GURPS
Fourth Edition

DUNGEON FANTASY 2
DUNGEONS™

By SEAN PUNCH
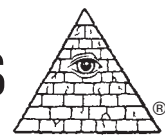
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INTRODUCTION

The term "dungeon" refers to a simple fantasy adventure. Typically, the PCs wander from room to room, killing monsters and grabbing treasure . . . A "dungeon" can also be a building, battleship, space station, etc. If the adventurers are dropped into a limited area, with little or no goal except to grab what they can and get out alive, it's a "dungeon."

– GURPS Basic Set

Dungeon Fantasy: Dungeons is about what heroes created using **Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers** actually *do:* raid dungeons! For players, it offers pragmatic advice on how to (ab)use advantages and skills from the **Basic Set** before, during, and after a dungeon crawl. For the GM, it provides tips on how to keep dungeon adventures challenging but fun.

Like all **Dungeon Fantasy** titles, this isn't a self-contained game – it's a play aid. It gives quick-and-dirty rules that are (mostly) compatible with the **Basic Set** but that don't require gamers to search 576 pages to find them. Most important, it shows the GM what corners to cut and calls to make when his only goal is a fast-and-loose dungeon crawl.

The shortcuts and rules of thumb that follow probably aren't very sensible *outside* a dungeon crawl. **GURPS** is generic, but this stuff isn't – it's all about adapting generic rules to the dungeon fantasy environment.

About the Author

Sean "Dr. Kromm" Punch set out to become a particle physicist and ended up as the **GURPS** Line Editor. Since 1995, he has compiled the two **GURPS Compendium** volumes, written **GURPS Wizards** and **GURPS Undead,** edited or revised over 20 other **GURPS** books, and masterminded rules for dozens more. Most recently, he created the **GURPS Basic Set,** *Fourth Edition* with coauthor David Pulver, wrote **GURPS Powers** with coauthor Phil Masters, and wrote **GURPS Martial Arts** with coauthor Peter V. Dell'Orto. Sean has been a fanatical gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, computers, and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.

DUNGEON-CRAWLING

Delvers such as those created with the templates in *Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers* may have dozens of skills – and dungeons can hold *hundreds* of challenges. The burning question, then, is "What skills do I use to get rich without getting dead?" Below are lots of answers, arranged by topic, with the operative skills (and occasionally advantages or spells) in **boldface.**

For the GM, this is a guide to setting up and handling common situations in dungeon fantasy games. For the players, it's advice on how to survive a dungeon crawl. It's also useful when choosing abilities, buying gear, and exploiting the system for a few extra coins!

GETTING READY TO GO

The GM *might* simply ask the players to create characters and buy gear, and then drop the PCs into a dungeon. This section won't apply in that case. *Real* munchkins will want their heroes to start out in town, though, so that they can beg, borrow, and steal the most useful equipment for the upcoming quest while spending as little as possible.

Getting Stuff Cheap

List prices in *Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers* are the going rate. Whether a PC gets his gear through purchase, barter, or inheritance, it normally comes out of starting money at those prices. There are other options, though (*none* of which apply to Signature Gear).

Below, "item" means one large article (weapon, magic item, etc.) or a group of small ones (e.g., a suit of armor or a quiver of arrows). The GM should probably limit each PC to rolls for three or four items – although true munchkins will quibble!

Scrounging: Any PC may try *one* **Scrounging** roll before each adventure. Success means he can take $10 worth of nonmagical items for free. Critical success (*ordinary* success, for someone with **Serendipity**) yields a more valuable, useful item of the GM's choice. Failures, even critical ones, aren't noteworthy.

Crafting: Heroes with **Armoury** can start with *ordinary* arms and armor of their own making – anything listed in the *Basic Set,* but no fine swords, magic items, etc. Materials and labor consume starting cash equivalent to list cost, but roll against skill: any success reduces the price by 20%, while any failure

means wastage that adds 10%. Use whatever specialty (Body Armor, Melee Weapons, or Missile Weapons) suits the item.

Brewing: Individuals with **Alchemy** can use the crafting rules above for any *chemical* or *potion,* while those with **Poisons** can use them for any *poison*. Adventurers with **Herb Lore** can start with *natural preparations* and *healing potions* (minor, major, or great) at *half price* on a success – but still 10% extra on a failure. Heroes with **Clerical Investment** get holy water at 50% off *without* a roll.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *GURPS* players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: **info@sjgames.com**. Resources include:

Pyramid (**www.sjgames.com/pyramid**). Our online magazine includes new *GURPS* rules and articles. It also covers the *d20* system*, Ars Magica, BESM, Call of Cthulhu,* and many more top games – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *Illuminati, Car Wars, Transhuman Space,* and more. *Pyramid* subscribers also get opportunities to playtest new *GURPS* books!

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see below.

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at **www.sjgames.com** for errata, updates, Q&A, and much more. To discuss *GURPS* with SJ Games staff and fellow gamers, come to our forums at **forums.sjgames.com**. The *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons* web page is **www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/dungeonfantasy2**.

Bibliographies. Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we're putting them online – with links to let you buy the books that interest you! Go to the book's web page and look for the "Bibliography" link.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition.* Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

Bargain Hunting: A PC who has the **Merchant** skill can roll a Quick Contest vs. a generic skill of 15 (Merchants' Guild members are canny!) for a given item. If he *wins,* he saves 10%; if he *ties,* he pays list price; and if he *loses,* the price is 10% higher than usual. He can opt not to pay an inflated price – but he'll be unable to find that piece of gear at a better price before the adventure begins.

Black Market: As an *alternative* to bargain hunting, an adventurer can use **Streetwise** to get something cheaply on the black market. Use the same rules, except that losing still leaves the option of buying a legit item at list price. The catch: critical failure on the roll means the Thieves' Guild or Town Watch confiscates cash or gear equal to 10% of the PC's starting money!

Shoplifting: A daring PC can try a **Filch** roll to steal any article that would fit under a shirt – GM's judgment, but 3 lbs. is a fair limit. Pricy items are watched more carefully: roll at -1 for anything over $100, another -1 per doubling (-2 for $200+, -3 for $400+, and so on), and a further -3 for anything rare or magical. *Any* failure means the powerful Merchant's Guild pillories the thief – he loses all his gear! Even a successful thief must make a **Smuggling** roll before leaving town with stolen goods, with any failure giving identical results.

Scoring Extra Cash

Even with the above tricks – especially with those tricks, for failed crooks – money can be tight. These next few measures may help. A PC can try *each* of them *once* while in town before each adventure, or *one* of them *daily* while awaiting a quest (see *Finding a Quest,* below).

Dredging and Mud-Larking: Desperate heroes can try an **Urban Survival** roll to seek coin in gutters. Success finds $1 times margin of success; critical success finds a useful item of the GM's choice. Critical failure means a dire case of sewer rot: -1 on all attribute and skill rolls for the next adventure, barring **Cure Disease.**

Bumming, Busking, and Haranguing: Adventurers can beg, perform, or give sermons for cash. Beggars use **Panhandling.** Buskers use **Dancing, Musical Instrument, Performance, Poetry,** or **Singing** – and those with several skills start with the *best,* roll once against any others, apply +1 per success or -1 per failure, and then roll against the total (if the show includes music or song, also check **Musical Composition**). Soapbox lecturers use **Public Speaking** or **Theology.** Success earns $2 times margin of success; critical success scores a useful gift. Critical failure means a beating (1d HP) or a broken musical instrument.

Gambling: If the PC knows **Gambling,** he can bet any amount. Roll a Quick Contest vs. a generic skill of 12 for sums up to $25. Higher stakes attract sharks: +1 to opposing skill per doubling (13 up to $50, 14 up to $100, and so on). If he *wins,* he doubles his money; if he *ties,* he breaks even; and if he *loses,* he forfeits his stake. Success at **Sleight of Hand** allows cheating for +3, but *any* failure means the crook loses his bet *and* is beaten for 1d HP.

Working the Crowd: Dishonest delvers can go on a spree with **Pickpocket.** Success nets $5 times margin of success; critical success means $50 times the margin! *Any* failure means a beating (1d HP); critical failure indicates swift justice in the form of a broken hand (1d months to heal, barring magic).

Debasing Coin: Really depraved scum can debase (shave or add impurities to) the King's coin. Start with honest coin up to $1,000 and then roll against **Counterfeiting.** Success increases the sum by 10%. Failure means ruined coin or lost metal, costing the crook 20% of his stake. Critical failure means the King's men stick his hand in molten silver, giving him One Hand.

Finding a Quest

The GM wouldn't be running a dungeon fantasy game if he didn't have an adventure in mind – but having a dungeon ready doesn't mean that the *heroes* know about it!

Rumors: The GM might allow each PC *one* **Carousing** roll (for tavern talk) and one **Current Affairs** roll (to know a rumor already) between adventures. The player decides whether to attempt either roll, but the GM rolls in secret. Success reveals the quest – or if the GM has *several* dungeons ready, each success reveals one at random, and the players can choose based on hearsay. Failure discovers nothing. Critical failure finds a quest with *wrong* rumors, like a cave full of vampires described as "the Faerie Caverns."

Starving: If nobody succeeds, the GM can say "A week passes," dock everyone $150 for cost of living, and let them try again. To avoid this cost, each hero can try a **Survival** roll (if he camps outside town) or an **Urban Survival** roll (if he lives like a bum). Failure means starting the eventual adventure down 1d HP.

Advertising: Each week, *one* PC can use **Propaganda** to advertise the party's services. The GM rolls in secret. Success brings an adventure of the GM's choice. It's probably the dungeon he had planned all along – but the quest's bearer smells desperation, so clearly it's *nasty.* The GM will quietly make the monsters and traps scarier. Critical failure *also* means bad info, as above.

Details: After learning of a quest, *one* PC can use **Research** to unearth information about the dungeon. Again, the GM rolls in secret. Success reveals something useful (e.g., "It's full of werewolves!"). This lets heroes with suitable skills prepare accordingly; see *Exploiting Weaknesses* (p. 10). Failure gives nothing. Critical failure yields *false* info.

Scum and Villainy

At the GM's discretion, adventurers caught shopping or selling on the black market, shoplifting, cheating, pickpocketing, or debasing coin, or who betray a sponsor, may end up with Social Stigma (Criminal Record). Thieves might even *start* with this! The effect in dungeon fantasy is -2 on rolls to buy or sell, beg for alms, advertise for quests, or engage future backers. Even the Thieves' Guild is reluctant to back anybody stupid enough to get caught!

Finding a Sponsor

Once the party has a quest, it may be possible to get *more* money for gear by finding a backer. The group must appoint *one* mouthpiece to approach potential sponsors. He can try **Savoir-Faire** to seek merchant or noble backing, **Streetwise** to get the support of the Thieves' Guild, or **Writing** to compose an academic proposal to the Wizards' Guild or a temple. Apply any **Charisma** bonus.

Failure or critical failure means no backing. Any success gives each adventurer an equipment allowance: gear (*not* cash) worth $100 times margin of success, minimum $100 apiece. The catch is that the group owes the sponsor future loot worth *triple* the total allowance (a 200% return). The backer may settle for an artifact of special significance regardless of its value – which usually means it's worth more than the party realizes!

TRAVEL

Once the heroes have gear and a quest, their goal is to reach the dungeon. Again, the GM might simply drop them into the thick of things; if so, skip these notes. But it's traditional to trek across monster-infested wilds whilst subsisting on rat-on-a-stick.

Getting There Quickly

The GM should set a base travel time. He might roll dice, always proclaim "40 days and 40 nights!", or do something else. For simplicity's sake, assume that this accounts for encumbrance, weather, and terrain. The GM is free to set longer times for heavily burdened parties or lousy traveling conditions ("Sorry, but the trip to the Lair of the Weather Witch will take *60* days, not the usual 40.").

Delvers must carry, forage, or conjure three meals apiece per day of travel. When they arrive at the dungeon, they'll be down 1 FP per missed meal (and 1 HP per FP below 0!). This FP penalty will last *for the entire dungeon crawl,* unless the group rests with food for a day per 3 FP lost.

Naturally, the GM will roll daily for a random encounter with bandits, dire wombats, etc. More days means more chances to get killed!

Thus, it's important to minimize travel time. There are three tricks for this. For each, *any* success knocks 10% off travel time, failure adds 10%, and critical failure adds 20%. The results are additive, giving from -30% to +60% travel time. The party can opt out of any of these rolls.

The Golden Path: If the party appoints a guide, he can make a **Navigation** roll (-5 with just the shadows of the trees, -1 with a sundial, or no modifier with a compass) to pick an optimal route over the best terrain.

Wind at Your Back: If the guide has **Weather Sense,** a successful roll lets the party walk or sail with the wind, avoid storms . . . whatever. This is *fantasy* weather!

Forced March: If the party is traveling overland, everyone can try **Hiking, Riding,** or **Skiing,** as appropriate, to move quickly; use the *worst* result. On water, *one* hero can roll against **Boating** for a small craft, **Seamanship** for a large one, to make good time.

Foraging

Rations are expensive, and cumbersome to lug around a dungeon (you have to bring enough to make the return trip!). Next to the **Create Food** spell, foraging is the best way around that. Only a traveler who *knows* **Fishing, Naturalist,** or **Survival** – no defaults – can forage in a world with killer bunnies and man-eating shrubs. Roll once per trip.

Success means that he needs only *half* as much food from rations; e.g., 60 instead of 120 meals on a 40-day journey. Critical success means he can either consume *no* rations or halve the rations used by himself and one companion.

Failure still means *some* good days – but mostly bad ones. He needs only 2/3 as many rations. Critical failure means he must rely on rations like everyone else. This is probably a disaster: an outdoorsman counting on foraging and carrying less food will be half-dead after a long trip – or the whole party will be weak, if they're nice and share with him.

Most sensible delvers plan on modest failure. Those with Overconfidence bank on success.

Camping and Posting Watches

Camping requires no special skill, but the party should post watches. The order isn't important; when a nighttime encounter occurs, the GM will *randomly* determine whose watch it interrupts, and secretly roll against the higher of **Perception** or **Observation** for that PC. For sneaky monsters, this becomes a Quick Contest against Stealth (likely to be 18+ for wereleopards, undead shadows, etc.).

If the watch-keeper succeeds (*wins,* if a Contest), the party isn't surprised – although those who were asleep start combat lying down. Otherwise, everyone is asleep or stunned; each delver must make one IQ roll per turn, at +1 per turn after the first and +6 for Combat Reflexes, and can only react on the turn after he succeeds. So post watches – it's free.

Wilderness Camps: If a nighttime encounter involves monsters that hunt by sight, the GM will roll a Quick Contest: the monsters' Vision vs. the party's *highest* **Camouflage** skill, at bonus equal to the number of party members who know the skill (no defaults!) but a penalty equal to party size. Victory means the enemy spends enough time sniffing around that any watch-keeper gets a *second* chance to detect the monsters, as above.

Dungeon Camps: When sleeping in a dungeon, camouflage won't work – but if the room has doors, use the same rules with **Traps** to set simple noise-makers. In that case, victory means the monsters awaken the party; the delvers won't be surprised. Sleeping heroes will still start combat lying down, though.

Tracking

The adventurers may have to follow a trail to the dungeon – that of the last group to die there, rivals with a lead, monsters boiling out to eat travelers, etc. Since it won't be much of an adventure if the party never gets there, they'll *eventually* find the trail. Make *one* **Tracking** roll per delver, at -2 in wastes (ice, rock, etc.) or -4 in goo (slime, swamp, etc.), and note the best result. Success lets the party follow the trail at full speed. Failure or critical failure means time wasted searching for tracks: add 10% or 20%, respectively, to base travel time.

Exploring the Dungeon

Huzzah! The party is now at the gates of the Durance of Doom or Tunnels of Terror. Time to see lots of monsters and kill them and take their treasure! This works best with a little forethought.

Mapping

Traditionally, the GM describes what the PCs see and the players attempt to map it. Players *and* GM alike should read *Player-Made Maps* (p. B491) to understand how this works.

For the players to be allowed to make a map in the real world, a party member must serve as "mapper" in the game world. He requires ink, paper, and *two* free hands. He can't carry a ready torch, shield, weapon, etc.

When using the map (e.g., to predict where a tunnel comes out) leads to nonsense results, the players can ask the GM for help. He'll make a secret **Cartography** roll for the mapper. Success means he explains what's wrong so that the players can correct their map. Failure means he smiles smugly. On a critical failure, he pretends it's a success and *lies!* Even a good map of a twisted and weird dungeon will seem wrong – the GM should never reveal *that*.

Light Sources

In a typical dungeon, the party will be blind without light sources. Most lights require a hand, which *can't* be used for combat. Those marked * below are hands-free, and the first choice for fighters who must carry their own light.

A light usually *eliminates* darkness penalties to combat and vision, for everyone, in a semicircle in front of the bearer – who's presumably holding it so that *he* can see:

Candle, **Continual Light** *spell (level 1)**, **Light** *spell**: 1 yard
Continual Light *spell (level 2)**, *Glow Vial**, *Lantern, Torch:* 2 yards
Continual Light *spell (level 3)**: 4 yards

Spells like **Glow** and **Sunlight** eliminate penalties over their entire area of effect. One of the most useful things a caster can do when combat starts is cast such a spell!

For simplicity's sake, assume that if the party has any area-effect source, vision and combat are possible at -3 out to *triple* the range of the *best* source; e.g., 6 yards if a torch, 12 yards if a 4-yard-radius Sunlight spell. After that, the ambient level applies: -3 for the lamps and candles in an evil temple, -8 for glowing slime, or total darkness for shadowy tunnel.

