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THE CRUSADER™

The Journal of the Intrepid Adventurer

REMEMBERING GARY GYGAX

BY STEPHEN CHENAULT,
JAMES M. WARD
AND FRANK MENTZER

HOW IT ALL HAPPENED

BY GARY GYGAX

DUNGEON BUILDING 101

BY ROBERT DOYEL

AULD WYRMISH

BY MIKE STEWART

HAMMER & ANVIL

BY CASEY CANFIELD

KEEPER'S NOTES

BY DAVIS CHENAULT

CONVENTION BLOG

BY STEPHEN CHENAULT



**LOTS O'
TROLLS
INSIDE!**



Trolls at Work

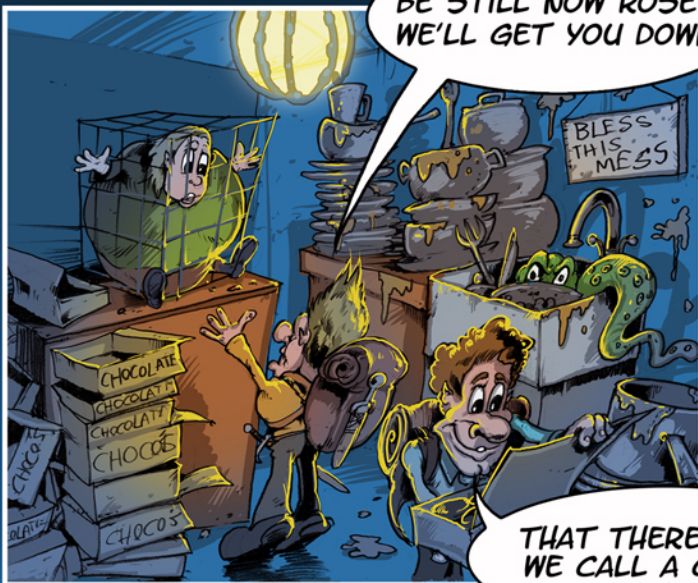
by Stephen Chenault Art by Jason Walton



LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE SKINNED OUT.



ALL CLEAR JED.



BE STILL NOW ROSEY, WE'LL GET YOU DOWN.



COME ON BOYS, LETS SEE THE FUSS.

THAT THERE'S WHAT WE CALL A GENUINE PICKLE!



THAT'S TROLLS AT WORK FOR YERS.

END.

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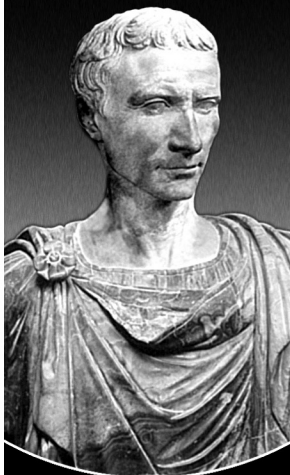


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WHEN CAESAR

STOOD UPON THE
BANKS OF THE
RUBICON LOOKING
SOUTH TO ROME,
HE HESITATED.
BEFORE HIM STOOD
THE VAST, COMPLEX
MECHANISM OF THE
PAST, GLOWING
WITH A HOST OF
INTRICATELY WOVEN
STRATAGEMS.
WITH HIM, HE HAD
BUT ONE LEGION,
WEARY FROM EIGHT
YEARS OF BRUTAL WAR
WITH THE GAULS.
BUT WHEN CALLED
TO SURRENDER
HIMSELF TO THE
SENATE AND CERTAIN
EXILE, HE DID NOT
HESITATE.
HE CALLED HIS
LEGIONARIES TO
CROSS INTO ITALY,
TO CROSS
THE RUBICON.
AND AS HE DID SO,
HE SAID ONLY THIS:
ALEA IACTA EST!



JULIUS CAESAR

ALEA IACTA EST



"The Die is Cast" – An Editorial by Stephen Chenault

REMEMBERING GARY GYGAX

It is hard to know where to begin a story, and sometimes it is best to begin it at the end. It was an honor when Gail Gygax asked me to be one of the eulogists at Gary's funeral. She included me with his son Luke, James Ward and Harold Johnson, both old hounds from the TSR days. I don't really know what I said. I know that I went up there with a little outline, but I couldn't read my writing and so I just spoke. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done because as each word fell from my lips I knew that Gary was getting further and further away. As I neared the end, I could sense it was the end. I didn't want it to end.

I do not know by what strange twist of fate led my path from the little, skinny, skate board riding, comic book collecting D&D playing kid in 1977 to the doors of Gary Gygax. But who can answer such things?

On an August (or was it July) morning in 2001 I was working away in our Gen Con booth when an elderly gentleman came up and said, "Hey do you want to have a smoke?" or some such business. He was a bit portly, bearded with a pony tail and if memory serves, wearing a t-shirt. I stammered for a minute, obviously having no idea who this was. He noted my confusion and said "I'm Gary Gygax" in a most unassuming manner. Holy Crap I thought. This is HIM, not only the fellow who created the game but the fellow who we were going into business with. I opted to have a smoke with him.

Aside from Mac, none of us had any idea what Gary looked like. Though we had all played D&D for decades we never bothered to pay much attention to Gary. Why would we? He gave us the game and kept cranking out materials for it. We gamed two and three times a week throughout the 80s and into the 90s, breaking out the same old AD&D books we always had. Though we all knew who Gary was and that he had made the game and we had vague rumors of his ousting from TSR we didn't concern ourselves with such trivia, because we were gaming. Fact is, had

you asked any of us aside from Mac I doubt we could have explained why we had stopped buying TSR products, beyond the fact that than in the mid 1980s they began to drop in quality and get far too cumbersome to actually use at a table. "Rules, rules, rules" I used to grown and punish people by docking experience points if they quoted too many rules back at me. Beyond that, I didn't really know Lake Geneva was an actual town, giving it almost no thought what-so-ever and if I did, it was nothing more than as a minaret tower.

That belabors some other discussion though, which I will, in coming issues, detail. I have often wondered how it came to pass that Gary arrived at the booth and asked me to join him for a smoke.

The first time that any of us Trolls had any contact with Gary was at Gen Con 2000. Mac Golden had gone to one of his signings at the Hekaforge booth and had him sign a DMs Guide; he left him copies of our three modules and world setting. Later in the show Gary stopped by the booth and thanked Mac for the modules. Davis and I missed all this, no doubt out on a smoke break. I remember Mac dancing around in the booth like an idiot singing "you missed him again, you missed him again" or something along those lines. Unbeknownst to any of us of course and in a strange twist Davis had actually met Gary but didn't know it was Gary. Several times back in 2000 they had shared multiple smokes on the back loading dock at the Milwaukee Convention Center. They didn't realize they knew each other until the next Gen Con in 2001.

Several months after Mac's initial encounter, he suggested we contact Gary and see if he was interested in publishing some works as no one seemed to be working with him outside the Hekaforge press. A fact to which both of us were a little confused over. We figured it was a long shot, but what the hell, what did we have to lose?

So Mac or I emailed him, kind of a follow up email about the books we had dropped off, we really didn't expect to hear anything from him. But we did. Much like countless others we received an email from Gary Gygax. He wrote a very nice note thanking us for the books and remarking that they were much fun. This email prompted a conversation between Mac (then a partner in TLG) and myself that resulted in contacting both Gary and Chris Clark from Hekaforge about publishing opportunities. Gary had been trying to find a home for some remarkable books on role-playing. For our part we were more than anxious to give it a shot. Who could ask for more than serving as a publisher for Gary Gygax. Though I can't speak for Gary's motivations, I suspect that his natural inclination to help people prompted him to give us a chance. We were a little anxious, supposing we had discovered some gem the rest of the rapidly growing ranks of d20 publishers had somehow missed. We were amazed that no one was trying to tap this well spring.

When I arrived at Gen Con I was rather nervous about meeting this big time celebrity, and was really working hard to avoid it, assuming what everyone else assumes about celebrities, but what I met was anything but an out of reach star. Gary and I plopped down on some chairs outside behind the hall there in Milwaukee and lit up. He was smoking Camel Unfiltered, me Marlboro Reds. The conversation lingered on games for a moment or two, but we started in on some non-game related topics, probably politics, food, or some such and had a lively multi-smoke discussion. It was quite refreshing. Gary was very unassuming and relaxed, and we had a good time. In fact for the rest of the con, we had a number of smoke breaks, Davis and Todd joining us, had dinner, and hung out quite a bit. We had a formal dinner with him, Gail and Alex at the Old Town Serbian Gourmet Restaurant, one of his favorite haunts in the Twin Cities on Saturday and we all hit it off quite well.

It was a good time and started a long working relationship that bore fruit on multiple levels, both professional and personal.

Over the years we worked closely together, remaining in constant contact throughout 2001-2008. He came to Little Rock for a short spell and we would stop off in Lake Geneva on our way back from Gen Con or Gamefest there in Milwaukee. Eventually, at his urging, TLG paid for some conventions that at first were nothing more than an elaborate way to pay for a trip up north to Lake Geneva where we could hang out on the front porch and chat away. Of course both conventions began to grow quickly and that made it all the better.

I have a natural aversion to asking personal questions so rarely did I inquire into Gary's past, about his troubles, TSR and the like. It wasn't any of my business and I think that such discussions always detracted from his person and his

time. It really was only an incident in his life, much like the International Wargamers Association or any one of his dozens of endeavors. It set him on certain paths but in no way reflected on his creation. To many it was the defining moment by which he was and remains to be judged... what happened at TSR... to him, and to Davis and myself, it was nothing more than a scene in the life.

We all really enjoyed having fun with him and the years flew by.

But beyond all that Gary's story is so much more. I think that I came to realize this about a year or two ago. I noticed that very often, when the dust of company settled, and especially when Gary, Gail, Mark, Davis, and myself were sitting around that the conversation changed and Gary loved telling stories about his child hood. How he and one friend or the other found themselves on adventures, whether in the old Asylum or simply walking back from the movies. He always returned to these adventures. Listening to him talk, slow, methodical, his words carefully chosen, and his voice mellow with a hint of smokers gravel, it wasn't too hard for someone with an active imagination to find themselves in the 1940s Lake Geneva on a cold wintry night with shadows pursuing you all the way to the doorstep. I noted too, in rereading his Crusader articles about "How it all came to be" that the vast majority of these articles were about his child hood and the games they designed and played and the fun they had as kids.

I enjoyed listening to these stories as I've always been curious how people live and what influenced them. It's the historian in me I suppose. I like to know where things came from and beginnings are always the hardest to understand. It's easy to look at a story from the end or even the middle, but the beginning is always confused and muddled because no one really thinks they are starting a new story when they do. In Gary's tales I saw an adventurous young man, much like most of us are, eager to experience something other than the mundane traffic given to us by school and chores. He had that same drive that drives all children to explore. The difference with Gary is that through all his life's many ups and downs he never wholly lost that drive, that desire. Sure, it may have been dampened from time to time, but he seemed to remain a child at heart.

This was brought home in a huge way the day before the funeral. We were putting together some family collages for the ceremony so people could have a look at Gary before it all began, during and after. In this maelstrom of pictures I stumbled on one of Gary as a young man. Its black and white and he's standing on a wooded path with a satchel over his shoulder. Next to him stands a friend, I don't know who. They are looking at the camera, posing a little. Gary is cocky for sure and seems to be captured in the moment of play, far more than his friend. The sun is shining as there are

shadows in the brush. It looks warm, the perfect day for an adventure. I can see in Gary a reflection of myself, a young man, growing up, facing a world of responsibility and all the other claptrap that comes with age, but a desire, a deep-rooted desire to keep playing. To keep on kicking that can until well after the twilight of our youths have passed away. In that picture I see a reflection of us all and of the children we want to be even beyond the years of age.

That was the Gary I knew, that Gary in the picture. For in truth I don't think Gary ever forgot that young man. I think that's why things went not as Gary would have liked them to go. He never fully grasped that people were human and were not perhaps possessed of his motivations. In youth we are loyal to a fault, it is easy. We are headstrong, filled with pride. Our emotions are raw and we relish them. Gary never lost those raw emotions. Loyalty, honesty, gumption, humor and on the other side anger, unforgiving, these were the traits he possessed in great amounts. In his many life's triumphs these helped or hindered him as the situation demanded. But through them all, though possessed of the sharp mind of a business man, he was possessed of the heart of a child. Who, at the end of the day, and at the end of his days, loved to have fun, to play games?

That was Gary Gygax's gift to us. He brought the games of his spring, his youth, to us and told us to play and be merry and here's how. Its something we all want to do but only Gary had the actual drive to do it. He made it all possible, through his vision, tenacity, consistency, and just damned hard work.

It snowed here in Arkansas the morning Gary died. I took the kids to school a little late so they could play in it. I went into the office later than usual and I noted a voice mail on the phone but didn't think much of it, there's always voice mails on the TLG phone. A few minutes later the phone rang and it was Bill, Gary's son-in-law. It was too early for Bill to be calling. There was only one reason he would call. I watched the phone ring but I didn't answer it. It rang over and over again until it stopped. Eventually I listened to the voice mail. It was Ernie...

When I returned home from the funeral, some 8 days later, it was warm here. The tulip trees, crepe myrtles, and dogwoods were all in bloom. Spring comes fast here in Arkansas and if you don't watch for it, you'll miss it.

On the Passing of E. Gary Gygax

By James M. Ward

I sit at my desk today sad beyond words at the passing of my friend, E. Gary Gygax. Those reading this will know Gary as the father of all role-playing games. He was of course lots more than that. Gary had many claims to fame, but for me his creation of a brand new game category in RPGs is an amazing feat impossible to duplicate.

I had the pleasure of meeting him in 1974 when he was working as a shoemaker out of his basement. He taught me how to role-play on his back porch and it was some of the best times of my life. He mentored me in the design of products from my work on the first science fiction game to the Deities & Demigods hardbound book.

Generous to a fault, he treated people in an even-handed manner, wither Gary was rich or poor. For the last several years, I had the distinct honor to go over to Gary's house to play games. Last year I spent many happy months running Gary and his friends through my Starship Warden. While normally people who play my game go through several characters in sessions of play, Gary and his group never died. At sixty-nine he was the sharpest player and DM I ever knew.

I owe a great deal to the man and have nothing but the highest respect for him. I know it's silly, but I feel with his death that a huge dungeon door is closing for the last time and I don't want that door to close. The man is gone, but he's not going to ever be forgotten as long as mankind uses the written word.

How E. Gary Gygax Changed The World

by Frank Mentzer

My friend Gary changed the world. Remember him.

Gary's Chainmail rules of 1971 spawned a new kind of game called role-playing. And because of that D&D game, fantasy literature became a worldwide trend in mass entertainment, which inspired thousands of computer games, dozens of major motion pictures, and more. Trace them to their roots and all paths lead to Gary.

