303

The night is cold and you get little sleep on the rough ground. Thankfully you are left unmolested by the numerous cutpurses who dwell in Fenmarge - they know better than to rouse a tired barbarian! The next morning you arise stiff and groggy. Deduct 1 Stamina

point and turn to **239**.

304

Your foot is mere inches from his face when his arm shoots out faster than you would have thought possible for a creature of his size and he grabs your leg and flings you onto your back. Deduct 2 Stamina points. You barely have a second to recover before he raises his foot to stamp on your head. Will you:

Try to grab his foot before he can do so?

Turn to **201**.

Try to sweep his other leg from under him with your leg?

Turn to **281**.

305

The man-orc lifts his arm and calls out that he wants to surrender. The dwarf announces that the fight is over and you are the winner. The crowd let out a cheer and you raise your arms in triumph. The dwarf gives you a potion to drink and has someone patch up your wounds. Restore 4 Stamina points. The dwarf offers you a choice of two prizes. You may have either 8 gold pieces or a potion of strength. The potion can be used once to restore your Stamina to its initial level. Once you have chosen your prize, you take your leave of the arena with the crowd still chanting your name. Turn to **213**.

306

The wolf the orc is riding suddenly rears up and throws its rider off. You quickly put the orc to death while the wolf runs off into the distance. Gain 1 Luck point and turn to **33**.

307

You emerge into a clearing where three trails meet. The trees here are decidedly odd looking. They are small and greenish and their gnarled barks give the impression of faces. Branches resembling skeletal arms jut out from the sickly trunks. Oddly, some of them even look like they are holding wooden swords. You sense a movement behind you and spin round, sword in hand, only to see more of the trees. One of them looks like it has a sinister grin, but it must be the morning light playing tricks on you. You decide you have had enough of this spooky clearing and try to make your exit, but suddenly the trees all turn towards you. This is not your imagination: the trees are really alive! With an inhuman scream, the sword trees uproot themselves from the ground and charge at you. Fight them all as one enemy.

SWORD TREES Skill:9 Stamina:12.

Should the trees win two attack rounds in a row, turn immediately to **94**. If you defeat them without this happening, turn to **64**.

308

You enter a large, lavishly decorated room. Soldiers in plate armour line the walls and a massive window gazes out on the majestic city. Between you and the window is a semi-circular table and seated around this table are the Council of Seven - the seven most powerful people in the country. You know them from reputation and can now put names to the faces.

Sitting leftmost is Kolgor Maxos; a man dressed in azure robes, with a long white beard and holding an oaken staff. He is the chief wizard of the city and one of the most powerful enchanters in these lands. Next to him is a fat middle-aged man with a grumpy expression: Bloffor Tarnos, chief tax collector of Ximoran. On his left is the slender form of Jalia Nillaire, high priestess of the city. Due to the religious nature of Ximoran, Jalia is usually the most highly respected member of the council, but in the current state of emergency, the man sitting to her left has eclipsed her influence: General Askalo Belgar, in charge of the city's defence and leader of its armies. He is clad from head to toe in chainmail and he strokes his blond beard thoughtfully as he glares at you with piercingly blue eyes. Next to him is Howe Glockheed, a strong dwarf with a bright red beard. As head of the conduct of trade for the city, he is an integral part of the council. On his left is a tall, thin man with a shock of ginger hair: Fergam Moonshy, in charge of city maintenance. Lastly is a small, jolly looking woman wearing a beret: Felicia Drinlass. As head of the city's art patronage, she has little knowledge of warfare.

All seven regard you silently for a moment before Fergam Moonshy asks you in a reedy voice what news you bring them. What codewords do you have? If you have:

'aerial'	turn to 392 .
'coward'	turn to 132 .
'ambush'	turn to 107 .
None of the above	turn to 51 .

309

You race towards your opponent and then leap into the air sending your leg out in a flying kick. But faster than you would have thought possible, the man-orc sidesteps to the left and you fall to the ground painfully. Deduct 1 Stamina point. As you are endeavouring to rise to your feet, the man-orc kicks you hard in the ribs. Deduct 2 more Stamina points. As you double up in pain, you feel a hand grip round your throat and your opponent hoists you up by your neck and squeezes tightly in an effort to choke you. Will you:

Try poking him in the eyes?	Turn to 52 .
Try to hammer his arm away from your throat with your fist?	Turn to 246 .

310

You do not have to wait long before a soldier walks near your hiding place in the trees. He is wearing a blue cloth tied round his arm and a heavy cloak with a hood. By his delicate features, you judge him to be an elf. Once he is nearly upon you, you leap out at

him and he hurriedly draws his sword to defend himself.

ELF Skill:7 Stamina:7

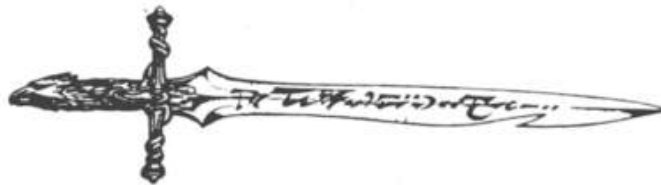
If you win, turn to **21**.

311

You find a stall that has several articles you may be interested in. It is run by a greedy little man named Zacchaeus who rubs his hands together eagerly as you peruse his goods. The prices are listed below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>To Buy</u>	<u>To Sell</u>
Provisions	3 gold pieces per meal	-
Potion of Skill	12 gold pieces	3 gold pieces
Potion of Strength	12 gold pieces	3 gold pieces
Potion of Fortune	12 gold pieces	3 gold pieces
Chainmail	30 gold pieces	10 gold pieces
Soft Boots	-	2 gold pieces
Sword	-	6 gold pieces
Manticore Head	-	12 gold pieces

You may not carry more than ten provisions. A potion of skill will restore any lost Skill points. A potion of strength will restore any lost Stamina points. A potion of fortune will allow you to increase your initial Luck score by 1 point and restore your current Luck to this new initial score. These potions can only be used once each and the market only sells one of each kind. The chainmail will allow you to add one to your Attack Strength in battle. If you sell a suit of chainmail that you already have, remember that you can no longer use its bonus. You cannot wear two coats of chainmail at the same time! You may only sell your sword if you have another one spare. Once you have finished here, return to **192** and choose again.



