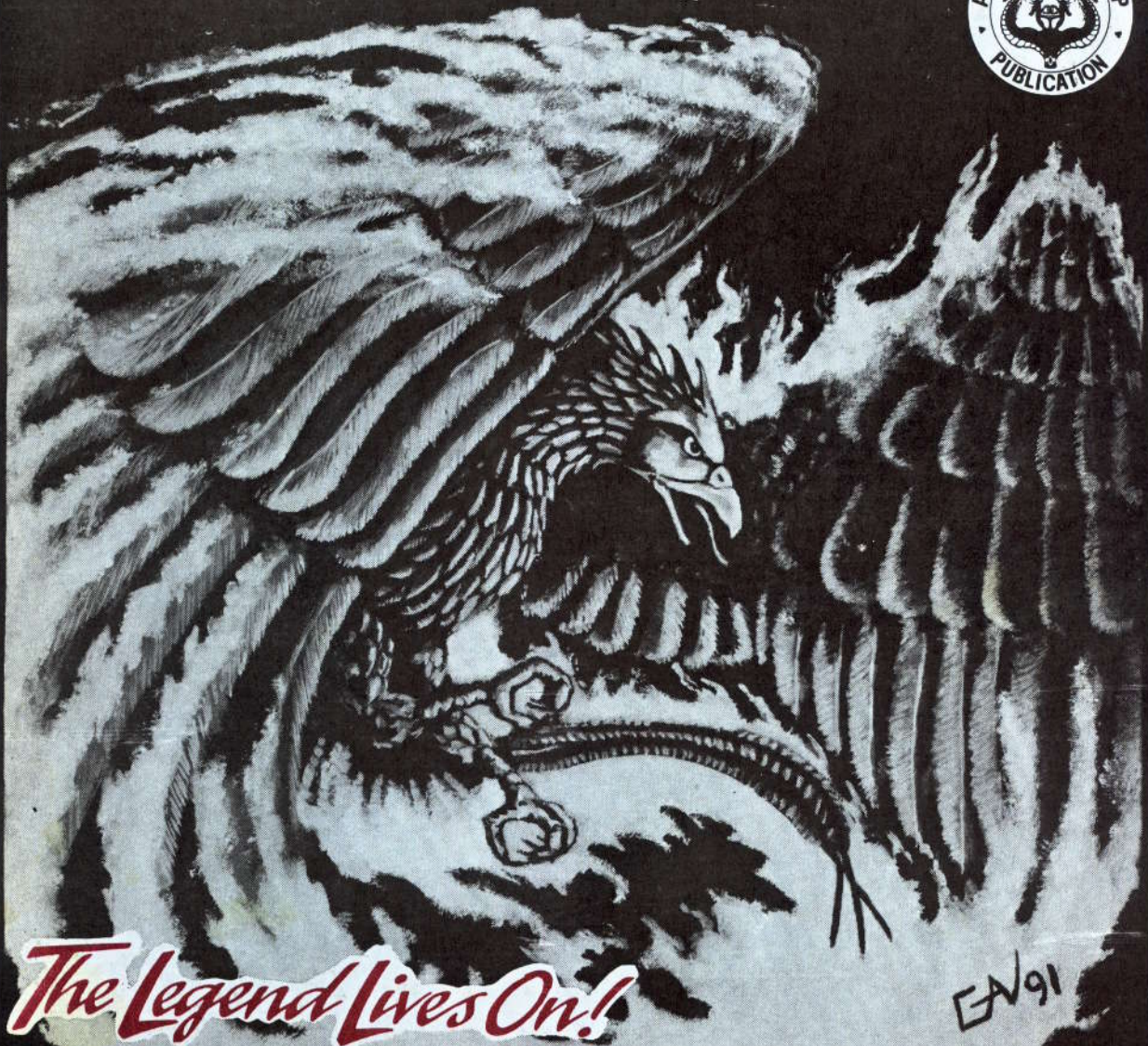
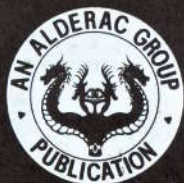


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**Publisher**

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**Editor**

Jolly R. Blackburn

**Writers this Issue**

Jolly R. Blackburn James Shipman  
Chris Engle B.A. Felton

**Typesetting, Layout and Production**

Jolly R. Blackburn

**Alderac Anthology Continuity Editor**

Greytar

**Contributing Artists**

Erin Burgetts Jerry W. Caines  
David Dixon Janet DuPuy  
Daniel Giddings Bob Hobbs  
George A. Vrbanic

**Cover Art**

George A. Vrbanic  
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## SPECIAL INSERTS

**Greytar's Traveler's Guide to Alderac:**  
*A full color fold-out map for the Alderac PBM game*

**Alderac PBM Forms:**  
*Issues mailed to Subscribers will include extra APBM forms so that  
players will not have to make their own copies to play.*



# Cries from the Attic

## EDITORIAL

*phoe-nix (fee-nix) n. [*Gr. phoibos, bright*] Egypt. A mythical bird which was consumed by flames and rose back up from its own ashes. Symbol of rebirth.*

Welcome back! Gracing the cover of this very special issue is George Vrbanic's rendering of a phoenix rising up in flames from its own ashes. A fitting subject considering that the issue you hold in your hands represents our back from the grave issue.

By now, most of you know that SHADIS was forced to shut-down during Operation Desert Storm. From December 1990 thru July 1991, I was involved with mobilizing and demobilizing soldiers going from Saudi Arabia. This meant working seven days a week, 16 hours per day. The decision to put SHADIS on hold temporarily was a difficult one, but, in truth, it was made for me by sheer lack of time. Now that my service obligation to the Army has been fulfilled, I will be devoting my full attention to SHADIS once again.

I want to skip my normal onslaught of rambling this issue and get down to the business at hand. (See, I'm not even going to rant and rave about our new format and COLOR!)

This issue unveils the long promised *ALDERAC the Play-By-Mail Game* (referred to as APBM). APBM has been undergoing various stages of playtesting and revisions for over a year.

APBM allows characters to perform virtually any conceivable action and to pursue any number of careers or occupations. So, whatever your personal tastes are in good role-playing, you should be able to find it here. If you love simple adventuring and dungeon exploring, you'll find plenty of challenges scattered throughout the realms. If you'd rather climb up the political ladder of the Empire, perhaps with an eye on the throne itself, you may attempt

to do so. Or if you love the seas and wish to try your hand at buying and selling commodities in far away ports, your ship awaits you.

Like most roleplaying games there are no ultimate winners in APBM. There are no pre-defined goals or objectives for characters. It is up to the player to choose objectives for his character and strive to achieve those goals. Conflict with other players and non-player characters arise when objectives overlap. Some players will choose to work alone, but the greatest enjoyment in APBM is derived from player-interaction. Parties can be formed, alliances, treaties, etc. Imaginative players will find that great advantages can be found in such dealings with other players.

This first installment deals with Character Generation and Getting Started in the game. Future installments will introduce rules on sailing ships, mass-warfare, politics, colonization, etc. The Alderac PBM game will be an ever-expanding system, growing to meet the needs and demands of the players and providing more options for characters as they increase in level and experience.

One important note, just because you don't see a rule for a desired action in print, don't assume that there are no rules for such actions. The APBM rules have been presented to the players in a 'blind' format. That is, players are only given enough rules and information to get them started. Everything else, unless presented in future installments, is learned through game play. (For example, a player may consistently pay tithes to his local temple. The rules may make no mention of any benefits for doing so. However, the player suspects that his combat results are always more favorable on those days he has paid his tithe.) The lesson is, don't pass up an action just because you can't find a listing for it.

Before jumping into the rules, here is a quick run down on what I believe are some unique features of the Alderac PBM Game:

CONTINUED ON PAGE 53



Gar Bloodaxe  
Prisoner no. # 3245  
Soul's Tet Penitentiary



## The Letters Page

c/o SHADIS Magazine  
755 Burcale Road #B2  
Myrtle Beach, S.C. 29577

# The Letters Page

*Due to space considerations some letters have been edited. While praise and 'atta boy' letters are greatly appreciated, letters containing constructive criticisms, complaints and/or suggestions are more likely to see print in The Letters Page. Keep the letters coming!*

Dear SHADIS,

SHADIS is a gem among Small-Press magazines. Now, that the war is over can we finally find out what happens to Scav?

Greg Howe  
French Lick, IN

Dear SHADIS,

I'm literally foaming at the mouth with anticipation. My precious SHADIS is finally coming back. I can't wait to hold Issue no.#6 in my hands. If I can help SHADIS in anyway let me know. I have the highest hopes for SHADIS.

Tom Hall  
Elgin, SC

Dear SHADIS,

I've been waiting for months for someone else to ask this question. I can't stand it any longer. What does 'SHADIS' mean anyway! I know that in the fiction, BONES OF RUIN, there is reference to a moon called SHADIS and in the Scrolls of Greytar we are told that SHADIS is indeed one of two moons about Alderac. My question is what is the significance of SHADIS?

Why did you choose it as the name of your magazine? I just have to know these trivial things.

Sam Boyles  
Kokomo, IN

• *Shadis is indeed one of two moons that orbits the planet of Alderac. However, Shadis is also the goddess of wisdom in the Ragean Mythos. As the goddess of wisdom, the Rageans believe that it was Shadis who gave the gift of writing to mankind. Since Shadis was to be based partly in the Alderac milieu, we felt that Shadis would be an appropriate name. Incidentally, the moon of Shadis orbits Alderac once every 60 days. So every time there's a full phase of Shadis (the moon), Shadis magazine makes its appearance on the stands. Pretty nifty, huh?*

Dear SHADIS,

The thing that's always bugged me about small-press is that most publishers act like they don't give a damn. They seem to be on an ego-trip and sometimes a power trip. (It's my magazine. I'm right and everyone else is wrong.) They interject their opinions on every topic under the sun. In what is supposedly a gaming magazine, they frequently: attack religion; go on frequent gay-bashing rampages, put down other small-press publishers and magazines, whine about low circulation and bitch about how over-worked they are.

These same publishers put out crap that is filled with so many typos and

errors that you wonder if they even bother to read their own magazines. I've seen publishers who pen in page numbers and even make corrections with pencil on the masters before going to press.

These same publishers will tell you that they are working on a low-budget and that they are unable to do any better. If that's the best excuse they can give, they should get out of the business now.

It doesn't cost money to have a friend read over your proofs once or twice before going to press. It doesn't even cost money to layout your magazine with a little thoughtful attention.

Now, why am I telling you all of this? Because SHADIS is the most professionally done small-press magazine I've ever chanced upon. It's loaded with quality art, well written and, most importantly, it's laid out with obvious care and attention. Everything is embellished with those nice little touches that tells the reader a lot of work went into the making of the issue in hand.

I've read the letter's page over the past year or so and seen readers comment on the stories, rave about the articles and so on, but I've never seen anyone take time out to just say, Job Well done!

And so, I'm sure the rest of your readers and the new ones yet to come, will join me when I say, "Good Job!"

Eric Kensley  
Tampa FL

□



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# CAMPAIGNS MADE EASY: Role-Playing and Matrix Games

By Chris Engle



**W**e share a common interest. We play role playing games. We've spent many hours over the last twenty years in this wonderful pursuit and our lives have been greatly enriched by the fellowship of the hobby. So, why is it that game makers keep tinkering with the rules?

It's simple really. The rules aren't perfect. There are situations in role playing games where the rules just don't handle things well. When a campaign gets caught in one of these situations, it can be in trouble. Consider the following scenarios;

- A game master begins the adventure in a city. There are 5 players in the game (a good manageable party). Suddenly, everyone wants to do something different. The Thief wants to join the local guild. The Magic User wants to find a library. The Fighters want to visit the magic-toy shop and the Cleric wants to minister to the poor. The GM is swamped. If he tries to role play each one of these "non-adventure" events, the entire game session will be used up in 'boring' (i.e. non-adventurous), but important, play. The game is lost in an avalanche of minor details.

The normal solution to this problem is to ignore the minor stuff and gloss over time consuming role plays. Of course, this often backfires when a player is accidentally given a minor, but powerful job or magic item. The GM, of course, is forced to take it away from him, which brings on cries of protest from everyone. This is bad, but consider the next example.

• A GM spends days writing a new "Adventure" for the party. It is filled with up to 100 enemies, each complete with a life story. Detailed maps cover every possible place in the playing area. And so, the game begins. Almost immediately the players begin asking questions that the GM had not considered! The GM is forced to improvise, which can easily throw off many of the wonderful little pre-planned encounters. The GM can steer the adventurers back to the "script" with an iron hand, but few players like to be treated in such a manner. A more daring GM, well versed in story telling and lies, can make it up as he goes along. Either way, the GM has the largest burden of work. If he gets tired, the game suffers.

A common solution to this problem is to tightly script what can happen in the game. The GM becomes God, provider of ALL information. If a player's question does not fit in with the script, he is ignored. The problem is that the players become helpless to change the world. Is it any wonder then that they soon long for a good fight? At least in combat they have the power to affect the world.

One can see why GMs continue to seek ways to correct these problems. If a rules change can help, then more power to it. There are probably hundreds of ways to improve the situation. I have found one way around the problems that I feel works very well.

### THE MATRIX GAME

If you play RPGs, you have probably seen the following happen in a game. One player says, "I visit the high priest and convince him to loan me the +5 Holy Sword." To which the GM says, "Yeah, you visit him, but he tells you to stick it in your ear." This ends the exchange. The GM has all the power. Often times though, a player will not let it drop. He goes on to give reasons why he should be given the Sword. "I

am a Paladin. He knows that I am going to use it to kill the Dragon God and he knows that I NEVER tell a lie!" Sometimes this works and the GM relents. Without knowing it, the player and GM have just used the principles behind the Matrix Game.

Matrix Games are a method for using arguments to describe and resolve non-adventure events. They are very simple to run. To begin the process, a player makes a 3 part argument that tells an action he wants to happen, the result that comes about because of that action and a list of reasons as to why events should occur in this manner. This is basically what is already happening in many games as described in our situation above. The only difference is that Matrix Games add structure and a die roll to resolving such arguments.

### The Rules

After each role playing session, the players get experience points according to the traditional method for advancing characters. When Matrix Game Rules are being used in an RPG, the players are also allowed to make 2 arguments to advance their characters. One of the arguments must be used for social development. The other argument can be used either for making social contacts or to improve the character's abilities (like learning a new skill or spell).

In a Matrix Game, arguments are clearly structured. A legal argument must be comprised of the following elements:

- **Action:** Something the character is going to do.
- **Result:** What happens when the action is completed.
- **Reasons:** Three short statements that support the action/result equation.

There are no limitations on what a player can attempt with an argument, as long as it follows the above format. You will find that such freedom for your players will generate creative, original arguments that enhance the RPG campaign.

Actions and Results are decided on by the player, but the Three Reasons are a different matter.



Reasons come from a list of short descriptive phrases that describe the world. This list is called a "Matrix", thus the term, "Matrix Game". Below is an example of what a matrix might look like:

- Great Magic
- Magic Beasts
- Buy Things in the Market
- Self Preservation
- Guilt by Association
- Anger
- Fear
- The King Defends the Realm
- etc.

The purpose of the matrix is to describe the world to the players. It is NEVER a complete description of the world. It usually suggests many more descriptive phrases that could be in it. Most players know a lot about how the world works, especially players of a D&D campaign.