Other lights throw a beam that eliminates darkness penalties in a path 1 yard wide, in the direction of the carrier's choice (pointing it is a free action each turn), out to a fixed range:

Helmet Lamp*: 5 yards
Bull's-Eye Lantern, **Light Jet** *spell:* 10 yards

Marching Order

The party should establish one marching order for traveling single-file down narrow passages, another for moving two abreast along typical interior corridors, and a third for walking three abreast in spacious hallways. Be sure to note gaps (between, to one side, etc.). It usually makes sense to put people who know **Traps** in front, fighters with long weapons behind those with short ones, and delvers with missile weapons where they'll have a clear shot.

Positioning casters demands careful thought. Placing them in front lets them detect supernatural dangers but exposes them to physical ones better faced by nimble thieves and armored knights. Putting them in back lets them cast unmolested . . . unless attacked from behind. They're probably safest in the middle and/or protected by a tougher buddy.

When it becomes important to know who can see by what light sources, trips a trap, is in front (or back!) when the monsters come, etc., the GM will use the current order. If the players want to change this, they must *tell the GM*. Otherwise . . . too bad.

Hidden Doors

Secret Doors: Secret doors are things like pieces of wall that spring open, altars that roll aside, and fireplaces that drop into the floor to reveal hidden portals – but only when some hard-to-find control is manipulated. Finding them always requires an active search; the GM rolls secretly against the *highest* of Vision, **Observation,** or *Per*-based **Traps** for each searcher. Success reveals a door, if there is one; it may require an IQ-based **Traps** roll to open. These rolls *often* have steep penalties!

Concealed Doors: Concealed doors are ordinary doors *behind* or *inside* other items, like tapestries and wardrobes. They require a roll to find, as for a secret door, but not to operate. However, the GM may wait for a player to declare that he's looking behind the curtain or whatever – so *pay attention* when the GM describes the area!

Scouting Ahead

It's useful to send a thief or a scout ahead of the main marching order to reconnoiter – especially if he can run fast!

Sneaking: Roll against **Stealth** to *sneak* ahead. Normally, any success will do – but if you happen upon a sentry, this becomes a Quick Contest against the *better* of his Hearing or Vision. In a dark dungeon, you *can't* sneak with a light source; you'll need a spell like **Dark Vision, Infravision,** or **Sound Vision.**

Information Gathering: Spotting pits, counting orcs, noticing doors, and so on requires no roll. A successful **Observation** roll will reveal *interesting* details: the pit is freshly dug, the orcs have a shaman, the second door looks more worn, etc. It will also determine patrol frequency and sentry placement, but that's a Quick Contest vs. Stealth or Camouflage for *hidden* sentries. If you can get within 7 yards (×2 with a telescope, ×2 *per level* with the **Hawk Vision** spell), you can use **Lip Reading** to learn what intelligent monsters are saying – perhaps even a password! Detecting traps requires a **Traps** roll; see *Traps and Hazards* (p. 8). Noticing monster tracks calls for **Tracking.**

Dogging: To follow a monster to its lair or treasure without being noticed, *win* a Quick Contest of **Shadowing** against its Vision. Any other result means it sees you and may try to eat you. This is where the "run fast" part comes into play (don't overlook the **Haste** spell!).

A wizard can cast **Wizard Eye** or **Wizard Ear** to do these things remotely; enemies are at -7 to spot such effects, and *can't* see **Invisible Wizard Eye** or **Invisible Wizard Ear.** But spells aren't a perfect replacement for old-fashioned reconnaissance – magic is fatiguing, and few wizards are skilled at noticing sentries, tracks, and traps. Savvy mages prefer to assist thieves and scouts with spells like **Hide, Hush, Invisibility,** and **Mage Stealth.**

Signaling

Gesture can communicate a simple concept – "six monsters," "attack," etc. – without compromising stealth. The player writes what he wants to relay and hands the note to the GM, who rolls in secret. Success means he tells everyone the message. Failure – or an attempt to relate anything complex (e.g., "a death brain and two dire wombats") – means he says nothing. Critical failure means he gets to be evil.

Mimicry (Animal Sounds or Bird Calls) can deliver a *prearranged* signal to warn the party. Outdoors, assume this is stealthy. In a dungeon without animals or birds, it's likely to warn monsters, too. Failure simply means the others don't hear the call of the wild.

If a party member spots danger and doesn't signal, or fails, the GM may roll secretly for an ally's **Body Language.** Success means the GM gives a hint ("Bob looks like he's seen a ghost.").

BREAKING AND ENTERING

Delvers often run into obstacles (literally, if they lack adequate light) while sneaking around corridors and mapping passages. Some have to be skirted – by one brave soul or by the whole party – while others must be removed.

Dungeon Parkour

Martial artists, swashbucklers, and thieves sometimes use athletics to reach difficult areas. This lets them get into position to deploy a rope or a portable ladder to help less-agile friends. *All* of these rolls have a penalty equal to encumbrance.

Balancing: Roll **Acrobatics** to traverse something *narrow,* at -2 if it's taut or rigid (a ledge or a rail) or -5 if it's slack (an ordinary rope). A pole helps balance – add +2 for a quarterstaff or a 6' pole, +3 for a 10' pole. Failure means a fall, but allows a DX roll to catch something and try a pull-up to get back on. Critical failure (or failure on a DX roll to catch yourself) drops you into the depths. Those with **Perfect Balance** don't *have* to roll!

> ### ". . . With Spikes"
> The dungeon-delving tasks discussed here assume the basic, plain version of each situation or hazard. The GM may assess penalties for trickier versions. A handy way to think about it is like this: for every nasty qualifier added, the roll has another -1. For instance, balancing on a *slimy, twisting, smoke-obscured* ledge is at an extra -3. This lets the GM "scale up" threats to challenge even experienced delvers.

Climbing: Most dungeon-sized climbs require *one* **Climbing** roll, at no modifier for a steep slope, -2 for a rope straight up, or -3 for a vertical wall (*no* penalty with climbing spikes). Failure means a fall from halfway up; critical failure means a fall from the top.

Diving: An **Acrobatics** roll at -4 lets you dive through a narrow opening – under a pendulum, between two rollers, etc. Failure means you end up stuck halfway through, which may hurt! Critical failure adds 1d-3 HP of injury (DR *doesn't* protect).

Jumping: If an obstacle is small enough for anyone to hurdle, the GM should let people do so on a DX roll. If it's *wide,* it calls for an expert with the **Jumping** skill, who can run and jump up to skill/2 yards. In either case, success gets you across in one piece. Failure allows a DX roll to catch the far side (no consolation with a *shallow* hazard) and try a pull-up. Critical failure – or failure on the last-ditch DX roll – means you fall right in.

Leg Up: A friend can boost you to reach a high area. He makes a ST roll while you roll **Acrobatics** at -2. If you both succeed, you can reach anything up to the sum of your heights and try a pull-up to get *yourself* up there. Failure by either of you lets you retry, but your partner must pay 1 FP per repeated attempt. On any critical failure, you collapse in a pile and each take 1d-3 HP of injury (DR *doesn't* protect).

Pull-Up: Make a ST-based **Climbing** roll to pull yourself up onto anything you can reach: your height plus 1.5'. On a failure, you hang there and may retry, paying 1 FP per repeated attempt. Critical failure means a strained arm (crippled for 30 minutes) and a fall – *bad,* if you're trying to recover from another failed stunt.

Running Climb: If two obstacles are within a couple of yards, you can run at one and kick off back and forth between them to gain additional height before a pull-up. Use the better of **Acrobatics** or **Jumping,** at -4 to gain Basic Move/4 yards or -6 to gain Basic Move/2 yards (round *up*). Failure means a fall from that height; critical failure means maximum falling damage!

Skidding: To cross ice or similar, make a DX or DX-based **Skiing** roll at the combat penalty for bad footing – usually -2. Failure means you fall; roll DX-4 to stand up before you can try again (this is when the ice weasels attack). Critical failure adds 1d-3 HP of injury (DR *doesn't* protect) to a random limb.

Squeezing: Roll against **Escape** to wiggle through a narrow crack. Success gets you to the other side. Failure means you *won't* fit, and can't retry. Critical failure means you're stuck and must be rescued.

Swinging: If you can affix a line to an overhead anchor (toss a grapnel, climb up and tie it, etc.), you can swing across a hazard. Regardless of the rope's true length, *effective* length can't exceed the distance from anchor to ground. You can swing up to 3/4 of that length from a vertical rope, or 1.5 times that length if it starts 45° off-vertical. Make an **Acrobatics** roll at the range penalty for that distance (p. B550). Failure allows you to retry. Critical failure drops you into the hazard!

Bridging Hazards

In all cases above, if *one* party member gets past the obstacle, he can coordinate with somebody on the far side to set up a ladder (no roll) or a line (roll vs. **Throwing** to *toss* a line, but not to carry one) so that the others can safely join him, provided the group *has* a rope, ladder, etc., long enough to reach! Once this is ready, people can be hoisted up – or cross using handholds, or on hands and knees – one at a time. This requires no roll – or a DX roll, if the GM feels mean (probably DX+5, unless he's being *really* mean).

Water Hazards: It's possible to swim across water – make a **Swimming** roll, with the usual consequences for failure (p. B354). Most water in dungeons has Things That Bite, and then you're stuck using Water Move (Basic Move/5), while your combat skills can't exceed your DX-based Swimming level.

Picking Locks

Reliable locks are either anachronistic or costly in a "medieval" setting, yet portals in dungeon fantasy are often locked. (Somewhere, gnomish craftsmen are growing wealthy selling locks to stupid goblins.) Picking them is a **Lockpicking** roll, at -5 with a knife or similar crude tool, no modifier for proper picks, or +1 or +2 for good or fine tools, plus anywhere from +5 to -5 for cheap through fine locks. It's traditional in dungeon fantasy for lockpicking to be a fiddly physical task, so this skill roll is *DX*-based, and gets **High Manual Dexterity** bonuses. *Puzzle* locks still require IQ-based rolls.

Muscling Through

Delvers don't have to unlock or skirt doors and other barriers. They can plow *through* many obstacles! The disadvantage is that stealth is impossible – *each* attempt at the tasks below has a chance of being heard.

Bashing: You can destroy a door or a chest with a crushing or cutting weapon. Don't bother with attack rolls! Roll damage at +2, or +1 per die, for All-Out Attack (Strong) – plus *another* +1 per die with **Forced Entry** at DX+1, or +2 per die at DX+2. The GM will subtract DR, multiply by 1.5 if you used a cutting attack, and reduce the target's HP until it breaks. *Swords* dislike such abuse, and have a 3 in 6 chance (2 in 6 if fine, 1 in 6 if very fine) of bending: -1 to skill. *Crowbars* revel in destruction, and deliver swing+2 crushing.

Forcing: Another option is to apply boot or shoulder to the door and overpower its attachments without annihilating it. Roll a Quick Contest: ST vs. the lock or hinge's HP (6 to 46). You may add **Lifting ST,** +2 for a crowbar, and +1 with **Forced Entry** at DX+1 or +2 at DX+2, but have a penalty equal to the hardware's DR (-3 to -24). For a *barred* or *wedged* portal, use the bar or wedge's DR (-1 to -16) as a penalty, if greater than the lock or hinge's DR; similarly, the portal resists with the bar or wedge's HP (14 to 37), if higher than the lock or hinge's HP. You must *win* to open the door. Repeated attempts have a cumulative -1 and cost 1 FP each.

Bending: To pry apart metal bars in a grate or a portcullis, use the rules for forcing. A metal bar gives from -6 to -24 for DR, and has from 12 to 46 HP.

Lifting: If the problem is a *heavy* barrier (fallen lintel, unlocked portcullis, etc.), the solution is to lift it. This is a two-handed lift; use Basic Lift × 8 lbs., figured using ST plus **Lifting ST.** Add another 5% to BL per point by which you make a **Lifting** roll.

Hiii-yah! For *all* the feats above, martial artists can make a **Breaking Blow** roll (-1 for wood, -5 for metal) to divide object DR by 5 and/or a **Power Blow** roll to double ST. This costs 1 FP per skill per attempt.

TRAPS AND HAZARDS

Monsters aren't the only things that can kill delvers (or at least give them a really bad day). Dungeon security systems include all manner of infernal devices. In *all* cases, if an adventurer with **Danger Sense** is on a fast path to enjoying one of these dangers, the GM should make a secret Perception roll for him. Success warns him that he'll be in danger if he continues – but *not* what the danger is!

Dealing with Traps

A *trap* is a mechanical device – covered pit, shuriken launcher, overhead chute full of rusty morningstar heads – intended to harm those who trigger it. Everything to do with traps is a function of the **Traps** skill.

Finding: Detecting a trap requires a *Per*-based roll, with **Acute Vision** bonuses and darkness penalties. *Concealed* traps give a penalty. The party is assumed to be looking for traps at all times. The GM rolls secretly against their *best* **Traps** skill – separately for each group, when split up – to see if they notice each trap. When fleeing or similarly rushed, the roll is at -5!

Disarming: Disabling most traps calls for a *DX*-based roll, with bonuses for **High Manual Dexterity.** *Tricky* traps give a penalty.

Rearming: By making the roll to disarm again, it's possible to rearm *some* traps after the party has passed.

Stealing: Small traps (leg-hold traps, tripwires, etc.) can be taken once disarmed. This is a standard *IQ*-based roll.

Tricks

A *trick* is a non-mechanical trap – mirror or other optical illusion (IQ roll at a penalty to discover), temporary spell (**Detect Magic** cast on dodgy-looking scenery, or an active **Mage Sight** spell, to reveal), enchantment (**Magery** allows a Perception + Magery roll to detect), etc. Details are up to the GM. It's impossible to prepare for every trick!

Portals: A favorite trick of evil wizards is a magic portal that transports the party somewhere *bad.* If you're tricked into walking through one of these, Magic Resistance *won't* help! You'll also be disoriented and forced to Do Nothing for the first turn after you arrive – when the zombies attack – unless you can make a **Body Sense** roll.

Dangerous Stuff

Other unpleasantness includes . . .

Gunk: Some "traps" aren't triggered but consist of vile glop sitting where heroes will touch it; e.g., contact poison on treasure or flesh-eating acid in a mud puddle. To spot these, adventurers get a *Per*-based roll against **Poisons** for toxins, or **Alchemy** for acid, volatile oil, etc. **Acute Vision** adds if the goo is visible; otherwise, **Acute Taste and Smell** helps sniff it out. Such rolls often have penalties! Make a standard *IQ*-based skill roll to wash it off safely, with failure meaning it gets on *someone.*

Potions: Magic potions (see *Dungeon Fantasy: Adventures* for examples) can guest-star as gunk. Use the rules above, but mages get a Perception + **Magery** roll to spot this. Removing such gunk requires an **Alchemy** or **Hazardous Materials (Magical)** roll.

Evil Runes: Nobody knows who carves them, but Evil Runes that drain life, explode, etc., show up regularly in dungeons. They're enchantments of some sort, but don't correspond to standard wizardly spells; they require a **Thaumatology** roll to distinguish from orc graffiti or a mason's mark, and defy Analyze Magic. Most are permanent and target *intent,* affecting delvers who "cleverly" try to avoid them using 10' poles or pull-ropes. The usual solution is to send the barbarian up, because he has the most HP.

Curses 101

Some dungeon areas are *cursed* by squid shamans, *satanistas,* etc. Possible effects include something resembling the Curse spell (-1 to -3 to success rolls), disease-like symptoms (injury or attribute loss), flying objects (inflicting damage or stealing gear), and possession (spinning head and vomiting). They might be persistent (constantly affecting a room) or triggered (e.g., afflicting those who touch an altar), and may be confined to the area or haunt the victim after he leaves.

Detection: Those with **Holiness** or **Power Investiture** get a Perception roll at a bonus equal to advantage level to recognize a cursed zone before it's too late. If they're not *in front*, though, somebody may already be cursed! An **Occultism** roll will also reveal the danger, *if* there's a visible altar, idol, or the like that will curse those who mess with it (e.g., by prying the rubies from the idol's eyes). The GM makes such rolls in secret.

Analysis: A separate **Occultism** or **Theology** roll – at a penalty for altars of *forgotten* cults or *unspeakable* gods – may turn up clues about the curse's effects and triggers. The GM rolls in secret. Critical failure means the curse affects the analyst. It isn't wise to stand around the evil altar, thinking hard about what the squid motif means!

Cleansing: Making a cursed area safe to enter or a cursed altar safe to pillage requires an **Exorcism** roll by someone with Holy Might. This is a Quick Contest vs. the (possibly high) Will of the evil force possessing the area. A blessed or high holy symbol gives +1 or +2, respectively. This takes *three hours,* if time matters, and fails automatically if anyone casts *any* magic within the exorcist's sight. The exorcist must *win* to prevail. Otherwise, he can't retry for a week (others can). If his roll is a critical failure, he suffers the curse.

Treatment: If a *person* is cursed, use the procedure for cleansing, but add the higher of the victim's ST or Will to the exorcist's roll.

Magic: Those with more FP than time may use a **Remove Curse** spell for cleansing or treatment. This works just like Exorcism, but costs 20 FP and takes only an hour.

MONSTERS

A *monster* is any hostile being – including not only creatures like dragons and trolls, but also dangerous and warped animals, evil humans (like bandits and cultists), *former* humans (zombies, werewolves, etc.), slimes, and magical creations (notably golems and animated statues). Dungeons are full of 'em. Adventurers normally handle monsters through combat (p. 10), but there are other options to consider before or even instead of fighting.