Despite his status as one of the most influential people of the 20th century, Gary chose to remain accessible. Why did he spend his precious time responding to letters, e-mails, and message board posts? Because he knew that our pastimes are intensely personal. His creations were embraced by millions worldwide, one person at a time. He had to respond to our pleas because, to Gary, creating games was not just a job. Our pastimes were his mission in life.

My friend Gary changed the world. Honor him.



How It All Happened by Gary Gygax

The Inspiration for the D&D Game, its Creation, GenCon's Founding, How TSR came into Being, and its Early Days...

Ghostly Happenings...

As noted before, my bedroom was the first in the left when one ascended to the first floor of 925 Dodge Street. The hall was an L-shaped one, and opposite my door a pace further on was another bedroom door, just past it one on an angle, both of these leading to the summer bedrooms at the south front of the house. Then, heading north along the narrow corridor one passed on the right a bedroom door, the linen closet door, and the attic door—all in close proximity. When the attic door was opened, it closed the hallway as if meant to do so. Across from the attic door was another bedroom door. Beyond these was the door to the north bedroom (that of my grandparents Hugh A. and Grace D. Burdick), the bathroom door to the left at the end of the passage, and the door leading out to the rear balcony. Traveling down that long hallway at night was something of a test of courage at night, as you will soon understand.

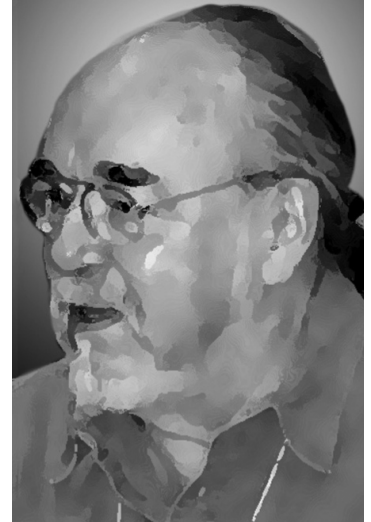
The summer I turned nine years of age my parents decided to take a train trip to San Diego. Father planned to buy land in La Jolla where he would eventually retire. Believing summer was wasted in such travel, I convinced my parents to have the Dimery family stay at out place—a mini-vacation for them, and great fun for me and their son David who I mentioned previously as my oldest friend. His family and mine had been next door neighbors in Chicago, they having an apartment at 4115 Kenmore Avenue, dad owning 4113. It was a great couple of weeks, with only one normal mishap where Dave and I got sunstroke from fishing too long in the noonday sun without hats on our heads, and very strange exception to the fun.

David shared my room, he getting the much favored upper bunk. As usual for young boys, we talked and horse-played far past the time we were to be asleep, and when his parents, Joe and Jean, retired at midnight our racket was heard. With no uncertain terms David was taken to the bedroom across the hall, and I was ordered

to be silent and go to sleep. Alone, I was in process of dozing as ordered when about 10 minutes later there was a house-shaking crash in the attic above. This frightening noise was followed by a series of thumping noises as if some very tall and heavy person was striding from the south front of the place, where the initial crash came from, to the north rear of the attic. There were seven such pounding sounds, I was covering in bed counting, and I recall counting them clearly to this day over 50 years later.

Mrs. Dimery came rushing into my room to see if I was somehow responsible for the terrible commotion, as Mr. Dimery checked on David. Jean found me huddled under my sheet; David was sound asleep and Joe had to awaken him. The four of us then went up the hall to the attic door, Mr. Dimery armed with a baseball bat from my bedroom. He alone had the courage to go up the stairs and look around. No one was to be seen, and so he locked the door, and we all went back to bed. It took me a long time to fall asleep, with every creak the old frame Dutch colonial made sounding threatening. Next morning we all went forth, unlocked the door and ascended into the attic, searched it thoroughly. All window screens were locked, nothing was disturbed or broken, and there was no trace of any animal. Later I came to understand it was a prime case of poltergeist phenomenon. It goes without saying that I was uneasy about passing the attic door at night, and the sounds coming from up there as I was going to sleep didn't help.

Although there were occasional strange sounds heard from the attic, and I had dreams about something up there that didn't want me making a clubhouse of the place, I sucked it up and was not frightened out of such a great place for boyhood fun. The second unusual incident, a truly paranormal one occurred on the ground floor, as you will read about in the next installment.



Gary Gygax

has written and had published over 70 games, game products, and books since he began creating in the 1960s, when he founded the world-renowned GENCON gaming convention. His first professional gaming work was published in 1971.

He co-founded the game publishing company Tactical Studies Rules (later TSR, Inc.) in 1973 with his longtime friend from Lake Geneva, Don Kaye.

His best known game and fiction credits include co-creating and authoring the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Role-Playing Game, creating the AD&D game, WORLD OF GREYHAWK Fantasy World Setting, and the Gord the Rogue novels. He is often referred to as the "Father of Role-Playing".

Dungeon Building 101 – A Random Generation System

for the Castles and Crusades Fantasy Role Playing Game

by Robert Doyel

DUNGEON BASICS

Several factors are vital to the development of a thriving and realistic dungeon, whether it be nothing more than a long-lost collapsed mine or the bustling underbelly of a metropolis. Each will share elements that define what it is, and each will have things which are unique. The former greatly assists a Castle Keeper in dungeon building, providing basic guidelines and quick-and-gritty playing, while the latter strikes a chord of creativity, letting the mind wander and develop as the game and setting needs. None of the following should be classified as canon, and should be changed to suit the development schemes created by the Castle Keeper; however, they are provided as a groundwork fundamentalism, and to provoke ideas.

PURPOSE (WHY DOES THE DUNGEON EXIST?)

Of fundamental importance is the reason a dungeon exists. Some are natural, carved by water and beast, and others are constructed, cut by brute force and levied with magic. Should a dungeon be a prison, or a home? Perhaps it is a temple or a tomb. Knowing the answer to this question will help a Castle Keeper define features encountered, as well as adding depth to the campaign.

TABLE 1: PURPOSE

d20 Roll	Dungeon Purpose
1-9	Shelter
10-12	Economic
13-15	Military
16-17	Prison
18-19	Religious
20	Experiment

Shelter— A dungeon built for shelter is a protective place, whether it is designed to keep the weather out or to house entire nations. They are meant to be secure and safe. Often, there is a centralized structure within the dungeon where those it guards can collect and gather, usually stockpiled with wealth and equipment as well as food and water. Such places are always well guarded. If a sheltering dungeon is large and occupied by intelligent beings, it will ordinarily function as a city of sorts, and be very active; such places fall outside the scope of this work, however. Rarely rushed, the interiors will be crafted with intense care, and will often bear marks reminiscent of those that use or once used the dungeon; litter will not normally

occur in an active dungeon, though monstrous occupants might not care. If rushed, no such evidence (except perhaps littered evidence, such as broken lanterns) will be found, and the interiors will have a ramshackle and rustic feel; this is especially true for shelters found in caverns. A dungeon of this sort will always have sections which serve specific uses such as latrines, food storage, and others, in a logical and easy-access manner.

Economic— Crafted to provide monetary assistance, commonly in the form of a mine, a dungeon of this sort will typically have reminders of its purpose scattered around, from wall-mounted torches to coins and picks laying on the ground; depending on the nature of the structure and activity, there might even be workable lodes remaining. An economic dungeon does not need to be a mine; it could function as a secretive location for the trafficking of illicit goods and services, or even a means to hide such things. In the latter case all manner of lethal traps are prone to exist, though in the former cases typically only natural traps such as explosive or corrosive gasses will be present. Cave-ins are a potential and deadly risk.

Military— Used to house forces, weapons, and to function as a defensive structure, a dungeon of this sort is a well-guarded and vicious place. If inactive, age will deteriorate and weaken the structure, though remains (especially those of corpses and arms and armor) will be left behind. Walls are usually thick and numerous secret passages will be present, as will stockpiles of gear, food, and water. Murder holes and other defensive implementations are likely to exist in this sort of dungeon as well. An active military installation always has guards and sentries; they are well prepared and trained for defense.

Prison— Dungeons of this kind are built to keep things in, whether people, items, or monsters. They are very effective (assume all prison dungeons are equivalent to a maximum security environment), laced and riddled with traps and false passages. Every door will be barred, locked, and reinforced, and keys are difficult to obtain. There is normally a single, or a series in larger dungeons, of exact pathways which connect to every section of the dungeon; however, these can only be accessed with special techniques. An active prison will always have guards and look-outs, but they are not necessarily well-trained; if the dungeon also has a military purpose, the guards will be highly trained elite forces. Also, the active dungeon will contain a number of items held prison, befitting the

specific purpose of the dungeon itself. The nature of the imprisonment helps determine some basic features of the dungeon; for example, a prison constructed to house lawbreaking spellcasters must have means to prevent or limit magic use within its walls.

Religious— Tombs, temples, and sanctuaries are the typical dungeon type, though large cemeteries and mausoleums are not uncommon. As a religious structure, icons and relics of the faith and culture building the dungeon will be very commonplace. Murals and depictions of stories from the religion's canon will adorn the walls. The nature of the faith determines if there are traps, their severity, and many other aspects; for example, a temple to a God of Thieves would be expected to contain many traps, both of the annoying and lethal variety, often intermixed or overlapping. Several alcoves and bedchambers, as well as centers of worship will exist within the structure; faiths of an evil nature, or those which are typically outlawed will often create emergency exits for the high priests. Of utmost value in this sort of dungeon are the holy relics and writings, varied in number by the needs and means of those residing within, and these will always be well guarded and protected with powerful divine magic. Active religious dungeons are guarded and maintained by the clergy, though some, especially those of a warlike mindset, will have trained and equipped warriors on call.

Experiment— Experimental dungeons are places where the extraordinary is performed. Whether powerful magic, twisted and often perverse crossbreeding, architectural principles, or the feasibility of a new technology, a dungeon of this type exists to be a playground of the unique. Everything within its walls serves to further its purpose, generally crafted in such a manner as to be a labyrinth of the bizarre. A more mundane structure, however, will appear quite ordinary and have standard features. More often than not, the builder of the dungeon infuses it with bits of their personality, and the structure reflects it; note, however, that experimental dungeons are not necessarily the products of madmen or the insane, but these do compose the great majority of such structures.

Note: Seldom does a dungeon serve a single purpose, though it is not impossible for that to happen. As such, a Castle Keeper should choose or roll as many of the above options as is fitting for the concept. For a completely random dungeon it is suggested that at least two rolls are made, with a duplicate result being the only result; ie, the dungeon is of the rare sort built for a single and often very effective purpose.

BUILDER (WHO CREATED THE DUNGEON?)

Who built a dungeon is arguably just as important as why the dungeon exists. Each condition of creation imparts a certain level of similarity, and these will become standard and well-known to those who dwell in the fantasy

world of the campaign; dwarves, for example, might be known for their high vaulting archways, and purple worms leave perfectly smooth tunnels wherever they pass. These trademarks of construction add great depth and allow for creative descriptions, giving a lasting and enjoyable experience when dungeon delving. Note that a dungeon's builder, if some sort of creature, does not have to be the current resident of the dungeon.

TABLE 2: BUILDERS

d20 Roll	Dungeon Crafter
1-6	Intelligent Race
8-13	Burrowing Monster
14-17	Natural Conditions
18	Magic
19-20	Combination [Roll Twice]

Intelligent Race— Creatures with intelligence and knowledge will use it to their advantage, crafting structures of heightened utility to their own needs. They typically have some sort of trademark, often dictated by religious or cultural elements which they use in nearly everything they make. Some have preferences and consistently use the same materials and motifs, while others are varied and wild; some use brute force and slave labor, and this can lead to self-identifying graffiti or abnormal features. In all cases, a dungeon built by an intelligent race will always use the location to its greatest advantage, and will serve its purpose fully. In mixed structures, where part of the dungeon was formed by natural events and part handcrafted, an intelligent race will place doors, and other, small structures.

Burrowing Monster— Some beast (intelligent or not) with the natural ability to burrow through ground is responsible for the formation of the dungeon, created simply by the creature's own movement. Sometimes such a monster is controlled via magic, such as the use of earth elementals or the enslavement of worms, and it still qualifies as this sort of construction method. Areas formed in such a manner do not naturally have doors or traps and generally have very smooth reflective surfaces, resembling large tubes rather than a hallway; some creatures leave trails of porous holes, where appendages like tentacles traveled. Such dungeons are typically very stable, provided there is not an excessive amount of passageways, and will generally become the lair of a beast of similar size and ability as that which formed it. Any creature with a burrowing movement speed can create a dungeon of this sort. Note that even low or non-intelligent creatures usually have escape passages, and such dungeons are prone to have numerous, long, winding sections.

Natural Conditions— Weather and environmental conditions cause the creation of these types of dungeons, taking centuries to develop, and are always classified as a living dungeon. Standard features are typical to caves, with stalactites and stalagmites being common, as are fungal growths and other natural subterranean plants. Dungeons of this sort do not have native doors or traps, though they can be subject to cave-ins and other natural disasters.

Magic— Forged entirely of magic, through use of spells such as stone shape and earthquake, a dungeon of this sort is crafted with specific needs in mind, as the power necessary to construct it is enormous. These places are often home to myriad magical traps and devices, and are often very confusing and labyrinthine. A dungeon borne of magic is exceptionally rare, and when they do exist tend to be very small and function as a workshop, home, or laboratory for some powerful spellcaster.

LOCATION (WHERE IS THE DUNGEON?)

Location plays a key role in the development and construction of a dungeon. Not only does it often directly relate to cost, but transportation of goods, availability, and ease of construction are key ingredients to its successful completion. In addition, where the dungeon sits determines many things about the dungeon; for example, a dungeon created within an underground coral reef is not going to be built by dwarves, though it would probably function as a very effective prison. Some dungeons sit under cities, and some are enlarged portions of fallen castles; others are caverns crisscrossing a mountain passage, and still others are bi-planar gateways between worlds.

TABLE 3: LOCATIONS

d20 Roll	Dungeon Location
1-10	Terrain [See Table 3.1]
11-13	Civilization
14-16	Ruins
17	Underwater
18	Aerial
19	Planar
20	Combination [Roll Twice]

Terrain— The dungeon lies in a natural environment, carved into the ground from above. Some terrains are easier to build into than others; it is much easier to carve a dungeon into the granite of a mountainside than to create one in a swamp. A dungeon of this sort will typically be composed of materials readily available to its terrain, though imported goods are possible. However, such things should be reserved for special rooms and areas. Natural dangers are also governed by the sort of environment in

which a dungeon resides; there is little chance of stepping in quicksand while exploring a granite floor, but the likelihood of such an incident increases dramatically in a swampy location. Accessibility is a major factor when dealing with a location, making some environments more likely to be selected than others depending on the needs of the dungeon crafter.