In the Matrix Game, a player could support an argument with reasons he has made up which he believes SHOULD be in the matrix. If the GM does not veto the reason, it becomes part of the matrix and supports the argument.

Arguments are resolved by a roll of 1d6. If an argument has three reasons and generally seems reasonable, it has a 50% chance of happening. The player rolls a die. If the roll is 3 or less, the argument wins. The result becomes part of the matrix and the player can use anything he has gained. If an argument only has 2 reasons supporting it, the roll must be 2 or less to win. Resolving arguments using the Matrix Game is as simple as that.

### COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

Once the player has presented his argument (complete with an Action, Result and Three Reasons), the GM may choose to present a *counter-argument* to the player's argument. This in effect is another argument that bounces off the first argument. The GM can say "Yes your action/result happens and a second result also happens." Or he could say, "Yes,

your action happens, but the result is different." He might also say, "No your action/result does not happen. Actually, this different action/result equation takes place." The following table lists the various formats for a counter-argument:

#### Table: Counter-Argument Formats

YES (the player's action takes place) AND (a second result occurs)  
 YES (the player's action takes place) BUT (a different result occurs)  
 NO (the player's action/result does not take place) ACTUALLY (a different action/result occurs)

When the GM makes a counter-argument, resolution is handled a little differently.

- Counter arguments are also supported by three reasons.
- YES AND arguments win on a 4 or less
- YES BUT arguments win on a 3 or less
- NO, ACTUALLY arguments win on a 2 or less.

When a counter-argument is made, one of the two results proposed must actually occur. An unopposed argument must win on it's roll of the die or nothing occurs.

After the GM has presented his counter-argument, the GM and player roll for their own respective arguments. The rolling continues until one of the arguments, either the initial argument or the counter-argument, has won. If both arguments win or both lose, then continue to roll the die.

The GM can decide that a player's argument is either STRONG or WEAK. This is a judgement call based on how much build-up a player has been doing to prepare for this event. If it is strong, modify the roll needed to win by +1. If it is weak, modify the roll by -1.

Lastly, the GM may decide that a player's argument is just plain STUPID or simply too much. If this is the case, the GM can simply *Veto* the argument, no roll needed. After all, the GM must have the final say in his own game. The power to veto allows the GM to retain control and keep things from getting out of hand. However, if he chooses not to veto and allows

a roll to made for an argument, he should live with the results.

### SO WHY USE A MATRIX GAME?

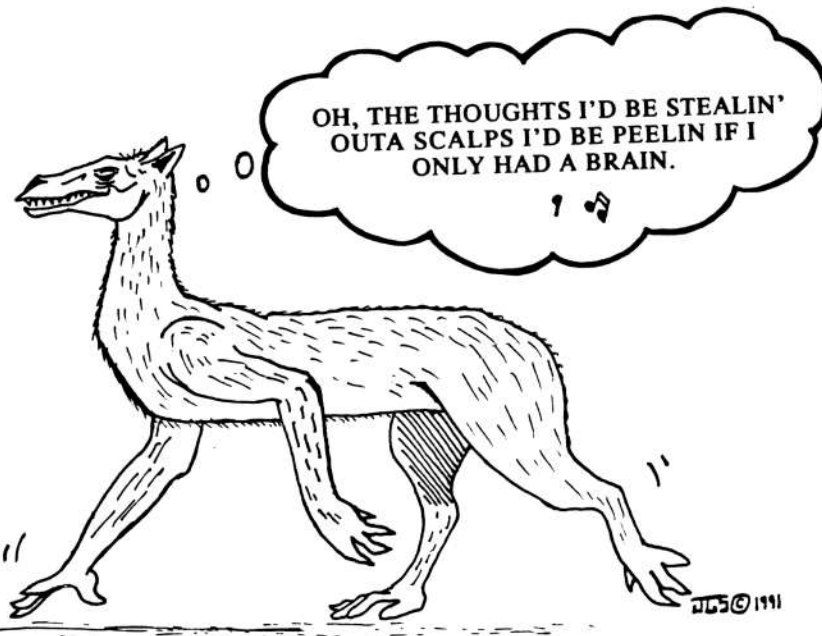
One can see that a Matrix Game is not a role playing game. So why does it help run one? The answer is simple. Matrix Games make it easy to run non-adventure events that do not role play well. Beyond that Matrix Games have other virtues to offer.

Playing a Matrix Game requires a shift in a player's thinking. Role playing centers a person's thoughts on the immediate and short term. If there is not a lot of action, players get bored. So, if plans do not work out quickly, they are dropped. At the same time, if there is too much action players get lost in detail and, again, forget the long term. Matrix Games allow players to do anything they want, but, only by strategic planning, can a player be allowed to make really powerful arguments. For example, Peasant Boy may make an argument that he is declared King, but most GMs would veto this as being STUPID. The same would not be true if the Duke of Albion were to

say the same thing. Peasant Boy might eventually be able to make such an argument if he precursored it by arguing that he was the son of Good King Ethelred, who was deposed by the Usurper Harold.

Players like Peasant Boy add a lot of spice to a game. Not only is he thinking about himself, but he is also suggesting to the GM possible future adventures (to rescue Ethelred, to sneak into Harold' castle, to raise the barons in rebellion, etc.). The GM now has another person giving creative input into the game. This makes GMing much easier. In addition, the player of Peasant boy is likely to be more interested in the game since he has a more active voice in what is going on.

The players in the D&D campaign I run are consistently planning ahead about what they want their character to do next. They take care of most of the non-adventure events, which frees me up to concentrate on the role playing aspects of my campaign. Far from detracting from the role playing, the Matrix Game draws the players into the game while reminding them that there is much more to life than just "hack-n-slash".





### HOW CAN A GM USE A MATRIX GAME?

Matrix Games enhance other games tremendously. While I use one to backup my RPG, they are also useful in running miniatures, political games, diplomacy games, etc.

Some applications you might try include:

- Matrix arguments quickly settle non-adventure situations like, social climbing, business deals, politics, negotiations, etc.
- Allow players to do character growth by presenting arguments. This is guaranteed to create unique characters since players will not be making the exact same arguments.
- Have Magic Users gain their spells by presenting arguments.
- Settle large scale campaign events (wars, raids, natural disasters, etc.) by arguments.

### EXAMPLES

Look through the following examples of what a Matrix Game can allow the players to add to an RPG. The examples are from the D&D\* games I run in Bloomington, Indiana. (Note that after each game, the player gets to make 2 arguments to advance his character. One can be used to improve his skills and characteristics while the other is used to establish social contacts.)

#### Mark D'Amberly Human Fighter-Magic User

Mark is a Fighter/Magic User who, aside from adventuring, has very high social aspirations. He wants to become a powerful man in the kingdom by marrying the Earl's daughter and making a name for himself. Here are some of the arguments Mark has made to do this:

**Action:** While out riding one day, Mark rescues the Earl's beautiful daughter, Marie, from her runaway horse.

**Result:** Marie falls madly in love with Mark.

**Reason:** 1. Mark is her hero.  
2. He is a handsome dashing figure.

3. She is of marrying age and looking for a husband.

*This is a weak argument, but I let him roll on it and it passed! I declined to make a counter-argument.*

Mark then makes another argument.

**Action:** Mark, inspired by Marie, decides to study courtly manners.

**Result:** Mark is preparing for life at court.

- Reasons:**
1. Mark hopes to become a member of court.
  2. Mark does not want to be seen as uncouth by the court.
  3. Having proper manners could help in his rise through the ranks.

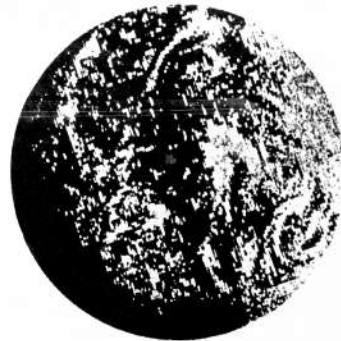
*I decide to make a counter-argument against Mark's argument.*

**Action:** Yes And...

**Result:** Mark gains the skill Etiquette.

- Reasons:**
1. He hires a teacher for 100 gp.
  2. You can't learn manners on your own.
  3. Good manners are vital for social growth.

## It's Coming!



### *The Alderac Compendium*

An entire world in the palm  
of your hands.

Notice that if Mark wins this round, only his Results will take place. If I win the round, both Results would occur. It turned out that both of these arguments did happen, so Mark gained a new skill in etiquette while preparing for life at court.

In another session Marks makes the following argument.

**Action:** Mark goes to a small tournament in Anjou.

**Result:** He wins the joust and comes home richer (2000 gp).

**Reasons:**

1. Mark is an excellent warrior.
2. Mark is an excellent horseman.
3. Mark was greatly underestimated because he was a stranger.

*I present a counter-argument.*

**Action:** No, actually Mark becomes lost in the woods and has a fight with the Green Knight.

**Result:** Mark beats the Knight who becomes a fast friend.

**Reasons:**

1. Knights often fight at cross roads.
2. Mark does not know the terrain well.
3. Armand the Green Knight is a man of honor.

In this case, if I win the die roll, only my Result will occur. If Mark wins his Result will take place.

Mark's argument wins and my counter-argument did not actually happen, even though after hearing it, Mark would have preferred my Results to his own.

Later Mark presents this argument;

**Action:** Mark uses his Resist Charm ability to help glean information about Othar's magic sword.

**Result:** Mark learns about the powers of the sword.

**Reasons:**

1. Mark knows the sword tried to control him, so it must be enchanted.
2. Mark is familiar with charm spells.
3. Mark's friend at the magic school helps him by researching magic swords.

*This argument won, which allowed Mark to fully utilize his new magic sword.*

Here is another argument Mark presented:

**Action:** Mark visits the Faeries' cave to learn the Charm Monster spell.

**Result:** Mark can now use that spell.

**Reasons:** 1. Mark saw the Faeries charm a monster.

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2. Mark speaks their language.
3. Mark pays them to teach him the spell.

*I counter-argued.*

**Action:** Yes, Mark visits the Faeries' cave, **BUT**  
**Result:** He does not learn the spell and leaves the cave ten years older.

**Reasons:** 1. Mark knows the Faeries are dangerous.  
 2. Faeries' magic can age people.  
 3. Mark went to the cave alone (easy victim).

This time my counter-argument won and Mark received only a few grey hairs for his efforts.

Mark used his matrix arguments to advance himself in skills, magic and social standing. Some of his arguments covered events that could have been solo adventures (going to the tournament or into the Faeries cave, for example.). Others dealt with purely non-adventure events (researching the magic sword and learning etiquette). Lastly, he made an argument about an event that is very hard to run in RPGs (namely rescuing Marie and her falling in love with him). Consider the possibilities of what else Mark could propose by use of the Matrix system. Perhaps you are beginning to see how powerful a tool the Matrix Game can be to an RPG campaign.

Players are literally "making up" what they want to happen by presenting arguments. This shifts some of the burden off the GM to the players. The game becomes more of a shared creation than the GM's baby. For instance, I had not even decided that the Earl had a daughter, let alone named her. Mark made her up. Since Mark's argument added something to the campaign I allowed him to roll and see if it happened.

### AFTERWARD

Matrix Games first appeared in 1988. Since then, they have been run at conventions in both England and in the United States. More than likely, you have never heard of them before. I hope that after

reading this article you would like to learn more about them. If you would like to know more, please write me and I'll be glad to send you some additional information. I publish a newsletter on experimental games (Experimental Game Group - EGG for short). In addition I sell a beginners Matrix Game to introduce new people to what I believe is a new genre of gaming. Thanks for giving the article a read! ☐

*\* Editor's Note: The following tables will come in handy for reference if you choose to run a Matrix Game. If you enjoyed Chris' article please let him know. For more information on Chris Engle's newsletter, refer to the Market Platz.*

### TABLES:

#### Table I: Roll needed to win

<i>Argument, supported by 3 reasons</i>	3 or less
<i>Argument, supported by 2 reasons</i>	2 or less
<i>Yes/And Counter Argument</i>	4 or less
<i>Yes/But Counter Argument</i>	3 or less
<i>No/Actually Counter Argument</i>	2 or less

#### Table II: Modifiers

GM declares Argument Strong	+1
GM declares Argument Weak	-1

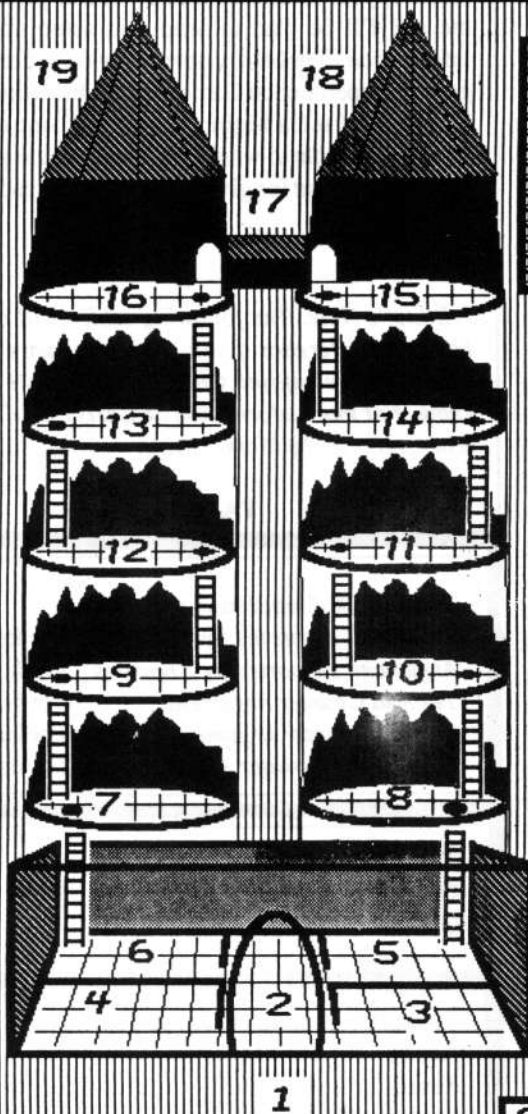
#### Table III: Argument Format

Action
Result
Reasons (3)

#### Table IV: Counter-Argument Formats

YES (the player's action takes place) AND (a second result occurs)
YES (the player's action takes place) BUT (a different result occurs)
NO (the player's action/result does not take place) ACTUALLY (a different action/result occurs)





Faglin's  
Tower Of  
Dark Deed's

Drawn By  
James L Shipman

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key

Ladder



Door



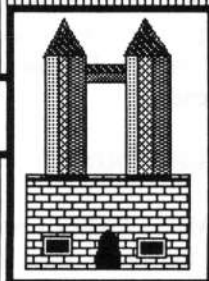
Hole



Wall



Side View Of  
The Tower



1 Length = 30 feet



## **REASONS WHY GAMERS NEED TO SUPPORT CAR-PGa IN DEFENSE OF THE RPG HOBBY**

Some of you have already heard of organizations like "Bothered About Dungeons & Dragons" (BADD), the National Coalition on Television Violence (NCTV), Pro-Family Forum and Educational Research Analysts.

These organizations, run by people like Pat Pulling and Thomas Radecki are censorship organizations which are devoted to denying *YOU* your civil rights; freedom of the pursuit of happiness (First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution), freedom from religious and political persecution, freedom to learn and literary freedom.

BADD and NCTV petitioned the federal government in 1984 for labeling to be required on fantasy role-playing games (RPGs). They almost succeeded. This would have likely culminated in a petition for banning the game for minors, then adults. Since that failed attempt, they have been pursuing other avenues to the eventual censorship of the hobby.