Recognition

It's good to know the opposition. The GM makes identification rolls in secret – but only if somebody asks *and* has the right skill:

● **Heraldry** to recognize bandits, orc tribes, etc., by their mark. They *always* have a mark, like a pig's head on a stick.

● **Hidden Lore** specialties (Demons, Elementals, Undead, etc.) for supernatural entities with complex hierarchies or cultures.

● **Naturalist** for giant, dire, and warped versions of normal animals. Anybody can recognize lions, tigers, and bears, but things like greater dire numbats are trickier.

● **Occultism** for freaky-weird things, like Spawn of 'Thulhu.

● **Thaumatology** for golems and other wizardly automata.

Success identifies the target, plus one useful tidbit (favorite weapon, special power, weakness, etc.) per two points of success. Failure reveals nothing. Critical failure means the GM *lies* ("It's mostly harmless, and likes apples.").

Negotiation

Intelligent monsters that aren't bloodthirsty and pure Evil *might* be willing to parley. This is advisable when the party can't afford a fight; e.g., everyone is wounded, power items are exhausted, and the cleric is somewhat dead.

Make a reaction roll (3d). Modifiers are infinitely variable, but generally, the GM will assume a basic -5 (these are *monsters,* not merchants), and allow only the bonus for the speaker's **Charisma** and +1 for **Social Chameleon.** If the sum is 10+, the monsters will listen instead of attacking immediately.

Making Deals: Deal-making is pure roleplaying. The PCs offer something, the GM counteroffers, and so on. If everyone seems to agree at some point, roll **Diplomacy** – at -3 with non-human monsters, unless the bargainer has **Cultural Adaptability.** Success means the monsters accept the deal. Failure means it isn't good enough after all, and the party must make an extra concession (usually loot) to close the deal. Critical failure means war! This roll *isn't* secret. The party will hear the orc boss yell, "Get 'em, boys!"

Language: Most intelligent beings in dungeon fantasy have at least *some* command of the "generic human" or "common" tongue of adventurers. The GM may rule that *these* orcs speak only Orcish, however! In such cases, the **Diplomacy** roll is at -1 for an Accented grasp of the monsters' language, or at -3 for Broken comprehension. If no one knows the right language, hand signs may work: roll against the *lower* of **Diplomacy** or **Gesture.** The -3 for nonhumans still applies in all cases.

Skeevy Bastards: The GM might have decided that *these* monsters are cheats, and have no intention of honoring any deal. He'll roll secretly against the bargainer's **Detect Lies** skill – and if anyone in the party has **Danger Sense,** he'll roll for that. Success means he warns the players. Otherwise, the heroes *won't* see trouble coming.

Trickery

Intelligent (IQ 6+), free-willed monsters that aren't *too* intelligent can sometimes be fooled. This is a chance to get creative with skills that rarely see use. Possibilities include feigning injury or death to draw the enemy into an ambush (**Acting**), posing as fellow monsters (**Disguise** or **Disguise (Animals)**), using noises or voices to distract them (**Mimicry** or **Ventriloquism**), duping them with a snake-oil pitch (**Fast-Talk**), mesmerizing them with old Bardic mind tricks (**Captivate, Hypnotism, Musical Influence, Persuade, Suggest,** or **Sway Emotions**), exploiting their appetites or fears (**Psychology (monster)**), or even showing some leg (**Sex Appeal,** best saved for mostly compatible species).

The only goals of much importance in dungeon fantasy are getting past the monsters without a fight (like negotiation, but without giving up anything) or getting the drop on a big horde in order to whittle them down a little. Most such "dirty tricks" involve a Quick Contest against the IQ of the *leader* of an organized group or the *smartest* monster in a rabble. The trickster is at -5 if the monsters are already on the verge of combat (e.g., they chase the party around the corner, only to come across a nude Marge the Barbarian rippling her unibrow knowingly).

If the party *wins,* they avoid the fight or score a second of surprise (the monsters are stunned, but roll vs. IQ to recover, at +1 per turn). If they *tie,* the attempt has no effect. If they *lose,* it backfires in some way; e.g., a hidden archer shoots the trickster mid-speech.

"Good (Three-Headed) Doggie!"

Druids, elves, etc., may take exception to adventurers who kill animals, even in self-defense. The following alternatives work as written on natural animals, at -5 on giant or dire ones that share the mindset of their natural brethren, and not at all on supernatural *things* that merely resemble animals (e.g., hell-hounds).

Call of the Wild: An **Animal Handling** roll – at -5 for man-eaters, cumulative with the -5 above – allows Nature Boy to distract a beastie while the party passes. A **Mimicry (Animal Sounds)** roll lets him lead it away from the party, although he'll need a plan for dealing with it when it finds him.

Doggo: Winning a Quick Contest of **Disguise (Animals)** against the animal's Perception lets someone pass uneaten. One person can use his skill to disguise as many party members as he wishes, although some may object to being smeared with dung.

Soothe the Savage Breast: As in most fantasy, **Musical Influence** *does* affect animals.

COMBAT

Delvers spend a lot of time killing monsters in order to take their stuff – and monsters smarter than slimes tend to fight back. Combat is one situation where the GM will *need* to break out the ***Basic Set.*** It's too complex a topic to summarize in a few paragraphs! However, the ***Basic Set*** doesn't directly address several dungeon fantasy standbys.

Exploiting Weaknesses

Dungeon denizens often have bizarre flaws. Some weaknesses require a skill roll to discover – and it's more fun if the players *don't* know these initially! If the players forget a weakness, they must roll again unless somebody in the party has **Eidetic Memory.**

Higher Purposes: Heroes with such **Higher Purpose** advantages as "Slay Demons" or "Slay Undead" get +1 on all attack and damage rolls against the relevant foes, and to all active defenses and resistance rolls against those monsters.

Supernatural Flaws: A delver who has a suitable **Hidden Lore** specialty can ask the GM to roll against skill in secret when combat begins. For every two points of success, the GM will disclose one form of Dread, Fragile, Revulsion, Susceptible, Uncontrollable Appetite, Vulnerability, Weakness, or similar disadvantage that the monster possesses. Failure reveals nothing. Critical failure means the GM lies!

Turning Undead: A hero who has **True Faith (Turning)** may take a Concentrate maneuver and roll a Quick Contest of Will with any undead or evil spirit he can see (roll just once for a mob with uniform Will). A blessed or high holy symbol gives +1 or +2, respectively. If he *wins* or *ties,* the monsters can't come closer to *him* than yards equal to margin of victory, minimum one yard; those that are closer must move away. This lasts while he concentrates and for 1d seconds afterward.

Vitals: A successful roll against a suitable **Physiology** specialty will reveal where to find the equivalent of the brain, vitals, etc., on a creature for which this isn't obvious – assuming it *has* such areas! Any failure means the PC simply doesn't know.

No "I" in "Teamwork" (No Profit Without It)

Dungeon fantasy is about the adventures of a *team* of delvers. If the GM decides that a task requires the party to pull together – or that a group effort would be fun for more of the players if it involved more of the heroes – he can use one of these rules:

With a Little Help From My Friends. If the GM feels that a hero with the skill needed for an undertaking would benefit from assistants who know the same skill or complementary skills, each helper may try his skill roll first. This gives a modifier to the final roll: +2 per critical success, +1 per success, -1 per failure, and -2 per critical failure. For example, a bard using **Singing** to distract monsters as a form of *Trickery* (p. 10) might benefit from a musical accompaniment from a few of his bard friends, who would roll against **Musical Instrument**.

Part of the Solution or Part of the Problem. In a situation where everyone needs to look out for himself but some party members lack the right skill, skilled adventurers *might* be able to cover for unskilled ones. Start with the best skill level in question, add a bonus equal to the number of delvers who *know* the skill (no defaults!), and subtract a penalty equal to party size. An example is when concealing the group's camp using **Camouflage**; see *Camping and Posting Watches* (p. 5).

Pulling Your Weight. For combined feats of strength, the GM must first decide how many sets of hands can contribute; e.g., two heroes could lift a chest that had two handles, while four could cooperate to raise a 4-yard-wide portcullis. If combining ST for a ST roll or to deal damage (e.g., with a battering ram), use the *highest* ST plus 1/5 the total of the other ST scores (round up). If working together to lift a weight, add together everybody's Basic Lift.

Medic!

The *best* way to get healed in battle is to yell for the cleric to cast a healing spell – or to swig a healing potion. Another unrealistic dungeon fantasy tradition is combat-speed bandaging. This requires a **First Aid** or **Esoteric Medicine** roll, at *-10* for "instant" use! The medic must take a Concentrate maneuver, be close enough to touch the patient, have one hand free, and have bandages, a first aid kit (+1), or a healer's kit (+1) ready in his other hand. Success heals 1d-3 HP; critical success restores 3 HP. Failure has no benefit; critical failure costs 2 HP. Technically, this takes time – but compared to 30 minutes, it's instant!

"Onward to Victory!"

Fantasy warriors often shout orders, wave battle standards, and strike inspiring poses. In dungeon fantasy, this can serve a purpose . . . *if* the fighter is willing to stop hacking and slashing for a second! The options below require at least one turn and a Do Nothing maneuver. (Everything here is doing *something*, but overlooking this lets badly wounded heroes contribute while trying not to pass out.)

Advice: You can observe and advise your friends. Choose *one* companion to aid. On his turn, he can listen to you – or ignore you! If he listens, make your **Tactics** roll. The result affects all his attack and defense rolls that turn: +2 on a critical success, +1 on a success, -1 on a failure, or -2 on a critical failure. Reroll each turn. If multiple people try to advise a fighter, *he* chooses whose advice to take, and only that person may roll.

Encouragement: A successful **Leadership** roll gives +1 to your *side's* Fright Checks, resistance rolls against mind control or fear, and self-control rolls for disadvantages that would affect combat. Critical success gives +2. This bonus lasts until your next turn, but you can roll and shout for as many turns as you like. Failure, or several people trying this at once, gives no benefit (but no penalty).

Observation: You can take a turn and ask the GM to roll **Strategy** for you. Success means he'll reveal the enemy's general plan – if they have one – beyond "Kill 'em all!" For instance, "Guard the altar," "Keep the party away from the west wall," or "Kill the guy wearing the Sacred Talisman." Failure means he *lies.*

Playing Dead

If you wish to opt out of combat, feign death. This is a free action at any time – just fall down, drop your weapon (monsters *never* trust a "corpse" with a ready weapon!), and stop moving. If a monster that attacks only the living (e.g., zombie) would attack you, roll a Quick Contest: **Acting** vs. the *higher* of its IQ or Perception. It gets bonuses for special senses (like +4 for Discriminatory Smell); you're at +1 at half HP, +2 at 0 HP, +3 at -HP, +4 at -3×HP, and +5 at -4×HP (you're *really* dead at -5×HP, and succeed automatically). If you *win,* your would-be tormenter overlooks you and eats another party member.

Recognizing Magic

Those who know a spell recognize it automatically in combat. Should it become important to identify an *unknown* enemy spell ("Is Sir George asleep or dead?"), a player can ask the GM to roll against his PC's **Thaumatology** skill. Success means the GM reveals the spell – or the *closest* spell, for spell-like effects that aren't spells. Failure, as always, means he lies!

Roguish Skills in Battle

Thieves aren't as tough as front-line fighters. In an ideal world, they would *avoid* fights. Yet they're often out in front, scouting or looking for traps, when the whacking starts. Fortunately, roguish skills can be helpful in combat.

Backstabbing: When the GM starts combat time, anyone may try a **Stealth** roll to hide in shadows, duck into the bushes, etc.

Modifiers: A basic -5; any encumbrance penalties; +5 if the party is ambushing, no modifier in a stand-up fight, or -5 if the party is ambushed; and -5 anywhere *but* in bush or shadowy tunnels.

Success lets him attack his *nearest* foe (GM chooses) from behind; critical success lets him get at *any* enemy. On a combat map, start him one step away from and behind his target. He gets +4 to hit because he can afford to be completely telegraphic against an opponent who can't see him; this helps offset the -3 for vitals (×3 injury), -7 for skull (+2 DR but ×4 injury), -8 for chinks in torso armor (*halve* DR), or -10 for chinks over the vitals or skull (half DR *and* extra injury). The victim gets no defense. The sneak can opt to make this an All-Out Attack, with further bonuses, but this isn't wise – attacking reveals his presence!

Hidden Weapons: A *small* blade can be hidden in the palm, along the forearm, etc. This requires a **Holdout** roll, at no modifier for shuriken, -1 for daggers, -2 for larger knives, or -3 for sabers, shortswords, and smallswords. Success means that when combat starts, the *first* attack with that weapon will be hard to see coming: -2 to the target's defense. Ensuing blows won't surprise anyone.

Practical Poisoning: Anybody can poison a blade – a long action that must be done *before* combat. There are tricks for getting a larger dose to the target with one blow. The poisoner may apply two or four doses, if he has enough. When he hits, make his **Poisons** roll. Failure means it isn't any more effective than one dose. Success gives -2 to HT rolls to resist and ×2 damage for two doses, or -4 to HT rolls to resist and ×4 damage for four; e.g., four doses of monster drool require a HT-4 roll to avoid 8 points of injury.

Traps: Traps add to the fun when setting an ambush. Make one **Traps** roll per trap. Repeated attempts are allowed but take a minute apiece – and critical failure means the *trapper* is affected! On any success, record the margin; during the fight, the GM will make a secret Vision roll for anyone who enters the trapped area, with a penalty equal to this margin (allies who know about the trap add +10, but success is only *automatic* for the trapper). Those who make the Vision roll see and avoid the trap; the first person to fail trips the trap, after which it's obvious or sprung, and can't affect anyone else. Hasty traps used by delvers include concealed caltrops (margin of failure on Vision determines how many affect the victim), crossbows with trigger lines (inflict their usual damage), leg-hold traps (damage a foot and, if anchored, hold the target in place until he breaks free), trip-ropes (roll DX-2 or fall), and shallow stake pits (thrust impaling damage based on victim's ST). Each affects a one-yard area – one hex, on a combat map.

Speed is Armor!

Not really – if you're hit, it's better to be an immobile lump in dwarven plate. Still, mobility keeps martial artists, swashbucklers, and thieves from getting hit. Your *first* dodge after any of the moves below counts as your Acrobatic Dodge (p. B375) for the turn, even if you didn't use **Acrobatics,** giving +2 to Dodge if the trick succeeded but -2 if it failed.

Acrobatic Evade: You may substitute **Acrobatics** for DX when evading (p. B368) on a *Move* maneuver, tumbling between your foe's legs, rolling over his shoulder, etc.

Acrobatic Guard: If you fear for your life, you can declare that you're acrobatically avoiding *one* opponent and doing nothing else. Roll a Quick Contest of **Acrobatics** vs. his best melee skill. If you *win,* he'll have a penalty equal to your margin of victory on his roll to hit you on his next turn. If you tie or lose, you waste your turn. Regardless, you still get your usual active defenses.

Acrobatic Stand: If you're lying down, you can jump to your feet using one Change Posture maneuver instead of two by making an **Acrobatics** roll at -6 plus encumbrance penalties. Failure means you end up sitting; critical failure means you fall face-down!

Athletics in Combat: Scenery permitting, the feats under *Dungeon Parkour* (p. 7) can be part of any *Move* or *Move and Attack* maneuver. During a Move and Attack, they count as the "Move" portion, and both your attack roll *and* roll for the stunt take an *extra* -2.

Tumbling: During a *Move* maneuver, you may try to cartwheel or roll at full Move. Make an unmodified **Acrobatics** roll. Success means that anyone who makes a ranged attack on you adds your full Move to range. Failure means you only get half your Move and no special benefits. Critical failure means you *fall down* and go nowhere!

Taunt and Bluster

Delvers often want to draw the aggression of monsters away from allies – especially *wimpy* allies. Many skills work for this: **Animal Handling** to provoke dumb animals, a suitable **Psychology** specialty to distract things that *have* a psychology, **Religious Ritual** to aggravate evil monsters (especially demons), and **Singing** to taunt foes smart enough to understand insults (IQ 6+).

Take a Concentrate maneuver and roll a Quick Contest of skill against the *higher* of the monster's IQ or Will. If you *win,* that foe decides to attack *you* from now on. A tie means it continues to fight as it was. If you lose, it targets a hurt or otherwise vulnerable party member! Win, lose, or tie, if you roll a critical success, your mark *also* makes an All-Out Attack on its next turn.

You can try **Intimidation** to drive off an intelligent monster, but *not* one with IQ 0-5, Indomitable, and/or Unfazeable (which excludes animals, golems, undead, most plant-monsters, many demons, etc.). Roll dice as above. If you *win,* that foe attacks somebody *other* than you next turn, and must move *away* from you to do so (so if you step between it and a friend, you can protect your friend) – and if you rolled a critical success, it must make a Will roll or flee the battle. If you tie or lose, though, it wants *your* lungs!

AFTER THE BATTLE

After succeeding at the "killing the monsters" part, the party will want to move right to the "taking their stuff" bit. There are occasionally steps between killing and looting, however.

Prisoners

Sometimes, the monsters *aren't* dead – they're charmed, knocked out, pinned, put to sleep, or trapped. In that case, the party has to decide what to do with the prisoners.

Chains and Irons: Top priority is to ensure that they don't escape. Shackles are ideal, but not every party brings those (thieves *hate* them), and they rarely come in dragon size. Rope or cord will do; divide the prisoner's BL by 50 to get the needed weight in pounds. Make a **Knot-Tying** roll to estimate this amount and bind the target. Failure means he'll wiggle free as soon as nobody is looking. Critical failure lets him

burst out immediately. In the case of a spellcaster, *any* failure means he wasn't gagged and blindfolded securely enough to prevent casting!