312

You pick up your bow and return to aiding your fellow archers in shooting down the climbers. The attackers back away and the gates are flung open as the infantry charges into them and sends them fleeing.

Just then, a brigade of orcs burst from their hiding place in the trees and charge towards

the city, cutting through their fleeing allies to get there. The city gates are closed in the nick of time, but the orcs are not going to give up so easily. Turn to **384**.

313

The crossbow bolt thuds into your side (deduct 2 Stamina points). If you are still alive, you manage to stay in your saddle and soon leave the enraged rancher behind, shaking his fist in impotent rage. Turn to **143**.

314

You concentrate and have a vague memory of a man with elaborately styled white hair telling you how to increase your willpower. But why would he teach a wolf such a secret? You try to recollect the technique he taught you and focus on your earlier life. You feel something trying to hold you back, but with your technique you fight against it. You begin to growl with the intense mental strain . . . and then something snaps. It all comes flooding back to you. You were a human, turned into a wolf by the foul sorcerer whom you have been forced to serve. But no longer! You give a deep growl. You may be doomed to this bestial form for the rest of your life, but you will get your revenge on the Master of Wolves. Record the codeword 'mind' on your adventure sheet and add 1 Luck point. Sensing you have your memory back, the eagle seizes you in its talons and places you at the foot of its great tree before returning to its nest. Turn to **134**.

315

You leave the house and shake your head at the anxious mother. Distraught, she barges past you into the house. A few seconds later, she crawls out of a window holding her baby close to her chest. Then the whole building collapses. You cannot help but feel a bit of a coward for giving up so easily. Deduct 1 Luck point. Retrieving your horse, you remount and head in the direction of the raucous laughter. Turn to **218**.

316

You trudge through the soft grass of the trail. This close to the Foulbrood River the ground is very boggy indeed, but with careful footing, you traverse the trail without great mishap.

Eventually you arrive in a small clearing. Trails lead east and west, but that is not what is occupying your attention. Dozens of tiny scorpions are swarming out of the reeds behind you and you will be surrounded if you do not move quickly. Roll one die. If you roll 1-3, you manage to slip past them and head west (turn to **226**). If you roll 4-6, you are forced to turn east (turn to **127**). If you want, you can *test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, you may choose which direction to head in. Otherwise, you must go by the roll of the die.

317

Several hours of riding later you come across the ruins of Shakista, the old capital of Klarash, before the death of King Orien and the formation of the Ximoran Protectorate that resulted from his death. The formerly majestic city has little of its original splendour left. Few buildings remain, most have either fallen into rubble or have caved in. Fallen stone pillars litter the cobbled streets. The King's Highway continues through the ruins and crosses the Catsblood River via a stone bridge. It is at this bridge you gaze upon the sight you were looking for: the rear guard of Saul's army.

There are about forty of them in all and none are paying much attention to the road and so have not seen you yet. You decide not to tempt fate however and urge your horse behind a crumbling stone wall. In order to get to Ximoran you must cross the river somehow. If you do not wish to risk taking on the vanguard, you could head west into the wilderness and look for a suitable place to ford the river downstream. Otherwise, there are a few options open to you. The first is that you try to charge through them - a risky venture for certain and not even worth contemplating if you do not have a sword. If you have a longbow, you could try firing a few shots at them, hoping that when they scatter for cover leaving a clear way to the bridge. There is also the possibility that these soldiers may still be loyal to you, in which case it might be worth riding up to them and greeting them. Will you:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| Head west and try to cross downstream? | Turn to 210 . |
| Charge into them (providing you have a sword)? | Turn to 380 . |
| Try to pick a few of them off with your longbow (if you have one)? | Turn to 169 . |
| Ride up to them and hail them? | Turn to 8 . |

318

As you make your way through the market square, you notice a crowd forming in the centre and you decide to investigate. A circle of crates has been arranged and on top of one of them an excited dwarf is asking who would like to fight in his makeshift arena. If you wish to enter and maybe gain whatever prize is being offered, turn to **396**. If not, you take your leave of the arena. Turn to **213**.

319

You are just contemplating what to do next when you hear a scream from the inn. The townspeople look around, stunned and unsure what to do, but you do not have this cowardly caution of the civilized. You dash into the inn and see the cause of the commotion. Caius is standing at the far end of the tavern holding the young serving wench in front of him with a knife held to her throat! Three of his cronies stand around him with their swords drawn.

‘I know who tipped you off about me, barbarian dog,’ Caius yells. ‘And once my boys have killed you, I'm going to enjoy gutting this little minx.’

The poor girl stares at you in panic as the three swordsmen advance on you. Fight all

three at the same time.

FIRST SWORDSMAN Skill:6 Stamina:6

SECOND SWORDSMAN Skill:5 Stamina:8

THIRD SWORDSMAN Skill:6 Stamina:5

If you kill the first two swordsmen in ten attack rounds or less, turn to **20**. If not, keep fighting until you kill all three. Then turn to **251**.

320

You wave your arms desperately and yell out that you mean them no harm. Three swamp orcs step cautiously out from their hiding place, their bows ready to fire at you in case of treachery on your part. If you have a crescent mark on your shoulder, turn to **336**. If not, turn to **242**.

321

As you approach the doorway of the stone building, a burly troll bars your way and demands two gold pieces as an entry fee. If you can and wish to pay, cross off 2 gold pieces and turn to **145**. If you don't have the money or you think the hypnotist's show is not really worth the expense, return to **192** and choose again.

322

You follow Poomchukker and Doctor Flaude into a room containing a mattress and a bench covered with rather sharp and cruel-looking instruments. The doctor gives you a small pill and tells you to lie down on the mattress. As you do so, you feel the pill doing its work and you grow drowsy and your body becomes numb. Your last vision before sleep hits you is that of Doctor Flaude advancing on you with a scalpel. Roll a die. If you roll:

1-3

Turn to **141**.

4-6

Turn to **187**.

323

. . . You see two wolves growling at each other. Finally one leaps at the other and tears out its throat, silencing it forever. The victorious wolf has no time to celebrate however before it is confronted by a much bigger wolf. The wolf growls at this newcomer, but the new wolf merely barks once. The smaller wolf stops growling and begins wagging its tail happily. The larger wolf then stalks off and the smaller one follows it obediently . . .