No matter where you live, or how respected you are among your peers and in your community, these actions have serious and frightening implications for you.

It's not enough any more to simply *believe* in your rights. You must *defend* them. But how do you do that?

**Write to us for our free information kit and literature list.** We have the most complete, in-depth files on all the events and groups which have affected the pastime which many gamers take for granted. However, CAR-PGa (The Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games) is more than an information source. We derive our ability to collect our research from members, gamers like you who have special resources at their disposal: a local library, print shop equipment, copiers, computers and modems, and talents which make it possible for us to advocate the hobby and do research to support our position.

If you or someone you know is interested in helping us, write to us at:

**CAR-PGa International HQ**

**8032 Locust Avenue**

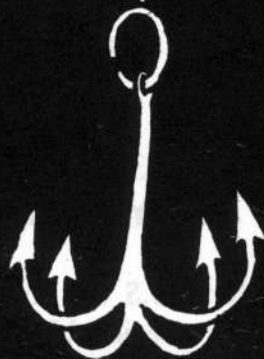
**Miller, IN 46403**

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# Hook, Line and Sinker



By Jolly R. Blackburn

*H*ow many times has this happened to you?

After spending all week preparing and designing a massive adventure for the next gaming session, you finally sit down at the table with players assembled. It feels like a good night, the adrenaline is pumping and everyone is anticipating a full night of adventuring. However, as the night progresses you begin to panic. The adventure you thought would take hours to unfold is beginning to wind down and the evening is still young. You thought that battle with the Orc Raiding party would take at least an hour to resolve, but it only took 10 minutes of real time. The trap you cleverly laid on level 5 to slow the players' progress wasn't even encountered. It's only 8 p.m. and you normally play to midnight. The players look toward you with trusting anticipation. They know you won't let them down. But as you thumb through your notes, you begin to sweat. Nothing! Usually you can think of an adventure on the cuff and ad-lib your way through. But tonight nothing comes to mind. What's a GM to do?

It was a situation similar to the one described above that first inspired the **Hook, Line and Sinker** concept. With HLS you simply find a situation (Hook) that most closely resembles your player's current situation. (*For example, if your characters have just ended an adventure and are lounging in a bar waiting for something to happen you look for a Hook that reads something like, "The party is sitting in a tavern/Inn"*). It's as easy as that. You will then be given the seeds for a new adventure. You'll need to flesh the adventure out as it unfolds.

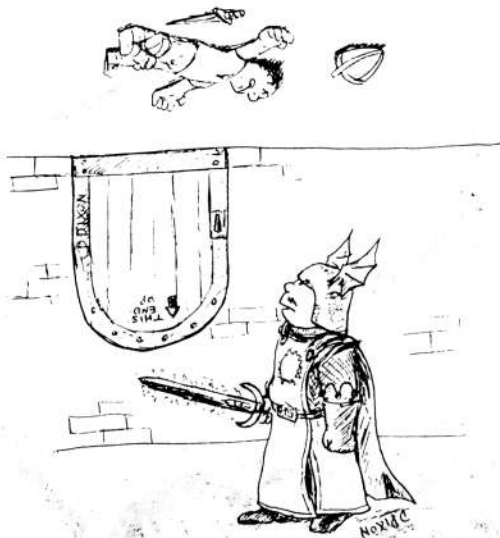
Each HLS scenario has the following format:

**Hook:** The current situation/location of the party.

**Line:** This is the opportunity for adventure that presents itself to the party. A line normally is presented in a short paragraph. Think of a line as what you use to pull the player's into an adventure with.

**Sinker:** This is the clincher to the line. Here the Game Master is presented with what





makes the adventure particularly dangerous or exciting.

Using an HLS scenario is easy. They are purposely vague so that the Game Master can fill in the details with the particulars of his own world and campaign. One advantage to the HLS system is that they are truly universal and can be adapted to any rules system or setting.

*\* We invite you to send in your own HLS scenarios to share with other readers.*

### 1. An Errand of Mercy

**Hook:** The party is in a small village scouting out the local pubs and listening for rumors.

**Line:** A finely dressed merchant approaches a member of the party and seeks his/her employment. It seems the merchant's younger brother died while the two were enroute to the capital city. The brother must continue his urgent business and cannot spare the time to accompany his brother's body back home (which is approximately a four day ride from the party's current location).

He offers 700 gp to the party if they will take his brother's corpse back home. The merchant provides

a wagon and a small mule for the purpose.

**Sinker:** The brother has neglected to tell the party that his brother was killed by a vampire. The dead brother will rise as a vampire on the second night of the trip home. Some interesting side adventures could spring up from this scenario. If the vampire flees, the party will have to explain to his family what happened to him. Perhaps the brother was placed in his coffin with his valuables and the family will suspect thievery.

### 2. Body Double

**Hook:** A member of the party has died and his comrades have sought out a high level cleric to resurrect him.

**Line:** The party locates a cleric who agrees to perform the ceremony for the traditional fee. He insists on being alone during the ceremony.

**Sinker:** The cleric is actually a Doppelganger. Once left alone with the corpse the Doppelganger will assume the identity of the dead character. He will then hide the body and emerge from the private chambers. Feigning weakness, he will suggest something must have went wrong with the ceremony because, as he explains, the cleric disappeared in a cloud of smoke. If the party becomes suspicious the Doppelganger will claim to have lost his memory.

### 3. That Ol' Black Magic

**Hook:** The party is in a town restocking supplies and equipment.

**Line:** A store proprietor will offer a member of the party a very special deal on a fine sword. He explains that his son, who owned the sword, was killed in battle just weeks before. The memories are too painful for him to bear and so he wants to get rid of the weapon. He offers the sword for 100 gp.

**Sinker:** The sword is a cursed blade. If a member of

## Hook, Line & Sinker

the party is holding the sword during combat, EV-ERY party member will automatically miss every other attack round. If the owner tries to rid himself of the sword, it will always reappear (replacing any other sword the owner is currently carrying), in 1d6 turns. As long as the sword is in the owners possession it will automatically go to his hand during combat and every member of the party will miss as described above. The only way to get rid of the sword permanently is to sell the sword to someone else. There is a 25% chance that any would be buyers will sense the sword's curse and decline to buy it.

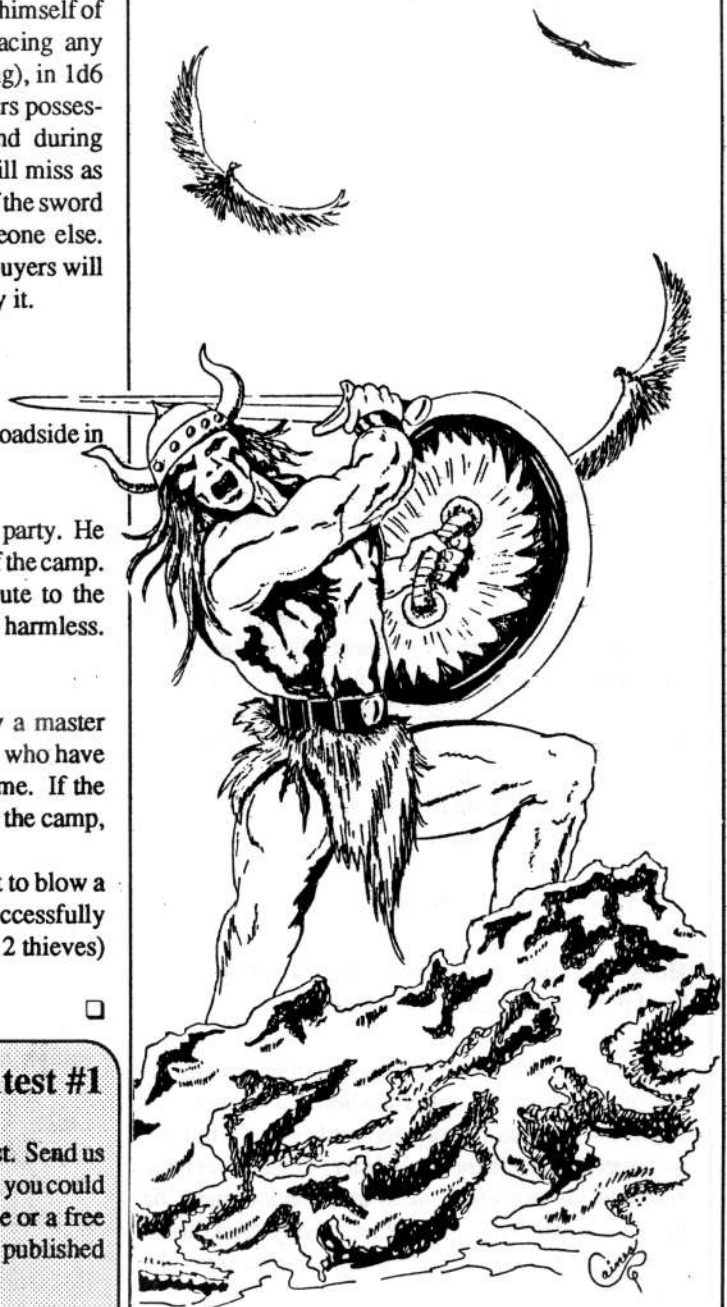
### 4. Country Hospitality

**Hook:** The party has set up camp along a roadside in a wilderness setting.

**Line:** A weary traveler stumbles upon the party. He asks if he can spend the night in the safety of the camp. He even has a several rabbits to contribute to the evening's meal. The traveler appears very harmless. In fact, he is very friendly and likeable.

**Sinker:** The 'weary' traveler is actually a master thief. He is the leader of a band of thieves who have been spying on the party for quite sometime. If the party allows the thief to spend the night in the camp, he will attempt to steal anything of value.

If he is caught in the act he will attempt to blow a whistle he wears about his neck. If he successfully blows the whistle his band of thieves (1d12 thieves) will storm the camp in 1d4 turns.



### Hook, Line and Sinker Contest #1

SHADIS magazine is sponsoring a contest. Send us your adventure ideas in the HLS format and you could win a free subscript to SHADIS Magazine or a free SHADIS T-shirt. Winning entries will be published in SHADIS magazine.

**SEND IN YOUR ENTRIES TODAY!!**

# Question:

## Which of these four men subscribes to SHADIS?



### ANSWERS

1. No, that's Frank. He's just come from his favorite game-store. They were sold out of SHADIS magazine. Now he has nothing to look forward to tonight but Gilligan's Island.
2. Right. Why is he smiling? Since Bert subscribed to SHADIS his whole life has changed. He has a new girl friend and his boss just invited him to go skeet-shooting next weekend. And to top it all off, he just found a twenty dollar bill.
3. No, that's Lew. He's smiling because Bert's his best buddy and will probably let him read his copy of SHADIS.
4. No, that's Joel. He's pretty upset. His wife begged him to subscribe to SHADIS but he didn't listen. She left him for Bert. To make matters worse, Joel just discovered he lost a twenty dollar bill.

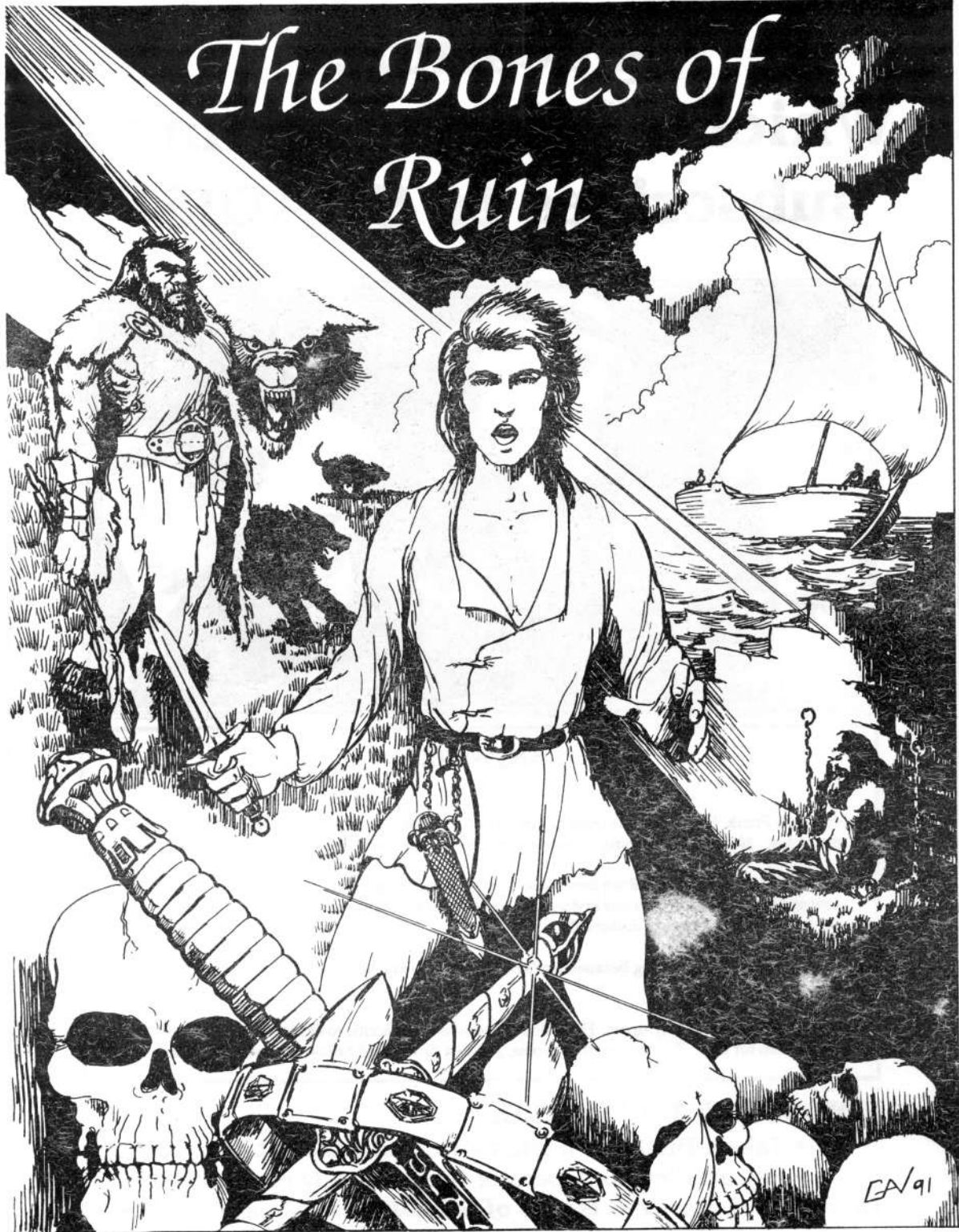
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# The Bones of Ruin



Day 242 Year 108

## Part VI

## Revenge Wears a Dark Cloak

*As the Raven struggled against the snare, beating its wings violently against the evening breeze a hunter stood at a distance and watched with amusement.*

*Finally, with a smile the hunter withdrew his dagger from his belt and approached.*

*"Easy my pretty," he said, "Don't jump and toss so, I promise this will be nice and quick."*

*The Raven abruptly halted it's battle and gazed up at the hunter in silence. The hunter paused, and wondered at this strange behavior .*

*The Raven, cocking its head began to speak, "Touch me with that blade and you embrace misfortune."*

*The startled hunter leapt back. "What evil resides in this creature that it threatens me?"*

*"I've given you fair warning," answered the Raven.*

*The hunter found his courage again and smiled. "Tricks and threats will not save you. I must eat, not even the gods would fault a man for that."*

*"Then gloat well over this fleeting victory!" cried the Raven fluttering it's wings, "I am sending my servant to deal with you. I trust you will greet him as you have greeted his master."*

*The hunter lowered his dagger, his curiosity aroused.*

*"So little one, you've a servant and he's coming to see me you say? By what name does this servant answer to? I'll want to make sure it's him before I sever his head."*

*"His name is Revenge!" answered the Raven.*

*The hunter's amusement turned to fear. "And how shall I recognize him?"*

*"Oh," said the Raven softly, "You won't see him, he wears a very dark cloak."*

*From the Raven and the Hunter,  
by Eslain Sular*

Scav leaned against the ship's railing and peered out over the protective harbor. Over three hundred ships bobbed and rocked on the morning tide, their tangle of masts, sails and riggings creating a web of motion against the rising sun. Scav had been the first to arrive at the ship and (while waiting impatiently for his comrades), he found himself lost in quiet reflection.