TABLE 3.1: TERRAIN

d20 Roll	Terrain Location
1-8	Plains
9-11	Desert
12-14	Hills
15-16	Forest
17-19	Mountains
20	Swamp or Jungle

Civilization— Resting beneath the surface of a settlement, whether a city, a castle, or even a single family dwelling, this sort of dungeon is located as close to sentient beings as possible. They are normally well-known and active but this is not always the case, such as the hidden subways used by a thieves’ guild, for example. The deeper a dungeon of this sort goes, the more likely it is to be occupied by foul creatures and the less standardized it becomes. Sometimes the civilization springs into being because of the dungeon beneath it, and at other times they co-exist without either being wiser.

Ruins— Lost and buried under the fallen remains of a settlement, a dungeon found in ruins is often forgotten and riddled with dangers, occupied by a variety of creatures possessing it as their home. These dungeons were once used for a particular purpose and they may still function as such, but they never have their original occupants, save them being undead in form. It is likely that any known location of a ruined dungeon will have been explored and pillaged for its loot. Traps and doors are generally in poor shape and may not function properly.

Underwater— Sunken beneath the waves and tides, an underwater dungeon is usually crafted from some sort of rock or coral. It typically serves as a home or lair for an aquatic creature, though sentient races can and will construct such dungeons for any reason. These dungeons are normally difficult if not impossible for land-based creatures to discover and explore, and are limited in size by the availability of their material. Doors do not normally exist within the structure, though traps, especially those of a poisonous nature, are often used. Castle Keepers are encouraged to develop these dungeons only when means to explore them are readily available to the characters in the campaign.

Aerial— Almost always crafted from magic, an aerial dungeon is a lethal venture for any character lacking the means to fly, as a solid floor is not likely to exist. These dungeons are very different than most others as they are usually capable of moving, albeit at a very slow speed. However, some aerial castles are stationary and exist within clouds, formed as a sort of treasury for powerful giants or dragons. Disorienting, the walls of an aerial castle are usually transparent, with doors and nonmagical traps being generally nonexistent.

Planar— Crossing barriers of existence itself, a planar dungeon is either wholly composed of some otherworldly material, or is a bridge between two or more realities. Such dungeons are very dangerous and often are the lairs of very powerful creatures; these dungeons cannot exist without being constructed by magic, and when found are usually part of a prison complex or the laboratory of a potent spellcaster. The treasure one can obtain within a planar dungeon is generally unmatched, though the risk in getting it is very high. Unless a planar dungeon contains elements of the normal world, anything nonmagical is unlikely to be present.

ENTRANCES (HOW TO ENTER THE DUNGEON?)

Dungeons do not usually advertise their presence, but on rare occasions an obvious entrance will exist. These typically will lead into dungeons which have been pillaged many times, or are places held by evil groups, awaiting the foolish with ambushes and deadly surprise. To create a fully working dungeon, the number, location and accessibility of its entrances must be known. Roll or select based on the following table, once for each column; this must be done for each entrance the dungeon has.

TABLE 4: ENTRANCES

d20 Roll	Number	Known?	Hidden?
1-12	1	Yes	No
13-16	2	Yes	Yes
17-19	3	No	Yes
20	4	No	Yes

A known entrance indicates that a large percentage of the local population knows about the dungeon, can point the party in its direction and in many cases provide a map as well. It does not mean, however, that any of these people have been inside the dungeon or can provide details of what may or may not be inside.

A hidden entrance means that few if any know the exact location of the dungeon entrance, or that there is some sort of special circumstance needed to gain admittance, such as the bearing of a certain staff or the utterance of a password prior to entering. Typically those who have access are a select group, and they are generally not willing to share access to outsiders. Castle Keepers are encouraged to

develop methods and manners to discern the nature of a hidden entrance, that being an adventure unto itself.

DRAWING THE MAP

Having a fundamental understanding of the basic concepts composing the dungeon, a Castle Keeper can begin to actually draw it, keeping in mind design decisions that are appropriate and reflect the engineering skill and creativity necessary for the dungeon itself. Of course, completely random dungeons are possible as well.

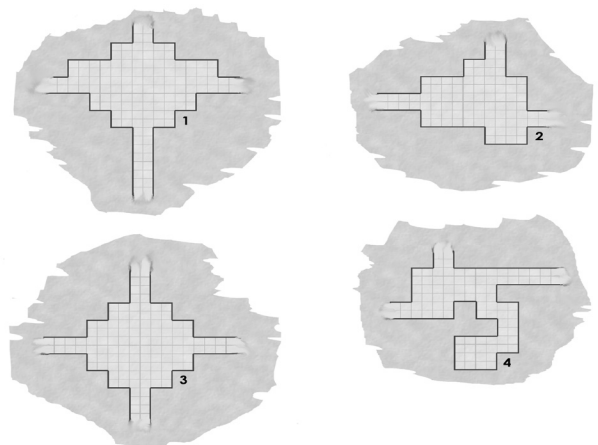
Dungeon maps are created in the following order, with each table being checked as needed:

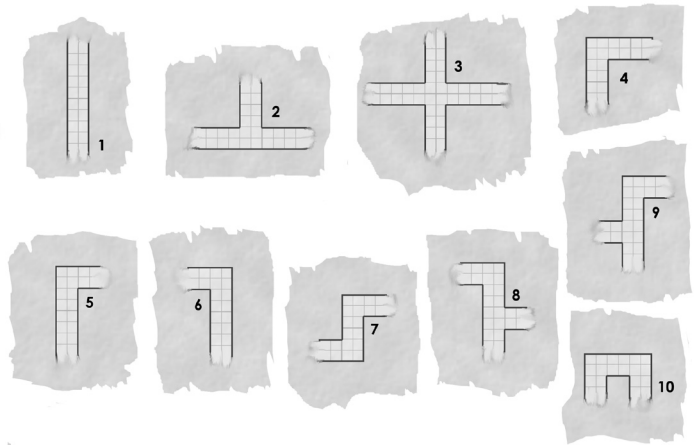
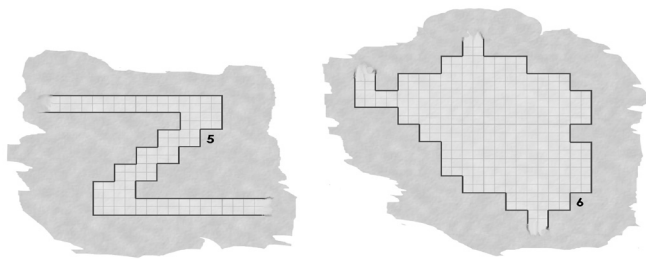
- 1) Entrance structure and location [Table 5]
- 2) Pathway direction [Table 6]
- 2a) Pathway features [Table 7]
- 3) Return to 2

Of primary importance is the placement of a possible dungeon entrance; only one entrance must be initially mapped, with all others being located and entered onto the map as needed. In general, if the dungeon is to have a centralized or singular entrance, it should be located near the outer edge of the map, though a more labyrinthine dungeon should have its entrance located toward the center. Additional entrances can be placed wherever the Castle Keeper would like using the basic design concept as a guide.

TABLE 5: DUNGEON ENTRANCE

d20 Roll	Entrance Number
1-4	1
5-8	2
9-12	3
13-15	4
16-17	5
18-20	6





dimension of such factors are determined below. If a passageway is indicated, then check for direction; rooms and chambers are rarely tilted at angles, though if the Castle Keeper desires such geometry, then rolling for them is acceptable. Content is then determined, with attendant rolls on the various subtables, with this process continued until the entirety of the dungeon is created.

TABLE 6: PATHWAYS

d20 Roll	Pathway
1-11	Passage [Table 6A]
12-19	Room or Chamber [Table 6B]
20	Dead End

TABLE 6A: PASSAGES

d20 Roll	Passage Number	Direction	Slope
1-2	1	Straight	Flat
3-4	2	Straight	Flat
5-6	3	Straight	Flat
7-8	4	Straight	Flat
9-10	5	Straight	Flat
11-12	6	Straight	Flat
13-14	7	45° Left	Flat
15-16	8	45° Left	Slow
17-18	9	45° Right	Slow
19-20	10	45° Right	Steep

Three rolls are required on the above chart, once for determining which of the passages is to be used, and another roll to see if the passage is tilted; the third roll is used to determine if the passage itself has a gradual incline or recess. If the passage has a 45° direction, then it can be drawn by using diagonal sections of the grid, rather than straight linear; a right motion causes the passage section to shift toward the right edge of the graph paper, while a left motion does the reverse. With practice, placing and drawing such angled sections will become easy; if it is difficult, then simply use straight passages. Note, it is also possible the passages are rounded, using curves, instead of following straight lines.

TABLE 6B: ROOMS & CHAMBERS

d20 Roll	Length	Width	Depth
1-3	5 feet	15 feet	Small
4-8	15 feet	20 feet	Small
9-14	10 feet	10 feet	Medium
15-16	20 feet	25 feet	Medium
17-18	25 feet	30 feet	Medium
19-20	30 feet	35 feet	Large

One roll for each column should be made, each determining a relevant aspect of the pathway's dimensions. Length is generally the number of feet extending from the point of entry the pathway crosses, with width being an indicator of the distance across the widest portion. Depth measures the size category of monster or creature which can easily maneuver within the pathway; creatures larger than the listed size can enter but must do so in cramped conditions, with penalties and effects subject to the Castle Keeper's discretion. Exits indicate the number of points of exit, placed wherever the Castle Keeper deems appropriate. Shape determines the geometric identity of the room or chamber; if the shape is non-geometric, the Castle Keeper should draw any shape that is wanted, using the space's physical dimensions. Note, in general the only difference between a room and a chamber is that the former has a door at its entrance.

TABLE 9: FEATURES

d20 Roll	Door?	Trap?	Treasure?	Monster?
1-15	N	N	N	N
16-19	Y [Table 7A]	Y [Table 7B]	N	Y [Table 7D]
20	Y	Y	Y [Table 9C]	Y

Each of the feature types should be checked to determine if it is present or not at the Castle Keeper's discretion; it is not required that each hallway or room be checked. If a door is found, it may exist at one or all of the entrances/exits

of that particular pathway; roll again, once for each of the entrances, with a Y result indicating that the exit also has a door, and then consult Table 7B for further information, again per door. While possible, it is not suggested any single pathway have more than one trap, as it is assumed the passage itself is trapped, rather than any doors which may have their own. Monsters that are located within a pathway are considered to have made the place their home, though it is not their lair unless treasure is also indicated; Castle Keepers should place an appropriate creature using the dimensions on the passage as a guideline, as well as the nature of the dungeon. Unguarded treasure is rare, but possible; consult the appropriate table to determine the treasure type, and then Monsters and Treasure for the specific treasure present. If monsters are present, the treasure available is determined by the monster, rather than by Table 7C.

* – Castle Keepers are encouraged to develop descriptions based on the known facts about a dungeon, disallowing or modifying any roll to keep the contents logical and exciting. The tables for decorative features are for inspirational and creative purposes only and do not attempt to cover all possibilities.

TABLE 7A: DOORS

d20 Roll	Locked?	Secret?	One-Way?	Trapped?
1-15	Y [Table 7A-1]	N	N	N
16-19	N	N	N	Y [Table 7B]
20	N	Y	Y	Y

The Castle Keeper should check once per column, per door, to determine the features and functions of the discovered door. A locked door will have some mechanism which prevents it from being easily opened; in most cases, the Pick Lock class ability can be used on these doors, though in a magically constructed dungeon it may not be possible. Table 7A-1 provides a difficulty for the lock if the Castle Keeper should need it. Secret doors do not make themselves known, though some abilities can detect them; unless found, the presence of these doors should not be revealed. A door which opens one way is difficult to navigate, as once it is opened the way one enters is not the way one leaves. Traps on doors are fairly common, and the same guidelines for traps in general apply here equally. False doors appear as a normally functioning door of the same general type but do not actually lead anywhere.

TABLE 7A-1: LOCKS

d20 Roll	Difficulty
1-3	Average Level -2d4
4-7	Average Level -1d4
8-16	Average Level
17-19	Average Level +1d4
20	Average Level +2d4

TABLE 7B: TRAPS

d20 Roll	Accessible?	Visible?	Lethal?	Difficulty
1-3	Y	Y	N [Table 7B-1]	Average Level -2d4
4-7	Y	Y	N	Average Level -1d4
8-16	Y	Y	N	Average Level
17-19	Y	Y	Y [Table 7B-2]	Average Level +1d4
20	N	N	Y	Average Level +2d4

A trap which is not accessible cannot be disarmed; the reason being the device which triggers or otherwise functions as the trap is itself not present locally. A trap which is not visible causes the difficulty of its disarming to increase by ten. Lethal traps cause damage, whether by injection of poison, or arrow; they do not necessarily result in death. Non-lethal traps are those which hinder movement or cause some condition which does not directly inflict damage. Rarely, 1 in 20 times, a trap will actually be layered with another; in these cases, roll again for the secondary trap and apply all results as normal.

TABLE 7B-1: NON-LETHAL TRAPS

d20 Roll	Trap Type	Area of Effect	Attack Roll?
1-7	Immobilizer	Immediate	Y
8-13	Movement	10 foot radius	Y
14-15	Confusion	30 foot radius	Y
16-18	Puzzle	45 foot radius	Y
19	Trick	60 foot radius	N
20	Magic	90 foot radius	N

Area of effect indicates the maximum distance the trap can affect, starting at its origin and extending outward.

If an attack roll is required, all creatures within the area of effect must successfully be hit, treating the trap as having an attack bonus equal to its difficulty.

Immobilizing traps render its victim immobile, whether by unconsciousness, paralysis or simply falling into a pit; they never cause petrification. In any case, these traps prevent further movement.

Movement traps, unlike those of an immobilizing nature, actually move those affected; this is generally not caused

by teleportation, though a dual-layered trap might. Instead, these are usually such things as falling hallways or sliding staircases and generally have the characteristics detailed below, bearing that no movement trap will lead into a solid wall. Each column result should be determined separately.

A confusion trap generates confusion generally by shifting position or by causing sensory deprivation; this effect is not magical in nature, though it can mimic a magical effect such as blindness or deafness. Rarely 1 in 20 times a confusion trap will also function to counter magic.

Puzzle traps are those which deny further progression unless successfully solved, much like a riddle or other challenge of mind and body. Typically these types of traps cannot be disarmed.

A trick trap is any kind of trap that seems to be of one kind but is actually another. Any such trap has a difficulty four points higher than normal and two rolls should be made, one to indicate what the discoverer initially believes is present, and once more for what the trap actually is; if both results are the same, then the trap is especially confusing and should be considered to be of that type.

Magic traps can have any effect which the Castle Keeper wishes, using the difficulty of the trap as a general guide to the spell or spell-like abilities the trap has. However, as a non-lethal magic trap, no damage should be taken.

TABLE 7B-2: LETHAL TRAPS

d20 Roll	Trap Type	Area of Effect	Attack Roll?	Damage
1-5	Arrow	Immediate	Y	1d4
6-9	Guillotine	10 foot radius	Y	1d6
10-11	Crushing [Do not roll damage]	30 foot radius	Y	1d8
12-13	Non-magic Element	45 foot radius	Y	2d6
14-16	Pit [Table 9B-2A]	60 foot radius	Y	3d6
17-19	Poison [Do not roll damage]	90 foot radius	N	4d6
20	Magic	120 foot radius	N	4d8

Area of effect indicates the maximum distance affected by the trap, starting from the point of origin and extending outward.