. . . You awaken with a start from your dream. You may restore up to 2 Stamina points for your rest. You clamber out of your sleeping bed, knowing today battle will commence. Turn to **225**.

324

At last you find an inn which does not have a "full" sign on the window. It is an upmarket establishment called "The Gilded Fox" and will doubtless be very expensive.

You enter the foyer and are greeted by a man with a pencil-thin moustache and a haughty expression. When you ask him how much to stay for one night you start at his reply: ten gold pieces! If you can and wish to pay this extreme price, turn to **257**. If you cannot or will not pay that much, you take your leave of the place. Turn to **91**.

325

The orcs' morale crumbles at the loss of their chieftain. Many are cut down easily by the city's defenders and many more flee out of the city. The city gates are heaved shut after them with a resounding thud. Turn to **341**.

326

You have no time to waste. You leap into the saddle of your new horse and gallop out of town onto the highway that leads south-east towards Ximoran. Dark storm clouds gather as you leave Fenmarge and soon it begins to pour down with rain. A bad omen perhaps?

You follow the road, looking for signs of the army's passing, but visibility is terrible through the torrents of rain and the road is awash with water and mud. You doubt even Saul himself could track in these conditions. Saul's tracking skills were always superhuman. It is one of the reasons why he came to your attention. You turn away from such thoughts and concentrate on following the road through the sheets of rain. Roll one die. If you roll:

1-2

Turn to **377**.

3-4

Turn to **182**.

5-6

Turn to **119**.

327

One of the two swordsmen spots you out of the corner of his eye and yells to attract his partner. Both turn to face you and run towards you, waving their swords frantically in the air. Fight each in turn.

FIRST SWORDSMAN Skill:7 Stamina:8

SECOND SWORDSMAN Skill:8 Stamina:7

If you win, turn to **337**.

328

The trail south does not go far before you are faced with a wide, fast-flowing stream. It is

too wide for even you to leap across, but it does not look too deep so you could probably wade across it. You plunge one foot into it experimentally and find it is quite warm. You wade out more confidently.

You are half-way across the stream, when a large green beast burst from the water, its fanged teeth reaching for your throat. You must fight the giant eel. Due to the unsteadiness of your footing, you must subtract one point from your Attack Strength for this fight only.

GIANT EEL Skill:7 Stamina:7

If you win, turn to **22**.

329

Your squadron is completely overwhelmed. You try your best to shoot down the birdmen, but there are so many and they move so fast. You take several hits from their cruel barbed arrows before your squadron succeeds in chasing the birdmen off (deduct 6 Stamina points). Turn to **297**.

330

The trail gets increasingly boggy as you head west and insects fly onto your body, irritating your fur. The vegetation opens up to reveal a T-junction. Another trail leads to the south, while the trail you are on continues west. But another creature lurks in the clearing. It looks like a large fox, but its orange fur is flickering like fire. You have faced such enemies before: it is a firefox. Whenever you win an attack round against the firefox, its body will erupt into raging flames. If it wins the next attack round, it will burn you for 5 points of Stamina damage. After that round it will fight on as normal, but if it is hit again it will use its flame power again unless it is dead. Every time it uses its power it will lose 1 Skill and 1 Stamina point. With a snarl, the firefox bounds towards you.

FIREFOX Skill:7 Stamina:6

If you win, you continue westwards and reach the Master of Wolves' clearing. Turn to **279**.

331

Soon the villagers' bucket chain brings the fire under control. Not long after, the fire is out, but the majority of the village is a smoking ruin. The villagers thank you for aiding them, but they have nothing to give you in way of thanks. You are just about to leave when the village headman stops you.

‘My thanks for your help, friend,’ he says. ‘A group of soldiers came to the village and demanded we give them food and supplies. When we said we had none to spare, they set

fire to a house and rode away - all except those two sadists you dealt with.'

You reply that these men are planning to take Ximoran and you intend to stop them.

The headman nods. 'I expected as much,' he says. 'So I wrote this letter for you,' he says, passing you a scroll. 'It is a letter of recommendation. Fergam Moonshy of the Council of Seven in Ximoran is an old friend of mine. Show him this letter and the council will trust you.'

You thank the headman before leaving the village and continuing to ride south-west towards Ximoran. Turn to **250**.

332

The trees begin to get sparser and the ground gets more moist as you follow the trail east. The morning sun warms you with its welcome heat, invigorating you after your ordeal last night.

Your pleasant stroll is suddenly interrupted by several arrows flying out from behind some boulders to your left. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **120**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **196**.

333

You feed on the bodies of the two swordsmen (regain up to 4 lost Stamina pints). Once you have had your fill, you decide to take your leave of this clearing. Three trails lead away from this clearing. The northern one will lead you further away from the Master of Wolves' home so you ignore it. You may take the trail east, providing you did not come from that direction (turn to **16**) or you may turn west instead (turn to **367**).

334

You raise your sword and roar at the oncoming knights in a brave, but incredibly foolish act of defiance. The lance of the first knight thuds into your chest and ends you toppling to the ground. Before you can rise, your body is trampled into pulp by the hooves of several horses.

335

You lift him above your head, your muscles straining to support his considerable weight. With one colossal effort, you throw him to the ground where he collapses in a heap groaning. You do 3 Stamina points of damage to him. Will you:

Try to shoulder charge him as he's getting up?

Turn to **97**.

Try a flying kick to his face?

Turn to **309**.

336

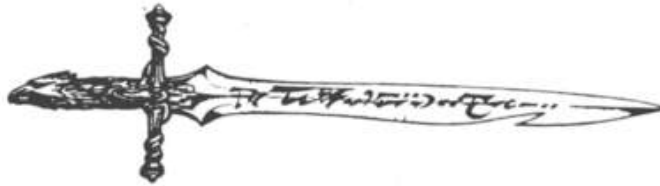
The orcs notice the mark on your naked shoulder and begin conferring with each other in a guttural language. You begin to get suspicious and contemplate attacking them when one of them turns to you.

‘Human,’ he says, clearly finding the common tongue difficult to speak, ‘you wear the sign of honour and are a friend to the swamp orcs.’

With that, he walks forward and embraces you. Pleased as you are to avoid an unnecessary fight, you don't particularly want a clammy, warty thing to have its arms wrapped around you and you shrug it off.