Two days in the coastal city of Pleen had done wonders for Scav's spirits, but he was now anxious to resume his journey. The ship's captain, Yabar, had been very accurate in his description of Pleen and what to expect. "Plenty of women and drink to sap a man of his money," he had said. Scav's coin purse was indeed lighter, he doubted he could afford another night of such luxuries.

The weather had warmed considerably the past two days, taking much of the sting from the brisk wind blowing in from the Aludian. Scav knew, however, that it was but a brief reprise from the cold. The previous night, cradling a mug of ale, he had watched and listened with great intent to the old sailors nod in agreement that the 'Bear' was about to rear it's head. From what he could gather, they were expecting a terrible storm any day now. And so, Scav and his comrades had all agreed that it was time to get under way and beat the storm. From Pleen it was only a two day journey to the mouth of the Soult River, the gateway to the capital city herself.

Finally Scav's thoughts were disturbed by a soft, rhythmic sound coming from behind. Turning his attention toward the dock, Scav was surprised to see an elderly man making his way along the dock tapping a twisted cane on the planks.

The old man wore a tattered red robe with a great hood pulled low nearly over his eyes. As he reached the Yarpan, he paused and scanned the length of it's hull. He noticed Scav and flashed a smile.

"Is she a sound ship?" he asked.

Scav moved across the deck and nodded. "She held her own through some rough waters on the trip here. I'd say she's fairly sound."

## Bones of Ruin

"Good! I was thinking of catching passage to Aramar with you."

Scav started to protest. "I'm sorry, but we are on urgent business. We won't have time to make port at Aramar."

"Nonsense, you'll be passing right by Aramar. I'm sure the captain will accept my gold. He couldn't be much of a sailor if he turned away good hard coin."

Scav didn't waiver for a moment. "I'm sorry there's just no way...."

The old man stepped from the dock and onto the railing of the ship. "Here, here, help me aboard. Don't just stand there."

Without thinking Scav stepped forward to assist the old man aboard. "Look, my friends are not going to be happy if they return to find you here. Be a good fellow and move on. There must be a dozen ships making sail this morning."

The old man was obviously ignoring Scav. He seemed more intent on finding a comfortable place to be seated. Spotting several bags of grain stacked in the prow of the ship, he smiled. He made his way toward them and with a heavy groan seated himself. Sinking deeply into the grain, a very contented look spread across the old man's face.

"Ahhhhh! This should do nicely I think."

Scav eyed the stranger with suspicion. He noticed a waterkeg near the old man's side and seated himself. "Why are you in such a hurry to get to Aramar anyway? Do you have family there?"

The old man was retrieving a hard wedge of bread from the folds of his robe. He looked up and shook his head. "Me? No, I've no family to speak of these days. I'm afraid I've outlived them all." He paused to take a bite of bread and then offered some to Scav, who declined. He continued "It's such a terrible thing, to live beyond the years of your own children and wives. I've seen them all put beneath the ground. Two brothers, a sister, my parents, four..er five wives and seven children. There's nothing as hollow as the heart of a man who's seen his entire bloodline pass away."

The old man pulled the hood back from his face and Scav immediately detected his brilliant blue eyes. He noticed something else too. A warm sincere smile beaming from the old man's face. Scav thought it

strange that such a smile should be there.

"No, I've just come to see an old friend for the last time. Poor fool, he's having a terrible time. Thought I'd go comfort him and offer my help."

A smile found its way to Scav's face and he nodded. "He must be a very dear friend for you to make such a journey this time of year. I've a friend like you, he's suffered all manner of cuts and scrapes on my behalf."

The old man finished off the last of the bread and brushed the crumbs from his beard. "And I'm sure you're worthy of such a friend. You'll need such men to get through this life."

"I am sorry we can't take you with us." reminded Scav. "I'd really like to take you with us, but we just can't afford the time."

The old man seemed to be ignoring Scav again. He had crossed his left foot across his right knee was removing his sandal. He inspected the sandal with great care and attention, as if he were a prospective buyer examining a piece of fruit. He turned the sandal several times in his hand, paused and then tossed the sandal over the railing of the ship into the water.

Scav laughed and shook his head at the old man's queer behavior. "Now you've done it. You only have one sandal now. What'd you do that for?"

The old man placed a hand on Scav's shoulder, leaned over and whispered, "The journey's over for that one. It's brought me many miles and served without complaint. Still, this is as far as I will allow it to carry me. It's journey ends here."

Confusion swept through Scav's mind. "What are you talking about? What about the other sandal?"

The old man raised his right foot to reveal a sandal that appeared fairly new. "Why, this one has just begun it's journey. It should carry me for many miles yet to come."

The old man noticed Scav's arched eyebrow and laughed. "Come now, it's not so mad as you would think. I needed two sandals to complete my journey, I just didn't need them both at the same time."

Scav was just about to ask the old man why he was speaking in riddles when there was a tap on his shoulder.

He nearly fell from the waterkeg as he reeled



around.

"Easy you, Sciver. What's got into you?"

Scav struggled to his feet and pulled Falsnare to the side.

"Fal, there's something very strange about this old man. Have you ever seen him before?"

Falsnare turned to where Scav was motioning and scratched his chin. "Say, that inn keeper's rum must have stewed your brain. Who in the hell are we talking about?"

As Scav turned, his jaw dropped and he became speechless. The old man was gone. Where he had been sitting was now a small black raven, tugging at the corner of a sack of grain. The raven fluttered it's wings, scratched twice at the bag and then suddenly took flight out across the harbor. Scav watched as it disappeared into the webbing of masts and riggings.

"Falsnare, please tell me you saw me talking to an old man when you came aboard."

Falsnare whistled in amusement. "Say, you're serious aren't you? Well lad, you were mumbling to yourself but you most definitely were the only one here. Unless of course you were having a nice little chat with the bird."

"To hell with you." snapped Scav. He sank to the deck of the ship and leaned back against the sacks of grain. Closing his eyes, he let out a deep sigh.

"You're as pale as fresh milk lad." said Falsnare seating himself at Scav's side.

"You could have lied to me Falsnare." whispered Scav. "A good friend would have lied to me."

There was suddenly a loud commotion from the dock. Brantar, a great smile beaming from his bearded

face, was helping Yabar and one of the crewmen wrestle a large keg of ale on board.

"Hello aboard ship!" bellowed Brantar. "This keg is the only baggage I'll be needing from here on out."

Falsnare and Scav stood to their feet and helped their comrade on board.

"You've been drinking my friend." commented Falsnare.

Brantar staggered and fell. "Drinking? Hell, I've been drowning. I had a terrible dream last night. Dreamed we were headin' for Soult Tet to dance with the Emperor. Can you imagine such a crazy thing? Me headin' back there? Why they'd have my head."

Scav shook his head and cast a quick glance toward Yabar to see his reaction. "That's enough Brantar. Try to get some sleep."

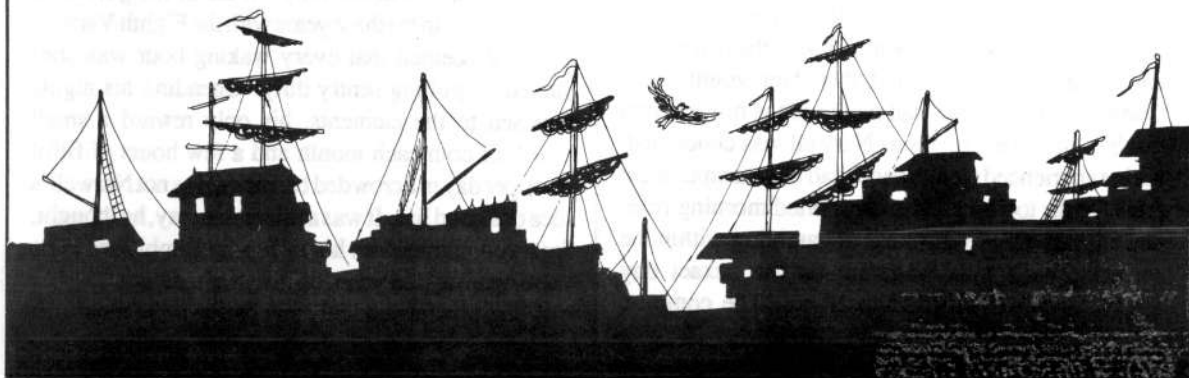
Brantar looked up at Scav and scowled. "I just wish Tasmare were here. If I'm going to loose my head, I think that grevan pig should loose his too."

Scav grabbed Falsnare by the arm and pulled him aside. "Damn it," he whispered "He's giving the crew an ear-full. Doesn't the bastard realize our peril? If he's been running his lip like this all night we're dead men."

Falsnare pulled away, "When's the last time you paid heed to a drunken man's babbling? I'll have a talk with him when he wakes up." Falsnare started to walk away then paused. "Don't you ever wonder though?"

"About what?" asked Scav.

"If we might not be dead men already?" With that, Falsnare reached down and pulled Brantar to the side of the deck. Scav turned and leaned against the rail of



## ARTIST LIST

The following artists graciously contributed their artwork for this issue.

All artists can be contacted through SHADIS magazine.

Jerry W. Caines (Fantasy Masterworks).....Page 16, 21

David Dixon.....Page 15, 29, 42, 50

Bob Hobbs.....Page 24, 54, 55

George Vrbanic (Infinite Images), Mailer Art, Cover Art, Pages 18, 36, 37

James Shipman.....8, 12, 35

the ship. Gazing into the water, something caught his eye.

A small object was floating on the surface, gently bobbing and tapping against the ship's hull. Scav felt the hair rise on the back of his neck as he realized what it was, a single, leather sandal.



### Day 246 Year 108

Narwell, with eyes swollen from fatigue, gazed down from his lofty position atop the North Tower of New Emberton. He yawned and shook his head several times to cast off the heavy call of sleep. Just below him, the last weary stragglers of the 3rd Watch were re-entering the main gate of the outpost. He envied them, at least they would soon lose their misery in the warmth of their soft pallets.

One of the soldiers caught a glimpse of Narwell and shook his head. Narwell could see the disappointment on his face. The watch had returned empty handed again. It appeared that their young, new Commander, Sagavar, had really gotten himself into trouble this time. As far as Narwell was concerned, his inexperienced Commander had been tempting the fates for far too long. His unescorted morning rides had created a lively business of gambling within the barracks: each man wagering on the exact day Sagavar would finally do himself in. The common

soldier refused to go beyond the confines of the Outpost without a dozen comrades at his side. After all, this was the heart of Grevan territory. Hostilities had been open and heated here for the past fifty years.

Who knew if the Commander would ever be seen again? It had been three days since he had ridden off alone. Only the cavalry had remained steadfast loyal to Sagavar refusing to halt their daily searches. Sagavar had risen from the ranks of the cavalry and he still had many friends there. The rest of the Outpost's contingent, however, weren't so eager to see the Commander return safely. The other officers of New Emberton, with subdued glee, seemed satisfied that the young braggart was dead.

Narwell coughed deeply, his coarse hacking echoed across the valley. The sentry pulling watch on the East Tower looked toward him as if he were greatly annoyed. Pulling his cloak tighter about himself to put off the damp morning air, Narwell gazed impatiently toward the Watch-Commander's shack. Narwell frowned. The bastard was probably asleep. It was well past the hour for Narwell to be relieved. How he hated sentinel duty. It ate at his gut like a meat-worm. In his three years with the Eighth Varmen-Caras, it seemed that every waking hour was consumed by pulling sentry duty. Spending his nights exposed to the elements, his only reward a small pouch of coin each month and a few hours of fitful sleep per day in a crowded barracks, was not Narwell's idea of a good life. It was a miserable way, he thought, for a young man with his talents and ambitions to be wasting away the years of his youth.

A sharp wind suddenly swept down the mountain

pass and tugged at his wrappings. He cursed and turned his back to the wind, trying with total failure to escape its sharp, mocking sting.

As Narwell turned, he was startled to find that he was no longer alone on the tower's summit. He fumbled with his lance and attempted to raise his shield. Then he paused and stared in astonishment at the intruder who now joined him at his post. A very elderly man, with a great flowing beard of grey and bent with age stood smiling at him.

"How...how did you get up here?" Narwell stammered. "You must leave immediately!" He cast a glance at the unsteady wooden ladder which offered the only access to the watch post. Surely this frail figure did not scale the ladder?

The old man smiled and shook his head. "There's no need to worry young man. Your Commander would not disapprove. I've just come up here to see with my own eyes. A quick look and off I'll be."

Narwell stood firm. The Watch-Commander would have both their heads if he should catch sight of the old man on his post. "Look, I don't care what you've come up here to do. You must leave, before I call the Watch-Commander!"

The old man pushed by Narwell and stood next to the tower wall. He gazed toward the north, up the mountain pass and strained his eyes as if he were trying to detect some small detail on the horizon.

"What are you up to?" said Narwell, "You damn fool, you best leave before...."

"Easy, lad, easy," reassured the old man. "I've just come up to have a quick look. I've been waiting far too long for this moment to arrive, much too long to let anyone stand in my way."

Narwell was now very curious, "Waiting? For what? Why? Is something going to happen today?"

The old man looked over his shoulder at Narwell and shrugged. He then turned to face the young sentry and gazed at him for several long moments with discerning eyes. Finally he asked, "You believe in the Gods boy?"

Narwell didn't hesitate. "Of course I do. What kind of question is that? Only a fool would...."

"Aaahhhh" growled the old man, "I'm not talking about saying a soldier's prayer before battle, kneeling

in the temple or flippin' a copper in the Bell-Toller's cap. I'm asking you, do you BELIEVE in the Gods?"

"Look, I don't have time for this nonsense. I'm asking you to please leave before I have to sound the alarm."

The old man shoved a finger in Narwell's face "You haven't answered my question yet. Do you believe the Gods can raise mountains, darken the sun, heave the oceans themselves out of their basins? Well? Do ya?" The old man smiled and leaned in closer. "Could you possibly believe that the muddled rambling of a dying, feeble man could come true a thousand years after his death? Hmmm?"

"I don't know!" snapped Narwell, who was becoming increasingly unsettled about the old man's presence. "I guess I could."

"You guess? Now that's what I'm talking about boy. That's not belief. There's no hint of faith in such a miserable answer as that." The old man waved the boy away in disgust. "You young bastards are all snipped from the same blemished vine. You believe in nothing but your own flesh and iron of your blades."