If an attack roll is required, all within the area of effect must be successfully struck using the difficulty as the attack roll bonus.

The damage rating is sustained by all affected victims, though a successful save vs. traps reduces by half. Should a Castle Keeper wish, damage can be increased or decreased based on the desires and specifics of the dungeon.

TABLE 7C: TREASURE

D 20 Roll	Contained?	Modifier	# of Rolls	Treasure Type
1-3	Y	-10%	1	2
4-8	Y	-5%	1	4
9-14	Y	—	1	6
15-16	Y	—	1	8
17-18	N	+5%	1	10
19-20	N	+10%	2	12

One roll for each column should be made, with each factor noted. Treasure found in containers may be locked, trapped or possibly both, with the Table 9A used to determine the specifics. The modifier column result is the percent value added or subtracted when rolling for the presence of a particular type of treasure, such as coinage or gems as noted in Monsters and Treasure, based on the treasure type itself; this modifier applies to all such rolls. Castle Keepers are encouraged to limit or increase the value of any found treasure, per the needs of the campaign.



LA 6



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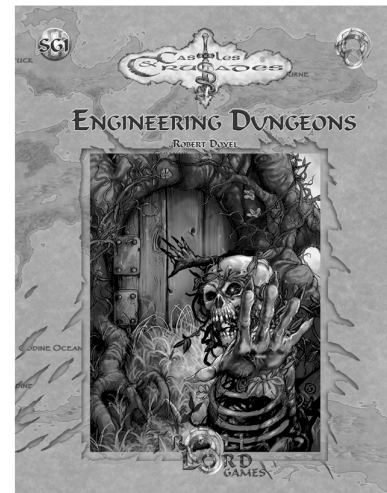
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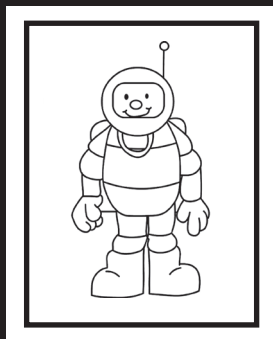
Auld Wyrnish

Wisdom from an Old Master

by Mike Stewart



In 1978, Mike Stewart became interested in roleplaying games and has never looked back. He is currently a post graduate student at the University of North Texas. When he grows up, he wants to be a spaceman.



EXPERTISE on the Fly:

Creating High Level Characters on the spur of the moment

We've all been there. It's game night, and the players all arrive at the table to begin the regular Castles & Crusades campaign. But wait! Your Castle Keeper has just purchased TL20: Terrible Tragedy at TrollCon! (module designed for Character levels 10-12), and he/she is just dying to run it tonight. Problem? The average character level in your party is 4th! Cries of "Killer CK!" and "I'm leaving!" fill the game room...

"No problem people," your CK soothes one and all. "You guys can just roll up some 10-12th level characters and we'll run TTT as a one-shot!"

"Ok..." the only slightly mollified players grumble. "But how do we do that? Can I have a double heavy warhorse? By 10th level I ought to have the Pinky Finger of Dire Fairies, or the Hand Cross-bow of Drow Scimitar-Wielder Slaying, or..." Etc., etc. ad nauseum. What to do?

Below is provided a system to not only create a high level character in a short amount of time, but also provide a reasonable amount of equipment and loot acceptable for a character of their given level. Additionally, the tables should provide a small amount of history and background for the player to flesh out as much as they wish. In fact, with the below system a character can be generated that could even become a regular in an ongoing campaign.

NOTE: An astute reader will notice that the below system provides a chance in any given period for the character to "die" during adventuring. Well, yes... (putting on the Old Dragon Hat) "Back in the day, it wasn't a good RPG unless you can die during character generation! You kids today just have it too easy! Why I once ran...0-level Man at Arms...with a bum knee...into Valley of Horrors... uphill, both ways...through 30 feet of Green Slime...blah, blah, blah."

Now that the above is over; you can always change the "death" to an injury, maybe reducing the character's Constitution score by 1 or something. This way, there's a penalty without being lethal. Now, without further procrastination, on to the system!

STARTING OUT:

A character begins adventuring at the age appropriate for their race to become a young adult. Each path of expertise takes years to attain, and this time varies from race to race and class to class.

The Time Adventuring is further subdivided into 4 "Epic" periods, with each Epic Period providing one cycle of rolls on the tables below. After the Expertise Period is completed (4 Epic Periods), the character can decide to begin play or enter another Expertise Period.

An Epic Period's length of time is variable depending on the race in question as noted below:

LENGTH IN YEARS

PC Race	Young Adult	Expertise Period	Epic Period
Dwarf	35	28 yrs	7 yrs
Elf	100	104 yrs	26 yrs
Gnome	50	50 yrs	12.5 yrs
Half-Elf	(as chosen race)		
Halfling	22	12 yrs	3 yrs
Half-Orc	12	4 yrs	1 yr
Human	14	6 yrs	1.5 yrs

Resolution of an Epic Period is carried out in three steps:

1. determine Overall Adventuring activity
2. determine specific Adventuring activity
3. determine outcome of the Adventure.

The four rolls listed below are the checks to determine the course and success/failure of an Epic Period. Unless otherwise stated, all checks are rolled on a 12-sided die.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS:

Survival: This is the roll to determine if a PC survives the Epic Period that they are rolling for. It is the first roll, because if the PC is killed then there is little point in rolling the rest of the period. NOTE: A Castle Keeper may waive 'death' on a failed survival roll and instead leave the PC with a grievous (permanent) injury or stat reduction as viewed appropriate by the Castle Keeper.

Renown: This is a number that quantitatively measures the fame and repute of the Player Character in the performance of the adventure in question. Each point of Renown may be 'spent' as an extra roll on the Loot or Magic Item table after all periods are rolled for but before play begins. Any Renown points remaining after character generation are lost.

Advance: This roll determines if the PC has gained a level in their class during this period of time. Due to the vagaries of activities and plain bad luck, an Epic period adventuring does not necessarily guarantee level advancement.

Loot: During the course of adventuring, Player Characters inevitably gain monetary reward. A success on the Loot Roll provides an immediate roll on the Loot Table for the PC before continuing on in the character generation process.

GENERAL ADVENTURING TABLE

D8 Die Roll	Cleric	Knight	Fighter	Ranger	Magic-User	Rogue
0-1	Danger					
2	Danger					
3	Danger	Danger	Danger	Danger	Wanderer	Danger
4	Danger	Danger	Danger	Danger	Wanderer	Danger
5	Wanderer	Danger	Danger	Danger	Wanderer	Danger
6	Wanderer					Danger
7	Wanderer					
8	Wanderer	Wanderer	Special	Wanderer	Special	Special
9	Special					

Knight= Includes Paladins

Magic-User= Includes Wizards & Illusionists

Ranger= Includes Druids & Barbarians

Rogue= Includes Assassin, Monk & Bard

Modifiers: (*A +1 is gained if the Character's Prime Attribute is 16+. Conversely, a -1 penalty is deducted if the Character's Prime Attribute is 8 or less.*)

SPECIFIC ADVENTURING:

D12 Roll	Cleric	Knight	Fighter	Ranger	M-U	Rogue
0	Wild					
1	Wild					
2	Wild					
3	Train	Train	Wild	Wild	Myst	Wild
4	Bnty	Bnty	Bnty	Bnty	Bnty	Bnty
5	Urban	Urban	War	Myst	Grd	Urban
6	Grd	Grd	Grd	War	Grd	Myst
7	Grd	Grd	Grd	Grd	Grd	Grd
8	Grd	War	Grd	War	Grd	Train
9	Train	Train	Train	Train	Train	Train
10	Urban	Urban	Urban	Bnty	Urban	Bnty
11	Bnty	Myst	Myst	Urban	Myst	Wild
12	Train	War	Myst	Urban	Urban	Wild
13	Train	Urban	Myst	Urban	Urban	Wild

Modifiers: (*A +1 is gained if the Character's Prime Attribute is 16+. Conversely, a -1 penalty is deducted if the Character's Prime Attribute is 8 or less.*)

ABBREVIATIONS:

Bnty=Bounty Hunting; Grd= Guardian/Garrison; Myst= Mysterious investigations; Train= Training for Class/Skill; Urban= City Adventures; War= Warfare, fought as soldier; Wild= Wilderness adventuring

SPECIAL ADVENTURE:

D6 Roll	Ftr/Knights	M-U/Cls	Other
1	Contact	Scholar	Contact
2	Noble Deed	Dungeon	Mighty Haul
3	Dungeon	Discovery	Dungeon
4	Dungeon	Grand Quest	Grand Quest
5	Save the Day	Save the Day	Save the Day
6	Mighty Haul	Contact	Discovery
7	PC Choice	PC Choice	PC Choice

DEFINITIONS:

Choice: Choose any one of the following as desired.

Contact: PC gains the friendship of one NPC of import in the campaign. Exact NPC and situation to be determined by the CK.

Discovery: PC makes an important discovery. This can be from research, a new combat style, or unraveling a mystery. Gain 3 Renown points.

Dungeon: The PC spent their Epic period clearing out a hive of scum and villainy. This can be a dungeon, a bandit lair, or an orc village. Gain 3 Renown points.

Grand Quest: The PC succeeded in a grand quest for the benefit of many. Gain 3 Renown points.

Mighty Haul: The PC acquired much loot; either from a treasure haul, thievery, inheritance, etc. Gain two extra rolls on the Loot table.

Noble Deed: The PC performed a noble deed of great renown. This need not be combat, and might even be an act similar to the others on the list. Gain 2 Renown points.

Save the Day: The PC was instrumental in helping many avoid dire consequences by their timely intervention, gain 2 Renown points.

Scholar: The PC spent time in research and study. This allows the PC to gain 1-3 previously unknown spells, check w/CK for details.

Modifiers: (A +1 is gained if the Character's Prime Attribute is 16+. Conversely, a -1 penalty is deducted if the Character's Prime Attribute is 8 or less.)

EPIC ADVENTURING PERIOD RESOLUTION

Ranger

	Train	Mystery	Urban	Bounty	Wild	War
Survival	auto	4+	5+	5+	6+	6+
Renown	none	1 2+	8+	9+	5+	6+
Advance	4+	6+	8+	9+	6+	6+
Loot	7+	none	7+	8+	5+	6+

Modifiers: (For survival, a modifier of +1 allowed if any Prime Requisite is 16+; Advance in level gains a +1 modifier if Class Prime is 16+.)

Rangers in Guardian/Garrison use the Fighter Guardian/Garrison Chart.

Fighter/Knight/Cleric

	Train	Myst	Urban	Bnty	Wild	Guard	War
Survival	auto	4+	5+	5+	6+	6+	auto
Renown	none	12+	9+	10+	6+	none	6+
Advance	4+	6+	8+	9+	6+	7+	6+
Loot	11+	none	7+	8+	5+	none	10+

Modifiers: (For survival, a modifier of +1 allowed if any Prime Requisite is 16+; Advance in level gains a +1 modifier if Class Prime is 16+.)

Magic-User (Wizard/Illusionist):

	Train	Myst	Urban	Bnty	Wild	Guard
Survival	auto	4+	4+	5+	6+	auto
Renown	none	none	10+	11+	7+	none
Advance (4+)	(6+)	9+	10+	7+	(7+)	
Loot	8+	none	7+	7+	6+	none

Modifiers: (For survival, a modifier of +1 allowed if any Prime Requisite is 16+; Advance in level gains a +1 modifier if Class Prime is 16+.)

Rogue:

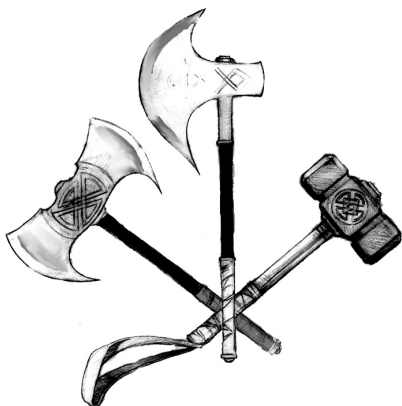
	Train	Myst	Urban	Bnty	Wild	Guard
Survival	3+	4+	4+	5+	6+	auto
Re-nown	none	none	9+	8+	5+	none
Ad- vance	4+	7+	8+	7+	6+	9+
Loot	6+	none	7+	6+	5+	none

Modifiers: (For survival, a modifier of +1 allowed if any Prime Requisite is 16+; Advance in level gains a +1 modifier if Class Prime is 16+.)

LOOT TABLE

D10 Roll	Cleric	Knight	Fighter	Ranger	M-User	Rogue
-1	10	0	25	10	25	50
0	25	10	50	25	50	75
1	50	25	100	50	100	150
2	100	50	200	100	200	300
3	200	100	300	200	300	400
4	300	150	400	300	400	500
5	400	200	500	400	500	600
6	500	250	600	500	600	700
7	500	300	700	600	700	800
8	600	350	700	650	700	800
9	600	350	700	650	700	800
10	700	400	800	700	800	900
11	800	500	900	800	900	1000
12	900	600	1000	900	1000	1100
13	1000	650	1100	1000	1100	1200
14	1100	700	1200	1100	1200	1300

Modifiers: (+1 if Prime Attribute is 13+; +2 if Class Prime Attribute is 18; -1 if the Character's Class Prime is 8 or less; -2 if the character Advanced in that period.)



MAGIC TABLE

Roll:	Cleric	Knight	Fighter	Ranger	M-User	Rogue
0	none	none	none	none	none	none
1	none	none	none	none	none	none
2	scroll	none	none	none	scroll	none
3	scroll	Armor	Wpn	MM	scroll	wpn
4	Ptn	ptn	ptn	ptn	ptn	ptn
5	Arm	ring	Wpn	Wpn	ring	MM
6	wpn	swd	arm	swd	ring	ring
7	arm	swd	wpn	wpn	arm	arm
8	Arm	Arm	Arm	Arm	MM	Arm
9	Arm*	Wpn*	Swd	Swd	RSW	MM
10	wpn*	arm*	Swd	Swd	RSW	MM
11	RSW	Swd*	wpn*	Wpn*	RSW	Wpn
12	RSW	Swd*	Swd*	Wpn*	RSW	Wpn
13	special	special	special	special	special	special

Modifiers: (+1 if Class Prime is 16+, -1 if no Advancement this period.)

*= The player is allowed to re-roll once upon the resulting table if the original result is unacceptable.

Abbreviations: arm= Armor; wpn= miscellaneous weapon; swd= sword; RSW= Rod/Staff/wand; ptn= potion; MM= Miscellaneous Magic(roll 1d6-1 for table), Special= Upon this roll, the Player may choose which magic item table they wish to roll on.