‘Please, accept these gifts,’ he says. One of the swamp orcs passes you his longbow and a quiver of arrows while another passes five gold pieces into your palm. You thank the orcs, but they reply it is the least they could do.

‘Take the trail south from here,’ says one of them. ‘That will lead you out of the swamp.’ You wave goodbye to the orcs and follow the trail south. Gain 1 Luck point, then turn to **211**.



337

The two swordsmen lie dead on the marshy ground and the flies already begin to gather round them. If you have the codeword 'mind' recorded, turn to **23**. Otherwise, turn to **333**.

338

‘Or maybe you're not,’ he continues, stroking his chin. ‘I can see you want to be free of the Master of Wolves, but the dryads are not a better alternative. They are not malicious beings, but they are totally selfish and would use you for whatever purpose suited them. I am the Master of Gardens by the way, and I have no love for the Master of Wolves. It would please me greatly if one of his minions broke free. But the only way you can do that is if you tackle him head on. I believe I can help you on that score.’

He waves his hands mystically and you suddenly feel stronger. You may add one to your Attack Strength for the next two battles you fight.

The Master of Gardens leads you out of the trees and back to the crossroads. You head southwards to face your destiny. Turn to **149**.

339

The knight tumbles forward, dragging his poor horse down with him. You see he has a javelin strapped to his back. Thinking this might be useful, you cut it loose and grab it. You then leave the alley via the entrance the knight used and emerge into the main street.

You spot several knights cutting through defenders like butter and skewering them with their wooden lances. One knight with a red plume on his helmet seems to be giving orders to the others. If you could eliminate him perhaps the defenders could defeat the rest. Raising your new javelin, you fling it with all your considerable strength at the leader. Roll two dice. If the total is less than your Skill, turn to **155**. If the total is equal to your Skill or greater, turn to **348**.

340

You rack your brain trying to concentrate on your past, but every time you try to think of it, you see an image in your mind's eye of the Master of Wolves holding aloft his wolf medallion. He is the only master you have ever known - what does it matter if you cannot remember every detail of your life? The bird gives a mournful cry before seizing you with its talons and placing you on the ground at the foot of the great tree before flying back to its nest. Turn to **134**.

341

As you use this slight respite in the battle to help the wounded, Askalo Belgar, general of Ximoran's armies, rides up to speak with your commanding officer. You cannot resist taking this opportunity to give your advice.

‘General,’ you bellow. ‘You should strike now while they're trying to regroup. If we wait in the city, they'll destroy us with their siege weapons.’

Askalo looks downwards in utter outrage that you would give advice to one his status, but his features soften as he thinks over what you've just said.

‘You are right barbarian,’ he says. ‘You shall join us for this final charge.’

You are provided with a horse and find yourself at the head of a column of cavalry. The city gates swing slowly open . . . turn to **388**.

342

The trail emerges into a grassy clearing. Three pathways lead off into the swamp apart from the one you came from. You are just considering which route to take when you hear a scuttling noise coming from the far side of the clearing. Suddenly, hundreds of tiny black scorpions pour out of the eastern trail. Quickly they cut off the route to the north. If you want to head north or east, the only way would be to battle through this hoard of venomous creatures. If you wish to attempt this, turn to **24**. If you would rather flee down the southern trail, turn to **259**.

343

You follow the trail southwards and emerge into a clearing that is covered with stinking pools of slime. The smell is atrocious and plays havoc with your sensitive nose. You are eager to leave this place, but you see a huge piece of meat lying on the clearing floor. The food looks delicious and you lick your lips greedily. If you wish to eat the meat, turn to **170**. Otherwise, you decide to leave the clearing. Turn to **148**.

344

You reach the chair and with cat-like reflexes you spring on Caius and grab him in a vicious headlock.

‘Guess who?’ you growl down his ear. Caius tries to struggle, but you merely tighten your grip.

‘You know I can strangle a bull with these arms,’ you say, ‘so you’d be no bother at all. Tell me where Saul is headed and I’ll let you keep your treacherous life.’

Fighting for his breath, Caius tells you that Saul plans to lead his army against Ximoran, the capital city of the kingdom. You release Caius and he collapses choking to the floor.

‘Farewell Caius,’ you say as you open the front door and head back to the centre of town. You had not expected that Saul would have the audacity to attack a fortified city like Ximoran. Perhaps he has made some allies? Record the codeword ‘grass’ on your adventure sheet before turning to **318**.

345

The eagle seizes you in its talons, but rather than try to squeeze the life out of you as you feared, it lifts you high into the sky, above the foul marsh and its many insects. If you had the orb of destiny, it falls from your mouth into the mire below. The eagle soars through the air, beating its wings confidently. It takes you far to the north, across the Foulbrood River which divides the swamp into north and south. Finally, you arrive at a clearing in the canopy of sickly vegetation. A huge tree stands in the centre of the clearing and a large nest is on top of it. The eagle drops you on the nest and alights in front of you. You expect it to attack, but instead it starts making some chirping sounds mixed with sharp cries. If you have the codeword ‘parrot’ recorded, turn to **161**. Otherwise, turn to **18**.

346

The arrow flies harmlessly into the trunk of a nearby tree. The wolves advance on the spot where it came from, but the stench of the swamp orc fades quickly. Clearly he decided to make his escape before he was surrounded. Some of the wolves are eager to give chase, but you silence their yelps with a harsh bark. You continue north. Turn to **361**.

347

Your excellent archery skills stop any pulling themselves onto the battlements to face you. If you have the codeword 'safe', turn to **312**. Otherwise, turn to **85**.

348

The javelin glances off his plate armour. He turns to you and he motions for two knights to join him as he charges towards you. You retreat back into the alley so that they can only approach one at a time, but this will still be a tough fight.

FIRST KNIGHT Skill:10 Stamina:8

SECOND KNIGHT Skill:9 Stamina:12

LEADER Skill:10 Stamina:7

If you prevail against these overwhelming odds, turn to **293**.