Whips and Thumb-Screws: Monsters often know things – like where the secret door is and how to open the trapped chest safely. *Win* a Quick Contest of **Interrogation** vs. Will to get an answer; assume that any penalties for ferociousness are canceled by bonuses for Bad Things Done by Greedy Munchkins (and Best Left Unsaid). Losing by 5 or more means the prisoner *lies.*

Elbow-Length Gloves: Make a **Search** roll to find objects that the prisoner is trying to hide in unexpected places on its hairy, dirty body.

Patching Up

When Ed the Barbarian is face-down in a puddle of blood and you need him to bash the vault, the surest fix is to pour a healing potion in his ear or ask the cleric to heal him. However, clerics and druids study nonmagical healing skills for a reason.

For the tasks below, *one* attempt is allowed. Failure produces no change. Critical failure inevitably makes things worse.

Antidotes: In a wilderness setting, an hour and a **Pharmacy (Herbal)** roll will cook up an antitoxin for a *known* poison – if the victim can hang on for that long.

Bandaging: Assume that dungeon fantasy is TL3 for the purposes of first aid. It takes 30 minutes to restore 1d-3 HP. This requires a successful roll against **First Aid** (+1 with first aid kit) or **Esoteric Medicine** (+1 with healer's kit). See also *Medic!* (p. 11).

Bleeding: Ignore *Bleeding* (p. B420) in dungeon fantasy unless some monster, poison, or weapon specifically causes it. The usual cure is a particular degree of magical healing. Taking a minute and making a bandaging roll will also work – but apply a penalty equal to the healing needed (e.g., -4 if the effect requires 4 HP of healing to stop bleeding).

Horrible Grubs: In the event of skin-boring grubs, burrowing arrowheads, or similar unpleasantness, healing magic can cure the injury but not solve the problem. That takes a **Surgery** roll – at -5 without real surgical instruments (e.g., just a dagger). Failure means 2d injury, critical failure means 4d injury, and either means the grubs are still there.

Weird Afflictions: Make a **Diagnosis** roll to reveal what's wrong with somebody who isn't responding to healing, or to avoid -5 when casting **Cure Disease.** Roll **Poisons** to identify poison and avoid -5 on **Neutralize Poison.** Use **Thaumatology** to deduce the spells needed to cure an ongoing magical effect.

Weird Treatments: Magic spells have no penalty to cure a *diagnosed* affliction. If the party lacks the right spell, taking a day out to make an **Esoteric Medicine** roll (+1 with healer's kit) might work. Of course, the GM may cackle and apply penalties, and a day holds the potential for *many* random encounters with monsters that can smell suffering. Not to mention that fantasy diseases and poisons often kill in hours or minutes!

Fido and Ol' Paint: Use the same rules to patch up the party's pets, but **Veterinary** replaces Esoteric Medicine and First Aid.

Searching the Bodies

Dead enemies, like live ones, may have hard-to-find loot on them. Make a **Search** roll to find this. If several people search, use their margins of success to determine who finds the best stuff. The GM should reveal search results to the players in secret. That makes it easier for the thief to palm evil, mind-warping things that the cleric would destroy!

Dead Monster Bits

Taking rings from dead hands isn't enough for the truly greedy – some will want to keep the fingers. The necessary preparations must be done while the kill is fresh. If the party returns to an undefended room full of carrion, assume that massive dungeon rats (or grubs, 'pedes, or *something*) carried it off, or at least ate the valuable eyes.

Poisons: Make a **Poisons** roll to milk toxins from a mundane venomous creature (like a cobra, even a *giant* cobra), or a **Hazardous Materials (Magical)** roll to extract any agent with weird magical powers. Failure ruins the lot. Critical failure poisons the looter.

Mundane Parts: Make a **Naturalist** roll to know what furs, horns, etc., are useful for raw materials or medicine (in dungeon fantasy, this skill *does* cover "unnatural" things like giant worms). Roll against a suitable **Physiology** specialty to find any *internal* part of this kind. To remove a pelt, yank out claws, etc., make a **Survival** roll. To take out internal organs, roll **Surgery.** Any failure on the extraction roll spoils the loot.

Magical Parts: "Mana organs" require a **Thaumatology** roll to find and know how to properly extract, and a **Surgery** roll to remove. Failure on either roll ruins the body part.

LOOT

All that glitters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms enfold.
      – William Shakespeare, **The Merchant of Venice**

And now for the feature presentation: booty, plunder, spoils, swag, treasure . . . loot.

Cracking Chests and Vaults

Use the rules under *Picking Locks* (p. 8) and *Muscling Through* (p. 8) to open loot containers – and *Dealing with Traps* (p. 8) for any traps on them. A few notes:

● Bashing open a container using **Forced Entry** will set off any trap on it!

● When picking a *trapped lock*, use the *lower* of **Lockpicking** or **Traps.** Success opens the lock – which, when done correctly, also leaves the trap untriggered. Failure means the lock stays shut but the trap goes off.

● Some traps aren't visible from outside an enclosed chest. A looter can feel for these and try to interrupt them *as he opens the chest*. This is working by touch: make a *DX*-based **Traps** roll at -5, but with any bonus for **High Manual Dexterity.**

Identifying the Good Stuff

Not all loot looks like loot. Some has hidden properties that make it more valuable – or trash. Professional dungeon-crawlers *need* special skills to figure out what to keep, sell, and discard. Except as noted, the rolls called for here identify the treasure but not its fair market value.

Coin: Assume that any delver who isn't completely illiterate (as barbarians often are) can count and evaluate coin: a copper farthing is $1; a silver penny, $4; and a gold piece, $80. Copper is $62.50/lb.; silver, $1,000/lb.; and gold, $20,000/lb. To avoid being ripped off, bring scales and weigh it all!

Stones: Everybody knows that shiny rocks are valuable. To tell semiprecious stones from gemstones, make a **Merchant** roll. *All* trained dungeon fantasy merchants seem to know about gems.

Luxury Items: To know fine incense from cathouse perfume, rare tropical woods from common types, ermine from rat fur, etc., roll against a suitable **Connoisseur** specialty.

Rare Artifacts: Some things, especially artwork, are valuable because of who made or owned them, or by dint of some other historical quirk. Make a **Connoisseur** roll to spot a potential item of this kind – and a **Forgery** roll to discover whether it's real or a fake! A **Heraldry** roll might deduce makers or past owners from marks left on the item (GM's decision).

Superior Weapons and Armor: Roll against an appropriate **Armoury** specialty to spot better-than-average arms and armor, including such properties as "balanced," "dwarven," and "meteoric."

Blessed Items: A Perception roll with bonus equal to **Holiness** or **Power Investiture** lets those with either trait spot a blessed (or *cursed*) item. A cleric can take four hours to pray to his god and get the full details by making a **Religious Ritual** roll. Critical failure triggers any curse present.

Magic Items: The most reliable way to spot magic items is for a wizard to make his Perception + **Magery** roll on sight or on touch. Use the **Analyze Magic** spell to reveal specific enchantments. A delver with a backpack alchemy lab can take an hour and make an **Alchemy** roll at -2 to learn the item's *general* abilities (*not* specific spells) – but critical failure wrecks the item! If the item is legendary, a **Hidden Lore (Magic Items)** roll will identify its common name and known functions.

Magical Writings: The reader of a book must know its language to have any hope of knowing what it's about. Skimming a spellbook reveals what spells are in it. Roll **Hidden Lore (Magical Writings)** to discover other properties ("Those who read this will turn into a duck!"), with any failure activating *bad* effects. Either takes four hours – or an hour and a half with a **Speed-Reading** roll. Magic scrolls show up to **Magery;** make a **Thaumatology** roll to learn what spell a scroll casts.

Potions: These are visible to **Magery.** Roll **Alchemy** to analyze a potion's effects. The tester can use a backpack alchemy lab, take four hours, and at worst ruin the potion on a critical failure . . . or taste the stuff, which takes 10 seconds but means that bad effects affect him on *any* failure!

Naturally Occurring Money

Even an "empty" room – especially a cave – may contain loot. To identify the ore that the goblins were mining, the strange metal in the excrement of that rock-chewing worm, etc., make a **Prospecting** roll. The GM decides how much is there, and how long it takes to mine.

Determining Value

Looters who want to estimate an item's fair value must *fully* identify the booty first; e.g., "A fine, balanced broadsword of smiting, blessed by the Squid God, known to be the blade that Hack Slashman used to slay the great wyrm Blargh." The GM will make a secret **Merchant** roll. On a success, he'll reveal a round figure *based on what the delvers know.* This will be bogus if the party is missing major details, or if the roll fails!

DISPOSING OF THE SPOILS

Once the loot is identified and evaluated, it's time to decide what to do with it all.

Keepers

What the party keeps and what it sells is entirely a matter of intraparty negotiation. Approaches include:

● Split loot by shares, seniority, etc. Enforcement takes the form of "If you cheat, the others will pound you!"

● Allocate items to those who can make the best use of them. This *sounds* altruistic, but munchkins often prefer it because it makes the party *more powerful.*

● Free-for-all! Keep whatever you grab! (Thieves tend to play by this rule no matter what the rest of the party does.)

However it works, skills don't affect negotiations. PCs can **Fast-Talk** and haggle with NPCs, but weaseling *each other* is pure roleplaying.

Fixer-Uppers: Armor is an unusual special case, as it's made for a particular user. If the new owner's SM isn't that for which the armor was designed, it will *never* fit. If SM matches, the armor may fit with adjustments. Make an **Armoury (Body Armor)** roll, at -1 per unusual property (dwarven, magical, spiked, etc.) – but *-5* for fine. Success fits the armor to the new wearer. Failure means it won't fit *him* ("Sorry, Bob, but most people aren't as freakish as you.") but, with further adjustments, might fit somebody else. Critical failure ruins it for good.

Getting a Good Price

True munchkins will want to sell swag they can't use to get money for better gear. Dungeons with vast unexplored depths – or ones that repopulate or rearrange when nobody is visiting – often have a perpetual merchant encampment outside. A few might have shops *inside,* surrounded by mana-free areas and patrolled by armed ogre guards from Stinkerton's. Otherwise, the party has to drag the spoils back to town; see *Travel* (p. 5), and remember that a trip takes longer when hauling 523 lbs. of copper coins, the worldly goods of 114 dead goblins, and a gold cockroach the size of your head . . . while driving off the inevitable bandits bent on stealing it all.

Coin always fetches its full value. For everything else, start with the *lower* of actual value and what the seller *believes* his item is worth (see *Determining Value,* above). As noted in *Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers,* the sum that an adventurer will actually receive depends on his **Wealth:** Dead Broke yields

0% of this price (a euphemism for "Get out of my shop, you bum!"); Poor, 10%; Struggling, 20%; Average, 40%; Comfortable, 60%; Wealthy, 80%; and Very Wealthy, 100%. The wealthy can weasel out of taxes and are assumed to be good for any damages caused by stolen, cursed, or exploding articles (the Merchants' Guild collects taxes for the King and insurance from its members). Thus, selling is most profitable if the richest party member does it – and if he's smart, he'll take a percentage.

There are a few ways to bend the rules, however.

"For you, a special price!" Make a reaction roll (3d) before each selling spree. Add any bonuses for the hero's **Appearance** and **Charisma.** If the total is 16+, the merchant likes the seller: treat the PC's Wealth as one level higher (cumulative with the effects of haggling, if attempted).

Haggling: For each item, a PC with the **Merchant** skill can roll a Quick Contest vs. a generic skill of 15. If he *wins,* treat his Wealth as one level higher for that sale; if he *ties,* he receives his usual rate; and if he *loses,* treat his Wealth as one level lower. Thus, even Dead Broke delvers can cut deals, while Very Wealthy ones shouldn't bother. The seller can reject the offer, but other merchants will be reluctant to make another – no repeated attempts until after the party brings its next haul to town!

Black Market: A seller can try to move goods on the black market. Use the haggling rules, except that **Streetwise** replaces Merchant and losing leaves the option of selling to a merchant. Critical failure on the roll means that some sniveling snitch turns the PC in for tax evasion or violating Guild privilege, and the Town Watch or King's men seize the item for good.

The Temple: Those with **Clerical Investment** can trade luxury items and rare artifacts suitable for a temple (statuary, incense, etc.), and blessed items, as if their Wealth were a level higher – no roll required. They *don't* get cash, though, but credit for merchandise in town.

Scrap

Greedy delvers who bring a wagon and haul back everything may end up with tons of scrap – rusty iron gratings, partly sundered doors, etc. Make *one* **Scrounging** roll for the party at the adventure's *end.* Success means the junk might be of some value to someone. Failure indicates that it really *is* garbage.

In town, make *one* **Current Affairs** roll to discover whether anybody is buying scrap ("Archmage Recnam Orcen is excavating a new, um, *cellar,* and could use such wares."). Success finds a buyer who offers $1d×100 per half-ton wagonload – take it or leave it. Any failure reveals nothing, but for each week the party stays in town (at $150 apiece for food and lodging), *one* PC can try a **Propaganda** roll; success means he finds a similar deal through the power of advertising.

Selling the Tale

At the end of a dungeon crawl, the heroes can take a week to immortalize their recent adventures. Each may try *one* roll – **Cartography** to map the journey, **Musical Composition** to compose a ballad, **Poetry** to pen an epic, or **Writing** to create a learned work on the Squid Cult, ochre slime mating rituals, etc. Success creates something worth selling; the creator gets $100 (of course, it costs $150 a week to live at the inn, which explains why most authors live in garrets). Critical success is literally that, and scores $500. Dungeon fantasy worlds don't have presses, syndication rights, etc.; those who aren't happy with their fee can deny the world their brilliance, but it won't help.

Last Ditch

Dungeon fantasy is about the rousing sound of tunnels collapsing, the bracing smell of suffocating gas, and the salt spray of (your friends') blood. Sometimes, though, things go *really* wrong thanks to unlucky dice. Then the GM may wish to grant hints or assistance. When checking for aid, failure shouldn't make matters *worse* – if things are so bad that brave adventurers are begging, it isn't funny to have The Devil show up and curse them, too.

Seeking Guidance: If the players are merely at a loss for what to do next, they may make a **Meditation** roll to seek enlightenment (popular with martial artists), or a **Theology** roll to decide "What would my deity do?" Success means the GM gives a *small* hint – nothing as clear as magic divination, just a cryptically worded shove in the right direction. This has the benefit of making contemplative PCs actually *seem* contemplative.

Praying: "There are no atheists in dungeons." Adventurers who *really* need help can pray! Roll vs. the highest of IQ, **Meditation,** or **Theology,** at a base *-10,* +1 per unspent character point sacrificed, +1 per **Holiness** or **Power Investiture** level, and -3 for wizards with Social Stigma (Excommunicated). Success means a fortuitous coincidence saves the supplicant; e.g., his pack snags, stopping his fall. Critical success means a miracle; e.g., his god teleports him to safety. (Gamers familiar with the computerized adventures of @ will find this comforting.)

Altars and Shrines: Dungeons often contain ready-made altars and shrines – just not ones holy to friendly gods. Someone with **Clerical Investment** and an hour to spare can make a **Religious Ritual** roll to sanctify such a site (provided that it isn't actually *cursed*). Success makes it holy; only critical failure angers the resident god enough to blast him. With a proper shrine, he can then lead the party in a prayer for aid. Roll against **Religious Ritual** at -10, plus **Holiness** or **Power Investiture,** plus the total of all points sacrificed by everyone. Success and critical success work as above, but benefit the *entire group.*

Pass the Plate: When a god answers delvers' prayers, anyone who benefits is advised to donate $1,000+ to the temple when he's next in town. Otherwise, the helpline will be busy next time . . .

MASTERING DUNGEONS

If you're not the GM, please stop reading.

– The Management

Much of what the GM needs to know appears in *Dungeon-Crawling* (pp. 3-15). With the rules for kicking in doors, sneaking around, looting, and so on spelled out, it's simple to come up with challenges for the heroes – just decide on things like how hard the locks are to pick, how many HP the doors have, what monsters live there, and how much gold is in the hoard! Some *additional* advice on such matters follows, with cross-references to earlier rules that may be relevant.

DUNGEON DESIGN

Dungeons don't have to make sense, but they do demand some forethought so that the GM isn't making things up while the players tap their toes. Dungeon fantasy is all about *what the heroes do* – that's why most of **Dungeon Fantasy: Dungeons** consists of ways for PCs to exploit their skills! Before starting a dungeon adventure, the GM should make notes on the elements below so that when the players do things, he's ready to respond.

Archetype

What *is* the dungeon? Answering this question can be a big help when making maps and "winging" the answers to the players' questions! Some possibilities:

Cave: Unlit and damp, with deep fissures, ponds, and similar natural dangers. A cave won't have "rooms" or "levels" as such, but erosion can produce the same effect. It may house cave-dwellers (bears, giant bats, etc.) or *intelligent* monsters that have taken it as a lair and installed traps, doors, etc. Open caves make it easier for distant foes to hear the party; tighter ones can challenge armor-clad heroes to wiggle through narrow openings.

Cellar: Might be lit, albeit poorly (-3 to Vision), and even in use; in the latter case, the users are either hostile or rarely seen (perhaps monsters are eating them). Extended cellars have numerous small rooms separated by thick walls that support the building above, and thus have lots of doors and traps – but also easily secured rooms for resting in. Monsters tend to be either humans or kept pets, unless something has burrowed in.