Narwell attempted to protest but was cut off. The old man was in his face like a famished mosquito.

"That sad pile of bones you proudly tote about is nothing but a fortress lad, a stronghold constructed by pride and guarded in vain, constantly under siege by Death. That fortress may be armored with muscle and bolstered with flesh and bone, but it's a fleeting defense. One day the walls to your stronghold will collapse. On that day, Death shall enter your precious domain and claim his spoils, and it little matters if you're the lowest of slaves or the mightiest of kings. None are too small to escape Death's wanton greed or too esteemed to find sanctuary. It's everyone's fate and for the soldier it comes quicker and more bitterly than for most. You think of that on your lonely vigils at night lad. You just remember..."

The old man suddenly turned his attention back to the north, as if someone had called out his name. A faint smile stretched across his lips as he nodded his approval.

"Now there's something to believe in! Take a look out there, far up the pass."





Narwell gazed toward the horizon, but could see nothing except a pair of ravens circling high overhead. Then he detected movement along the edge of the forest. A solitary figure, struggling with great difficulty was approaching the Outpost.

"Hey!" cried Narwell. "There's somebody out there!"

"That's right lad. He's back. Men of better stock than yourself would trade places with you to witness this moment."

"Who is he?"

"It's HIM, damn it! The one the old man rambled about. Ha-ha, the boy with uncombed hair and bare feet." The man laughed with glee. "Yes indeed, just look at him, emerging from the throat of death. Such a sight he is, and he hasn't the slightest notion." He

turned his attention back to Narwell. "Better sound your horn lad. You'll be a hero for a day. Enjoy it."

Narwell wondered at the old man's words. He stepped in front of him and stood against the tower wall. He watched the figure for several minutes. Whoever it was, he was in a terrible state, for the figure was barely keeping his footing. Finally Narwell turned around. "But who in the hell is...." He stopped cold. The old man was gone.



### Day 260 Year 108

Curstain was busy making notations on a scroll by the flickering light of a single candle, when a servant entered the room. Curstain looked up, his great annoyance reflecting on the deep furrows of his face.

"I made it very clear that I was not to be disturbed!" he snapped.

"Uh...my lord" the servant stammered. "There....there's a visitor waiting for you in the atrium. It's Varnen-Patrell Jantes. He refuses to leave until you speak with him."

Curstain jumped at the mention of the name. "Jantes! Here? At this hour?"

"I'm sorry my Lord. I should have sent him away. I'll tell him to come back tomorrow."

Curstain was on his feet, struggling to don an outer-robe. "Send him away? Are you mad Sival? You don't turn a man of his standing away. You did the right thing. Now quickly, bring him to, oh, er, forget it. We'll want to be alone. Stoke the fires in my chambers and then you may retire for the evening."

"Very well my Lord."

Curstain ran his hand through what little was left of his grey hair. It had been rumored that Jantes was returning to the capital city. Curstain had in fact been looking forward to renewing his old friendship with the General. But what could be so urgent as to warrant such a late, unannounced visit?

He tied the belt of his robe very tightly and burst out of the room. Walking briskly down the main hall of

his villa, he made his way to the central atrium. There, grasping his hands behind his back, was Jantes pacing about.

He saw Curstain approaching and smiled. "Ahhh, my dear friend. How these eyes have longed to see you. How are you?"

Curstain accepted the man's warm embrace and stepped back to inspect him. "There's more of you then I remember." he said. "This is indeed a surprise. I was hoping to see you soon. I had no idea I would.."

Jantes blushed noticeably. "I...I apologize Velnar. I know this is outrageous, disturbing you and your household. I hoped our friendship, our bond, would forgive my breach of etiquette. I've been distressed these past few days. There are not many men I can call friend. But you...well you know what they say about soldiers who have received scar and bruise together."

Curstain motioned for Jantes to take a seat on a bench and joined him. "Friends to the last breath. You're always welcomed here, at any hour. It is so good to see you. It was such a shock to hear you had resigned your command at New Emberton. The Emperor will be hard-pressed to find a worthy replacement."

"I finally realized that I've grown old. I've denied it for far too long." He patted his large belly and laughed. "I look more like a politician than a soldier. Hell, Velnar, my eyes are shot and my knees ache. All those old wounds have come back to haunt me. And, my wits have slowed."

"Never." reassured Curstain.

"No, it's true. I decided to follow your example before it's too late. Settle down, enjoy the fruits of my labor while I can. Time to hang up sword and buckler, pass on the Chain of Rank to the young. Besides, those damned Grevan Steppes, I don't believe I could have stood another winter in those mountains."

Curstain nodded his understanding, "Oh yes, I remember those winters far too keenly. Waking up with my beard blanketed in hoar frost was all too common."

Jantes laughed and then suddenly grew quiet. Curstain sensed his change of mood. Jantes wasn't here to recount old war stories. Something heavy was on his mind.

"What is it old friend? What is troubling you so

much?"

"I'm a terrible liar Velnar. I'm not being honest with you. There's another more pressing reason for my sudden retirement."

He paused and drew a long, deep breath. His eyelids began to twitch with nervousness, as if he were about to utter some horrible revelation.

"I've been hearing rumors Velnar. Hell, for years I've been hearing similar vicious stories and gossip. Of course, I counted them as nothing of worth. You were in the ranks yourself, you know how discontented soldiers squabble and quibble. War-camps are notorious for the tales that are woven within the barracks late at night. But over the last year or so, I've been hearing these same stories from the mouths of men I respect most, old allies, governors and.... even my own brother."

"What kind of rumors?"

"Rumors about....," Jantes paused again as if the words had lodged in his throat. "Rumors about the Emperor."

"Oh..." replied Curstain. "I see."

Jantes leaned forward and cradled his head in his hands. "I had an audience with Sageem yesterday after I arrived in Soult Tet. I hoped, no, I fully expected that after we had talked, my fears would be put to rest. I would laugh at my foolishness and know that all was well after all. What a relief it would have been to find I'd created this whole nightmare in my head, to suddenly awaken to find I'd been dreaming. Frankly, I came away not sure what to believe. Everything I even dared to consider doesn't compare with the reality. I...I just can't say it."

"It's alright, Jantes. Two old soldiers here, we can talk in confidence, you know that."

Jantes stood to his feet and turned his back to Curstain, unable to look him in the eye as he spoke the words. He stood in silence for several long moments. Finally, he reeled about and bellowed, "The man's INSANE, Velnar! I hardly recognized him. Babbling all manner of nonsense. I...." He stopped and shook his head. His breathing was heavy now and he sounded short winded. "Curstain, I came back because I had to know. This Grevan problem is

getting out of hand. Our borders to the north are not as secure as the Bin'Parta would like us to believe. I've been requesting reinforcements for two years now. My answer? Nothing! I was starting to believe that my requests were not reaching the Emperor's ears. Perhaps there was an inept aid, for whatever reason, who was intercepting my requests. So, yesterday, I had my chance to discuss the Grevan problem with Sageem in person. No ministers, no bumbling politicians, just two seasoned soldiers talking tactics. Velnar, I swear by the wings of Benyar, I no sooner mentioned the Grevans to our Emperor when....."

Jantes stopped in mid sentence. His anger and frustration was evident in every motion of his hands and gestures. "Velnar, I don't think you realize how close Rang Taw is to sweeping the frontier, deep into the frontier. The only thing that has saved us thus far is Rang Taw's ignorance. He's basing his plans on the belief that our military presence in Greva is as strong as it was ten years ago. He's no fool. He'll soon realize he's virtually unopposed and take advantage of it. I had high hopes that my return here would convince Sageem to bolster our outposts before Spring. It's becoming very precarious up north. My guess is that Rang Taw will make a move with the spring thaw and we're just not ready. It will be a disaster, once Rang Taw senses the truth ... But Sageem, damn the man, he dismissed everything I said. He told me he had grown tired of hearing of the Grevans. He forbade me to speak on the subject any further.....ever! His only concern, he told me, were his enemies here, in Soult Tet. The Arden'Vas, the high priest himself, is an enemy now. Sageem told me this to my face. My God Curstain, the man considers his own people his worst enemy. He told me that! He looked in my eyes and said, 'The next great war of the Empire will be fought here, in the streets of Soult Tet. I need my armies here!' Velnar, do you realize what I am telling you?"

Jantes wrung his hands and seated himself once again. He looked hard into Curstain's eyes and shook his head slowly. "What happened to the man we once called friend and comrade? Up until a week ago, I would have struck down any man who dared to say

the things I've just said about our Emperor. When did Sageem cease to be?"

Curstain shrugged. "You've been away for a long time. The man we once knew is long gone. I can't point to the day or week, but I know it first became evident about five years ago. I first noticed something was amiss when I accepted the appointment as Rader'Keem. What was first just a suspicion, an uneasy feeling, became my greatest fear. The man's killed nearly every close friend he's ever had. He's isolated himself in the Matra-Kar. He's become a shadow. I've only heard hushed stories whispered in confidence, about insane ramblings, ungrounded fears, brutal reprisals against innocents. I haven't attempted to see the man for over a year myself. The surest way of keeping your life and properties these days is to remain silent and unseen. Everyone is afraid of him. Dantor Broutfar, the Var Rader'Keem, seems to be one of the few who manages to stay ahead of the Emperor's scorn. They must have suckled from the same she-wolf.

Jantes retreated to cradling his head again. "Then the Empire itself is on the brink. This is no time for a madman to be seated on the throne. With Rang Taw poised to strike at the north and Kal Dez to the south still embittered over the territories they've lost, the Empire sits on the edge of war. And if Sageem is foolish enough to make good on his threats and execute the Arden'Vas as a criminal, he WILL have a war in the streets. Curstain, it would be enough to unravel the entire Empire. It would take more than a military campaign to piece it back together again."

Curstain suddenly brightened. Had the Gods suddenly smiled on him? Here before him, practically pounding down his door, was a potential ally. It was too good to hope for, a powerful military hero of Jantes' standing could win the support of the legions. If Curstain could recruit him into the ranks of Scav Sagenthor, there just might be a chance of success.

"Jantes, there is a way to save the Empire. You're not alone in your fears. I'm part of a group who have not been content to stand by and watch one insane man destroy the realm."

Jantes looked toward Curstain and furrowed his brow. "Careful Curstain, I'm not sure I want to hear



what you are telling me.”

“Sageem cannot be allowed to remain in power. We have a plan to replace him.”

Jantes sat up erect. “Surely, you’re not talking about assassination?”

Curstain shrugged. “He’s far too dangerous alive. He’ll always command some type of authority. Too many officials derive their power from him. He must be crushed, completely! Only his death will bring about the cleansing of the ranks that we desperately need.”

Jantes stood to his feet. “We haven’t had this conversation Velnar. I can’t have any knowledge of such treachery. By the wings of Benyar, you’ve told me too much already.”

“What are you talking about? You just admitted that a madman could not be allowed to rule the Empire. Is your loyalty that strong to the man? Would you sacrifice everything you hold dear to honor such a man? Have you forgotten Rang Taw so quickly?”

“I’ve taken a soldier’s oath to the man. And I might add that you have also taken such an oath.”

“Yes and Sageem took an oath before the Bin’Parta; to uphold the Empire and to preserve the realms.”

“Damn you! We’re talking about Sageem! We’ve served under the man for thirty years, Curstain. He was a brilliant general, his prowess forged this Empire. He was fully worthy of my oath the day I made it to him. Whatever he’s become now, he deserves more than an assassin’s dagger to the back.”

“Then you didn’t learn enough about him during your audience with him. You listen to me well Jantes, the man we served is DEAD. There’s no tomb with his name etched on it. You won’t find his body, but he’s dead all the same. We owe no loyalty to the animal that dwells in his carcass now and we’re bound by no oaths to the Gods or man. You should know that if you spoke with him. And there’s something you’re forgetting. Our guilt in all of this. We supported his rise to power. We helped clear the way for him to seize power from Relnus Sagenthor. Can you live with that guilt? I can’t.”

Jantes stared at the wall and bit his lip. Finally with a great show of effort and regret, he threw up his hands. He turned and seated himself. “Alright, tell me

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*“And there’s something you’re forgetting. Our guilt in all of this. We supported his rise to power. We helped clear the way for him to seize power from Relnus Sagenthor. Can you live with that guilt?”*

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more of your plan. May we both be damned. But...” he paused and pointed a finger at Curstain, “I’m making no promises, only to hear you out and to keep silent.”

“Excellent. First of all, despite what you have heard, Scav Sagenthor is still alive and should be arriving in Soult Tet any time now.”

“Scav?” moaned Jantes, “Of what possible use could he be? He’s a branded traitor....Lord no, tell me he’s not the foundation of your plans.”

“He’s the son of Relnus Sagenthor and there’s more. The Kaba-Troth describes him perfectly. The gods are behind him.”

“When did you start reading the Kaba-Troth and believing in prophecies? We’re dealing with flesh and blood in this world Velnar. Saying a prayer before battle does wonder for morale, but when it’s over I know it was my own meddle that carried the day. Besides, there’s no support for Scav Sagenthor in the legions and there never will be. If he had succeeded in taking power last spring, I would have led my men back to Soult Tet myself and put him to the sword. He doesn’t have a slave’s chance of holding power even if he manages to grab it for a few waning days. His last attempt should have taught him....”

Jantes suddenly stopped cold, his face drew pale as the terrible truth took form in his brain. “You! You were behind his attempt to overthrow the Emperor.”

Curstain swallowed hard and nodded.

“I was cursed the moment I set foot here. It just keeps getting worse doesn’t it? You had me believing we were talking about possibilities and vague plans, but you’ve already acted on them! And worse, you’ve

## Bones of Ruin

now involved ME!"

"I'm sorry Jantes, but you know it's..."

"Enough, damn you! I won't listen to this. Do you realize how many innocents have been caught in Sageem's reprisals aimed at Sagenthor? Not just here in the capital, but all across the Empire, Sageem's enemies have been rounded up and executed in droves, conveniently accused of aiding Scav Sagenthor's plot. Your little revolt last spring made it all possible. That's blood on your hands Velnar."

"You would dare lay the guilt of Sageem's crimes on my head? The gods have chosen Sagenthor to..."

"You're as insane as Sageem; to think that the gods would need your help. How did this revelation come to you? Did Benyar descend to your bedside? Did a raven call to you to help Scav climb upon the throne?"

"No, the Arden'Vas revealed to me that it was to be Scav. And I'm not the only one who believed it. Raventhorpe was among us, he believed in Scav enough to die for him. And there were others, Barkrie, Falsnare. If you would just come with me to the Temple and talk to the Arden'Vas, you'll be convinced."

Jantes shook his head and stood to his feet. "You've clouded my mind. I came for reassurances and comfort and you've burdened me with THIS! I need to be alone and think this through."

He turned and headed for the door.

Curstain tried to stand, his knees buckled and he fell back on the bench heavily. "Jantes, please....there's something else you should know."

The old commander turned and stood silently in the shadows. Finally, "As far as I'm concerned I've heard quite enough. Enough to place my life and the lives of my entire family in jeopardy."

"Please, you need to know everything. The sword has resurfaced."

"The sword? What sword? What are you babbling about now?" asked Jantes.

"Thornbrim!" replied Curstain, as if the words caused him great pain to say.

Jantes looked as if he wasn't certain he'd heard right.

"You're mad! Thornbrim is a myth. Taken from children's stories. No reasonable man could seri-

ously believe in it."