THE CONTINUING CAMPAIGN

After the four Epic periods have been determined for a given Adventuring period in the character's life, the Player will roll again for another Adventuring period until the PC is at the level desired for play. Keep careful track of the PC's age and the various and sundry effects this will have on statistics during play.

MULTICLASS CHARACTERS

For PCs who are multiclassed, the PC will roll an Adventuring period for the first class (4 Epic periods) and then roll another Adventuring period for the second class (and a third for the third class if necessary, and so on.) as needed. Note that even though the character is multiclassed, the age time is cumulative.

RETURNING TO THE CAMPAIGN

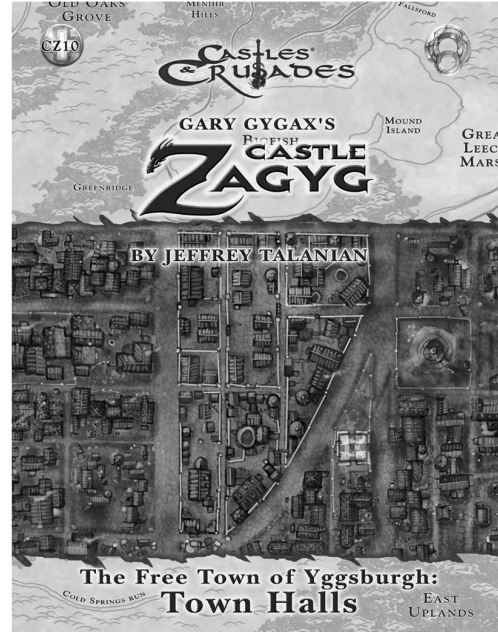
(Already in Progress)

Upon completing the final Adventuring period (as desired by the player) prior to play, each player should prepare a "Character History" that incorporates the

adventures rolled in the Epic periods and loot/magic gained, embellishing as needed (with CK approval) to fit the various roles into a concise and interesting backstory. Then, get ready for higher level adventuring!



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THE CAMPAIGN SETTING

PART II: THE CULTURE

In the last issue, I started describing the process for design of a small custom campaign setting. The result was the development of a “big picture” concept that forms the basis of the campaign. In this issue, I’ll give the elements of that concept more depth and plausibility to formulate the overall “campaign culture.”

I have five elements that I want to incorporate into my campaign concept:

- 1) “I’ve always wanted to let assassins be of good alignment.”
- 2) “I want to change ‘how magic works.’”
- 3) “I want a gritty campaign with a ‘local’ feel.”
- 4) “I want to use the knowledge of experienced players to challenge them.”
- 5) “I want death to be a central cultural theme.”

The challenge I face is in blending them to make a coherent whole that works well as a campaign environment. It is easier than it sounds. At this point, there is no need to worry about precisely how assassins could be of good alignment in a culture based on death. Instead of working on blending them now, I will start by describing how each element might work on its own. I’ll look for ways to blend them afterward.

“I’ve always wanted to let assassins be of good alignment.”

Character classes in C&C represent broad archetypes. The “assassin” term summons images of cloaked murderers killing for political reasons or for

profit. However, it’s conceivable that characters could exist, with the same skill set as the typical “assassin,” but with benevolent motivations.

Obviously, this approach requires some clarification of alignment for the campaign. I need to ensure that “good” and “evil” are defined in a way that allows for a stealthy killer to operate for the forces of “good,” whatever they happen to be. A character particularly good at infiltrating evil strongholds and slaying the threats within matches my intentions here, so I need to explain that being “good” in this campaign does not mean that heroes cannot be proactive or pragmatic. The players need to know that in this campaign, if a character of good alignment stealthily eliminates those of evil alignment that are a threat to others, the act is not an alignment violation.

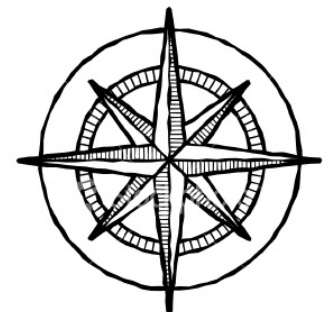
The general feel of C&C seems to at least sympathize with this point of view. If being “good” means that characters cannot go on the offensive versus evil, there wouldn’t be much adventuring in the campaign world.

“I want to change how magic works.”

That’s vague, and intentionally so. I have a lot of options here, and I’m not sure of the direction I want to take the change. I could fashion a top-to-bottom redesign of the C&C magic system. For example, I could convert the “fire-and-forget” of the traditional Vancian magic system to a “spell point” or “mana” system. Many have done this for their own campaigns, so it’s worth considering. However, something about the Vancian



Casey Canfield has been playing and game-mastering RPGs since 1983. Casey currently plots the deeds of nefarious characters and creatures from his lair just outside of Endicott, New York.



system appeals to me, as one of the roots of the game. I want a way to keep the traditional feel of the game, with Vancian magic, while turning everything the players think they know about C&C-style magic on its head.

There are fantasy gaming clichés that most players and CKs will “find familiar.” Two of them help illustrate my point in wanting to change the magic system. For example, most first level wizards cast sleep and magic missile, while fifth level wizards finally get access to fireball and lightning bolt. Most seasoned gamers know these patterns better than they know their own dice. I want to flip this around, so even experienced players can have fun “rediscovering” the game.

One possibility is to change the levels and effects of known spells to have an unusual effect. That might help establish some of the atmosphere I wanted, but making magic missile inflict 5d6 damage as a third level spell is just shuffling things around without changing anything substantial.

Another possibility is developing an entirely new spell list. This is attractive because of the potential for originality, but what a monumental task! My goal is to create this setting with less overall effort, and creating an entire spell list full of new spells would defeat the purpose. For anyone with the creative energy to do so, it would certainly have the desired effect of making things seem “new”, but what an investment!

What if the core C&C spells that everyone is familiar with still exist, and in their current form, but no one knows how to cast them? The knowledge of the “traditional” magic is lost. In a single stroke, the ability to cast magic missile ceases to be mundane. This is an idea with the potential to provide exactly the upheaval I am looking for.

If I run with this, I’ll face some challenges. I need a reason for unavailability of the spells, but I also need something to replace them for use by PC wizards. At this point, I’m undecided on either issue. I’ll put them on my list of tasks to be completed, and turn to something else. When designing, it is far more important to keep the creative process going rather than worry about the details. Details can be supplied with time, so bypass roadblocks and keep the creative energy flowing.

“I want a gritty campaign with a ‘local’ feel.”

I always wanted to run a campaign where it felt like the characters had to fight for every bit of advancement they got. The campaign would be in an unforgiving world that seemed huge as the PCs started, but seemed “smaller” as they gained more experience. The challenge with this approach is making the hardnosed approach fun for many different styles of player. While many players appreciate this style, others may not.

I am inspired to create this flavor of campaign from readings and stories gathered from some of the elder statesmen of our hobby, but also from many people I’ve met at conventions or around gaming tables. I’ve been blessed to have the opportunity to rub elbows and game with a few people that I consider gaming icons, and I’ve tried to understand their methods and styles of playing.

In a previous column, I discussed the need for the player to take the survival of a character into his or her own hands. This was to bring awareness to what I feel is a negative mindset that exists in gaming culture. This attitude sets an expectation of the game as movie-style entertainment, where disappointment, challenge, and failure are seen as elements of a bad or poorly-run game, and the hero should always prevail in the end.

This works for film, but not for a compelling and long-lived campaign, in my opinion. The elements of classic play and those of the best classic sword-and-sorcery literature seem to agree with me. Heroes aren’t special if their greatness comes without adversity, struggle, and a reasonable fear of failure. So, this campaign setting will require skilled and cooperative play from all at the table. A rational game master will not sacrifice standards of good, intelligent, cooperative play just to make the players happy. I adhere to this philosophy, as I feel it lends credibility to campaigns and the experiences of the players.

However, I recognize that many gamers would not agree with this philosophy, so it is incredibly important to disclose this before the campaign starts. Players can then make informed decisions about whether or not to participate. I’ll make a note in the materials I hand out to the players before the first game that sets these expectations.

Developing a “local” feel, to me, is all about providing the players with a tool to make compelling characters and stories. The “local” feel comes from keeping the geographic area of the campaign relatively small. I touched upon the idea of starting small in the previous installment, and this is an expansion of that concept. My design revolves around a small group of three hamlets in a geographically isolated valley. The player characters in the campaign will originate from one of these towns, and their adventuring careers will start in the vicinity. This has the advantage of requiring less preparation, but more importantly gives the wider world beyond a more mysterious feel. Characters from this area would naturally see the unfamiliar portions of the world as mysterious, so shrinking the focus to a local point of view helps the players get into character.

“I want to use the knowledge of experienced characters to challenge them.”

I fluttered around the edges of this one during my discussion of the changes to the magic system. I know that groups often consist of players with wide variations in gaming experience. A clear goal for me is to establish a campaign environment where things seem “new” to all players, not just those who are just starting or have little gaming experience. This can seem daunting, but it doesn’t require as much work as one might think.

One usual route taken in this circumstance is a change to monster vital statistics or special abilities. Making a troll susceptible to cold instead of fire and acid is a simple example. While this approach can help challenge experienced players temporarily, the effect is limited to the first encounter or two with the altered beasties.

Getting the players out of their comfort zone entirely is far more effective. The idea is to get them comfortable with the details of the immediate surroundings of the characters, and then leave everything else a mystery to be explored. Surviving is more than just knowing monster abilities or vulnerabilities. It’s about knowing how to deal with any potential threat. This is the area in which even experienced players are vulnerable in a new campaign.

In this campaign, I think I’ll turn humanoid culture on its head. The usual suspects will all be there, but they won’t behave like “orcs” or “goblins” are traditionally depicted. They will have certain behavioral characteristics that make them an entirely different sort of threat. These characteristics will have to be observed by the players, who will then develop strategies for dealing with these adversaries.

For example, orcs in this campaign are highly organized and militaristic, particularly due to the influence of a powerful half-orc chieftain that is organizing the local tribes. This chieftain is well-versed in battlefield tactics and logistics, and is developing a humanoid presence that is a true threat to civilization. If left unchecked, these orcs will eventually attempt dominance over neighboring areas in order to access their resources. Currently, these orcs are working on attaining horses so that a cavalry can be developed.

There’s a rough wilderness area to the west of the central valley location in this campaign. Several groups of humanoid races make their homes there. It happens to be the perfect location for tribes of humanoids that know the terrain like the warts on their hands. They will use that terrain to their advantage against aggressors, and likely know routes that would leave outsiders stupefied. They may even have the ability to traverse extremely rough terrain as a mountain goat would. The increasing power of the orcs in this area would make other humanoid races extremely uneasy, and potentially more aggressive as a result.

I will expand upon this idea in a future installment, but having this synopsis helps to solidify my direction.

“I want death to be a central cultural theme.”

When I wrote “Extraordinary Gods of Death” for Crusader issue 4, I was drawing on the experience I gained from developing the theology and culture of this particular campaign. As I begin the process of mapping out a theological system, my mind usually starts with a stereotypical Greco-Roman polytheistic approach. I know that I want to avoid that, because I think this setting demands something different. That approach succeeds in many cases, but I want something with a more unique feel.

I know I want to have multiple deities, because I like the atmosphere provided from having clerics of different faiths interact. I also know that I do not want to emulate a typical mythological structure, where the gods impact important aspects of the lives of the worshippers. I also want to avoid the messy situation that revolves around the concept of “divine intervention” at higher levels of play. These gods, whatever their nature, would be “hands off.”

What if the gods were distant not because they were apathetic to the worldly needs of their faithful, but because those needs were not their responsibility? In summary, the gods saw things like war, agriculture, love, and fertility as the exclusive domain of those doing the living. They would not interfere in those areas that the living could influence. The gods, therefore, would restrict their activity to those areas that the living could not influence – events after death.

The culture that adheres to this belief system might cherish life greatly while disregarding the concept of destiny. Each person born into the world becomes their own most important influence in his or her life. Good and bad things happen, and sometimes they happen to people that don’t “deserve” them, but that’s part of the gift of life. The gods have given the people life as their “domain.” This creates a tough, self-reliant mentality that lends itself to an independent culture as a whole.

As described above, the gods interfere where the living cannot. The body is treated as a sacred container of life, and when a person dies, the gods are responsible for the disposition and protection of the spirit of the deceased, the memory of the deceased, and the physical vessel that allowed that life to exist.

Egyptian mythology attracts me as a parallel here. While there are key differences, much of life in Ancient Egypt was influenced by preparations for death, a similarity I can leverage. I am able to take key bits of inspiration from the gods of the Egyptian pantheon and develop a theological system that fit perfectly into the belief system described above.

Following the technique I described in “Extraordinary Gods of Death” allows me to create three primary deities

for this campaign. The three sibling deities are named Darshai, Incordis, and Kheloria. Their characteristics, and those of their clerics and lay faithful, are listed below.

Darshai – Chronicler of the Dead

Bard/Wizard

Spheres of Influence:

Death, History, Memory

Darshai's true form is of a fair-haired, middle-aged male. Darshai's sphere of influence involves the memory of the deceased. Bards, historians, storytellers, and sages all acknowledge Darshai's place in ensuring the immortality of man through the recording of individual histories. It is said that Darshai resides in a great library of stone tablets, enscribing and reveling in the deeds of those who pass under his watch.

Darshai is able to destroy undead at will by reciting the true name of the creature's former self.

The Order of Darshai is often regarded as peaceful, but is actually quite methodical and destructive when provoked. Efforts to hide or distort the memories or histories of the dead are frowned upon quite strongly, and those persisting in efforts to do so often find themselves receiving dire warnings in the darkest night.

Alignment of Worshippers: Lawful Neutral or Lawful Good

Favored Weapon: Ball Mace

Clerical Powers: Clerics of Darshai receive a -5 penalty to attempts to turn undead, but undead turned are always destroyed.

Incordis – Guardian of the Dead

Ranger/Wizard

Spheres of Influence:
Death, Honor, Protection, Retribution

Incordis takes the form of a stern-faced, light-skinned male human, usually wearing plain clothing, especially with hooded mantles or cloaks. Incordis's influence involves the prevention of, or vengeance for, any desecration of resting places or the possessions of the dead.

It is said in some circles that Incordis extends his reach to all burial grounds, and will appear to strike down any who seek to use the dead or their resting places for ill



pursuit. Legends abound of those who dared to mock Incordis falling dead hours, days, or even weeks later of mysterious, and often painful causes.

The Order of Incordis consists of a loosely affiliated group of clerics, fighters, rangers, wizards, and assassins that seek to act as extensions of Incordis himself. They patrol graveyards, crypt areas, burial sights, barrow downs, and other resting places, seeking to keep those areas free of taint. They also guard the bodies of the recently deceased until they can be sanctified and interred properly by priests of the Order of Kheloria.