Labyrinth: A *deliberate* dungeon, created to challenge those within. Some are meant to keep something in – usually a terrible monster. Others are designed to tax explorers to the limit, but reward those who reach the far side or some inner area. Labyrinths tend to twist and sprawl; feature endless obstacles, tricks, traps, and monsters; and often require adventurers to use all of their skills to survive.

Mine: Dark, unless in use (parts in use will be lit at -3 to Vision). "Traps" are more like mining hazards – collapsing galleries, suffocating or explosive gas, and so on. Mines can go for miles and have many levels, but consist almost entirely of claustrophobic tunnels. Monsters might be the *miners* (evil gnomes, kobolds, etc.) or whatever ate them (giant worms, balrogs, etc.). Treasure often consists of raw ore or uncut gems.

Prison: Prisons resemble cellars with some important differences. They have guards, torturers, plenty of locked doors, and traps that offer a way for the guards to pass. There will also be cooks, kitchens, and even work areas for slave labor. Both the prisoners *and* the guards may qualify as monsters! An important subcategory is the *menagerie:* a prison for beasts. Wizards in particular seem to imprison some very unusual things . . .

Sewer: Sewers run under metropolises. They may have entrances all over town, but the *interesting* parts are remote. Sewers are wet, rank, and unhealthy; the heroes will have to make lots of HT rolls! Many have both deliberate traps (set by assassins and thieves) and bad engineering (e.g., collapsing walls). Inhabitants include slimes, giant rats, and undead drowning victims. Some sewers are dimly lit by glowing slime (-8 to Vision).

Tomb: Tombs tend to be dark, sealed, and dry. Many are labyrinthine, with cunning tricks and traps for foiling

Tavern Tales and Moldy Books

After designing the dungeon, the GM should decide what delvers can learn about it through hearsay and/or research (see *Finding a Quest,* p. 4). This step comes last because having all the facts at hand makes it easier to concoct *useful* tidbits that give a fair return on the PCs' investment in skills of little use outside town.

Also cook up two or three bits of hogwash for delvers who critically fail! These should be consistent with the accurate rumors. For instance, if success reveals "The Vault of Vileness is next to the ocean," critical failure might add "It's full of kraken!" when the Vault is actually a sealed tomb full of undead.

Rumors

Come up with a few *general* rumors about the dungeon to give to adventurers who make their **Carousing** or **Current Affairs** rolls: archetype (cave, mine, etc.), dangers obvious from the outside ("Halfway up a volcano, and full of fissures and lava pits."), a simple description of monsters seen nearby ("Ahr! Blue goblins, as sure as I be standin' here!"), fabled loot ("*Everybody* knows there's a Holy Sword in there."), etc. Critical success reveals a detail instead; see below.

Details

Write down a few *specifics* to share with heroes who succeed at **Research** rolls: particular inhabitants ("The Passages of Pain are said to be the lair of the lich Ruinas, necromancer extraordinaire."), construction ("The complex is the work of Hell Gnomes, masters of cunning locks and Evil Runes."), unambiguous dangers ("It's called the Cave of Curses for good reason – bring an exorcist."), or hints about treasure that go beyond greedy speculation ("The Holy Sword rests within, true. However, Evil placed it upon the Altar of Doom, since it could not be unmade. Only the strong of will can lift it."). Critical success gives an especially valuable tidbit – a weakness of one of the worst monsters, a password, a partial map, etc.

Also note a couple of fatally flawed details for researchers who critically fail. Again, these shouldn't disagree with other findings. If holy water *heals* the lich Ruinas, he's unlikely to discourage bogus rumors that it burns him . . .

grave-robbers. Obvious residents are the undead and things that eat corpses. Since burial is a religious ritual, tombs are often sanctified and include prayer facilities, making sanctity variations, curses, and strange altars likely. The dead are frequently buried with rich treasures, however, making the dangers worth braving.

Warren: A warren is similar to a mine, but excavated by burrowers (big ants, worms, killer bunnies) who lair there, not by miners. Most such creatures can navigate in the dark, so light is unlikely. The size and shape of tunnels will depend on the monsters that dug them; e.g., 7'-thick worms dig 7'-wide tunnels. The walls might be shored up with dung, straw, viscous goo, or the bones of prey. Things like webs and trapdoors are likely.

A dungeon may include different sectors with diverse themes. It's traditional to give the party a clue when they change sectors, though, so that they have a chance to prepare. This might depend on a skill roll – **Hidden Lore** for a forgotten labyrinth, **Prospecting** for a mine, **Urban Survival** for a sewer, **Theology** to spot tomb symbols, **Naturalist** for a warren, even **Streetwise** to know a prison. All such rolls should be *Per*-based.

Maps

The next step is to map out the dungeon – get some graph paper and start drawing rooms and passageways. *Caves* tend to have irregular areas linked by narrow tunnels. *Mines* and *sewers,* being manmade, are fairly regular; most have more corridors than rooms. *Warrens* could go either way, depending on the residents. *Cellars, prisons,* and *tombs* typically have lots of rooms

and reasonably predictable, squared-off floor plans. *Labyrinths* vary too much for generalizations beyond "confusing."

Don't worry (much) about cartography or architectural soundness, but remember these things:

Scale: Decide how many feet or yards each graph-paper square or hexagon represents.

Walls: Draw reasonably thick walls, and note their HP and DR – for when the players decide to carve a shortcut! Most dungeon walls are stone, with *ablative* DR (see p. B46). A 6" wall is about as thin as it gets, and has DR 78, HP 75; a 1' wall has DR 156, HP 94; a 2' wall has DR 312, HP 118; and a 3' wall has DR 468, DR 135.

Ups and Downs: In a multilevel dungeon, you'll need one map per floor or level. Be sure to include staircases, ladders, ramps, shafts, magic lifts, etc. Keying these between levels (say, with colors or letters) lets you see at a glance where the heroes will end up.

Area Labels: Number any area that you think might contain interesting features or an encounter, so that you have a way to refer to it in your notes. Each set of "generic" areas (connecting tunnels, prison cells, etc.) can share a number and a description. It's best to number areas in the rough order you think the adventurers will reach them, so that as the party explores the dungeon, you can consult your notes with minimal page-flipping.

Legend: You'll need symbols that represent doors, *secret* doors, stairs, ladders, and so on. You'll find it easier to answer the players' questions if you box off these symbols and always use the same ones in all of your dungeons.

For rules covering maps made by *adventurers,* see *Mapping* (p. 6) and *Selling the Tale* (p. 15).

Area Information

Looking at your map, write down the area labels in numerical order and note anything interesting in each area as you go. Your notes don't have to be *wordy,* but they should be *thorough.* A four-room dungeon can be hours of fun if it has lots going on, while 1,337 rooms with identical doors, no furniture, an orc apiece, and minimal loot is a recipe for boredom. "Interesting" is subjective, but here are some classics.

Doors and Locks

Area entrances in dungeons often have doors, grates, portcullises, or similar barriers.

Locks: Such portals may be *locked;* see *Picking Locks* (p. 8). Standard **Lockpicking** penalties range from +5 to -5. Especially tough locks might go down to -10! A Magelock spell *can't* be picked – it requires **Counterspell** or **Lockmaster.**

Doors: If lockpicking fails, the party lacks a thief, or the delvers simply want to break stuff, forced entry becomes an issue; see *Muscling Through* (p. 8). Any lock or bar can be *forced.* Typical values are:

Construction	Lock/Hinge		Bar/Wedge	
	DR	HP	DR	HP
Light	3	6	1	14
Average	6	12	2	18
Heavy	9	18	4	23
X-Heavy	12	23	8	30
Vault	24	46	16	37

The door itself can be *bashed.* Wood has ablative DR (see p. B46), while ironbound wood and iron don't. Use these numbers:

Construction	Wood		Ironbound		Iron	
	DR	HP	DR	HP	DR	HP
Light	1	23	5	27	12	36
Average	2	29	10	34	25	46
Heavy	3	33	15	39	50	58
X-Heavy	6	42	30	49	75	66
Vault	12	54	60	62	150	84

Metalwork: Gratings, grilles, etc., can be bashed or *bent.* The stats below are *per bar;* defeating one bar lets a Skinny person pass, two lets most adventurers get by, and three allows Fat or Very Fat delvers, or those with Gigantism, to squeeze through. Weight is for lifting *unlocked* portcullises; ST is the minimum effective ST needed without extra effort.

Construction	DR	HP	Weight	ST
Light	6	12	200 lbs.	12
Average	9	18	500 lbs.	18
Heavy	12	23	1,000 lbs.	25
X-Heavy	18	35	2,000 lbs.	36
Vault	24	46	3,000 lbs.	44

Inhabitants

Many areas should have monsters! Put their complete stats on a separate sheet that you can refer to whenever they show up. All you need to note in area information is the type and number of foes, any deviations from standard abilities and equipment, and perhaps a few important rolls (*especially* Hearing and Vision for sentries; see *Scouting Ahead,* p. 7). For advice on monster stats, see *Perilous Encounters* (p. 20).

Nasty Surprises

Traps and Hazards (p. 8) discusses many unpleasant gimmicks that could lurk in a dungeon. A few *clever* dangers – hidden on entrances, in rooms, and/or on furnishings – are a major part of what makes dungeon crawls fun! Avoid the temptation to put them everywhere, though. That will just make the players paranoid and turn the game into a tense-but-tedious mine-clearing mission. Some specific notes:

Traps: Describe *unique* traps in the notes for the area that holds them. Many traps are "generic," though, and show up repeatedly. Keep stats for these on a separate reference sheet, as recommended for monsters. Area information merely needs to note the traps' location, plus deviations from the standard versions.

Curses: Try to make these unique. Curses that show up often enough to get "generic" stats will seem *lame* – not weird and creepy! To describe a curse, specify its *resistance roll* (if any) and *effects:* damage (type and amount), or injury if it comes off FP or HP and ignores DR; afflictions (such as attribute penalties or temporary disadvantages); or spell-like effects (every malign spell in **GURPS Magic** is inspiration for a curse). If the curse is due to an evil spirit, note its effective Will for would-be exorcists.

Evil Runes: These differ from curses primarily in that they're uncommon but not rare, and mostly cause instantaneous effects similar to wizardly spells – usually Burning Touch, Deathtouch, Dehydrate, Frostbite, Icy Touch, or Shocking Touch. Note the spell, effective level, any resistance roll, and damage.

Gunk: Gunk requires a *resistance roll* and *effects,* like a curse. Resistance is normally against HT, generally at a penalty; effects typically mirror acid, poison, or potions. Note whether the gunk must touch skin or can leach through armor (similar to Oozing Doom; see **Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers**). Some glop can rust or rot gear! For that, make a HT roll for the equipment – again, possibly at a penalty. Delicate tools (like lockpicks) and articles with moving parts have HT 10, while armor, weapons, and heavy tools (like poles) are HT 12. *Fine* combat gear and *good* tools get +1, *very fine* weapons and *fine* tools get +2, orichalcum gets +2, silver or dragonhide *usually* gets +1, and meteoric iron is immune to magical goo. Failure most often means the item is ruined.

Tricks: Even more so than curses, tricks should be remarkable. What makes a trick tricky is that it's *unexpected!* For things like portals and shifting passages, indicate where the adventurers end up by keying the entrance(s) and exit(s) exactly as you would for a staircase between levels.

See *Fiendish Traps* (p. 19) for a handy format for writing up not only traps, but also curses, Evil Runes, gunk, and tricks.

Obstacles

Some areas should include *obvious* quandaries that call for the *Dungeon Parkour* (p. 7) and/or *Bridging Hazards* (p. 8) rules. These include interesting spots that are hard to reach and self-evident dangers that can be avoided but not disarmed, broken, or resisted; e.g., acid pits. Note any of the following that apply:

● The *height* of a vertical challenge: drop to a lower area, distance from the floor to the top of a giant altar or to a small opening halfway up a wall, depth of a pit, etc.

Falling Damage

Distance	Damage	Distance	Damage	Distance	Damage
1 yard	1d	15 yards	3d+2	45 yards	6d
2 yards	1d+1	20 yards	4d	50 yards	6d+2
3 yards	1d+2	25 yards	4d+2	60 yards	7d
4 yards	2d-1	30 yards	5d	70 yards	7d+2
5 yards	2d	35 yards	5d+2	80 yards	8d+1
10 yards	3d	40 yards	6d-1	100 yards	9d+1

● The *width* of any horizontal challenge: chasm, icy surface, lava pit, water, and so on.

● Penalties to rolls to defeat these challenges; see *". . . With Spikes"* (p. 7).

Be sure to spell out the consequences for those who fail! Some examples:

Falls: Those who fail to cross chasms, narrow ledges, pits, steep slopes, etc., smash into the ground. Don't bother doing the math on p. B431. Just use the above table.

Pits of Death: Falling damage becomes *impaling* when there are spikes at the bottom! Ignore falling damage for liquid-filled pits – but acid means 1d-1 corrosion damage per second, while lava does up to 8d+2 burning damage per second (and tends to be rather final, so use sparingly).

Water: Failure leads to drowning (see *Swimming,* p. B354).

Special Features

A dungeon area might contain all manner of weird and wonderful stuff – most of it bad, some of it good, and all of it entirely up to the GM. Old favorites include:

Altars: These might be cursed (see *Curses 101,* p. 9) or blessed (see *Last Ditch,* p. 15), or raise effective sanctity for *evil* clerics in the area.

Enchanted Fountains: These affect people who drink from them, those who bathe in them, or items dipped in them, causing corrosion (1d-1 corrosion for a dip, 3d injury if swallowed), poisoning (note damage and the penalty to any HT roll to avoid it), potion effects, and so on. Some have a whole table of random effects – or even *separate* tables for drinking, bathing, and dipping!

Mana: Areas with other-than-normal mana (see *Mana,* p. B235) can be an interesting challenge on occasion. Don't fill a whole dungeon with no-mana areas just for kicks, though – that's boring for wizards and bards, and unfair to PCs with magical Signature Gear.

Natural Features: Ore veins (specify net yield in $ and lbs.), weird fungus (glows, or poisons those who eat it, or *heals* those who eat it), and so on.

Sanctity: Areas can have different sanctity levels, too. This affects clerics exactly like mana affects wizards. Use this sparingly – clerics are the only healers in most parties!

Statues: These may talk, posing riddles for the *players* to solve. Getting the answer right might open a door or even grant a wish. Or perhaps the statue seems mundane, but is an NPC that the party can free with a **Stone to Flesh** spell (but be sure to offer a clue). Treat *walking, attacking* statues as monsters!

Secret and Concealed Doors

Secret and concealed doors are de rigueur in dungeon fantasy! As with traps, avoid the temptation to put them everywhere. Pressing against every last 10′ wall section while making an "ugh-ugh" noise is fun in 1990s video games, but not at the gaming table.

As noted in *Hidden Doors* (p. 6), a *secret* door requires a roll to spot and another to operate, while a *concealed* door demands only a detection roll but the searcher must be looking inside or behind the right scenery have any chance of success. Assign each such door a penalty to any rolls involved (typically from -1 to -10). Each concealed door *also* needs a piece of concealment – include this in the area information. Well-placed red herrings (a big cabinet here, a tapestry-lined hall there) make nice additions to *any* area.

Booty

An area or its inhabitants will often have swag – see *Treasure* (p. 28).

FIENDISH TRAPS

Traps give the GM an opportunity to exercise diabolical creativity. For each trap, briefly note *what it is* and *what triggers it,* and then list the following:

Detect: The skill needed to find the trap – usually **Traps,** but **Alchemy** or **Poisons** for gunk, or **Thaumatology** for Evil Runes – along with any difficulty modifier. Such rolls are always *Per*-based. Not every trap is detectable! Only magic can spot a trap concealed entirely within a wall or a chest, or behind a door.

Disarm: The skill required to render the trap harmless. This is most often DX-based **Traps,** but gunk may require **Alchemy, Hazardous Materials,** or **Poisons.** Some traps allow alternative skills – for instance, **Armoury (Missile Weapons)** would be as good as Traps for neutralizing an *accessible* crossbow. This roll, too, may carry a modifier. Also note whether failure triggers the trap! Some traps can't be disarmed – consider a pit with an illusionary floor over it. The only solution might be to spot and avoid such a trap.

Circumvent: How to avoid the trap if it's found but not disarmed. This might not even require a roll; it's simple enough not to step on the big, red tile. If there *is* a roll, it's just about always against DX – or **Acrobatics** or **Jumping,** if higher. As always, there may be a modifier. By definition, failure means triggering the trap!

Evade: Whether the trap offers a last-ditch chance to avoid its effects when triggered. In most cases, this is a Dodge roll, possibly a qualified one ("A Hearing-2 roll lets the victim hear a click behind him. He can roll Dodge at -2 to duck."). For gas or blinding powder, though, it might be a HT roll for the target to hold his breath or shut his eyes quickly. A few undetectable traps can be *stopped* by somebody carefully reaching into the trapped area to feel for and intercept traps – a *DX*-based **Traps** roll at -5 plus any **High Manual Dexterity** bonus.

Effects: The trap's consequences! It might hit the victim with a spring-loaded melee or ranged weapon (find damage for the weapon as if someone with respectable ST were wielding it), drop something heavy (*any* damage is possible, but instant death is boring), restrain the target (give it an effective ST), or fill an area with gas (offers a penalized HT roll to resist, and causes sleep, injury, etc.), among other things. *Magical* traps, such as Evil Runes, should specify a spell, its effective level, and all necessary parameters (resistance roll, damage, etc.).

Shots: How many times the trap can be triggered. Most traps are one-shot. A few can fire several times. Magical traps often have *infinite* shots! Things that don't have shots, like pits, are "constant."