349

The red wine you are proffered in no way recompenses you for having to put up with this tedious fop. He talks on and on about his various "ripping" adventures and repeatedly refers to you as an "ignorant savage". Apparently he is the cousin of Feilicia Drinlass, one of the members of the Council of Seven. He was paying "Felly", as he calls her, a visit, when the army showed up and left him trapped in the city and forced to stay in a "hovel" like this. Every time you try to excuse yourself, he interrupts you with some mind-numbing anecdote. Finally you can take no more and you smash your fist into his jaw, sending him tumbling out of his seat and landing on the floor unconscious. You walk past the stunned patrons of the inn and stagger up to your bedchamber exhausted.

You climb into bed, but get very little sleep before the cock crows, signifying morning. Deduct 1 Stamina point before turning to **225**.

350

You put your back to the rock and gaze to either side of you to check if there are any more n'yadachs hiding in the darkness. Once you are satisfied that there are not, you continue to lead your horse through the narrow tunnel.

Eventually, you emerge into a reasonably large cavern, the walls of which are covered in some sort of phosphorous lichen so you can see properly. In one corner is a bed of straw - no doubt that of the n'yadach. You also find some dried meat which you can store in your pack - enough for two meals. There is also a suit of chainmail armour propped against one wall. Clearly the n'yadach had no use for it, but you might. If you wish to try it on, turn to **295**. If not, there is another tunnel extending out of the cavern and you guide your horse in that direction. Turn to **130**.

351

The Master of Frogs shakes his head. 'I guess you've more brawns than brains then,' he says. 'Still at least that means you might not need my help.'

With that he bounds past you, heading northwards. You shake your head and cross the bridge to continue your journey south. Turn to **316**.

352

You climb on to the battlements and join the rest of the Lion Squadron archers. Your commanding officer, a lean elf with a no nonsense attitude, talks you through your duties.

'As archers in a siege we have the most important role in battle. If we give any ground, the enemy will overwhelm the walls. But we're not going to let that happen, are we?'

There is a loud cheer in response to this, but you all turn silent as you gaze out at Saul's army. It is laid out in successive waves, each looking stronger than the last. Several siege leaders and grappling hooks are also in evidence. This will not be an easy battle.

The tension is suddenly broken by a great flapping of wings as a battalion of monstrous birdmen fly towards the city walls. Battle is to be joined sooner than expected. You all draw your bowstrings and fire at the cloud of rapidly approaching birdmen. If you have the codeword 'arrow' written on your adventure sheet, turn to **17**. If not, turn to **38**.

353

The crab grass is destroyed, but it will quickly regrow. Unfortunately, the other wolf is dead. You shake your head and decide to leave the clearing. You ignore a trail heading east as that will take you further away from the Master of Wolves' home. That leaves you with the western trail, providing you did not come from that direction (turn to **45**), and a trail heading southwards (turn to **287**).

354

You race towards Fenris and dive on him.

FENRIS Skill:9 Stamina:7

If you win, you see that the Master of Wolves is spinning his sword in anticipation - the sword is moving so fast it looks like a blur! The Master has cast a Weaponskill spell upon himself and if he hits you at any time in the first three attack rounds, you will lose 3 Stamina points rather than the usual 2. After three rounds, the spell will have worn off and he will fight on as normal.

‘Come on then!’ he yells.

MASTER OF WOLVES Skill:11 Stamina:10

If you reduce him to 2 Stamina points or less, turn to **290**.

355

You stick your head through the foliage and find a nest swarming with angry hornets. They fly towards you and try to sting you while you try to swat them with your paws. Fight them as a single enemy.

HORNETS Skill:11 Stamina:5

If you wish to *Escape*, you may do so by turning to **152**. If you fight on and win, turn to **65**.

356

Doragors may be strong, but they are certainly not fast. You have no trouble in losing them amongst the narrow streets. However, you cannot return to Poomchukker's home now. If you have another lead you wish to follow, turn to the appropriate section. If not, there is nothing to do but make your way back to the inn. Turn to **318**.

357

You step through the door to find yourself confronted by several men-at-arms with their swords held to your throat! One takes your horse's reins and pulls it away from you, while another closes and bolts the door you came through. Finally, the sergeant-at-arms, a man with a thin nose and a haughty expression, asks you your business here. If you have a letter of recommendation for Fergam Moonshy, turn to **6**. If not, turn to **40**.

358

The other wolves flee to the cover of some bushes to your left. If you wish to join them, turn to **25**. Otherwise, turn to **345** to face the giant eagle.

359

You knock loudly and grin as you hear shuffling inside as Caius goes to open the door. He flings it open with a smile on his face, but the smile falls when he sees who it is.

‘Not quite the young punk you were expecting,’ you mock and raise your sword. Caius only just manages to draw his sword in time to defend himself.

CAIUS Skill:9 Stamina:11

If you reduce his Stamina points to 3 or less, turn to **370**.

360

‘You're a very clever doggy, aren't you?’ says the Master of Frogs. ‘And such a clever little pup can't go unrewarded. Very well. When you are face to face with your master, I shall send you my aid.’

With that, he bounds past you northwards. Record the codeword 'frog' on your adventure sheet and restore 1 Luck point. You cross the bridge and follow the trail south, deeper into the swamp. Turn to **316**.

361

At last you reach the edge of the Master of Spiders' clearing. It is festooned with cobwebs and crawling with spiders ranging from miniscule in size to enormous. The Master of Spiders; a bald, evil looking man with a thick beard, sits on a silver throne, his eyes closed in deep meditation, an ornate wand resting on his lap. In the far right hand corner of the clearing is the orb of destiny, perched on a pedestal. You and your pack remain unseen for the time being. How will you go about stealing the orb?

Will you:

Send one wolf to attack the master while you use the distraction to steal the orb?

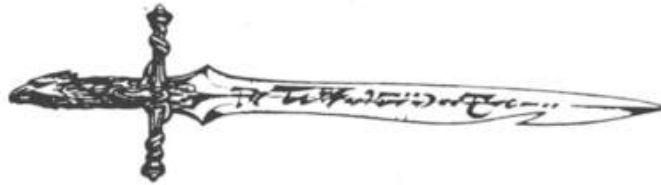
Turn to **50**.

Lead the whole pack into an attack on the Master?

Turn to **5**.

Sneak in on your own?

Turn to **84**.



362

Your soft paws make little noise on the soggy ground of the clearing and your fur blends in nicely with the backdrop of the trees. You reach the pedestal, grip the orb in your teeth and sneak back towards your fellow wolves. Turn to **128**.