Alignment of Worshippers: Lawful Neutral, Lawful Good, or Neutral Good

Favored Weapon: Any medium to long edged weapon with a single cutting surface, preferably curved.

Clerical Powers: With a successful roll to turn undead, Clerics of Incordis can cause fear on any mortal caught within a sanctified burial area. Clerics of Incordis can also turn undead as normal.

Kheloria – Caretaker of the Dead

Cleric/Wizard

Spheres of Influence:

Death, Honor, Heritage, Preservation

Kheloria takes the form of a small, attractive woman, dark of hair and eyes and pale in skin. Kheloria's influence is the preparation and protection of the fragile vessels that once carried life. The vehicle of that life is as precious as life itself, and must be revered, even after the life within it has moved on.

Kheloria is said to be especially incensed by the acts of creating and controlling undead. These actions are seen as the ultimate disrespect for the vessel of life. Life is pure and pristine, and the magical animation of the undead is an insulting replacement, leading to decay and destruction of the mortal temple. Legends say that Kheloria has intervened directly in especially heinous cases of the abuse of the dead, and she is merciless to those that offend her.

The Order of Kheloria is responsible for preparing, sanctifying, and interring the bodies of the deceased. The process is a long one, taking several days of ritual and ceremony. Interruption of a consecration ceremony is greatly frowned upon for any but the most dire emergencies. The Order of Kheloria works closely with the Order of Incordis to ensure the proper protection and escort of the deceased to and from



their care. The Order of Kheloria occasionally takes an active hand in hunting and destroying those that create and manipulate undead, but often defers that task to the Order of Incordis, when it becomes necessary to take action.

Alignment of Worshipers: Lawful Good, Neutral Good, or Lawful Neutral.

Favored Weapon: Any short weapon with a single cutting surface, preferably curved.

Clerical Powers: A successful roll to turn undead allows a Cleric of Kheloria to temporarily prevent 1d12 corpses from being used as undead. When used on existing undead, this power will weaken them, applying a -2 penalty to all hit rolls and a -4 to any damage rolls. This power also prevents level drains by affected undead for the duration of the turn effect.

PUTTING THEM ALL TOGETHER

I have expanded my ideas for each element, so I can now consider how these elements will work together to formulate the unique fabric of the campaign. While I was describing my thought process for each element, it is likely that ideas for tying the elements together popped into your head. I had that experience as well, and it was important for me to write those ideas down as I got them. Those ideas helped smooth out the task of making the elements into a cohesive whole.

Which elements are compatible, and which need work?

Well, good-aligned assassins are certainly compatible with the culture of death described above, particularly if those assassins are devoted to one of the deities that protect the spirits and bodies of the dead. One way I formulate this is to make one of the deities an avenger that seeks to find and punish those that would defile the dead. Characters with an “assassin” skill set would certainly be useful to the organized religion for such a deity. Multi-classed Cleric/Assassins are even a possibility. The description of Incordis includes these possibilities.

I can make my ideas for altering the magic system work in this context, as well. I need a reason to make the “usual” spells unavailable, and I need replacements for those spells. The most elegant solution is to remember Campaign Lasagna – everything builds on layers of history. Theological history would play a major role in explaining why certain magic isn’t available to the vast majority of characters. It was simply forgotten.

I created a basic theology based on respect and preservation of the dead and celebration of heritage. From that, I can justify the loss of traditional magic. The very influential churches that represent the sibling deities would have driven the research of magic that would protect and

preserve the bodies and the legacy of the dead. With this sort of influence, many youths were apprenticed to necromancers sanctioned by the churches, and apprenticeships with non-affiliated wizards were frowned upon by society. Over time, the massive influence of the religion, the relative scarcity of traditional wizards, and the general bent of society caused unrelated magic to fade into obscurity. Therefore, all PC wizards in the present age of the campaign setting will be necromancers (though still called wizards) and have a spell list that is necromantic in nature.

A potential problem rears its head at this point. Some necromancy would very blatantly violate the tenets of the prevailing theology. Animating the dead would be a horrible transgression. However, just as it is true that the skills of an assassin could be used for good in this campaign, there would certainly be aspects of necromancy that should be acceptable for use. I can expand on this by naming the two aspects High Wizardry (for good, helpful, respectful necromancy) and Low Wizardry (for defiling, disrespectful, and evil necromancy). High Wizardry would be sanctioned and taught by representatives of the religion, while Low Wizardry would come about from those abusing the teachings of the church to develop darker uses to the power. This helps justify the use of necromancy in this theological environment.

Based on this, I need to make some alterations to the rules. Importantly, I need to compile a spell list for wizards that reflected the source of the PC’s initial tutelage, but expand that list to include the temptation of Low Wizardry as well. I also need to ensure that the spell list includes a variety of potential uses, so that players of wizards in this campaign do not feel like they have nothing to contribute. Finally, I need to do all of this without creating too much of the list from scratch.

One idea that I have is to add various “Cure” spells to the wizard spell list. The campaign is meant to be difficult and gritty, so extra healing capability would be welcomed by the players. I need to come up with a way to make the wizard’s curing different from clerical curing, but I’ll delve into more details about this in a future installment of this column.

All of these ideas certainly will challenge players with experience, and will provide a setting that would seem new to them. Dealing with the challenges of the altered magic system and learning how to adapt techniques for encounters will be one aspect of this challenge, but dealing with the social ramifications of magic will be another. Also, wizard PCs will have a very interesting personal stake in finding sources of traditional magic and learning them.

Finally, I considered my concept of a “local” campaign. None of the above clashes with this concept. In fact,

orienting the campaign to a smaller geographic area allows me to sculpt the feel of the campaign even further. In an isolated area where the people are self-sufficient, there would be very little “urbane” influence in the form of “progressive” thinking. The cities, as they usually are in any culture, represent the leading edges of cultural change. Therefore, it adds more flavor to the campaign to dictate that cities are considered to have little to no respect for the religious beliefs of those that live in the more isolated rural areas. In short, the religion that gradually caused the loss of traditional magic has been pushed aside in the cities by a new, convenient religion – a religion based on pragmatism and convenience – and a deity that has no qualms about interfering in the lives of mortals.

The patron goddess of this new religion is detailed below.

Nyaenoth – Defiler of the Dead

Currently worshipped as Nysania – goddess of magic and practicality.

Wizard/Assassin

Spheres of Influence: Magic, Undead, Death



Nyaenoth’s true form is that of a lich. She is able to command any and all undead creatures to do her bidding. She can summon an army of undead to fight at her side whenever she desires.

Nyaenoth’s worship can take many forms. The dominant form of worship of this hideous goddess is borne of subterfuge. Known as Nysania to the public and her worshippers for eons, Nyaenoth has cultivated an image of apathy and nihilism in order to make her primary influence, necromancy, more appealing. Nysania’s image is of a stern, cold, and beautiful female magus. Urban women, especially, find her strength and apathy empowering.

The efforts of her faithful seem to be working. Nysania’s diligent and zealous worshippers, while not always evil themselves (though many are, and certainly the highest members of her order are the blackest evil), have caused her religion to become cosmopolitan. Major population centers have embraced Nysania’s philosophy and influence as principled and cultured, and are trending toward a disregard of the tenets of the Three Siblings as archaic, outmoded, and quaint.

Alignment of Worshippers: Any neutral or chaotic, but upper members of the hierarchy are always evil.

Favored Weapon: Halberd, Staff

Clerical Powers: Instead of the ability to turn undead, clerics of Nyaenoth cause undead to cower. However, checks that would normally destroy undead whip the undead into a frenzy, treating them as if hasted.

As you can see, this adds some spice to things. Nysania is actually a relatively pleasant-faced incarnation of a far more threatening entity. This helps justify the increasing influence of Nysania in urban culture in the campaign. The reason for this hidden identity is simple: it is difficult to imagine her influence becoming as broad among what is basically a good-aligned culture if her actual evil motivations were fully disclosed.

With these details in place, the conflict between urban influence and rural tradition becomes the centerpiece of the campaign atmosphere.

At this point, I’ve described the concept that I developed in the first installment in more depth. I have also developed more structured ideas about the campaign setting’s culture. I’m now ready to begin creating the details. I can now structure my locations, maps, NPC personalities, and adventure hooks to reflect the nature of the setting as a whole, and I can begin to breathe some life into the consolidated ideas that I’ve created.

Until next issue, happy designing!

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KEEPER'S NOTES

BY DAVIS CHENAULT

RUNNING A GAME – PLAYING MONSTERS AND NPCs

One of the most common questions from novice Castle Keepers, and one of the most difficult to answer, is this: what is the best way to approach the role-play of monsters and NPCs? The precise answer depends, of course, on the preferred gaming style of the Castle Keeper, as well as the styles of the players themselves. However, there are principles that will aid in developing compelling interactions with monsters and NPCs, regardless of personal style.

The primary tenet for the role-play of monsters and NPCs is to remember that these characters are living creatures with unique personalities, motivations, and self-interests. While this is not an easy task during large battles, remembering this can help a CK present a more compelling scenario and campaign environment to the players.

Most CKs understand this principle when playing NPCs. Most CKs can relate to the mortality of NPCs through their own experiences as players. Applying this frame of mind to the role-play of monsters, however, is more difficult, and often forgotten entirely. With terminology like “cannon-fodder,” “mooks,” and “mobs” introduced to gaming through cookie-cutter video game environments, monsters are often treated as cardboard cutouts that simply exist to be defeated and looted.

Ask yourself this: what goblin does not feel the impetus to survive a battle? What orc does not feel fear when outnumbered or outclassed? What intelligence would a dryad have if she failed to use all of her abilities to preserve herself and her tree? Do creatures fear death, capture, starvation, or torture? If the CK wishes a game to have verisimilitude, this is absolutely the case.

Fortunately, there are several points that a Castle Keeper can consider when playing monsters and NPCs that will help maintain a consistent approach. Determine how the intelligence of the creature affects its motiva-

tions and actions. Determine how the creature would best use its resources and abilities in its self-interest. Consider the personality and alignment of the creature and the impact on the creature’s actions and motivations. Develop a game plan when preparing for the game to prevent indecision during the game itself.

The intelligence of a creature is one driving factor behind its motivation and actions. The more intelligence a creature has, the more likely it is to consciously value its own existence. Intelligent creatures will plan for contingencies and take elaborate steps to ensure their survival. They will be cautious, and will seek to manipulate circumstances to their advantage. Creatures with lesser intelligence operate on instinct. They react to base impulses of hunger, pain, or fear, and do not have the cognitive ability to develop strategies.

Oozes and slimes are unintelligent, but they have a hunger impulse that compels them to attack creatures or objects identified as prey. They do not care if their prey appears to be strong or well-equipped, because they have no capacity to judge these criteria. These creatures will attack even if outnumbered, and will often fight until death.

Animals of all types have more sophisticated instincts. Predators also have a hunger impulse, but they are able to judge, on a rudimentary level, whether or not a given creature or group of creatures is likely prey. They often base their decision to attack on the size of the prospective target; predators most often attack creatures that are smaller and weaker. This helps ensure a reward for the massive amount of effort that hunting and killing requires. Non-predatory animals will generally avoid conflict unless provoked. The level of provocation can differ; a hippopotamus or rhinoceros might attack any creature that comes too near, while elephants may move away, posture, and then attack only if the interloper continues to threaten.



Davis Chenault was born way back during the 1960s, when free love and happiness reigned in a world seemingly without consequence. A product of a military upbringing, he managed to jettison all the cultural baggage that bogged down the whole host of anyone who lived in that era. He wandered the trackless wastes of life spending precious hours trying to decide what to do with his precious hours, until he at last found a home amongst the dead, digging up the debris of other long-dead people's lives and examining and comparing their relative value to his own world. "Archaeology," Davis is known to have claimed, "is the wellspring of all my knowledge of social-drinking houses!"

After a decade of cultural anthropology, Davis gave up the good life for gardening, in between which he designs and writes games for Troll Lord Games. His most notable achievements: Castles & Crusades and a cast-iron outdoor stove, acquired from his neighbor.

Animals of all types will react to pain and fear. Magical effects, grave wounds, the use of fire, or loud noises may cause animals to flee from a potential or active confrontation.

The least intelligent of the humanoid races are vastly more capable than the smartest members of the animal kingdom, with few exceptions. They are able to reason, and will develop tactical approaches to problem-solving. They have the ability to be methodical, even though their solutions are often crude, and they will use tools, their environment, and their numbers to best advantage. If they possess magical items or spell casting abilities, and know how to use them, they almost certainly will. They have the ability to “size up” their potential prey, though their conclusions may often be erroneous. This allows them to avoid conflicts where defeat is certain, but often gets them into trouble when they underestimate their foe. These types of creatures also feel emotion. Fear is still the most powerful motivator for this level of intelligence, but these creatures can also develop friendships, value loyalty, experience jealousy and love, and can develop intense hatred. On occasion, these creatures may have exceptional intelligence, and would therefore possess more refined cognitive skills, more nuanced emotions, and more measured behavior.

The races available to player characters are considered intelligent. While the range of intelligence for these racial groups can vary widely, the vast majority fall into a range superior to animals and humanoids. Their ability to reason is incredibly robust, though their capacity for emotion is equally as developed. Individuals in this group will act in both their emotional and rational best interests, and sometimes will find conflict between the two. Personality, culture, and individualism play a greater role in the behavior of individuals in this group. While this marriage of emotion and reason can create difficulties, it also allows these individuals to use one to transcend the impulses of the other. For example, a farmer greatly fears the prospect of fighting orc raiders to save his family, but he is rationally able to overcome this fear. He knows the outcome might be far worse if he did nothing. Individuals in this group will use every tool at their disposal in their self-interest, either emotional or rational. The most intelligent individuals manage their resources for almost perfect advantage, and will attain additional resources to bolster capabilities deemed lacking.

Creatures with the greatest levels of intelligence are masters of their own impulses. They understand the balance of cause and effect, and are able to project the outcome of a sequence of actions several steps in advance. They are able to plan for multiple contingencies, and do so effectively. They can leverage the resources at hand in ways that less intelligent individuals can not, blending spell effects, protective resources, or informational sources to solve intricate problems in creative ways. These individuals have the greatest ability to conquer their emotions with rationality, and usually will not let their personal feelings impact what they judge to be the best course of action. It is important to note, however, that while these individuals have greater cognitive ability, they are not machines, and are still subject to influence by emotion. They are fallible, but their rationality allows them to make fewer overall mistakes in judgment.