"No, it's real. I held it in my hands, felt it's power burn me." Curstain held up his hands for Jantes to see. "I held it in these two hands. I could feel it embracing my mind."

"You held it? Where is this sword now?"

Curstain's hands began to tremble and he lowered them. "It was stolen from me. The Arden'Vas entrusted it to me before he died and I've lost it. I should be damned for my carelessness."

Jantes slapped his forehead with an open hand. "And this revelation is supposed shake the foundations of the Empire? Am I to fall in with you because you think you found Thornbrim only to loose it again? I fail to see....."

"You're not thinking Jantes!" said Curstain. "The prophecy! 'From the bones of ruin an untamed youth with uncombed hair and barefeet shall rise with Saratar's sword in hand!' The sword has been lost for three hundred years. That it should resurface now, here! It has to mean something."

"It means the Gods have a terrible sense of humor Velnar. Even if you truly had Thornbrim in your possession, it's gone NOW!"

"But the sword is real and it still must be in the city somewhere. I know it will resurface again at the proper time. The Arden'Vas himself told me that Benyar was beyond his understanding. Perhaps when everything is in place the sword itself, will find it's way into Scav's hand."

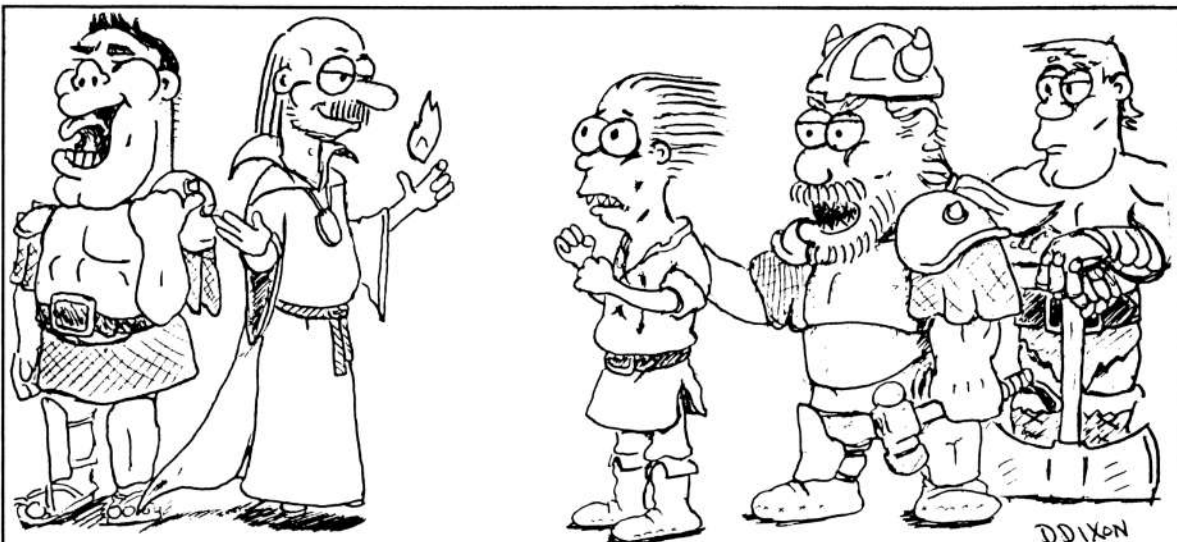
"Well," said Jantes scratching his chin, "I'm not convinced about any of this business. My head hurts and I feel as though it will split from the torment. I just want to loose myself to sleep and forget the whole damned thing. I'd best be going."

As he turned Curstain cried out, "Please! Jantes, your intentions? Give me notice first. I'll need to move my family to safety if you plan to..."

Jantes opened the door and paused. "I wasn't here tonight Curstain. The last time we spoke was six years ago on the banks of the Soult River. I would consider it a favor, however, if you would not attempt to contact me. I need to think on this."

"I understand. And thank you! I'm indebted to..."

"You owe me nothing! Don't you dare sound as if



**"Okay! It's our weakest versus their weakest. Show 'em what we're made of!"**

we've struck an agreement here tonight. I wasn't here." said Jantes sternly. "Your silence is all that I'm asking from you. You be sure to tell your servant the same thing. I wasn't here!"

With that, Jantes stepped into the night.

Curstain leaned against the wall and closed his eyes. The cool marble on his neck did little soothe his spirits. He needed a drink. No, he needed many, many drinks.



## Day 265 Year 108

Traetian Sagavar bit his lip and tore at the coarse linen blanket with his left hand. The Surgeon pulled the bronze blade over the festering stump that had once been the young Commander's right hand.

"Damn you, Gestra!" Sagavar screamed. "Do you never tire of agonizing my wounds?"

Gestra looked up from his work without pausing. "Come now sir. It wouldn't do to have your men hear your grumble so."

Gestra began to apply strips of linen, saturated in his special salves, around the wound. With his task completed, he stood up and held the arm up for

inspection. He nodded his approval and gently lowered Sagavar's arm back to the bed. Wiping his bloody hands on the front of his tunic he proudly looked to his Commander. "That was the last of the rot. I think you'll see some improvement now."

"If I'm not dead from your remedies first," commented Sagavar.

"I'm trying to save your arm as well as your life!" Gestra returned. "Just be thankful I was in your service here instead of returning to the capital with Jantes. I dread to think of what would have happened if another war-surgeon had been in your employment. You'd have lost your arm for sure."

Sagavar held up the stub and flinched at the sight. "Then my arm is saved?"

Gestra shrugged as he put away his tools. "It's hard to say. I've seen worse wounds heal under similar treatment. Once the wound becomes poisoned with infection, however..... Well, I've done the best that I can."

"You talk like a Bin'Partan! You refuse to be held accountable for anything."

Gestra let the remark go unnoticed. "Well sir, I'll be back in the morning for another treatment. You continue to rest and drink the potions I've left with Etra."

"Think again Gestra." said Sagavar as he sat up and



## Bones of Ruin

swung his feet to the floor. "I've been lying up here for two weeks while my officers have been plotting against me. I need to resume my command, immediately."

"Are we going to go through this again, sir?" said Gestra with a deep sigh of regret. "I thought I'd finally convinced you that...."

Sagavar pulled on his boots and stood to his feet. "I want you to do something for me Gestra. Summon my officers to the courtyard. I want to impress them with my recovery."

Gestra started to protest but resigned himself. "Yes sir. Of course they'll want to know what this is all about."

"Just tell them their commander has ordered them to be present. Each and every man. That's all they're required to know at the moment."

Gestra shook his head and departed the room.

Sagavar moved painfully to the window, his joints stiff from disuse. Looking down across the courtyard he saw something that caused him to smile. A contingent of the cavalry was practicing their drill and ceremony under the scrutinization of their stern officer, Bantress Geraar. Sagavar beamed with pride. There were still those who were loyal to him at the Outpost and Geraar was among them. Here were the hand-picked men who would deliver his vengeance against Rang Taw. While the other contingents complained and plotted, Sagavar would be carving a name for himself. The young officer had not been content the past days to sit idly and recover from his ordeal. He had been busy with late night discussions behind closed doors a handful of men whom he knew he could trust. His apparent slow recovery was a ruse. As long as the other officers believed him to be bed-ridden, they would not think him to be a threat. The cowards would not want to risk losing their heads seizing power from a man who might die of fever in a few days anyway.

Sagavar and Geraar had a plan. They would use a small well trained force to attack Rang Taw.

Sagavar had studied the Grevans very closely during his short time of captivity. He was convinced that a small force could move undetected through the heavily forested mountain passes. Just long enough to

draw close to Rang Taw's camp. One swift battle aimed at Rang Taw and his war chiefs. By sidestepping the main forces of the Grevan League and striking at the heart, Sagavar hoped to fracture the League and send them racing across the steppes in panic. Hopefully, in the chaos Sagavar and his men could race back to the safety of the Outpost. It was a tremendous gamble, but Sagavar knew that the greatest leaders took great chances.

If successful, not only would Sagavar have his revenge, but he would rob his opponents within his own ranks of a role in the victory thus weakening their positions. The rewards would indeed be sweet, any command in the Empire would be his for the asking.

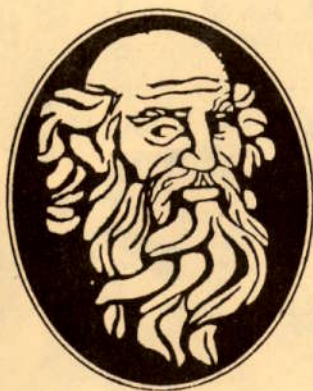
But his intentions went far deeper than mere revenge. A commander without victories to boast of was weak. Sagavar needed victories in order to win the loyalty of those who served him and this one battle could be the ultimate victory.

The time had come to act. Any further delay might give Rang Taw time to move camp, or worst, launch an attack of his own with his full strength.

When his officers had been assembled, Sagavar would announce that he intended to lead the night-patrols personally. It would seem natural that someone bedridden for two weeks would want to get out in the open. But tonight's patrol would be quite different.

Sagavar laughed as Geraar berated a soldier who had dropped his sword, clanging across the paved surface of the courtyard. The young commander felt as if Destiny herself were perched on his shoulders. Rang Taw setting him free, thinking Sagavar was nothing more than a common soldier, had convinced the young commander that the Gods were with him. The Grevan warlord was expecting an answer to his demands. Tonight he would receive an answer and when it was all over the legions would have but one name on their lips, Traetian Sagavar. Yes, even the Emperor himself would learn the name well. □

**Next Issue:  
The Raven's Song**



*Greytar's*  
*Traveler's Guide*  
to  
*Alderac*

CAMPAIGN MAP No.#1  
The Eder Soult

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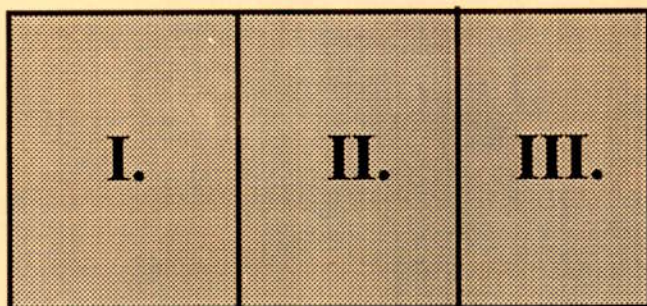
*A full color map to get you started on your journey through the realms of Alderac.*

*Revealing the heart of the Ragean Empire, this map comprises all of the starting locations for players in the Alderac Play-By-Mail Campaign.*

Note: The enclosed map represents only a small portion of the Ragean Empire. Players are free to travel off the edge of the map in any direction. This campaign map and others to follow are taken from the:

**Alderac Atlas, copyright © 1991 The Alderac Group**

## Starting Locations:



The figure above shows the starting locations for beginning players in the Alderac Play-By-Mail Game.

Once you have selected your starting location and submitted your Start-up package your player will be placed randomly within the Start-up area you have selected.

When placing your character, the Game Moderator will take into consideration your character's Occupation. For example, a Sailor starting out in Area III would more than likely be placed in a port city.

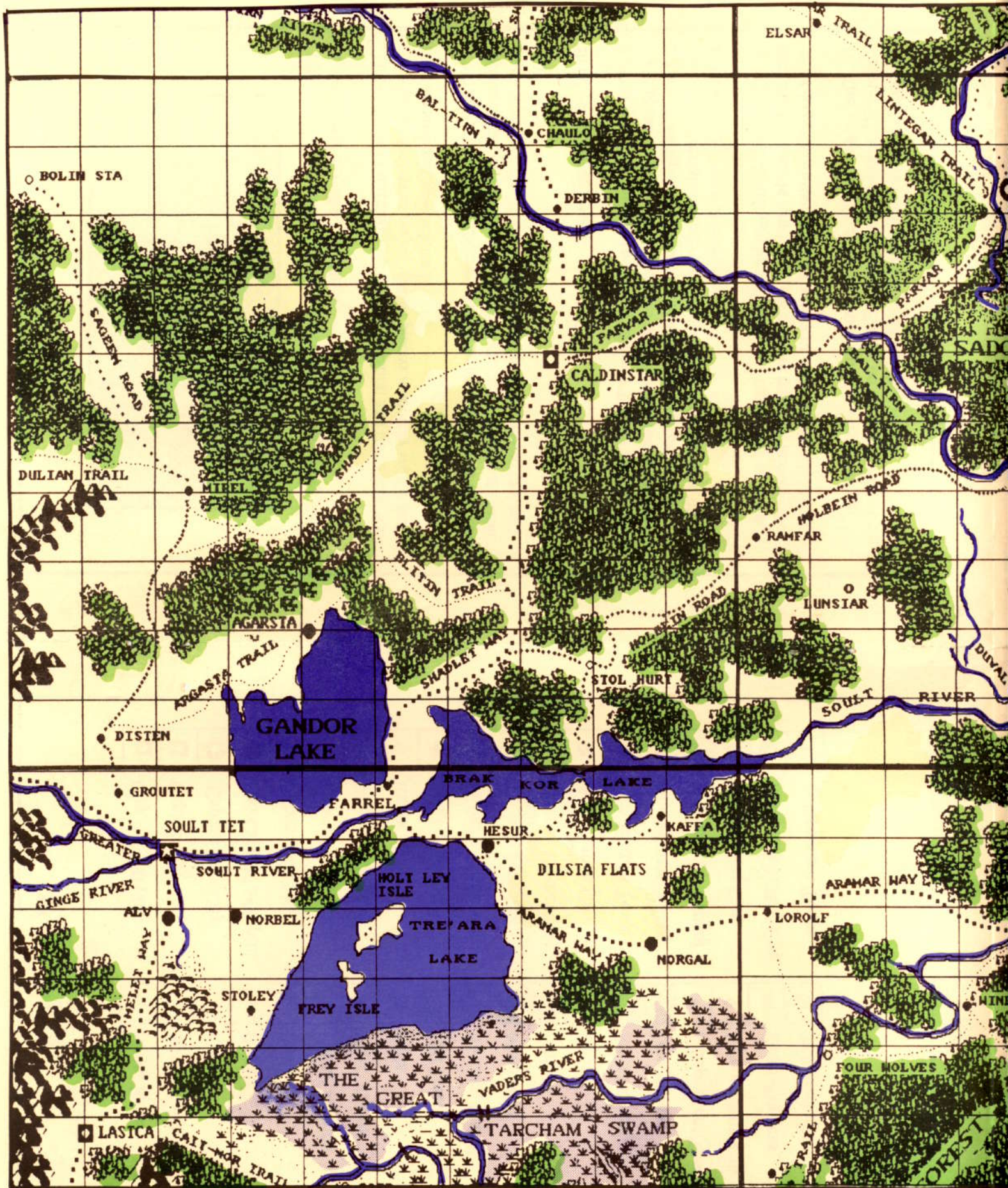
### Brief Area Descriptions:

I. This area is dominated by the city of Soult Tet, the capital city of the Ragean Empire. Don't be fooled into thinking this is the lap of luxury. Vast wilderness areas lie between the large cities and towns. The forests and marshes hold many secrets and give haven to bands of thieves and renegades.

II. This area is dominated by the provincial capital city of Abos. The Sadok Forest is famous for the militant bands of thieves who mock Imperial justice from the safety of their woodland labyrinths.