Rearm: If the trap is one that can be disarmed, indicate whether it's possible to rearm it by making the roll to disarm a second time.

Steal: State whether an IQ-based **Traps** roll – possibly with a modifier – lets a thief *take* the trap! If it does, spell out what the thief acquires ("A ST 15 crossbow.") and how much it weighs.

This information will make it *much* easier to adjudicate *Dealing with Traps* (p. 8) and *Dangerous Stuff* (p. 9).

Sample Traps

Concealed Crossbow: Crossbow concealed behind tiny hole in wall, triggered by loose floor tile.

Detect: Per-based Traps at -9.
Disarm: DX-based Traps. Failure triggers!
Circumvent: Automatic (don't step on tile).
Evade: Hearing roll at -2 allows Dodge at -2.
Effects: 1d+5 impaling.
Shots: 1.
Rearm, Steal: No – crossbow is *inside* wall.

Frozen Runes: 30' stretch of floor covered in Evil Runes casts magic on anyone who passes.

Detect: Per-based Thaumatology, or Perception + Magery for mages.
Disarm: No.
Circumvent: DX-5 to walk without stepping on runes.

Monsters and Player Knowledge

It's only fair to permit delvers who learn monster strengths and weaknesses through skills and spells, or by losing body parts, to exploit that knowledge; see *Recognition* (p. 9) and *Exploiting Weaknesses* (p. 10). The GM has no special obligation to respect player knowledge gleaned from game supplements, though! The time-honored response to this munchkin tactic is to mix things up: vampires dislike rowan or wormwood instead of garlic, or are laid to rest by burial under a sword stuck in the ground instead of by being staked through the heart; the "fire dragon" breathes lightning (or a jet of fire ants!) instead of flame; and so on.

Evade: No.
Effects: Resist Frostbite-15 with HT or suffer 3d injury.
Shots: Infinite.
Steal: No.

Illusion-Covered Pit: 30'-deep spiked pit under 10'×10' square of illusionary floor.

Detect: Per-based Traps (or suitable spell).
Disarm: No.
Circumvent: DX or Jumping – or automatic with ladder, board, etc.
Evade: No.
Effects: 3d impaling.
Shots: Constant.
Steal: No.

PERILOUS ENCOUNTERS

Killing monsters is necessary in order to take their stuff. Since that's the main point of dungeon fantasy, it's *crucial* that the GM do a respectable job of determining when and where monsters show up, what they can do, and how many try to eat the heroes at once.

Encounter Types

Dungeon fantasy encounters customarily fall into two categories.

Wandering Monsters

"Wandering monsters" are hostile things that traipse around looking for trouble. They might actively patrol a wilderness area or an underground dungeon. They could even pop in from Hell without rhyme or reason!

Handle these by assigning each outdoor area or dungeon level odds of an encounter. A roll of 6 or less on 3d suits "safe" roads, while 9 or less is best for most wilderness and dungeon. Save odds of 12 or less and 15 or less for Hell, giant wasp hives, and similarly monster-infested locales.

Assess up to +3 to the roll if the delvers are doing something stupid that will attract attention (e.g., hauling a ballista through the dungeon). Conversely, deliberate attempts at caution (e.g., everybody making **Stealth** rolls and using **Infravision** instead of lights) might give up to -3. The GM is welcome to assign further situational modifiers.

The GM must also set the *frequency* of such rolls. Hourly rolls are about right when moving around indoors, searching for secret doors, etc., while daily rolls work well when traveling outdoors. Also roll once per night when the party camps, once whenever the party stops to conduct an exorcism or other long task, and once per attempt to bash or force a door.

The GM decides what shows up (and how quickly) when a roll indicates an encounter. Some areas have just one sort of monster; others have dozens. Old-school GMs will want to put together a random encounter table for each area and let *it* determine the party's bad fortune!

Set Encounters

"Set encounters" are run-ins with monsters that the GM has deliberately placed in one particular dungeon area. This might still involve rolling dice! Area information that says something like "9 or less chance of 2d orcs" or "touching the altar summons a demon on 12 or less" can give a dungeon better replay value.

Creating Monsters

Just about *any* creature from *any* **GURPS** supplement can work as a dungeon denizen. If it wasn't designed for fantasy, simply change the special effects. For instance, an alien that zips through space, blasting people with psionic pyrokinesis, becomes a demon that flies through the air, blasting people with magic fireballs. Simple!

Like traps, monsters are fun to design. For each home-made monster, the GM should have enough information to resolve not just combat, but *all* of the situations discussed under *Monsters* (p. 9). Don't bother building monsters with character points! The following details will more than suffice:

ST:	**HP:**	**Speed:**
DX:	**Will:**	**Move:**
IQ:	**Per:**	
HT:	**FP:**	**SM:**
Dodge:	**Parry:**	**DR:**

Attack (Skill or Resistance): For instance, "Bite (14): 1d+2 cutting" or "Death Gaze (15 vs. HT): Heart Attack (p. B429)." *Bites* inflict thrust-1, while *strikers* (horns, scorpion tails, etc.) deliver thrust at +1/die; either may be cutting, crushing, or impaling. *Limbs* do thrust-1 (thrust for a hind limb); they may be crushing (+1/die with Blunt Claws), or cutting or impaling (+1/die with Long Talons). Natural attacks often benefit from Striking ST that raises damage; cutting and impaling ones can carry follow-up *venom* (note resistance roll and damage). Resistance and effects for *supernatural* attacks are arbitrary. Give each attack its own line.

Traits: Advantages or disadvantages important in dungeon fantasy, such as Acute Senses (for noticing sneaky delvers), Constriction Attack, Indomitable (for a monster that can't be influenced), Magic Resistance, Regeneration, and Unfazeable (for a fearless creature). Don't bother repeating DR, Innate Attacks, etc., already noted above.

Skills: Relevant skills, *especially* Brawling (at DX+2 or above, this gives +1 damage per die with natural attacks) and Stealth.

Class: *Animal* (*Giant* if huge or *Dire* if mutant; affected by Animal Handling and Animal spells), *Construct* (incorruptible magical servant), *Demon* (hostile extradimensional creature subject to the Banish spell), *Elder Thing* (hostile extradimensional creature *not* subject to Banish), *Elemental* (subject to Banish and Control Elemental), *Faerie* (free-willed creature of magic), *Hybrid* (as Animal, but shares traits of two or more beasts and requires a special subset of Animal spells), *Mundane* (any living thing that isn't Animal, Plant, or Slime and that has vital areas, like goblins and generic mouth-and-tentacles creatures), *Plant* (affected by Plant spells), *Slime* (diffuse, IQ 0 ooze that's immune to most Animal and Plant spells), or *Undead* (can be turned with True Faith). This is important for Higher Purpose advantages and when choosing the skill used to recognize the thing (see *Recognition,* p. 9).

Notes: Whether it will negotiate or feign willingness to negotiate (see *Negotiation,* p. 10), whether it's truly evil (matters to clerics and holy warriors), useful body parts (see *Dead Monster Bits,* p. 13), etc.

Sample Monsters

These monsters might prove useful to GMs who are in a hurry or who need inspiration for their own critters.

Acid Spider

This giant spider has a relatively tiny body – "only" 7' across – attached to long, hairy legs that lift it 7' off the ground. It can walk unhindered over all but the tallest of men. A hunting spider, it lurks in dark cracks, waiting for warm prey to happen by. It then jumps on its quarry, bites with fangs capable of penetrating plate armor, and injects fast-acting corrosive venom that partially digests its prey.

ST: 26	**HP:** 26	**Speed:** 7.00
DX: 15	**Will:** 12	**Move:** 9
IQ: 5	**Per:** 12	
HT: 13	**FP:** 13	**SM:** +2
Dodge: 11	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 4

Acidic Bite (15): 2d+1 impaling + follow-up 1d-3 corrosion (10 one-second cycles).

Traits: 360° Vision; Combat Reflexes; Extra Legs (Eight Legs; Long, Can walk *over* SM 0 or smaller adventurers without needing to evade); Horizontal; Infravision; No Fine Manipulators; Super Jump 1 (10-yard jump); Wild Animal.
Skills: Jumping-16; Stealth-15.
Class: Dire Animal.
Notes: Acid glands contain enough acid for 3d acid grenades ($10 each). Specimens with higher ST and HP aren't unheard of; Move, leaping distance, and acid are unchanged.

as-Sharak

The as-Sharak are elemental sorcerers who sold their souls for power . . . only to be turned into monsters in Hell and returned to the living world to punish similarly arrogant mortals. With the physique of great cats (but upright, like men) and some of the magical powers they so craved as mortals – but their mind shattered by madness – these demons guard troves of hidden lore, lying in wait for power-hungry wizards. They believe that taking sufficient mortal lives will eventually break their curse.

ST: 18	**HP:** 18	**Speed:** 6.50
DX: 14	**Will:** 14	**Move:** 6
IQ: 10	**Per:** 14	
HT: 12	**FP:** 12	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 10	**Parry:** 12	**DR:** 2

Bite or Front Claw (16): 1d+2 cutting.
Breath (16): Can breathe a 5-yard-wide × 20-yard-long cone of magic breath once a day. Effects depend on subspecies:
• *Agni (Fire) as-Sharak:* Breath of Flame (5d+1 burning).
• *Akasha (Spirit) as-Sharak:* Removal of Life (2d fatigue). Suffocation damage; DR has no effect on this respiratory attack, but Doesn't Breathe protects completely.
• *Jala (Water) as-Sharak:* Ocean's Frozen Spray (3d-1 crushing, no blunt trauma or knockback). Roll vs. HT at -1 per 2 points of penetrating damage or be frozen (paralyzed) for (20 - HT) minutes, minimum 1 minute.

- *Prithvi (Earth) as-Sharak:* Desert's Sand (3d+1 crushing). Roll vs. HT at -1 per 2 points of penetrating damage or be blinded for (20 - HT) minutes, minimum 1 minute.
- *Vayu (Wind) as-Sharak:* Rending Storm (5d+1 crushing).

Hind Claw (14): 1d+3 cutting.

Weapon (16): Shamshir (3d+1 cutting *or* 1d+3 impaling).

Traits: Combat Reflexes; Detect (Supernatural); Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Higher Purpose (Punish invaders of protected place); Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Vitals); Night Vision 5; Supernatural Durability (Can only be killed by supernatural damage).

Skills: Brawling-16; Broadsword-16; Innate Attack (Breath)-16; Stealth-14.

Class: Demon.

Notes: Some wear armor; if so, add armor DR to natural DR 2. Treat a shamshir as an ordinary cavalry saber (p. B271). Wizard as-Sharak with IQ 12+, Magery 2+, and spells are rumored to exist. Unwilling to negotiate. Truly evil.

Crushroom

A crushroom is a man-sized, ambulatory fungus. It resembles a huge mushroom with dozens of tentacle-like "feet" surrounding its base (allowing it to move) and a gaping maw on top (permitting it to eat delvers). Made of solid vegetable "muscle," it's fantastically strong. Druids believe that crushrooms are nonsapient, although rumors abound of *intelligent* fungus-men with hallucinogenic spores.

ST: 40	**HP:** 40	**Speed:** 4.50
DX: 10	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 4
IQ: 2	**Per:** 10	
HT: 12	**FP:** 12	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 7	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 2

Bite (10): 4d crushing.

Traits: Constriction Attack; Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Sleep; High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (Homogenous, No Blood); No Fine Manipulators; Unfazeable.

Class: Plant.

Notes: Bite counts as a grapple on opponents of SM 0 or smaller, and is followed by the Constriction Attack. Crushrooms aren't intelligent enough to negotiate. Plant spells affect them normally.

Dire Wolf

Dire wolves are huge, strong, *fast* wolves with thick, wooly coats, keen senses, and a taste for human flesh. Tales of orcs using them as mounts are apocryphal – they'll eat orcs, too. While one dire wolf might be no challenge for adventurers, they tend to occur in packs of up to 20 . . .

ST: 16	**HP:** 16	**Speed:** 6.00
DX: 12	**Will:** 11	**Move:** 9
IQ: 4	**Per:** 14	
HT: 12	**FP:** 12	**SM:** +1
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 2

Bite (14): 1d+1 cutting.

Traits: Discriminatory Smell; Night Vision 2; Quadruped; Temperature Tolerance 1 (3° to 70°); Wild Animal.

Skills: Brawling-14; Tracking-14.

Class: Giant Animal (despite the name).

Notes: While not sapient, dire wolves use effective pack tactics. Each pack has an alpha male with ST 17, IQ 5, HP 17, Will 12, Per 15, damage 1d+2 cutting, and Tactics-12.

Doomchild

Doomchildren (plural – there's *always* a horde) are pint-sized demons, barely sapient, that attack viciously with unexpected strength and speed. Bulging eyes and bloated heads mar their disturbingly childlike appearance. They're very fragile; one solid hit will kill them. On dying, though, they explode in a cloud of flame, just like a magical fireball.

ST: 8	**HP:** 8	**Speed:** 7.00
DX: 18	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 10
IQ: 6	**Per:** 10	
HT: 10	**FP:** 10	**SM:** -1
Dodge: 10	**Parry:** 11	**DR:** 0

Weapon (18): Large knife (3d-2 cutting *or* 1d+2 impaling).

Death Blast: 3d burning explosion + linked 1d cutting fragmentation (flying bone shards!) on dying.

Traits: Berserk (12); Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Striking ST +10 (ST 18); Unfazeable.

Skills: Knife-18.

Class: Demon.

Notes: Unwilling to negotiate. Truly evil.

Erupting Slime

Most slime is only dangerous if touched or if it drips on a careless delver. This one is unusual in that it oozes around, spewing globs of toxic gunk at anything that moves, with the goal of killing the target in order to engulf it and thus reproduce. Left undestroyed in an area with dead bodies, erupting slime will convert a body into a new slime in an hour. This doubling will continue until the slimes run out of corpses. Someone turned to slime cannot be resurrected!

ST: 0	**HP:** 10	**Speed:** 6.00
DX: 12	**Will:** 0	**Move:** 1
IQ: 0	**Per:** 10	
HT: 12	**FP:** 12	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 0

Slimeball (12): Ranged attack (Acc 3, Range 10/100). Penetrates armor in DR seconds, and then delivers 2d toxic, reduced to 1d toxic with a HT roll.

Traits: Amphibious; Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Sleep; High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Injury Tolerance (Diffuse; Infiltration, Can ooze under barriers and through tiny holes); Invertebrate; No Legs (Slithers); No Manipulators; Vibration Sense (Air).
Class: Slime.
Notes: Nonsentient – *can't* communicate or negotiate. Unaffected by Animal or Plant spells that don't specifically target slimes. A dead slime can be used (or sold) as one dose of Oozing Doom.

Flaming Skull

Flaming skulls are semi-corporeal undead that resemble flying human skills wreathed in fire. Streaking into close combat, they deliver flaming bites to their living prey. Owing to their size, speed, and diffuse nature, they're difficult targets, and can often inflict great damage before being destroyed. The jury is out on whether they're necromantic creations or free-willed evil spirits who loathe mortals.

ST: 0	**HP:** 20	**Speed:** 6.00
DX: 14	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 12 (Air)
IQ: 10	**Per:** 10	
HT: 10	**FP:** N/A	**SM:** -5
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 0

Flaming Bite (14): 2 points burning. This Cosmic attack ignores *all* DR!

Traits: Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (Diffuse); No Fine Manipulators; No Legs (Aerial); Unfazeable.
Skills: Stealth-14.
Class: Undead.
Notes: Unwilling to negotiate. Truly evil.

Flesh-Eating Ape

Flesh-eating apes superficially resemble the banana-eating kind, but have a mouth full of meat-tearing teeth and a predatory temperament. They're strong, combative, and have a nose for flesh, tracking tasty humans by scent. Due to their physical power, adventurers are advised to slay them before they get into close combat and grapple!

ST: 17	**HP:** 17	**Speed:** 6.00
DX: 12	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 7
IQ: 6	**Per:** 10	
HT: 12	**FP:** 12	**SM:** +1
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** 10 (Unarmed)	**DR:** 1

Bite (14): 1d+2 cutting.
Fist (14): 2d crushing.

Traits: Arm ST +2 (ST 19); Brachiator; Discriminatory Smell; Ham-Fisted 1; Wild Animal.
Skills: Brawling-14; Climbing-14; Wrestling-14 (+2 ST when grappling).
Class: Dire Animal.
Notes: Flesh-eating apes are smart enough that Animal spells *won't* work – use Mind Control magic. Arm ST and Wrestling skill give effective ST 21 for grappling, and some apes like to use Neck Snap (at ST-4, or 17, for 4d-1 damage; see p. B404) on grappled victims.

Foul Bat (Batchala)

These gigantic bats lack the fear of fire and men possessed by normal beasts. Their stench at close proximity can overcome victims before a single bite is delivered, and their mouth carries toxins that make wounds weep and bleed, causing weakness.