363

Before you can get to the pedestal, the Master of Spiders appears right in front of it and then snatches the orb before disappearing again. Deduct 1 Luck point. With your head hung low in failure you join the rest of the pack at the southern end of the clearing. Turn to **128**.

364

The door is answered by a sour-faced man dressed in furs and wearing a raccoon skin hat. You tell him you are in desperate need of a horse. He looks you up and down critically and then demands twenty-five gold pieces for one of his horses. If you can afford his price and wish to buy a horse from him, cross off twenty-five gold pieces from your adventure sheet and turn to **62**. If you cannot or will not pay, the only alternative is to attack the man. Turn to **154**.

365

‘Well if it isn't a little doggy,’ he teases as you approach him. ‘A servant of the Master of Wolves, no doubt?’

You growl at this and the Master raises his eyebrows in amusement.

‘Maybe you're not like the other doggies. Perhaps you have no fondness for my fellow wizard after all?’

You bark in the affirmative.

He strokes his chin. ‘Wouldn't it be fun,’ he continues, ‘if that lupine loving fool was turned on by one of his own doggies, eh? But are you up to the challenge, wolf? Perhaps you might need some help.’

He is silent for a few seconds as he muses on this.

‘Okay, I'll help you, doggy - if you can answer this question. I don't help random idiots after all: A frog named Billabong sits at the edge of a pond. He leaps onto a lily pad ten millimetres from the edge. Then he leaps to a second lily pad thirty millimetres from the edge of the pond and then another sixty millimetres from the edge of the pond. In the end, he reaches the last lily pad which is the eighth he has leapt to. How many millimetres from the edge of the pool is this lily pad? You can write your answer on that clump of mud in front of you.’

Do you know the answer? If so, turn to the reference with the same number as that of your answer? If you cannot work it out, or guess wrongly, turn to **351**.

366

Your reactions are too slow and he brings his foot down hard on your head. Deduct 2 Stamina points. As he raises his foot to strike again, you decide to swipe his other leg from under him. Turn to **281**.

367

The path dips lower as you enter a crossroads in the swamp. The grass is less soggy here and the ground is firmer. The edges of the crossroads are heavily wooded. You are about to leave when you see a beautiful creature beckoning you from the foliage. Her skin is pale green and her long green hair cascades over her shoulders. She looks at you with her doe-like eyes and motions for you to follow her off the trail and into the trees. If you want to follow her, turn to **156**. If you would rather try to leave the clearing, turn to **166**.

368

The ranger seems unsurprised as you charge towards him and he draws his sword in a swift fluid motion.

RANGER Skill:10 Stamina:10

If you win, turn to **13**.

369

One rider spurts ahead of the other two and draws level with you. He raises his sword and moves in close to attack you. You draw your own sword and try to defend yourself while your horse still thunders towards the gates of Ximoran.

RIDER Skill:9 Stamina:10

If you are still alive after three attack rounds, turn to **241**.

370

He throws his sword down and drops to his knees.

'It's not fair!' he whines. 'You're dead. How am I meant to kill someone who's already dead?' You grab him roughly by the shoulder and haul him to his feet.

'I am as alive as you are fool,' you growl. 'But that may change if you don't tell me what I want to know. Where is Saul headed?!'

This is too much for Caius and he confesses that Saul intends to lead the army against the city of Ximoran, the kingdom's capital. Record the codeword 'grass'. You shake your head at Saul's audacity. Surely he can't hope to take the walled city with such a meagre force? Maybe he has made some allies. Happy with this information, you stroll out of the front door leaving Caius blubbering on the floor. Turn to **318**.

371

With truly amazing dexterity, you vault onto the back of the horse and land securely on its rump. The amazed rider spins round and grabs your shoulders, attempting to push you off. You shove back, gritting your teeth and straining your muscles.

KNIGHT Skill:9 Stamina:0

Conduct this battle normally except do not subtract Stamina from the loser of each round. Instead, after someone wins an attack round, roll two dice. If a double is rolled, the victor has pushed the loser off the horse. If not, the fight continues. If you manage to push the knight off his mount, turn to **181**. If he is the one who pushes you off, turn to **144**.

372

The parrot continues to fly from tree to tree, never letting you fall too far behind. You notice the foliage is becoming more tropical; most unusual for this climate. Soon the trees thin out and you emerge at a grassy clearing where you behold an extraordinary sight. Surrounded by birds of all kinds, from brightly coloured macaws and resplendent peacocks to more humble birds such as pigeons and crows, is a beautiful woman seated on a pedestal. She is clothed in a white silken gown and her long brown hair falls over ivory shoulders.

‘Welcome to my home, barbarian,’ she says with a warm smile. You are speechless and stand with your mouth agape. ‘I am the Mistress of Birds,’ she continues. ‘I believe you have already met my supposed ally, the Master of Wolves. He has plans for you and no good will come of them. Whatever he asks of you, do not do it if you value your life.’

‘I will make my own decisions on what I do and do not do,’ you reply, angry at being ordered about by this woman.

‘Then you are a fool,’ she says, shaking her beautiful head sadly. ‘At any rate you will not survive long in the swamp in the condition you are in. Let me aid you.’ So saying, she raises her arms skyward and calls out several words in an unfamiliar language. You feel a tingling and watch in amazement as the wounds there have also healed (restore your 2 lost Skill points and gain the codeword 'parrot').

‘There,’ says the Mistress, the smile returning to her face. ‘I have also given you the gift to understand the words of birds. Perhaps their advice will steer you away from this path

of folly. Take the trail to the south. It will lead you out of the swamp, but beware the fear flowers.’

You mumble your thanks to the mysterious sorceress and follow the overgrown trail south. Turn to **55**.

373

You fall headfirst into some sharp rocks. Your brains are dashed out thus ending your adventure and your life.

374

You spur your horse to go as fast as it can, but it needs no encouragement. It is just as terrified of the fearsome manticore as you are. You look behind your shoulder and see the creature is still far off, but it is gaining on you. You guide your horse down a rocky gorge, hoping to lose the manticore there, but the creature is still following you. You spot a cave entrance in the wall ahead of you. You could try hiding in there, but you may leave yourself trapped and easy prey for the manticore. If you want to try it, turn to **291**. If you want to keep racing along the gorge, turn to **268**.