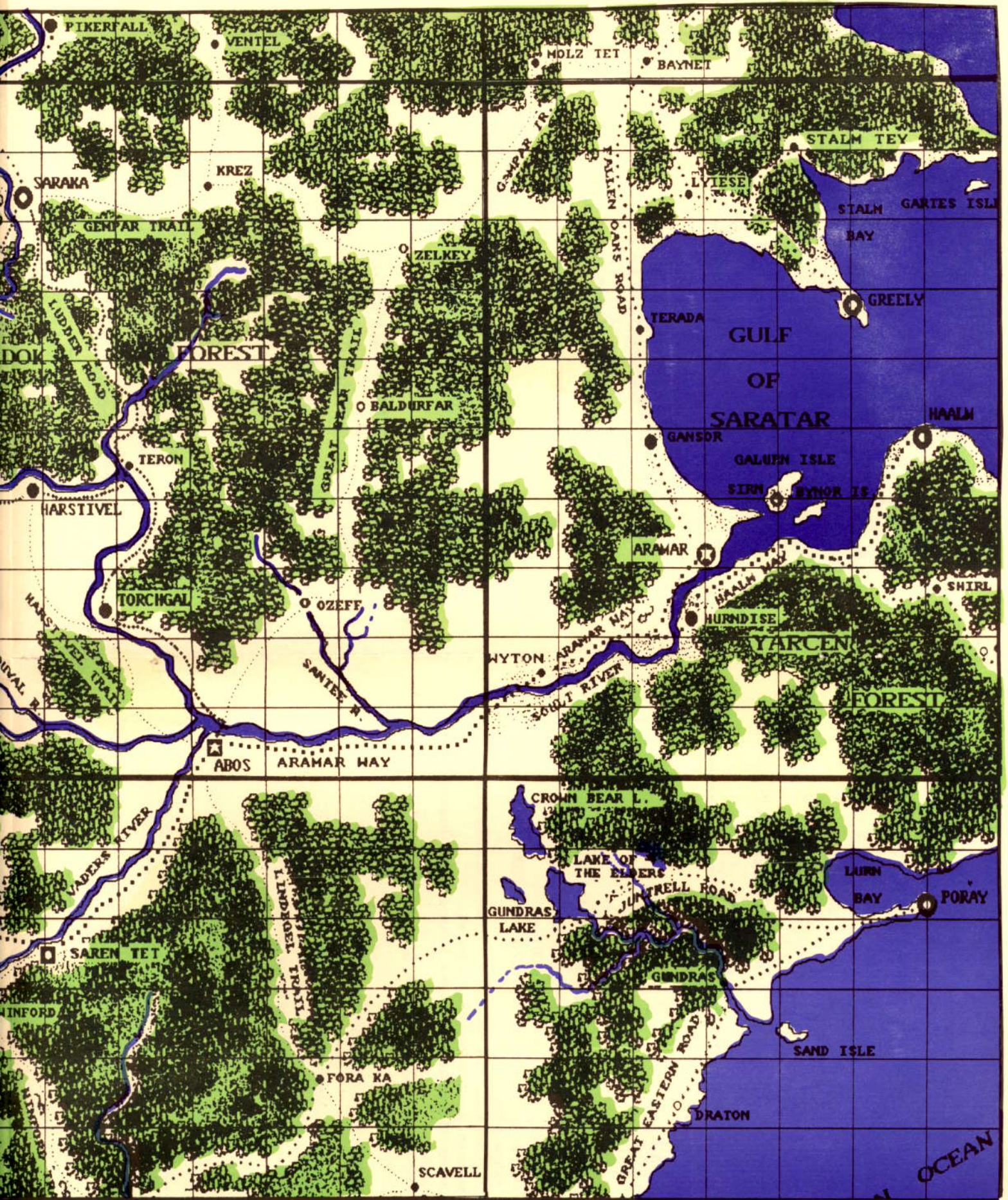
III. This area is dominated by the provincial capital port city of Aramar (Gateway to the Empire.). Sitting on the edge of Aludian Ocean, ships arrive and depart from all over the world.



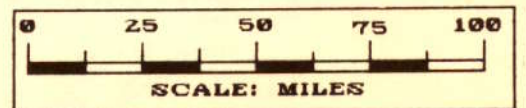


*Alderac*  
The Play-By-Mail Game











































# Campaign Map





# Map Legend

	City, 10,000 plus		Major Road
	Capital City		Minor Road
	Capital Port City		Trail
	Port City, 10,000 plus		Border
	Town, 6000 plus		Bridge
	Town, 15,000 plus		Ford, Crossing
	Village, 600 plus		Ford, Rapids
	Ruins		Falls
	Point of Interest		Hill lands
	Military Post/Camp		Swamp, Marsh
	Village, Seasonal <i>(Barbarian)</i>		Mountains
	Village, Permanent <i>(Barbarian)</i>		Forest
	Non-Human City		Desert
	Non-Human Town		Ice, Glaciers
	Non-Human Village		Grasslands
	Non-Human Capital		Independent Town
	Independent City		Independent Village
	Independent Port City		Keep, Fortress
	Independent Town		Toll Station



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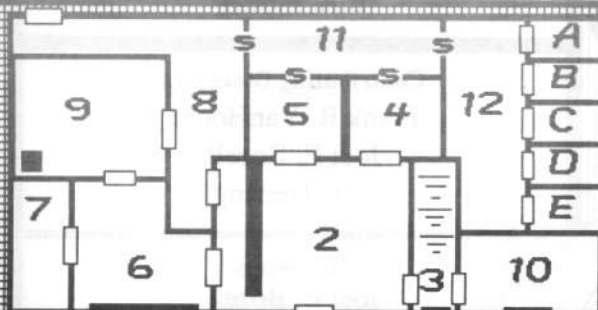
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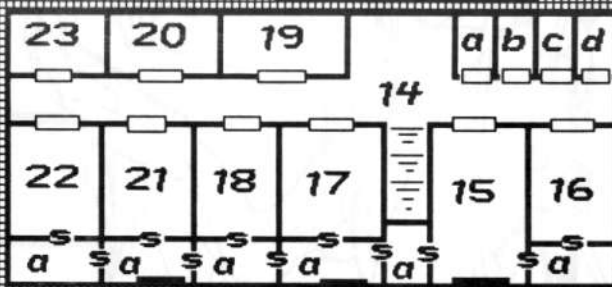
# The Silver Sickle Inn Of Death



By James L Shipman , Copyright 1990 ©



Level One



Level Two

Wine Cellar



1 Length = 30 feet

# Alderac

The Play-by-Mail Game

## Installment: 1 Character Generation & Start-up Procedures

### Credits

Game Design, Development and Programing

Jolly R. Blackburn

B.A. Felton

Contributing Designers

Frank R. VanHoose

Joel E. Bozell

Lew Herring

Playtesters

Joel E. Bozell

Frank R. VanHoose

Andrea E. OliverSchmeidel

Lew Herring

Technical Consultant

Greytar

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**T**erac leaned back from the table and brought a hand under his chin to scratch at his tangled beard. He stared across the table at his former adversary and wondered if this newly formed alliance had been a wise move. Bantar was a fool, but he was also very powerful. The elder Bin'Partan had agreed to arrange for Terac to be appointed as the new Governor Elector for the province of Holgen; something Terac had been coveting for seven years. In return, Terac had sworn to support Bantar's eventual grab for the throne. It was a weak alliance at best, based on the mutual need of two men who hated and feared each other.

Bantar smiled and raised his glass of wine in a toast. "To the future Governor of Holgen! May you prosper greatly."

Terac raised his glass and forced a hollow smile. "A Governor who shall always be loyal to his patron!" Terac replied. He almost laughed at his own words. Bantar might believe that Terac would be content with a comfortable Governorship, but the truth was Terac's ambitions ran much higher.

If everything went as planned, Bantar would move against the Emperor expecting Terac to throw in his provincial legions for support. Terac would march into the capital city alright, but not in support of Bantar. Terac would crush Bantar as a traitor and, in the aftermath, he would seize the throne for himself.

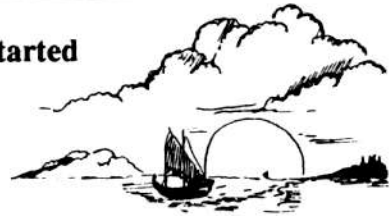
"Drink, drink my friend." urged Terac forcing a smile again. "The adventure we are about to embark on will give birth to a thousand songs."

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Alderac, The Play-By-Mail game.

Pull on your boots, strap up your sword and mount up for a sensational journey into the realms of Alderac. A vast world awaits to be explored. Your character is virtually unlimited in his choice of opportunities and endeavors. Perhaps you want to rise to power within the ranks of the Legions and prove your tactical genius by pushing the Grevan barbarians back beyond the mountains. Or perhaps the city life is more to your liking, a quiet political position where you can manipulate others and work at lining your own pockets without being caught.

## 1. Getting Started Quickly



As stated in my editorial, the Alderac PBM will be presented in installments. This section is designed to get players started quickly without having to wade through the rules. You will be guided step by step through a series of checklists. The lists will tell you exactly which rules you will need to refer to in order to generate a character, equip him and begin adventuring. After you have mailed in your Turn Sheet, you can browse through the rules at your leisure while you are waiting. Many of the rules included in this issue cover events and situations that you may not face for several turns. Our rule format will allow you to quickly locate the appropriate rule when the need arises. The point is, don't let the apparent number of rules in this installment and future supplements scare you off. Just like regular role-playing games, the player is really required to know very little about game mechanics. He only needs to be able to tell the Game Master what actions he wants to take. Likewise, many of the rules provided here are to provide you with a wide variety of activities and options to pursue. A thorough knowledge of the rules will make playing easier for you to tell the Game Moderator what you want to do, but it's not necessary in order to play the game.

### 1.1 Things you should know before beginning:

#### 1.1.1 Rules Format

We have chosen to present the APBM rules in a military-regulation format. This type of system allows players to quickly locate and cross-reference specific rules. More importantly, it allows us to update, alter add/delete rules with minimal confusion and difficulty. It also allows a player to cite a specific reference when trying to justify or appeal an action or outcome. For example: a player may write "I am

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appealing my last Turn Resolution, specifically Action no.#6: MN66. I should not have been subjected to the Woodland Movement modifier. Per rule 6.3.1, characters native to forest regions do not incur a movement modifier for forested regions."

### 1.1.2 Calculations:

Players should note that the System Computer rounds off all calculations to the nearest whole number.

### 1.1.3 Gender:

The male gender is used throughout these rules to refer to characters and players, as is the common practice. The reader should assume that these references refer to both sexes. This practice has been adopted to ease the burden of writing and editing is not indicative of the author's feelings toward the female sex.

### 1.1.4 Reserved Numbers:

It may help you to know that certain ranges of numbers are reserved for special purposes. For example, any personal items that a character can carry are always identified with a number between 100 and 599. The following list shows the various reserved numbers and their purpose:

0-8	<i>Directions of Movement</i>
10-99	<i>Magical Spells</i>
100-599	<i>Items and Equipment</i>
600-899	<i>Magical Items/Relics</i>
900-999	<i>Messages/Warnings</i>
1000-2999	<i>Monsters/NPC's</i>
3000- 5999	<i>Player Characters</i>
6000-7999	<i>Ship Registration #</i>
8000-8999	<i>Businesses/Property Numbers</i>
9000-9999	<i>Military Units/Parties/ Groups</i>

### 1.1.5 Building Points

You are allotted 250 Building Points (BPs) for purchasing your start-up options. BPs are used only during the Start-up phase. Any BPs remaining after

a player has completed his start-up purchases are automatically converted to money and placed in the player-character's treasury. (Section 3.5)

### 1.1.6 Postage

Participation in APBM is free to subscribers of SHADIS Magazine. The only requirement is that players include an SASE with their Turn Sheets to cover postage for the return of Turn Resolutions.

Players may opt to send a lump-sum payment to cover postage charges for several turns. Players using this option will have .35¢ deducted from their account for each Turn Processed. (This would cover the cost of a first class stamp and an envelope.) Players will be given a balance of funds remaining in their accounts with their Turn Resolutions.

### 1.1.6 Start-up Checklist

By following this simple checklist and referring to the appropriate sections as indicated, you will be ready to play APBM in no time at all.

#### Step 1: Complete a Start-up Worksheet

Appendix A provides a step by step walk-through in completion of a Start-up Worksheet.

#### Step 2: Complete a Turn Sheet.

Appendix B provides a step by step walk-through in completion of a Turn Sheet.

#### Step 3: Mail your Start-up Worksheet and Initial Turn Sheet to SHADIS Magazine.

- Be sure to enclose an SASE for the return of your Turn Resolution.

## 2. Character Generation

### 2.1 Occupations

Characters are free to pursue any conceivable occupation. There are no character classes or other artificial barriers in the Alderac PBM to force charac-



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ters to operate within a certain range of actions.

There is only one requirement for a new character. The player must state what occupation his character will be generally pursuing. This helps the Game Moderator in classifying characters for ranking purposes and determining top players in various categories. It also helps us plan future installments based on player interest. You can change your stated occupation at anytime.

The following is a list of some possible Occupations. Players are not limited to these choices and may suggest occupations of their own.

Politician	Soldier	Merchant
Priest	Thief	Sailor
Adventurer	Explorer	

## 2.2 Character Attributes:

Attributes define a character's mental and physical makeup. They also measure skills and abilities.

### 2.2.1 Attribute Ranges

All Character Attributes are based on a range between 0 and 100. An attribute can never surpass 100 or fall below 0.

### 2.2.2 Attribute Levels:

Like many factors in the Alderac PBM, a character's exact Character Attributes are never revealed to the player. For example, a player would never be told his character's Strength was 75 or his Intelligence was 39. Instead, you will be given a general description of your character's attributes. These descriptive terms are called Attribute Levels (AL) and indicate that a character's attribute rating falls with a certain range.

Attribute levels are as follows:

**Table 2.2.2 Attribute Levels:**

Level	Attribute Range
<i>Extraordinary</i>	91+
<i>Exceptional</i>	81-90
<i>Above Average</i>	71-80
<i>Average</i>	31-70
<i>Below Average</i>	21-30
<i>Poor</i>	11-20
<i>Pathetic</i>	00-10

### 2.2.3 Primary Attributes:

There are Five Primary Character Attributes; Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, Perception and Body. Primary attributes represent a character's basic mental and physical capabilities and limits. Primary

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Attributes rarely change other than as the result of age, magic or disease.

### 2.2.3a Strength:

Strength is a measure of a character's overall physical condition. It determines how much a character can lift and carry. It determines how long a character can exert himself at tasks that require the use of strength. It also helps determine how much damage the character inflicts with hand held weapons or with his bare hands.

### 2.2.3b Dexterity:

Dexterity is a measure of a character's overall coordination. It determines a character's ability to hit targets, retain footing in difficult situations, climb obstacles, etc. It also covers such things as sleight of hand, picking locks, etc.

### 2.2.3c Intelligence:

Intelligence is a measure of a character's ability to reason and solve problems. It can be an indication of a character's education, I.Q. and his ability to learn and retain knowledge.

### 2.2.3d Body:

Body is a measure of a character's overall health and stamina. It determines how much damage a character can sustain before becoming incapacitated or dying. It helps determine rates of healing and recovery, resistance to disease and the elements etc.

### 2.2.3e Perception:

Perception is an indication of a character's overall awareness to his surroundings. A high perception allows a character to learn new skills more quickly. A good perception rating can also help give a character more detailed information on Turn Resolutions.