ST: 10	**HP:** 10	**Speed:** 6.50
DX: 14	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 13 (Air)
IQ: 3	**Per:** 10	
HT: 12	**FP:** 12	**SM:** 0
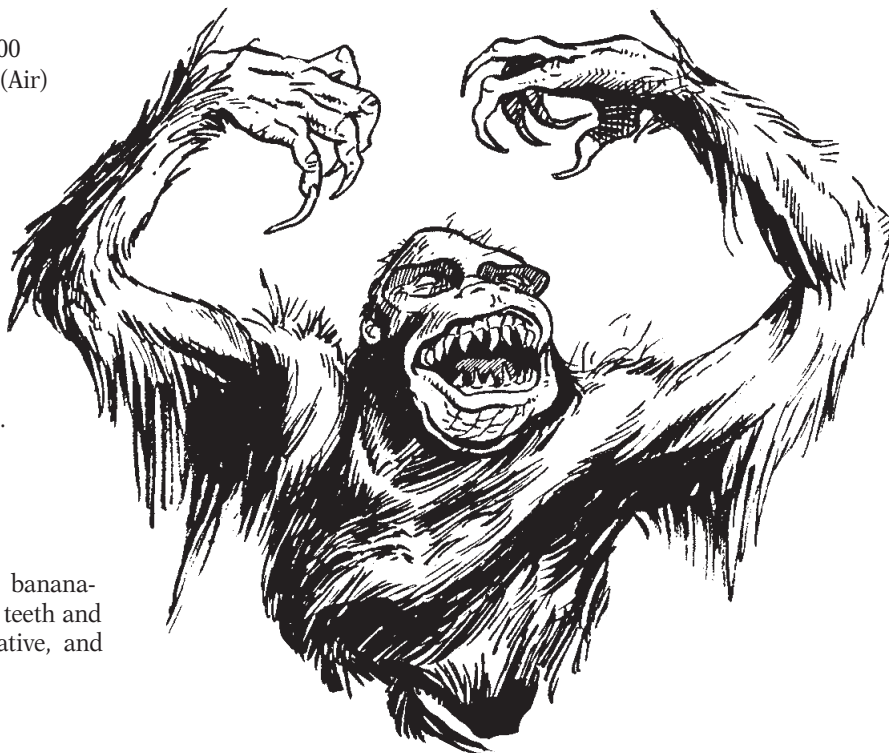
Dodge: 9   **Parry:** N/A   **DR:** 1

Bite (16): 1d+1 cutting + follow-up 1 FP.
Stench (Resisted by HT): Smell-based emanation in one-yard radius. Those who don't resist are *nauseated* (-2 to attribute and skill rolls, -1 to active defenses, and possible vomiting; see p. B428) for minutes equal to margin of failure.

Traits: Acute Hearing 8 (Hearing 18); No Fine Manipulators; Sonar (20 yards); Striking ST +5 (ST 15); Wild Animal.
Skills: Aerobatics-14; Brawling-16.
Class: Dire Animal.
Notes: Some colonies have a demonic leader who has IQ 10+, Indomitable, Magic Resistance 10, and Unfazeable. This is a demon, *not* a dire animal with the Wild Animal meta-trait.

Frost Snake

This white-furred serpent is feared by barbarian cultures in the Frozen North. It hunts by seeking body heat, and can function even in extreme cold. Its surprisingly strong bite delivers venom, and it can also weaken prey with an exhalation of pure cold.

ST: 10	**HP:** 10	**Speed:** 7.00
DX: 14	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 7
IQ: 2	**Per:** 12	
HT: 12	**FP:** 12	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 10	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 2

Bite (16): 1d cutting + follow-up 2d toxic (HT-4 to resist).
Chill Breath (14): 1d(5) burning (Jet, Range 5/10). This is extreme cold, not fire!

Traits: DR 20 (Limited, Cold/Ice); High Pain Threshold; Infravision; Striking ST +3 (ST 13); Temperature Tolerance 10 (-135° to 40°); Terrain Adaptation (Ice); Vermiform; Wild Animal.
Skills: Brawling-16; Innate Attack (Breath)-14; Stealth-14.
Class: Dire Animal.
Notes: Cold organ worth $50 to alchemists, who use it in liquid ice potions.

Giant Rat

There's little to be said about giant rats: they're as cunning and dextrous as regular rats, but *huge,* the size of the children they carry off as food. Almost all dungeons have them – especially sewers. They're fodder for well-equipped adventurers, but every now and then, 20 or 30 of them will get crazy and swarm a party anyway.

ST: 9	**HP:** 9	**Speed:** 6.50
DX: 13	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 7
IQ: 5	**Per:** 12	
HT: 13	**FP:** 13	**SM:** -1
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 1

Bite (15): 1d-1 cutting.

Traits: Night Vision 5; Semi-Upright; Striking ST +2 (ST 11); Wild Animal.
Skills: Brawling-15; Stealth-15.
Class: Giant Animal.
Notes: Anyone wounded by giant rats must make a HT roll to avoid infection with some disease or other. Sewer rot (-1 on

all attribute and skill rolls until stopped with Cure Disease) is typical.

Golem-Armor Swordsman

This construct consists of a flesh golem – made from a formerly living swordsman – riveted inside solid metal plates that are *also* animated, thereby augmenting strength. It's virtually indestructible . . . and when the flesh golem is slain, the armor reanimates on its own as an "armor golem" and must be destroyed a second time. Fortunately for delvers, the vast weight of metal used (200 lbs.) makes the thing slow and clanking, and it seems to have the usual human vulnerabilities at the head and vitals.

ST: 13	**HP:** 13	**Speed:** 7.00
DX: 13	**Will:** 10	**Move:** 2
IQ: 10	**Per:** 10	
HT: 13	**FP:** N/A	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 8	**Parry/Block:** 12	**DR:** 17

Weapons (16): Broadsword (3d+1 cutting *or* 1d+4 impaling) and medium shield (1d+2 crushing).

Traits: Automaton; Berserk (12); Cannot Learn; Combat Reflexes; Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Extra Life 1; Fragile (Unnatural); High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (No Blood); Reprogrammable; Striking ST +5 (ST 18); Unfazeable; Unhealing (Total).
Skills: Broadsword-16; Shield-16.
Class: Construct.
Notes: Usually carries an ordinary broadsword and a medium shield (DB 2), but these may be magical. The golem's massive armor can't be worn by a man, but is worth $1d×100 on its own as scrap! No golem will negotiate or reveal useful information.

Horde Zombie

Horde zombies *aren't* necromantic servitors, but victims of a horrible curse. Anyone slain by a horde zombie will rise as one a minute later and try to eat any living person in sight. While capable of speech, horde zombies only ever moan the name of the body part they wish to eat: "Braaaain," "Spleeeen," "Skinnnn," etc. They're mostly weak fodder – but if enough of them attack, the danger of being grappled, pinned, and eaten is real. On the other hand, they're easy to outrun, and usually forget about victims who duck out of sight (6 or less chance of staying on the trail).

ST: 13	**HP:** 17	**Speed:** 5.00
DX: 8	**Will:** 8	**Move:** 4
IQ: 8	**Per:** 8	
HT: 12	**FP:** N/A	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 8	**Parry:** 9 (Unarmed)	**DR:** 0

Bite/Punch (12): 1d crushing.

Traits: Bad Smell; Cannot Learn; Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Sleep; Fragile (Unnatural); High Pain Threshold; Immunity (All mind control); Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Incurious (6); Indomitable; Infectious Attack (Must *kill* victim); Injury Tolerance (No Blood, Unliving); Temperature Tolerance 10 (-115° to 60°); Uncontrollable Appetite (6); Unfazeable; Unhealing (Total).

Skills: Brawling-12; Wrestling-12 (+2 ST when grappling).
Class: Undead.
Notes: While "intelligent," horde zombies are uninterested in negotiation and immune to trickery. They just want to *eat*. They *aren't* truly evil – they're more a force of nature.

Mindwarper

Mindwarpers are Things from Beyond Time and Space, with genius-level intellect and devastating psychic powers. No mortal has survived to describe one, but ancient lore suggests that they're humanoids with pebbly skin (similar to that of a starfish), no nose, and hands and feet that consist of suckers surrounded by writhing cilia instead of digits. An encounter with a mindwarper generally ends in madness or death. Fortunately for humans, mindwarpers don't work well together; a mindwarper is likely to be the boss of a dungeon, found on the lowest levels, surrounded by mindless fodder.

ST: 10	HP: 10	Speed: 5.50
DX: 10	Will: 20	Move: 5
IQ: 18	Per: 18	
HT: 12	FP: 20	SM: 0
Dodge: 8	Parry: 13 (×5)	DR: 10

Psychokinetic Lash (20): 3d crushing (×5). This ranged attack (Acc 3, Range 10/100) can be dodged but not blocked or parried.

Traits: Compartmentalized Mind 4; Dependency (Mana; Constantly); Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Flexibility; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Vitals); Magic Resistance 6; Pressure Support 3; Regeneration (Very Fast, 1 HP/second); Temperature Tolerance 5 (-15° to 100°); Terror; Unfazeable.
Skills: Innate Attack (Gaze)-20; many IQ-based skills at skill 16-20.
Class: Elder Thing.
Notes: Parry, DR, attack, and Terror are psionic. Compartmentalized Mind lets the mindwarper psychokinetically strike *and* parry five times per turn! A mindwarper will often feign willingness to negotiate; it may even honor a deal that involves delvers agreeing to a horrible, soul-tainting quest. Truly evil.

Peshkali

Peshkali are powerful demonic sentinels set to guard forgotten places. They have a muscular, vaguely humanoid torso with *six* arms, while their lower body is that of a great serpent. What they lack in sorcery or astonishing powers they make up in strength and martial prowess.

ST: 20	HP: 20	Speed: 6.00
DX: 12	Will: 14	Move: 6
IQ: 10	Per: 14	
HT: 12	FP: 12	SM: 0
Dodge: 10	Parry: 13 (×6)	DR: 4

Weapons (18): Six clubs (3d+3 crushing), scimitars (3d+3 cutting *or* 2d impaling), or spears (2d+1 impaling).

Traits: Combat Reflexes; Constriction Attack (+2 to grapple and ST per arm used after first two!); Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Double-Jointed; Extra Arms 4; Extra Attacks 5; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Infravision; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Brain, No Neck, No Vitals); No Legs (Slithers); Supernatural Durability (Can only be killed if all six arms are crippled); Unfazeable.
Skills: Broadsword-18 *or* Spear-18; Wrestling-16 (+2 ST when grappling).
Class: Demon.
Notes: Unwilling to negotiate. Truly evil.

Siege Beast

These gigantic, stooped brutes are stupid, ill-tempered, and completely loyal to the dark forces that control whatever dungeon they're found in. Their purpose in life is to tow siege engines and guard gateways. They wade into battle with a massive hammer like a meat tenderizer riveted to one hand and steel bands nailed directly to their leathery hide. Fortunately for delvers, siege beasts are flesh-and-blood creatures, not constructs, and thus are subject to poison, strangulation, and blows to vital areas.

ST: 30	HP: 30	Speed: 6.00
DX: 12	Will: 12	Move: 5
IQ: 8	Per: 8	
HT: 12	FP: 18	SM: +2
Dodge: 9	Parry: 11	DR: 10

Weapon (16): Hammer (5d+5 crushing). Cannot be dropped!
Mailed Fist (16): 3d+3 crushing.

Metal Boot (14): 3d+4 crushing.

Traits: Bad Temper (12); Fanaticism; Hard to Kill 4; High Pain Threshold; Very Rapid Healing.
Skills: Axe/Mace-16; Brawling-16.
Class: Mundane.
Notes: Siege beasts *aren't* supernaturally bound and *can* be tricked or even negotiated with. Mind control also works – but given a siege beast's Will (and the triple cost to cast spells on SM +2 targets), this isn't usually practical. A siege beast's

"weapon" and "armor" consist of 180 lbs. of low-quality scrap.

Stone Golem

A stone golem is a magical automaton created as a guardian. Most golems found in dungeons have outlived their creators, and carry out obscure orders completely by the letter. Some warn delvers away from a particular place or action, and attack only those who fail to heed the warning; others simply attack on sight.

ST: 20	**HP:** 30	**Speed:** 6.25
DX: 11	**Will:** 8	**Move:** 6
IQ: 8	**Per:** 8	
HT: 14	**FP:** N/A	**SM:** +1
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** 9	**DR:** 4

Stone Fist (12): 2d-1 crushing.
Weapon (13): Huge (SM +1) maul (3d+8 crushing) or executioner's sword (3d+6 cutting).

Traits: Automaton; Cannot Learn; Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Fragile (Unnatural); High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (Homogenous, No Blood); Pressure Support 3; Reprogrammable; Unfazeable; Unhealing (Total); Vacuum Support.

Skills: Brawling-12; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-13 *or* Two-Handed Sword-13.
Class: Construct.
Notes: This is a *basic* model; there's no actual limit to ST, HP, DR, or skill. If clad in barbarian-sized (SM +1) armor, add armor DR to natural DR 4; DR 5 bronze plate (total DR 9) is common. No golem will negotiate or reveal useful information.

Toxifier

Toxifiers might be mistaken for ghosts due to their smudgy, semisolid appearance. However, they're actually demonic clouds of greenish poison vapor. They attack simply by standing near victims and engulfing them in a lethal mist of contact poison. They're largely unaffected by weapons other than those specifically designed to injure spirits, and are unusually strong-willed and hard to repel with magic.

ST: 0	**HP:** 10	**Speed:** 6.00
DX: 14	**Will:** 16	**Move:** 12 (Air)
IQ: 10	**Per:** 10	
HT: 10	**FP:** 10	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 10	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 0

Toxic Attack (Resisted by HT-4): Contact agent emanated in a two-yard radius. Those who fail to resist take 1d toxic damage and are *nauseated* (-2 to attribute and skill rolls, -1 to active defenses, and possible vomiting; see p. B428) if injury reaches 2/3 of HP. Nausea lasts until healed above 2/3 HP.

Traits: Doesn't Breathe; Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; Dread (Blessed Objects; 5 yards); High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (Diffuse); No Legs (Aerial); No Manipulators; Silence 2; Unkillable 1 (Achilles Heel, Magic Weapons); Vibration Sense (Air); Vulnerability (Wind ×2).
Skills: Aerobatics-16; Stealth-14 (18 vs. Hearing).
Class: Demon.
Notes: Unwilling to negotiate. Truly evil.

Triger

A triger is nothing more than a mutant tiger with three heads. It can bite three times instead of just once – and this bite is deadlier than a regular tiger bite due to the unusual strength needed to support two extra necks and heads!

ST: 19	**HP:** 19	**Speed:** 6.00
DX: 13	**Will:** 11	**Move:** 10
IQ: 4	**Per:** 12	
HT: 11	**FP:** 11	**SM:** +1
Dodge: 10	**Parry:** N/A	**DR:** 1

Bite (15): 2d cutting (×3).
Front Claw (15): 2d cutting.
Hind Claw (13): 2d+1 cutting.

Traits: Combat Reflexes; Extra Attacks 2; Extra Heads 2; Night Vision 5; Peripheral Vision; Quadruped; Temperature Tolerance 1 (24° to 90°); Wild Animal.
Skills: Brawling-15; Stealth-13; Swimming-13.
Class: Dire Animal.
Notes: Some mutant tigers have even more heads! For every Extra Head, add +1 to ST and HP (increasing damage to

match), plus another Extra Attack. Triger skins are prized for rugs, and can fetch up to $1,000 apiece.

Balancing Encounters

Determining suitable encounters for the party is an art, not a science. There's no mathematical formula for it, and nothing helps as much as GMing experience. A few guidelines:

Offense: In all but the most trivial of encounters, there should be at least one creature that can threaten the PC with the *highest* DR. If basic damage that high would slaughter the delver with the *lowest* DR, consider alternatives – especially armor divisors and attacks that don't interact with DR (innate Deathtouch spells, poison gas, etc.). Against a party with huge active defense scores, look at high skill (permits a Deceptive Attack) or options that bypass defenses (e.g., spells that work via resistance rolls, area effects, or Stealth to allow a surprise attack). Most monsters can attack only once per turn. Those with Extra Attacks get multiple shots at bypassing active defenses, resistance, and DR, and should generally have slightly lower skill and/or damage.

Defense: Some monsters are *fodder,* and just get squished. These aren't necessarily trivial; numbers and effective offense can let them chip away at the party before being exterminated. Others are *evasive,* and difficult to hit. This might be due to high Dodge, or it could be because of some innate spell-like defense that lets them blink aside, turn insubstantial momentarily, etc., on a roll of 15 or less, or even automatically, once or twice per turn. Yet others are *tough,* with enough DR to turn all but the heroes' biggest physical attacks, sufficient HP to soak up several hits from those attacks, Regeneration, and so on. An interesting option is Injury Tolerance (Damage Reduction). This divides all wounds by 2, 3, or more after DR, the net effect of which is that strong warriors can't kill the creature in one blow, while weak ones can at least injure it somewhat.

Mobility: A creature that has Move 11-20 can step two yards, one with Move 21-30 can step three yards, and so on, allowing it to approach, strike, and dart out of reach – very annoying! Flying monsters with lots of room to maneuver can stay *completely* out of reach, shooting fire breath, dropping rocks, and so on. This forces the party to resort to missile weapons (which usually aren't as nasty as melee attacks) or spells (at -1/yard, for Regular spells). Creatures capable of teleportation, melding with stone, etc., can make every attack a surprise attack and leave the adventurers little option but to Wait and react. Only give out such abilities if the PCs have *some* way to defeat the monsters.

Monsters come in three broad power levels, which modify the above assumptions:

Fodder monsters appear in hordes that outnumber the party. They should have weak attacks that are dangerous mainly because the threat of lucky dice (critical hit, maximum damage roll, winning a Quick Contest, etc.) increases when each PC faces *many* enemies per turn. Such creatures should still be able to injure the PC with the lowest DR, though! There's no need for Extra Attacks – a mob of fodder is essentially a distributed monster that has lots of attacks already. As noted above, fodder monsters don't require espe-cially great defenses. They often have the mobility advantage, though, nipping in and out like jackals or piranha, or swarming through the air like hornets.