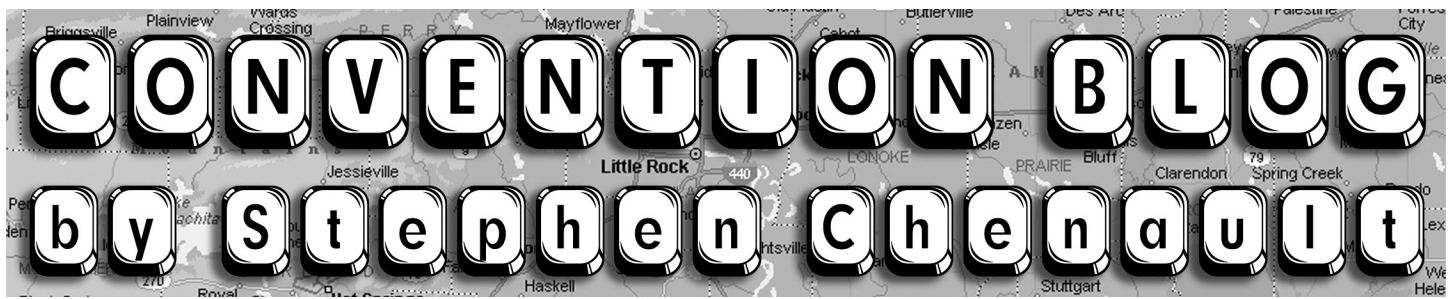
With these characteristics, the Castle Keeper can develop a plan for each encounter in a game. It is not necessary, and generally undesirable, to choreograph the actions of a monster or NPC. However, giving some thought to the intelligence, emotions, personality and resources of the creature will allow a more effective portrayal during the game itself. An effective way to model intelligence in encounters is to produce a map of actions for the most intelligent creatures, but deliberate avoid advance planning for less intelligent beings. A creature of genius-level intelligence would be able to anticipate situations, avoid, encourage, or neutralize them, and leverage events to its advantage. A map of actions is simply a list of general situations, and the reaction the creature would have to those contingencies. For example, a wizard might begin combat with certain spells when matched against mainly fighters, but would certainly opt for different spells when facing rival wizards. Even further, the wizard might anticipate the use of certain spells, and ensure that protections are in place before those spells are cast. The map of actions would dictate the protective measures the wizard has active at all times.

Fear not if you are unable to think of every contingency in advance! Another effective way to simulate intelligence is by allowing the creature to take actions retroactively to account for the maneuvers that the PCs make, while pretending that the action was really taken proactively. Some purists might consider this cheating on the part of the CK. However, if players can claim that their brilliant or charismatic character can come up with a solution that they could not possibly replicate as an average person, then a CK is justified in allowing an incredibly intelligent NPC to “anticipate” some of the players actions. However, the CK should be restrained in this case, and limit the “anticipation” to plausible actions.

For example, a wizard begins combat with an adventuring party. During the first round, the PC wizard casts magic missile at the wizard. The CK decides to allow the wizard to have anticipated this action, and retroactively allows the wizard to have cast a shield spell, negating the magic missile. However, the shield spell has a limited duration, making it very unlikely that the NPC wizard would have cast it before combat began. In this case, the action by the CK is implausible.

If, on the other hand, the battle has been progressing for several rounds, and the wizard has yet to enter the area (and therefore the fray), it is plausible to say that he cast the shield spell before entering combat. In this case, the action by the CK would be reasonable. The players have no way of knowing the wizard’s actions before entering combat, making this a reasonable way of simulating intelligence when the CK simply cannot think of every contingency.

Furthermore, the CK should avoid “anticipating” everything. This sort of action should be a targeted measure. Abuse of this technique is unfair to players, who have the right to expect a reasonable challenge. Rendering the players’ actions impotent through this sort of tactic is dishonest and unfair, while the occasional measured use of this tactic can underscore the intelligence of the foe for the players.



GEN CON

Indianapolis, Indiana, August 14-20

Gen Con always begins early for us. Not only do we have to pack the trucks but we have to arrive and set up before the show begins. These are always painful things for us to do as Davis and I are slow and don't react to schedules so well as perhaps we did when we were younger -- though I doubt we ever did. But we had a full crew this year. Six of us were loading up in two trucks and heading to the show. We were going to meet even more there, another three to five people depending on who could show. The roster of booth trolls included the usual: myself (Steve Chenault), Davis (of C&C fame), Todd Gray, Mark Sandy (he of much hair) and two newbies for the booth madness: Jason Alexander and Richard McBain. These latter two have only recently joined the crew and have been helping out with various and sundry issues here in the Dens for the past year or so.

Now, I should take a moment to give a little background on the convention experience as Davis and I have come to know it. In the past eight-odd years we've gone to a bunch of conventions. Ironically, Davis, who rarely shows now, has probably been to more than me as in the halcyon days of 2002-2003 he and Todd went to small hosts of local cons. We rarely fly to cons as it is more economical to drive if there is more than one person; and if Todd is along, you can pretty much get him to drive the first 15 hours of any journey, which pretty much means the rest of us can sleep.

For the drive we have one official truck, Old Blue (a '96 long box standard cab Chevy) and a smattering of vehicles we use now and again depending on the crew size and how much stock we need to bring. Of course we have to include the racking, backdrops, posters, and other material we need to run a shop at a show. This is mostly kept in the Blue Room at the Print Shop. This material is in constant need of updating. The con bags have things like tape, tie downs and the like in them and this stuff gets used, not only at conventions but for various and sundry incidents that come up in running this business (for instance shipping material to Titan Games requires we break out tie downs, box cutters and the like and these are mostly from the con bag. Sometimes they get put back, sometimes

they don't. These days we've merged the backdrop and some of the racking making the set up a little easier.

Gen Con required a bit of forethought this year. We had rented the biggest booth we ever had at Gencon. We were fielding a bigger crew, and also we were merging our booth space with Peter Bradley's art booth and his folks' Uniforms of Antiquity. We had more stock to display, despite largely phasing out d20 material. Todd and Casey were both running games. But more than all of that, Gary Gygax was making the trip down to Gencon and we were scheduled for a number of autograph sessions in the booth. So much of the prep time was spent purchasing new display racks, table and spinner, getting new banners and signs (only a few of which made the show), and gathering all the stock and boxing it up. Jason, McBain and I did this last, making mountains of stacks of boxes around the mail room and over at the Print Shop.

Monday was the first of the loading days. We had two trucks, Old Blue and the much sleeker Tahoe. Both are heavy duty vehicles and can carry the weight. Old Blue got the treatment first. By placing the backdrop/racking in the bed of the truck this serves as a buffer for the books which will rest on top of it (our camper shell was stolen in the mad crime wave Little Rock suffered through back after Katrina hit New Orleans and we hadn't gotten around to replacing it), protecting them from any water damage they may accumulate in the truck due to rain. The boxes we use are magazine box and fit perfectly in the truck, five across and six down, wrapping around the wheel well. Once this is done the truck is loaded to just beneath the gunwale. A few nooks and crannies exist and we stick smaller items here, food and the like. I loaded the back of the Tahoe with a mountain of boxes to the point that it was full to capacity as it still had to sit four.

On Tuesday night around 9 or so we all gathered at the Print Shop, both vehicles ready for the final treatment with a hoped for departure time of 10 to midnight. Davis and I both like driving late at night as the traffic is easier. McBain and Jason were a little abashed at the driving

arrangement, I found out why when I went into the main room and saw the number of personal bags everyone brought. There were enough bags with enough equipment to field a division of infantry for a month piled in heaps. Davis and I both have long experience in travel and pack very little in the way of personal items. I carry only one back pack and Davis an even smaller one. I thought to myself, "We're going to need more straps."

In Old Blue, on top of all the previous day's load, we placed the new racks. These are very bulky and though we had broken down the spinner racks and placed them in duffle bags, the table racks were still in their boxes and would have to remain so. They consumed a lot of space, add to them the two cases of slip sleeves, extra book boxes and some more odds and ends such as the water cooler and the truck rapidly filled up almost to the top of the cab. Davis showed up then and I hollered at him about tie downs. He produced a bundle from somewhere and he and Mark began tying stuff down.

While they did this we began to gather more odds and ends and load them in the Tahoe. It filled up quick and everyone began laughing about finding places for the personal stuff to go. At this point McBain produced a canvas luggage rack and he and Jason hoisted it up on top of the Tahoe and began stuffing it with crap. It was a godsend, but truthfully I was thinking, "What the hell are you bringing all this stuff for? Just wear some underwear and turn it inside and out and you're good." But it all fit nicely. Even after I produced another three boxes we had to put in Old Blue.

By this time it was just shy of midnight and we were all pretty hot; August in Arkansas ain't no picnic, even at night. A few of us more sanitary people showered (not together, not that there's anything wrong with that!) and we hit the road soon thereafter.

For the most part the trip was uneventful. We switched drivers now and again and I rode a few legs with Davis in the pickup. I do remember stopping for gas in the beautiful state of Kentucky, and as Davis and Mark pulled up behind us, Todd said, "Hey look it's a caveman convention!" Davis and Mark are heavily bearded and possessed of much unkempt hair after many hours on the road. As we were pulling into Indy, Davis woke me up to tell me he was exhausted and couldn't stay awake. I noticed we were only 10 miles out of town and mumbled something like "Dude, just bring us in, it'll take too long to stop." I suspect the Captain of the Hindenberg said something like this before that ship went down. A minute or two later I was jostled awake by the truck swerving in the lane and Davis looking at me and saying, "Dude, is my back on fire?" It was. He had fallen asleep and while

holding his smoke up it had dropped down the back of his shirt and caught his shirt on fire. Smoke was rising from behind him. He thrashed around a bit, stamping out the embers, recovered the smoke, relit it and kept on driving. We were of course both awake at this point.

We cruised on into the organized chaos that is Gen Con (they really do a great job with all that mess) and waited for a spell in the marshal yard. All the cool kids were there. The Bradley's showed up as did Joe from Goodman Games and the Kenzer Boys! We chatted it up a bit and were pleased to meet Jim for the first time. Jim is a friend of the Bradley's and has spent the last four years as a contractor in Iraq and had some great stories to tell. This was all around 10 am or thereabouts.

When our number was called we lumbered off to the docks and began the frantic unloading. Joe, who had preceded us, was good enough to pass on his cart and we quickly got everything off and to the booth. I left it in heaps as Todd and I parked the trucks. I missed much of the set up as I usually do, being responsible for the badges and what not. I stood in line a bit, talked to strangers, went to the bathroom, did some rock climbing and read a few books before returning to the booth, hoping against hope that all was well. The usual confusion and argument and chaos had resulted but the booth was largely intact or headed in that direction. Booth design looked a bit cumbersome, but what with the signing turned out to be very functional.

Stock was put up on racks, banners hung and mess piled away. All this as the afternoon slipped away into early evening. Everyone did a really good job, working hard and getting the mess turned over fast. Our booths have always looked chaotic, as we live in them as much as run a shop out of them. McBain, whom we nominated to be the money man, was appalled at our cash box; usually mine and Davis' pocket (far easier to get at when we are out carousing don't you know) and it was eventually given over to Todd for accounting and safe keeping. He improvised something with some of Todd's stuff, a cooler bag of some sort that came in handy later. Todd normally does the money but this was the first year he was set to run games and he had four of them. People love his games; if you ever get a chance to sign up for one, you should.

As we were setting up Aldo Ghiozzi of Impressions Advertising and Marketing, showed up, talked a bit and whisked away to visit with more clients. Aldo and I go way back and usually pal around at these shows with Joe Goodman. I called the Gygax's at some point and tried to coordinate with them a bit. Once we got set up Jason and McBain headed off to their hotel and the four of us tromped down to the Days Inn and got checked in. By

tromped, I mean drove. We lounged a bit and eventually did something for dinner, though for the life of me I can't remember what. And somewhere in the next 24 hours more Trolls showed up, Casey Christofferson, Ashley, James Mishlar and of course Jeffrey Talanian.

Seven of us crashed in two rooms: Todd, Davis, Mark, myself, Jeffrey, James and Aldo. It was pretty comfortable. Apparently James snores like a mojo as the folks sharing the room with him were interrupted in their sleep frequently. Peter and his folks and Jim were not far down the hall as they stayed there as well. The Days Inn is affordable, close (about a mile or so) and has nice rooms. Nothing fancy, but good enough. We like it here as parking is free and we can walk to the show without too much fuss. The walk is too long to carry large boxes of books, but fair enough for a stroll before work.

Thursday, the first day of opening, saw all six of us drift down to the hall and to the booth. I had to talk a little business in route and was late and by the time I got there it was 30 minutes to open. We scrambled to make last minute adjustments, hang some more banners and get the two folios put together. All their component parts were scattered about the place and needed some assembling, maps needed folders and so forth. Peter, Jason, McBain and I got busy on this, trying to get a few up and on the shelves before opening. A mad dash of early entry folks piling around the hall spooked me a bit as I thought the halls were open, but turned out we had a few more minutes.

Final preparations were made even as the halls opened to a giant orgiastic frenzy of gamers. I'm not going to scout through the next four days with a blow by blow account of the convention, mainly because it all runs together in my mind and I can't separate one day from the next, but I will go over some of the particulars. The booth was very, very busy, all four days, especially during the times Gary was signing. We did our best Gen Con to date, doubling most year's take. The interest in Castles & Crusades was enormous; not only did we have the complete game there but we had the East Mark Folio with the first level of Castle Zagyg at the show as well as the Ahrde Folio and about 4 new adventures. We had new material for LA in the More Beasts of Lejend book as well as the newly released Hermit. James had an exclusive Gen Con release from the world of Judge's Guild and Peter's art was everywhere. The whole experience hammered home the need to get the word out on C&C. I spent only about half my time in the booth, much of it talking with people and trying to keep a lid on things. McBain and Jason quickly gave up thoughts of spending most of their days wandering the halls and became the cornerstone of the sales crew. Casey and Ashley did their part, Casey stealing the best line

by shouting "How Castles and Crusades Saved my Life!!" right in front of a camera crew. They rushed him off to interview. Ha. And Ashley in her various costumes brought more than a few folks into the booth to peek at her curiosities. All in all we had the booth well covered. Jason handled CC, Jeffrey Gygax material, Mark LA and CC, Casey d20 and CC and Davis and myself wherever we were needed. Davis found himself cornered by many folks looking for me who wanted to talk about one thing or the other.

The most chaotic moments were, without a doubt when Gary and crew came into the booth to autograph books. We had a table set up for him in a crook of the booth, hoping to steer people in and out through the Uniforms of Antiquity section. The folks at Gen Con kindly announced the sessions, and we put up fliers so people could see when and where and word spread quickly. I've been to a lot of these sessions with Gary and some have been good, others not so, but I was very gratified to see that the lines piled up fast, soon wrapping around the booth, down the aisle and out of sight. It was wonderful. Things got so hectic at several points that Aldo took over crowd control and steered traffic and I had to call in Todd to monitor one of the lines (Todd was none too amused as he had been gaming for hours and wanted to sleep a little before his next game. He spent much of the time glowering at me, which was good as that coupled with his 6'3" bulk helped keep the line moving along). The lines were pretty calm and everyone very, very nice. We took a little time and let folks with very young children move to the front of the line and...

A very contented THANK YOU from all of us to all of you who so generously let families with little babies cut in line!