375

You turn north towards the Master of Spiders' abode. The trees begin to get denser and the drone of the many insects that call the swamp home increases. Your sensitive nose picks up a repugnant stench - the unmistakable scent of a swamp orc. The other wolves have noticed it too and begin growling softly. Suddenly, an arrow flies from the sickly trees straight towards you. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **346**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **191**.

376

You mumble a half-hearted apology and Poomchukker smiles and sits down.

‘Perhaps you're exactly what I'm looking for,’ he says mysteriously. Turn to **220**.

377

To your surprise, through the sheets of rain you spot the shape of a man sitting by the roadside dreamily playing a lute. On the ground in front of him is his hat left out for passers-by to throw coins in, but despite the torrents of rain falling, there is no water floating in the hat. There is something very wrong here. If you wish to race along the highway and leave this strange minstrel to his musings, turn to **129**. If you would rather toss him a gold piece and ask if he saw the army pass by, turn to **255**.

378

You pull yourself through the window and furtively step down on to the carpeted floor. You see Caius sitting on an armchair in the middle of the room. His back is turned to you and his sword is by his side. If you wish to sneak up on him, turn to **248**. If you would rather announce yourself, turn to **44**.

379

You have not been following the trail long when the way ahead is blocked by a fast flowing stream. A dwarf with a thick black beard sits on the northern bank, fishing with a wooden rod. Several fish are lying on the ground next to him - he is obviously having a good day. As you pad across the soft trail, he turns round and looks at you in alarm before scrambling up a tree as fast as his little legs can carry him, leaving his fish on the ground behind him. They look delicious. If you want to eat them, turn to **223**. Otherwise, you prepare to wade across the stream. Turn to **209**.

380

The soldiers suddenly become alert at the sound of your horse's hoofs thundering towards them. They leap to their feet and prepare to bar your way. You draw your sword and yell as you collide with them. You swing your weapon madly, trying to deflect their many blows. Roll two dice and subtract the total from your Stamina score. If you rolled a double one or double six, the blows have killed your horse (turn immediately to **222**). Otherwise, providing you are still alive, you manage to fight your way through the throng, galloping across the bridge to safety. Turn to **395**.

381

Knowing that a strong assault will send the enemy fleeing, your squadron throws caution to the wind and charges into the ranks of the enemy, leaving the city gates open and exposed. The gamble pays off however as the attackers put up minimal resistance before turning tail and fleeing. Several of your squadron are intent on giving chase. If you have the codeword 'ready', turn to **236**. Otherwise, turn to **284**.

382

You return to the foyer and the goblin girl hands you your sword back. You thank her and then consider your next move. If you have another lead to follow up, turn to the appropriate section. If not, you decide to call it a day and head back to the inn. Turn to **318**.

383

You lick the hornets up with your tongue and crunch down on them. They taste horrible! And to make matters worse, their stings dig into your tongue (deduct 1 Stamina point).

You spit the hornets out and head south away from this clearing. Turn to **343**.

384

The orcs wheel out several catapults from the trees and use these to fire boulders and flaming pitch at the ramparts. There are screams all around you as archers are crushed or set alight. As your squadron is distracted by these devastating weapons, the orcs advance on the city gates with a massive battering ram. They pound into the great gates which reverberate ominously. You and your fellow archers begin firing at the orcs and their ram, but with the missiles still bombarding you, it seems an impossible task to stop them. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **26**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **111**.

385

You step on a twig and it snaps under your feet. A dwarf soldier looks up and asks what you are doing skulking back there...then he sees your face and shouts a cry of alarm! Suddenly the camp is in turmoil and you race back towards the copse through the confusion. Two soldiers have their wits about them and manage to pursue you. You draw your sword and turn to face them, knowing you must dispatch them quickly. One is a lean half-elf and the other is a barrel-chested man.

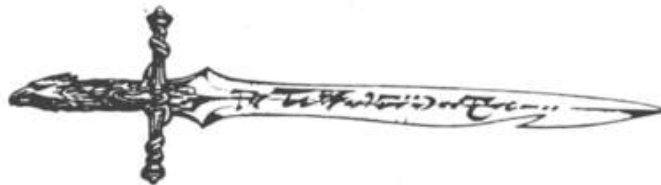
MAN Skill:8 Stamina:7

HALF-ELF Skill:9 Stamina:6

Fight them both together. If you defeat them in ten attack rounds or less, turn to **247**. If either of them is still alive after ten attack rounds, turn to **89**.

386

You leave the unfortunate wolf to his fate and try to block out his desperate howls. Three routes lead away from this clearing. You ignore the eastern one as it will take you further away from the Master of Wolves' home. That leaves the western one, which you may follow if you did not come from this direction (turn to **45**) or another trail that heads south (turn to **287**).



387

Suddenly, a massive green frog the size of a cow bounds through the undergrowth and

leaps on Fenris. Before the unfortunate wolf can struggle free, the monstrous amphibian grabs him round the neck with his tongue and swallows him whole. He then springs back into the undergrowth. You and the Master of Wolves both stare in stunned amazement for a few seconds before turning to face each other once more.

‘Come on then!’ yells the Master, cutting a figure of eight in the air with his sword. You snarl and charge towards him. At last you shall taste vengeance!

MASTER OF WOLVES Skill:11 Stamina:10

If you reduce him to 2 Stamina points or less, turn to **290**.

388

‘Charge!’ yells Askalo.

As one, the cavalry move forward out of the city, thundering towards Saul's army. They are dismayed to see the city's defenders taking the fight to them and scramble around in a panic. The cavalry meet with the enemy with the clash of arms. You break free of the front line, cutting down all those in your way in your eagerness to find Saul. Roll a die. If you roll:

1-2	Turn to 179 .
3-4	Turn to 124 .
5-6	Turn to 53 .

389

You bring your knee hard into his groin and he staggers away holding himself in pain. This move did 2 Stamina points of damage to him. Once again you begin circling one another. Will you:

Try a punch in the face?	Turn to 202 .
Try shoulder charging him?	Turn to 97 .
Risk attempting to throw him?	Turn to 168 .

390

You leap from the sunken arena onto the platform where the orc audience is crowded. They flee in panic from you, but you know it will not take them long to regroup. The swamp orc chief is waving his oaken staff in the air and shouting commands. Without him, the swamp orcs will likely fall apart. If you want to attack him, turn to **289**. If you would rather just try to get away, turn to **59**.