Worthy monsters can challenge the heroes when the numerical odds are more-or-less equal. Most use the offense, defense, and mobility guidelines as written. Tradeoffs are possible, however, and can make the encounter interesting. The GM might nudge offense up a bit at the expense of defense, or vice versa. It's still unwise to punch offense up to instant-death levels, even for a critter with *no* defense (ultimately, the monsters' survival doesn't matter, while the PCs' does), or to make defense near-perfect, even for an enemy that can't hurt the party (dungeon fantasy is about *killing* monsters, remember!). Mobility enhances offense *and*

Combat Rules

Fighting is *vital* to dungeon fantasy, so the players (especially those playing warriors) might want to use lots of combat options – including those from *Tactical Combat* (pp. B384-392) and **GURPS Martial Arts.** That's fine! But all of this can slow down what's supposed to be a fun romp, so the GM may wish to implement the following rules.

Trademark Moves

Much of the time wasted in fights has to do with the *players* working out odds and consulting obscure rules. To combat this, the GM may suggest or even require that each player work out a few "trademark moves" that cover an entire turn's worth of actions, and write down the effects in advance. For instance, "All-Out Attack (Strong) for 2d+3 cutting, thrown as a Rapid Strike with a chop to the neck, at skill 13, followed by a Deceptive slash at the torso for -2 defenses, at skill 14." To encourage this, the GM might let anyone who takes the time to work out such a move spend an earned point on a perk that gives +1 to all skill rolls made to use it.

Dumb Monsters

While the heroes can try all manner of crazy, complex moves to show off their skills, letting monsters do the same thing almost doubles the time it takes to play out a battle. Therefore, monsters shouldn't try fancy options such as Deceptive Attack, Dual-Weapon Attack, Feint, Rapid Strike, and combat techniques *unless* the GM specifically designed them to use such tactics to be challenging.

"And Stay Down!"

Fights can last forever when high-HT monsters keep making HT rolls. To get around this, *fodder* monsters are defeated if injured at all – even a 1-HP tap from the wizard's wand will do. *Worthy* monsters are finished when reduced to 0 HP or below. Only *boss* monsters fight to negative HP and attempt repeated HT rolls. "Defeated" monsters that aren't killed or knocked out might cower, play dead, flee, surrender, etc. Unnatural ones might even vanish!

defense somewhat – remember that when making other trades.

Boss monsters, like dragons, are meant to challenge the entire party all on their own. They can be superlative in every category! Any attack might be lethal, so the PCs can't just swarm in with a hail of All-Out Attacks. Multiple attacks are likely, especially if the boss won't have fodder for backup. Such creatures are often both evasive *and* tough; the heroes might even have to discover a special vulnerability in order to win! Some serious foes like this lack mobility, and sit there trading blows, but this isn't universally true. A boss might be a challenge *because* of mobility, moving all over the place so that only one PC can actually fight it at a time.

TREASURE

Loot shouldn't be boring – see *Identifying the Good Stuff* (p. 14) for ideas. Specify the weight of each item or collection of small items, plus a "fair market value" (which you can pull out of thin air, if you like!) for use with *Getting a Good Price* (p. 14). For coin, gems, and luxuries, that's *all* you need. A few articles call for additional details:

Rare Artifacts: Note whether objets d'art are real or fake. If *any* item has identifying marks (hallmark, coat of arms, etc.) that hint that it's more than meets the eye, jot that down, too.

Weapons and Armor: Adventurers *will* want to use these immediately! Specify *all* the special properties of such things, including any enchantments. Also note items meant for users with SM other than 0.

Magic Items: Most of these will see use right away, too, so note every enchantment and foible. Also assign a price to the underlying object, *without* its spells, for the benefit of spell-casters who want to turn it into a power item.

Blessed Items: Treat these like magic items. The only significant difference is that the magic is divine, not wizardly,
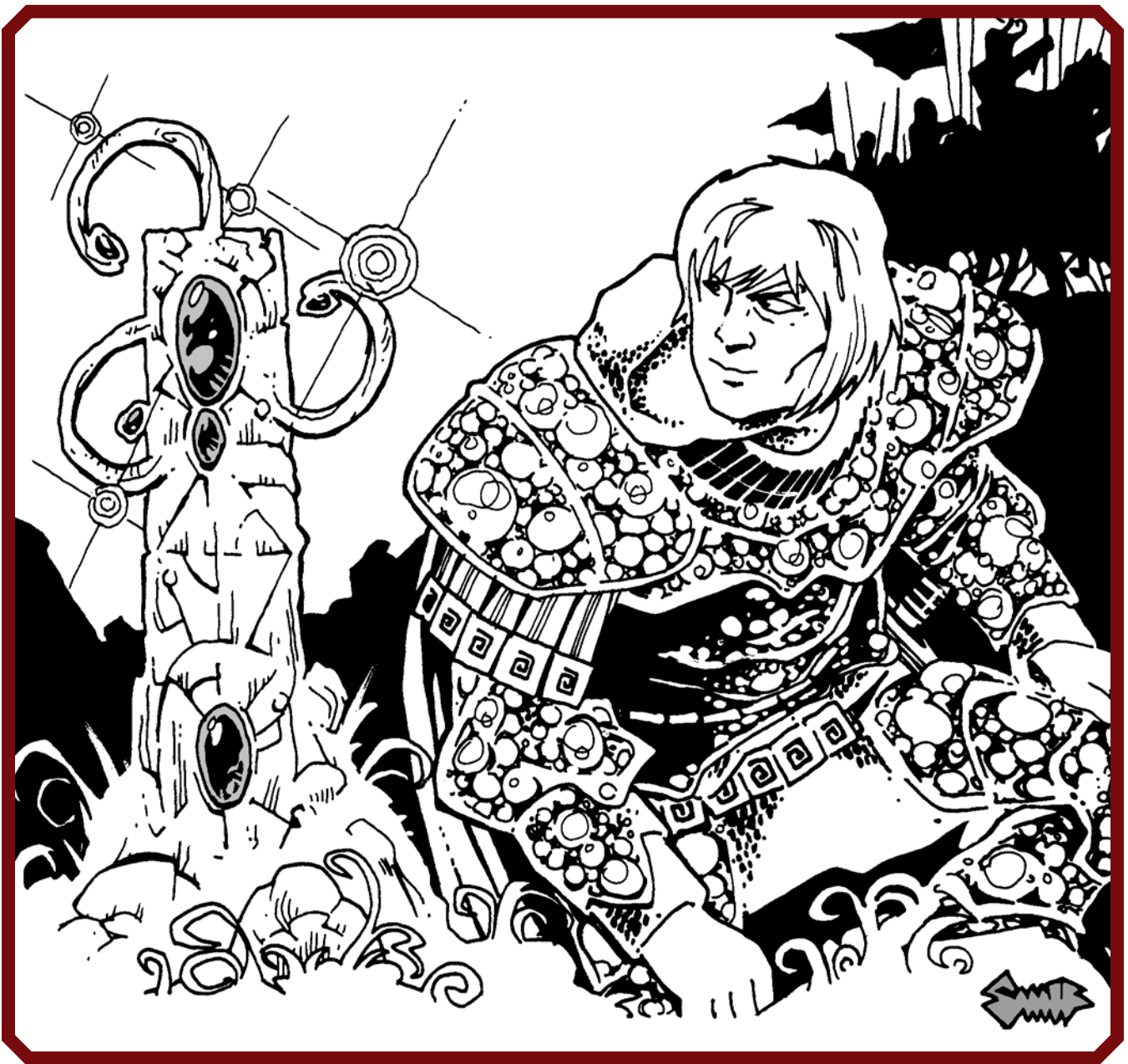
and grabs the eye of those with **Power Investiture,** not **Magery.**

Magical Writings: List any spells in a spellbook. This is an excellent way to hand out spells that you might not otherwise allow.

Potions: See ***Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers*** for a basic list. Potions with almost any spell-like effect are possible. Unheard-of elixirs found down dark holes boiling with evil monsters are hard to *sell,* though – nobody wants to drink poison.

Unique Items

Don't be afraid to include the occasional artifact that just *does what it does:* a musical instrument that gives +1 to all Bard-Song rolls, a bow that gains +1 to effective ST (up to double ST) per turn it's held drawn and ready, armor that changes size to fit any wearer, and so on. Not every "magic item" needs to make sense in terms of enchantments found in ***GURPS Magic*** (or equivalent blessings). Some use *weird* magic, or are home to spirits with strange capabilities, or are relics of cosmic power! These can't be detected or analyzed in the usual ways, and might not even seem that special. They may only reveal their secrets after much trial and error. But they often end up being the most memorable items in the campaign, because they're truly *unique.*

How Much?

Some GMs believe that it's easier to deal with *too little* loot than *too much.* This is a shaky claim. Even a disastrous dungeon crawl should garner enough cash that the PCs can afford to recharge power items, replace used-up arrows and potions, donate to the temple, and live in town for a week or two. Otherwise, nobody will show up for the next adventure. Why would skilled professionals do a perilous job that demonstrably doesn't pay?

On the other hand, soaking up money is easy. Prices are suggestions, and will go up if word gets around that the delvers struck it rich. Even if the GM dislikes such stratagems, there's always a way to coax cash out of adventurers: rituals that charge power items far beyond their usual limits for an exorbitant fee, expensive one-of-a-kind artifacts found by other parties, maps to *extremely* rich dungeons, training costs, guild memberships that grant access to hitherto unknown spells, and so on.

As well, there's no obligation to make all booty – even *powerful* treasure – salable. A wagon-load of potent magic items might sell only as scrap if they're unique artifacts that no wizard in town can analyze, or if they all bear the Number of the Beast. Goods stolen by monsters are still stolen once recovered; the King, Merchants' Guild, etc., might not consider "finders, keepers" much of a defense. Potions with unknown ingredients *can't* be sold. And so on.

Finally, if you give the heroes things they can use, they won't sell them! It's a good idea to include at least one gewgaw that each party member will fall in love with, and to make these the *best* items in the haul. All the rest together might barely cover beer and bed, but that won't matter if the barbarian got a new axe and the bard got a magic lute.

Playing Hard to Get

Most treasure is found in three places, each with its own challenges:

Dead Bodies: This is the easiest treasure to get at – kill, peel, and take. Don't forget to assign **Search** penalties for small, *valuable* items on the dead, though!

Containers: Locked containers work like locked doors; see *Doors and Locks* (p. 18). Most common containers won't stand up to a beating: a wooden chest has DR 2, HP 14; an ironbound one, DR 5, HP 18; and a solid iron strongbox, DR 12, HP 10. Two things keep adventurers from simply bashing, though. First, valuable, *fragile* goods, like potion bottles, will break on 1-4 on 1d (let impulsive players learn this the hard way!). Second, bashing *will* set off any traps present (see *Fiendish Traps,* p. 19).

Troves: Piles of loot at the bottom or back of the dungeon, in the lair of the boss of all boss monsters, *might* just sprawl all over the place like the classic dragon's hoard. But monsters appreciate security, too! Why else would they live in an underground fort full of traps and locked doors? A trove is quite likely to be in a vault with a stout door, good lock, and/or traps, all of which use the usual rules – but often with extra-large penalties to rolls to get at the treasure.

BEYOND THE DUNGEON

One last bit of advice to the GM: the dungeon is the centerpiece of dungeon fantasy, but standard, less-munchkin fantasy adventures can work, too. If the players are having a blast with their characters, and the cachet of killing monsters and taking their stuff hasn't worn off after one or two dungeon crawls, consider a quest *outside* the dungeon.

Wilderness Adventures

Travel (p. 5) and *Wandering Monsters* (p. 20) treat wilderness as a way for the GM to keep adventurers on their toes while yomping to and from the dungeon, but this isn't the only possibility. When ignoring finicky details such as ecology, the main differences between the Mines of Madness and the Bog of Badness are that the latter has no doors to bash and no roof overhead, and its monsters and hazards have an outdoor theme instead of a subterranean one. Both can still be dismal, monster-infested, trap-riddled places that demand careful searching and mapping.

Wilderness expeditions favor outdoorsy heroes such as barbarians, druids, and scouts, and might even be good *starting* adventures for parties made up of these character types. On the other hand, for a group of more "urban" types – particularly bards and thieves – such quests could be demanding, making them suitable challenges for experienced PCs who've already braved several dungeons.

Guidelines especially useful for outdoor adventures include *Camping and Posting Watches* (p. 5), *Tracking* (p. 5), *Mapping* (p. 6), *Scouting Ahead* (p. 7), and *"Good (Three-Headed) Doggie!"* (p. 10). For loot, consider *Naturally Occurring Money* (p. 14).

Town Adventures

Dungeon fantasy normally treats "town" as an abstraction. Transactions with shops, inns, and temples consist of a few rolls of the dice followed by an exchange of funds. The Town Watch, King's Men, Merchants' Guild, and Thieves' Guild are impersonal forces that somehow manage to dictate prices and even mete out punishment to heroes who could wipe the floor with clerks, watchmen, and soldiers.

If the GM wants, though, these things could be adventures of their own. Prowling alleys at night, breaking into buildings, stealing from shops, and fighting anybody who tries to interfere differs very little from sneaking down tunnels, bashing doors, killing monsters, and taking loot. This sort of "urban dungeon crawl" is excellent for bards and thieves, and the prevalence of lighter armor and weapons in the city means that martial artists and swashbucklers won't play second fiddle to barbarians and knights in combat.

Town adventures will make regular use of *Scoring Extra Cash* (p. 4), *Negotiation* (p. 10), *Trickery* (p. 10), and *Getting a Good Price* (p. 14). *Dungeon Parkour* (p. 7) is, as the name suggests, an excellent way to get around rooftops.

Making Everybody Useful

The templates in **Dungeon Fantasy: Adventurers** give each character type the ability to handle a relatively narrow set of tasks. Their competencies overlap some, but each enjoys areas of unique proficiency. This venerable convention of dungeon fantasy has a purpose: as diverse challenges in the game bring the capabilities of different specialists into the spotlight, the players take turns at the center of attention, which lets *everybody* have fun.

It's the GM's job to give each hero a few chances to shine on every adventure – preferably about as many as his companions. This is sometimes tricky. Some suggestions:

Barbarian: Obstacles that demand high ST (portcullises, bars to bend, etc.) let him show off his muscles out of combat. His great height and ST enable him to give friends a leg up, making him a surprisingly good partner for the thief. Avoid the temptation to gloss over travel – give him the chance to show off his outdoor skills. Giant-sized items that only he can use are a fitting reward.

Bard: Don't rush through business in town before and after dungeon crawls; these activities showcase the bard's social abilities. Work in monsters that are susceptible to taunts and trickery, and a few that will negotiate. Surprise the party with the occasional artistic turn; e.g., the faerie queen who demands a command performance. Include ornate and magical instruments in hoards.

Cleric: Healing is always in demand, so spotlighting the cleric rarely requires much work. It's no fun to be little more than a walking, breathing healing potion, though! Toss in a few cursed items and areas to identify and exorcise, undead to turn, and the occasional disaster that necessitates an organized prayer for help. Blessed items and ornate holy symbols shouldn't be *too* rare.

Druid: With his abilities weakened underground, it's crucial that part of each adventure happen outdoors. Don't make every monster a demon, Elder Thing, or similar horror – include hostile animals and plants, too. Play up desperate poison cures, the mysterious properties of slimes, etc. Most druids aren't materialists, but an interesting *pet* is a neat find.

Holy Warrior: Ensure that his Higher Purpose and knowledge of monsters and their weaknesses come into play – these things differentiate him from the knight and the cleric. As with the cleric, curses to deal with can elevate his importance. A common quest item for such champions is the "holy sword": a blessed weapon that *only* those with Holiness can wield.

Knight: Given his importance in combat, the knight won't ever be far from the spotlight. The trick is making him useful *without* his sword in hand. Try to play up his skill at Leadership and Tactics – let him verbally assist the thief trapped in combat across the chasm, or lead a horde of weak-but-friendly monsters. Mighty weapons and armor are, of course, what he craves.

Martial Artist: Few challenges put a greater premium on tremendous DX and athletic skills than those involving mighty leaps and deft steps. This gets boring by itself, so mix in some *weird* stuff that depends on chi rather than on mana, sanctity, or other occult energy. Have him find powerful exotic weapons that only he has mastered – or enhanced gauntlets and boots, if he fights unarmed.

Scout: Like the barbarian and the druid, the scout lives for outdoor action, so don't omit travel and tracking. Be careful not to cripple his archery skills by setting every combat encounter in dark, close tunnels where he has no shot – and include some out-of-combat challenges for him, like shooting lines across chasms. Obviously, his ideal prizes are ever-better bows and arrows.

Swashbuckler: The swashbuckler is easily entertained. He can rival the knight in combat and the martial artist at athletics, and his Luck lets him take fun risks. Since the archetype attracts fans of dash and flair, handle crazy stunts with "Sure! Roll at -10!" instead of "No." Have his blade of choice show up in treasure – or give him ways to improve his existing blade, if he's bound to it.

Thief: The party won't get far without the thief. With all the locks, traps, and scouting missions in dungeon fantasy, his biggest theft may well be the spotlight – at least out of combat. If he somehow gets bored, challenge a rarely used skill (e.g., Forgery). Welcome rewards include better tools and small-but-valuable items to palm (out of sight of his companions!).

Wizard: The wizard – like the cleric, knight, and thief – is indispensable. He can spot magic items, counter hostile magic, identify books and potions, and defeat multiple enemies with a glance. Dozens of spells keep him from getting bored easily. Items are the key to keeping the player happy: books of lost spells, ornate artifacts for power items, and so on.

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