In case you don't know, Gary is very devoted to the fans of his various endeavors and never rushes anyone who should come up. He signs whatever you like without comment or complaint and often talks a bit, poses for pictures and is very congenial. He does this, because this is the type of person he is. So the line moved slow as he talked and chatted, exchanged jokes, signatures and pictures and the like. But again, no one complained. We had one small incident occur which Aldo handled very well, baffled me and until he found out what happened, infuriated Gary. A gentleman came up to me and asked if he could get a picture of Gary. No autograph, just a picture. The line in front of the register (and by register I mean our cooler bag) was empty so I brought him to Aldo and said "This dude just wants to take a picture." Aldo obliged, Gary posed and smiled. The line stopped and waited. No one complained. The photographer jumped over to shake Gary's hand and then started to leave. I turned and walked out. A moment later Aldo signaled me and the dude was over by Gary talking to him and getting

another photograph. Aldo asked me what I wanted to do, I waited to see if he would clear out quick. But then he produced something to be signed and I said he's gotta go. Aldo stepped in, and in his very best business like California style, ushered the dude out in a hurry. Even as a young lady in line thanked us for getting rid of the dude, Gary went on signing. Anyone who knows Gary knows he can get angry pretty quick, but unless you've been in the spot of interfering with his interaction with the public you really don't know how angry he can get. As he will tell you, people spend a lot of money and time on these games and coming to these shows. And I could tell he was madder than a hornet. However, once the situation was explained, as quick as a summer storm, his anger was gone, calling the fellow a rascal he moved on with the session.

All in all, we were very pleased with the turnout for the Gygax autograph sessions. They were all very big and the folks very kind and they all bought lots and lots of Gygax books, which only helped to sweeten the pot in our eyes.

The show continued on, whirling around a maelstrom of strong sales, deals and people coming and going. McBain quickly lost track of outgoing goods and we eventually abandoned keeping tally, figuring we could make sense of it when we got back (by accounting for what we brought, subtracting what we came back with we come up with a reasonable estimate of items sold and since I had to approve all swag it's not too hard to follow). Everyone worked like dogs. Jeffrey, McBain and Jason earned top honors, often skipping lunches to keep on working. Though in truth I think they did this partially because they were in the zone and didn't want to loose the groove or yield the turf to older hands' sometimes lackadaisical approach. Todd's games went well and sent folks to the booth many a time to pick up material and James worked his Judge's Guild angle really hard.

The whole show went off without incident, I think. I do remember that Friday morning Mark, Aldo and I were walking to the show. Mark was carrying a small styrofoam cooler with drinks in it. Aldo has his note pad and me the money bag/cooler. About half way Mark's cooler disintegrated and water, ice, pepsi and dr. pepper went everywhere. We watched the cans roll about for a minute and looked around for a trash can. We then emptied the money bag into my old cash box (pocket) and put the ice and drinks in there. We cleaned up the garbage and headed off, picking up our conversation where we had left it. Not one of us even mentioned the cooler I don't think. It was pretty cool. Of course neither McBain or Todd were amused with our ad hoc use of the cash box, mainly because apparently it wasn't a cooler, just a water proof bag meant to keep water OUT and the money got wet when I put it back in there.

Evenings at Gen Con were filled with merriment and merry making. On Thursday night—or Friday, I can't remember—was the Goodman/Troll Lord Beer Fest. Joe organized this and I offered to help him cover costs. He mistakenly said hey to that because when I showed up there was only one ticket left and the hall filled with people neither Joe or I knew. I had told two or three folks that they were welcome to come and apparently they spread the word! Ha ha, Joe took it in good stride and laughed about it quite a bit, but he did tell us that we were in charge of it next year. A prospect to which Davis and Casey actually jumped to do! So next year we'll move it down the street to the Wild Beaver a small place off the path where I've been heading after hours for the past two years.

We all met at the Beaver a number of times. It's a good, small bar with a lot of friendly folks and good time for all. That's where we spent most of our after hours time. Though Davis did get lost at one point somewhere in the city and had to pay some kids to guide him back to the hotel. He tends to walk about a bit and we frequently lose him for hours on end only to see him resurface, usually staggering, but sometimes covered in blood and scars (in truth that's only happened twice).

We did take time to have a big dinner with Gary and his family (both Luke and Alex were in) at the Ram. Though I didn't get to talk to Gary much, it was a fabulous time with about 20 of us sitting around eating and enjoying some very relaxed conversation. Alex and his wife, Allison, from Mongoose stopped by and joined us. They are arguably two of the nicest, calmest, coolest people in this biz. We had wanted to have dinner with them at some point, but scheduling had gotten all messed up as it usually does. We'll pick it up at Vegas no doubt. After dinner we retired to Gary's Hotel Suite and sat around jawing and the like until they were ready to call it an evening.

To quote the late great Phil Hartman: Good Times. Good Times.

Sunday saw us wrapping up the show. A fourth day of strong sales left everyone very pumped and ready for more. But 4 o'clock came on us suddenly and we were very soon caught up in the groove of packing boxes and breaking down racks. Mark and I headed for the trucks. The floor had precious few carts and this slowed us down tremendously. Eventually we abandoned the idea of looking for any and started carrying the boxes out by hand. The boxes were too bad, and McBain had a small hand cart which helped, but those blessed racks were heavy and it was a long step to the loading docks. After several hours of loading we were all ready to go, hot, tired, ready for some grub and our own beds. We hit the road late in the afternoon, driving all night, back to the grind that is Troll Lord Games.

Stephen Chenault



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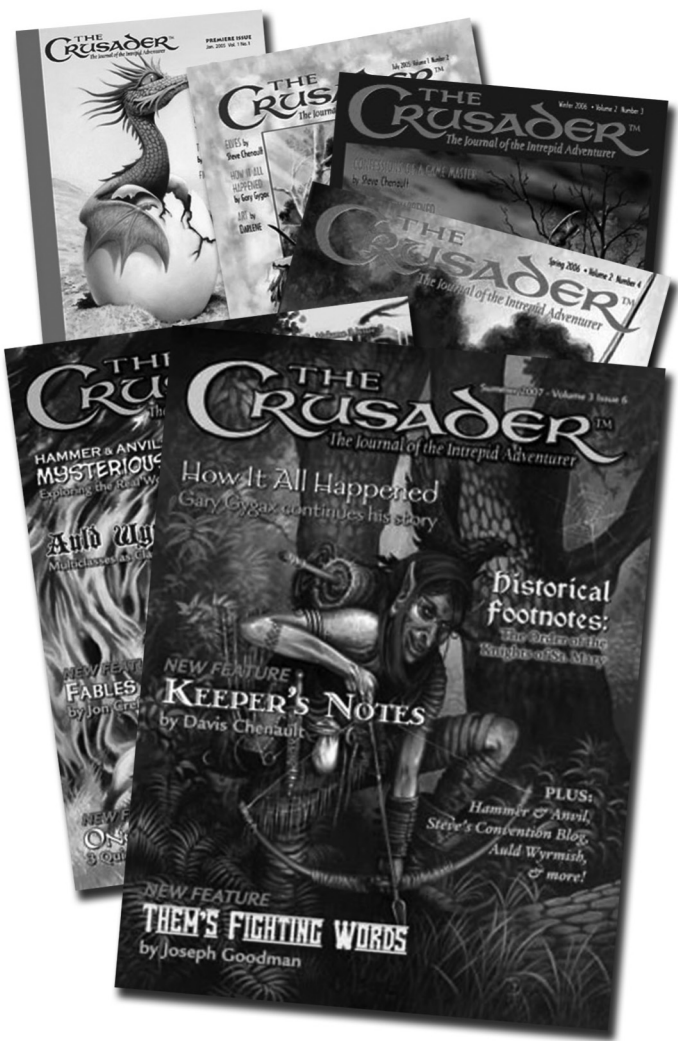
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WORDS FROM TOM WHAM



In very early 1977, I got a letter from my old college buddy Tim Kask,

who was then editor of the Dragon Magazine, inviting me to apply for work at TSR in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. You may have heard of them, they did a game called Dungeons and Dragons. Well, I applied (with a cartoon resume) and got the job.

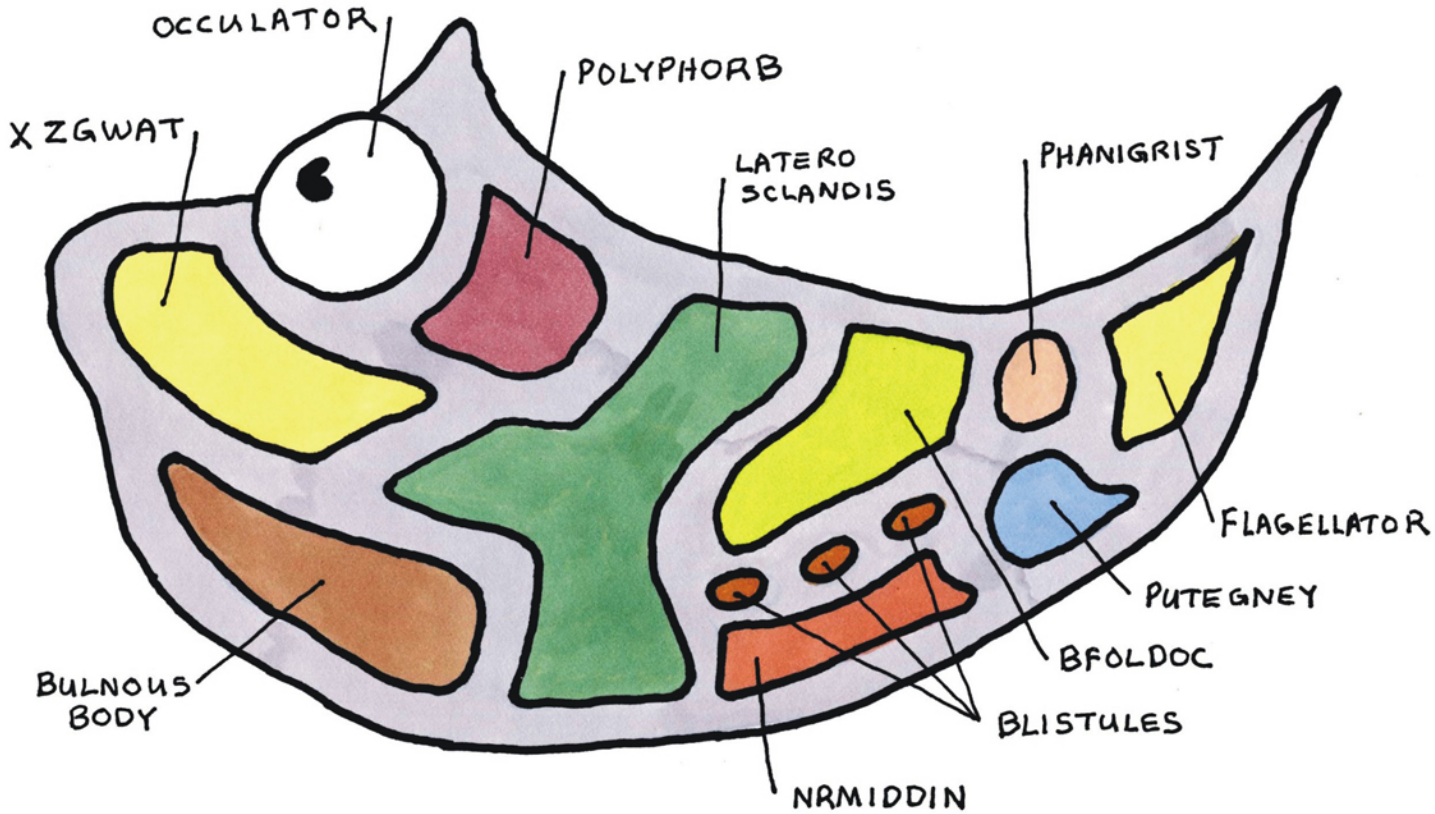
Soon I was working in the Dungeon Hobby Shop and upstairs in TSR's Art Department alongside Dave Sutherland and Dave Trampier. Tim Kask and I talked over the idea of doing a centerfold game in the Dragon Magazine. It began as a cartoon in Dragon #9. Some bored gods were sitting around and one of them created a world.

Soon, a parody of role playing games in general appeared in Dragon #10. It was called Snit Smashing, and it occurred on a distant planet in a far away galaxy. The bored Bolotomi (that's plural for Bolotomus) lived on a beach enjoying sun, sand, surf, each other's company, and not much else. Bulbous, the god... who was also the game master soon added Snits. Now Snits are little creatures that live in the sea, but every so often get the urge to run up on shore and reproduce by sticking their Snotches into a Snandergrab (a relic from the world's creation.).

Well, Snit Smashing wasn't much of a game, and was difficult to play. It's successor, however, was relatively simple and easy to play.

Anyway, it wasn't long before the bored Bolotomi thought up a game. They would smash Snits and keep score. Well, the god of the Snits was not pleased with this, and soon things changed. In a later issue of the Dragon appeared Snit's Revenge, in which clans of Snits invaded the bodies of the Bolotomi and wrought havoc among their internal organs (each of which, was of course, controlled by a Snorg.) When a Snit kicks the snot out of a Snorg, the organ fails. With enough organ failure, the Bolotomus, of course, dies.

The Bolotomus, however, was not without defenses. Most important of them being the Runnungitm, who chases Snits and attempts to devour them. The Nasty Makum is an intermediary in the development of a Runnungitm (ignore the fact that it looks somewhat like a sperm.) The playing board for Snit's Revenge is a sort of biological chart of the internal organs of the Bolotomus. This issue's cartoon just carries the ridiculous over another edge.



THE NASTY MAKUM (MAKUS RUNGUS)

CROSS SECTION 500X

The above illustration came from the Snit Research Institute. Humans once thought that the Atom was the smallest thing... then came Protons, Neutrons, Electrons... etc. For those who have never played Snit's Revenge, and don't know what a Nasty Makum is, inside a Bolotomus:



The Composer creates a Makum



Which swims to the Lapotum



Who turns the Makum into a Runnungitim

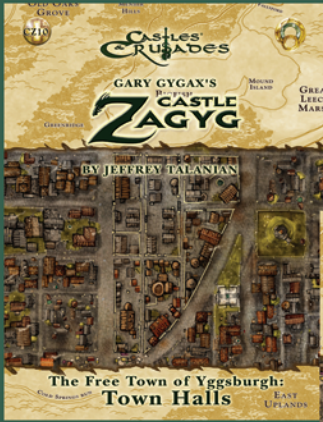
Who chases and devours these guys (the Snits)



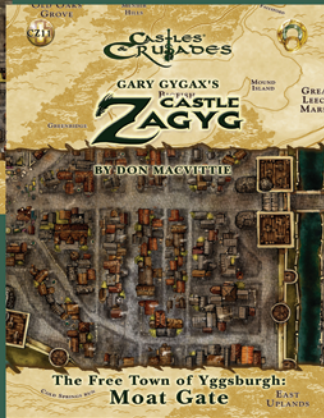
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