391

The little man knows these streets better than you do and you soon lose him among the various narrow alleyways. Cursing, you head for Poomchukker's house. Lose 1 Luck point and turn to **116**.

392

You tell the council that Saul has arranged for birdmen to attack those stationed on the battlements.

'Maybe we should increase the amount of archers on the battlements?' suggests Jalia in a calm and collected voice.

'Agreed,' says Askalo gruffly.

Erase the codeword 'aerial' and record the codeword 'arrow' on your adventure sheet.

'What else do you know, barbarian?' barks Bloffor.

If you have the codeword 'coward', turn to **132**. If not, but you have the codeword 'ambush', turn to **107**. If you have neither, turn to **56**.

393

A quick search of their bodies reveals three gold pieces in the dwarf's pocket. You may have saved the city from an easy defeat. Restore 1 Luck point and record the codeword 'safe' on your adventure sheet. Whistling merrily, you continue your hunt for an inn. Turn to **324**.

394

You fail to hit an apple. Of the other contestants, only one has been successful and he is declared the winner. You have no wish to stick around to see him receive his prize so you make your way to the market stalls. Turn to **160**.

395

You continue to follow the road south-west. There is a whiff of burning in the air and you see smoke billowing into the sky in the distance. You urge your horse onwards to investigate.

Soon you see the source of the smoke - a small timber village off the roadside is on fire and you hear the terrified screams of the people inside. If you wish to ride into the village and offer what aid you can, turn to **101**. If you wish to hurry on to Ximoran, turn to **250**.

396

You tell the dwarf you want to enter and a loud cheer goes up from the crowd. The dwarf quickly explains the rules. This will not be a fight to the death. If at any time you wish to submit, you may do so by turning to **173**. You must also keep track of how much damage you do to your opponent. When you have reduced his Stamina by 12 points, turn to **305**. These options will not be given in the text so note them down now. You will also be fighting with your bare hands - the dwarf offers to hold your sword and backpack for you. You nod to signify your understanding and enter the ring accompanied by the applause of the crowd. Your opponent is already waiting for you: a very large and heavily muscled man-orc! He grins savagely and begins kissing his muscles - an unpleasant sight indeed. The dwarf yells at you to begin the fight. The crowd grows quiet as you and your gruesome opponent circle each other wearily. What will you do:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Try to punch him in the face? | Turn to 202 . |
| Shoulder-charge him? | Turn to 97 . |
| Risk lifting him up to throw him? | Turn to 168 . |

397

You grab him roughly by the neck and pummel him repeatedly in the face with your fist. You do 3 Stamina points of damage to him. Finally he manages to shrug your arm off him and spins round to face you. Will you:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Try to punch him in the face? | Turn to 202 . |
| Attempt to throw him? | Turn to 168 . |

398

You are shown to your room and you relax on the soft mattress and are asleep within minutes.

The next day you wake up to a meal of eggs and bacon which you devour greedily. Feeling thoroughly refreshed, you leave the inn, keen to catch up with Saul. Restore 6 Stamina points and turn to **239**.

399

He beckons for you to sit at one of two wooden chairs by a plain wooden table. You do so and he sits opposite you resting his muscular arms on the table. Gain the codeword 'bark'.

‘You are probably wondering why I rescued you and brought you here,’ he begins. ‘Trust me when I say it was no altruistic motive that led me into saving you from the cross. Your betrayer goes by the name of Saul I believe?’ Your eyes flare at the mention of Saul, but you remain silent. ‘I can see you want Saul dead,’ he continues. ‘I want him dead too.’

‘What harm has Saul done you,’ you ask.

‘That is not important to you. All you need to know is that we both want Saul dead and it is because of this mutual goal that I have helped you.’

You nod in agreement. You were going to kill Saul anyway, knowing that another wants him dead will not affect this. If you have the codeword 'parrot', turn to **214**. If not, turn to **135**.

400

Two people stand in the clearing behind you. The first is a beautiful woman with long brown hair and wearing a white silken gown. A silver amulet in the shape of a bird hangs round her neck. Next to her is a tall man with blond hair and piercing blue eyes. He is dressed in simple work-stained clothing, but his medallion in the shape of a flower proves he is no mere labourer. They are the Mistress of Birds and the Master of Gardens. You watch them warily as they wave their arms mysteriously in the air. You give a yelp of pain and fall from your feet. Your whole body feels like it is changing, morphing. There is a blinding white light . . . and then you rise once more, but you are a wolf no longer - you have been restored to human form!

The Master of Gardens tosses some rags to you and you hurriedly pull them over your naked form. You thank the two wizards profusely and they nod in response.

‘But what of the Master of Wolves?’ you ask. ‘Is he dead?’

The Mistress of Birds shakes her head. ‘No,’ she replies sadly. ‘We who call ourselves masters of this swamp are impervious to many of its dangers. But it will take him some time to get out of that and while he is trapped, his power was sufficiently weakened for us to return you to your original form.’

You nod in understanding.

‘I suggest you leave here now,’ says the Master of Gardens, gravely. ‘The Master of Wolves may be able to reassert his control over you if he ever meets you again so put as much distance between you and he as possible.’

You take their advice and thank them once more before taking the trail eastwards. Eventually you emerge from the confines of the swamp and look with joy at the expanse of rolling green hills in front of you. Never again will you have to set foot in that infernal mire. Perhaps you will return to your homeland. You certainly no longer care what happened in Ximoran.

You are just about to travel on when a woman's voice call out to you. You turn to see a raven-haired woman clad in chainmail, with a broadsword hanging from her belt and a brass ring on one finger.

‘Do you know where the wizard Grimslade's tower lies, barbarian?’ she asks in an imperious tone. ‘I have heard he seeks an adventurer to explore the swamp for him and I was told by a local urchin that his tower was in these parts.’

You reply that you know nothing of a wizard named Grimslade and advise to stay clear of the swamp altogether. She mutters her thanks and then strides past you. You watch her go with a smile on your face. Although you certainly would not want to return to Scorpion Swamp, you admire the hunger for adventure that you see in the warrior woman. It is the same hunger that you yourself have often felt: the hunger of the wolf!