### 2.2.3f Purchasing Primary Attributes:

All characters begin with Primary Attributes that are initially of Average Level.<sup>4</sup> By expending the appropriate Building Point costs, you can raise these attributes to higher levels. Furthermore, you can lower a Primary Attribute to a level below average

and earn BPs which can be spent to raise other Attributes or spent on other Start-up Options.

BP Costs/Credits for raising or lowering Primary Attributes are as follows:

LEVEL	BP COST	BP CREDIT
Extraordinary	25	-
Exceptional	15	-
Above Average	10	-
Average	-	-
Below Average	-	05
Poor	-	10
Pathetic	-	15

*Example: Carl wants to raise his character's Strength to Exceptional. Looking at the table he determines that it will cost him 15 BPs to raise the Attribute from Average to Exceptional. Deducting the BPs from his balance, Carl finds he does not have enough BPs to buy another Start-up option he wants. Carl decides to drop his Body to Pathetic to earn additional BPs.*

### 2.2.4 Secondary Attributes

In addition to the Five Primary Attributes, each character also possesses the following Secondary Attributes: Prestige (PR), Fame (FA), Political Status (PS), Leadership Ability (LA), and Social Class (SC). Like Primary Attributes, Secondary Attributes are based on a range from 0 to 100.

Secondary Attributes represent various achievement levels and skills of the character. They differ from Primary Attributes in that they can greatly fluctuate during a character's career. (For example, a Politician's Prestige could plummet overnight if a scandal were connected with his name.)

Secondary Attributes also tend to affect each other. For example, a high Fame often raises one's Prestige; a high Leadership ability might also raise one's Political Status.

#### 2.2.4a Prestige:

Prestige represents how a character is regarded by his peers and those in the world around him. Prestige is an indicator of how those around the character

perceive his achievements and successes

The higher one's prestige, the higher the degree of admiration he commands from others. Prestige can be thought of as a 'Regional Fame' for your characters actions and accomplishments. It is important to remember that Prestige is relative. Black Beard the Pirate may be very prestigious among his own men and other pirates, but outside of his sphere of influence, he is very much hated and despised. Likewise, a great military general might have a high Prestige and be well loved among his own troops, but among his enemies his Prestige would be very low.

#### 2.2.4b Fame:

Fame should not be confused with prestige. Fame is a measure of how widely known a character has become. A character can be very prestigious among his peers, but if his fame is low, his prestige drops considerably when he ventures outside the realm of his peers. Fame can be viewed as a great benefit or an enormous hindrance, depending on your chosen Occupation. A pirate with a high fame will find life very difficult.

#### 2.2.4c Political Status:

Political Status is a measure of a character's ability to command respect and move within the political arena. Political Status can be thought of as the 'Commanding Presence' a character exerts over those around him. Some characters can make up for a lack of Political Status with money, contacts and/or force of arms. Positions acquired by these means alone are often unstable and quickly lost. If a character is deemed incompetent or unqualified for an important political office, there will be a score of usurpers in the wings waiting to make things right. Political Status can be affected by other Secondary Attributes. For example, if an office holder is accused of cowardice and his prestige suddenly drops, his Political Status could plummet as well.

Political Status means power! As your character grows in experience and in levels, he will undoubtedly be tempted to enter the political arena. There are hundreds of political offices and positions both within

and outside of the Ragean Empire. These positions often bring power and important ties which can catapult your character to levels of power and authority beyond his actual level of experience.

Even if your character does not wish to enter into politics, he will be faced with situations where Political Status is a crucial factor in determining his success. Political status figures into Guild activities, military rank, promotions etc.

#### 2.2.4d Leadership Ability:

Leadership ability is a measure of one's ability to command and influence others to do his will. It governs how well a leader is able to raise the level of loyalty, morale and discipline in those men he leads. It also governs how much effect outside factors influence the men he leads. For example, a captain with a high leadership ability will be able to rally his men in the face of great danger, whereas a captain of lesser ability may find himself standing alone.

Although Leadership ability and Political Status are closely related and complement each other, they should not be confused. Leadership ability deals with leading people and Political Status deals with the mechanics and skills in running an office or position.

#### 2.2.4e Social Class:

Social Class is an indication of one's position on the social ladder. Social mobility (the ability for one to rise above his current Social Class or fall to a lower one) is very rare in the Ragean Empire, although it is possible.

Social Class can be raised through marriage, by a high prestige and/or fame, acquiring new titles and ranks etc. It can also be raised by close, prolonged association with a member of a higher Social Class.

Social Class can be lowered by: conviction of a crime or often even a simple accusation of a crime. Also by breaking the standards of conduct associated with one's Social Class, etc.

A character's Social Class is relative to his place of origin. Outside the bounds of a character's native lands, his social class may rise or lower considerably. Note that Prestige and Social Class are not necessarily inter-related. The Emperor's nephew may be from

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the Upper Upper Class, but if he's a rude, obnoxious bore, his prestige could be dismal.

Social Class also determines how much 'expense' your character will incur each turn. A character accustomed to the luxuries of a high social class will automatically spend more money each turn than a character from a poorer class. The richer character will seek out the finer and, consequently, the more expensive rooms and meals. Also, merchants tend to charge more for their wares if they believe a customer has large sums of money.

The Social Class Attribute is unlike any other attribute in that it has it's own unique descriptive terms for Attribute Levels:

**Table 2.2.4e Social Class:**

Level	Rating	General Description
Upper Upper Class	98+	Emperor, Royalty
Middle Upper Class	90-97	Inner Circle to Emperor, Council
Lower Upper Class	81-89	Bin'Partans, High Officials, Rich Merchants
Upper Middle Class	71-80	High Ranking Military Officers, City Officials
Middle Middle Class	61-70	Skilled Laborers, Priests
Lower Middle Class	51-60	Common Soldier, Craftsmen
Upper Lower Class	41-50	Common Laborers, Unskilled Workers
Middle Lower Class	21-40	Freedmen
Lower Lower Class	00-20	Slaves, Certain Convicted Criminals. Non-Humans.

### 2.2.4g Purchasing Secondary Attributes:

Unlike Primary Attributes all Secondary Attributes start at the Pathetic Level with the exception of Social Class, which begins at Upper Lower Class. You must pay the following BP charges to raise a character's Secondary Attribute by 1 level.

**Table 2.2.4g Purchasing Secondary Attributes:**

Attribute	BP Cost
Prestige	20
Fame	30
Political Status	50
Leadership Ability	25
Social Class	40

"While attempting to negotiate his position, Mark the Magic-User compliments the Chieftain's Daughter."



### 2.2.5 Other Character Attributes:

There are other numerous factors and attributes that are recorded and maintained for your character by the system computer. They include such things as skills, experience points, etc. Most of these are developed during game play and are not the responsibility of the player to record or keep track of. You will be informed of the current levels of these items as such information is warranted.

## 3. Beginning Assets

Beginning assets are possessions and advantages the character begins the game with. It is assumed your character had a life and ambitions prior to the start of the game. Beginning Assets allow players to tailor the characters and better prepare them for their adventures ahead. Your character might already own a ship, have strong political ties or may already be on the road to a promising career in business or the military. Choose your Beginning Assets carefully.

### 3.1 Place of Origin/Starting Point:

You must select a starting location for your character to enter the game. This location will automati-



cally be the character's place of origin, where the character was raised and has lived up to his entry into the game. Here are his family ties, friends and contacts.

Currently players are limited to three starting regions. In the future, as more players come on board, starting locations will be broadened.

The special insert, "Greyatar's Traveler's Guide to Alderac" has a map detailing the traveling regions.

(If you are missing this map or would simply like another one, they can be purchased for \$2.00.)

### 3.2 Character Age:

Characters begin the Start-up Process at 20 years of age. By voluntarily increasing your character's age, you have a chance of increasing one or more Secondary Attributes. There are no BP costs for adding years to a character's age. However, adding ten or more years to a character's age can earn your character additional BPs to add to his beginning allotment.

Years Added	BP Credit	Chance of Improving Secondary Attribute*
1-10	0	2% per year added
20	15	40% - 1 attribute affected/Heir
30	30	60% - 2 attributes affected/Heir
40	60	80% - 3 attributes affected/Heir

\*The percentage chance listed is the chance of 1 or more attributes increasing. The amount of change is determined by the System Computer.

The greatest advantage to increasing your age 10 years or more is that your character will automatically have an heir. (Section 5.)

### 3.3 Citizenship:

There is a standard cost of 35 BPs to purchase citizenship in the Ragean Empire for your character. There are few places in the known world where one can totally elude the influence of the Empire. Being born on Imperial soil does not automatically bestow Imperial Citizenship on a character. Citizenship is an honor and a privilege but not a right. Citizenship can be granted to virtually anyone, except a slave, and it can be stripped away by the Rader'Keem (High

Judges).

Most non-citizens live their entire lives under Imperial rule and are seldom reminded of their status. However, citizenship bestows special privileges to those who hold it, such as preferential treatment under the law, certain guaranteed rights, etc. Perhaps the most important aspect of citizenship is the right to hold political office and to own property.

### 3.4 Pre-Fab Packages:

Pre-Fab packages are designed to simplify the process of equipping beginning characters. By paying the appropriate BP cost your character is instantly equipped and ready to begin play. You may only purchase 1 Pre-Fab package. The number in parenthesis after each item is the Item Number.

Chances are that none of the packages listed will contain exactly what you want. Don't be too concerned. You will have plenty of opportunities to equip your character further during the game.

Your characters already possess 1 set of clothing appropriate to his Social Class and a dagger. These items do not have to be purchased.

#### Package 1 BP Cost: 10

Ten feet of rope (170)  
 Bundle of torches (171)  
 1 Turn of provisions (including water) (172)  
 Leather Armor and helmet (150)  
 Short Sword (103)

#### Package 2 BP Cost: 20

Ten feet of rope (170)  
 Bundle of torches (171)  
 1 Turn of provisions (including water) (172)  
 Leather Armor and helmet (150)  
 Short Sword (103)  
 Riding horse with saddle (201)

#### Package 3 BP Cost: 15

Ten feet of rope (170)  
 Bundle of torches (171)  
 1 Turn of provisions (including water) (172)  
 Leather Armor and helmet (150)  
 Short Sword (103)

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Mule with packs and harness (202)

### Package 4 BP Cost: 30

Ten feet of rope (170)  
Bundle of torches (171)  
3 Turns of provisions (including water) (172)  
Pick and shovel (175 & 176)  
Leather Armor and helmet (150)  
Short Sword (103)  
Riding horse with saddle (201)

### Package 5 BP Cost: 60

Ten feet of rope (170)  
Bundle of torches (171)  
1 Turn of provisions (including water) (172)  
Pick and shovel (175 & 176)  
Small tent (177)  
Leather Armor and helmet (150)  
Short Sword (103)  
Horse with two-wheel cart (201 & 203)

### Package 6 BP Cost: 60

Large wagon (204)  
2 Horses, Team (205)  
Small tent (177)  
5 Turns of provisions (172)  
50 Units of Trade Goods (210)

### Package 7 BP Cost: 40

Small backpack (179)  
Thieve's kit (174)  
Suit of leather armor 150)  
Short sword (103)  
Guild Membership Papers (local)

### 3.5 Beginning Money

Your character's beginning money is based on his Social Class and the number of BPs you have remaining after purchasing your start-up options. Money is issued in Ragean coin, (Serti'Remius or SRs) which are basically gold pieces.

Use the table 3.5 to calculate your beginning money. Find your character's Social Class on the table. The indicated Multiplier is the number you

multiply your remaining BPs by. The resulting number gives you the total number of SR your character begins the game with.

Note\* Ten SRs weigh the equivalent of 1 pound. If your character begins the game with more than 100 SRs (ten pounds of coins!) the System Computer will automatically deposit all but 100 SRs in the nearest Varder Hall. (See Banks for more information)

**TABLE 3.5**

<b>SOCIAL CLASS</b>	<b>Multiplier</b>
UUC	X250
UMC	X200
LUC	X150
UMC	X100
MMC	X50
LMC	X25
ULC	X20
MLC	X15
LLC	X05

### 4. ACTIONS:

By issuing orders or actions in the proper format on your Turn Sheet, you tell the Game Moderator what your character is doing or attempting to do. It's the language with which the player speaks to the GM and System Computer.

#### 4.1 Action Points

The number of Actions a character is able to perform each turn is based on his available Action Points. A character is allotted 100 Action Points each game turn. This is a basic allotment and may vary due to such things as character injury, fatigue, severe weather, etc. Action Points are spent to purchase various actions for your character. Once your Action Points are depleted, you are finished with your turn. You can voluntarily end your turn with APs remaining, but those APs will be lost. You can not save or borrow Action Points!

#### 4.2 ORDERS:

There are various categories of Orders: Movement, Combat, Standing Orders, etc. The following

Order descriptions are presented in a format that lists the Order Code, Action Name, Proper Usage, Explanation and an Example of its use.

The Orders presented in this installment are a partial list to get you started. Additional orders will be presented in future issues of SHADIS. You will also discover many more available actions during play, from experience and from other players.

#### 4.2.1 Movement Orders:

There are five different Movement Orders available to players at the present time. Movement is allowed in any direction as shown on the Turn Sheet. The distance your character will be allowed to move in one turn is based on Action Points committed to movement, Mode of travel and Terrain.

##### 4.2.1a Mode of Travel:

Most movement orders require a Mode-of-Travel code to be entered in the order format.

The Mode-of-Travel codes are as follows:

- F -On foot
- H -On horseback
- S - By Ship

##### 4.2.1b Terrain Modifiers:

Terrain features will hinder your character's movement unless you are traveling on a road or path. Modify AP costs associated with movement orders by the following:

##### Terrain Modifiers:

- Forest: +5 APs
- Hills: +5 APs
- Mountains: +10
- Swamp: +15
- Travel on Road/Path: -5
- Cross River: +5

Terrain Modifiers are not cumulative. If a map square contains one or more terrain features, use the beneficial terrain feature to calculate AP cost for that square.

##### 4.2.1c Code: MN

**Action:** Movement, Normal

**AP Cost:** Variable

**Format:** MN/(Mode-of-Travel),(Direction Moved),(Direction Moved), etc.

**Example:** MN/F 2,2,3 (Character moves by foot, 2 squares NE and 1 square East.

This order moves your character by the indicated Mode-of-Travel 1 square for each direction listed on the command line.

AP Costs for this action depends on the mode-of-travel and terrain encountered:

**On Foot:** 20 APs per square moved.

**Horseback:** 10 APs per square moved.

**By Ship:** 5 APs +/- Ship's movement modifier, per square moved. (No terrain modifiers apply)

##### 4.2.1d Code: MT

**Action:** Movement, Tracking/Hunting

**AP Cost:** Variable

**Format:** MT(Mode-of-Travel),(TargetNo.#),(Direction Moved)

**Example:** MT (F)(2005) 2,2,3 (Character moves by foot, 2 squares NE and 1 Square East attempting to track or find player#2005).

This order moves your character by the indicated Mode-of-Travel 1 square for each direction listed on the command line while attempting to track or attempting to find the indicated target.

The target may be a creature, another player or an item.

AP Costs for this action depends on the mode-of-travel and terrain encountered:

**On Foot:** 30 APs per square moved.

**Horseback:** 15 APs per square moved.

**By Ship:** 10 APs +/- Ship's movement modifier, per square moved. (No terrain modifiers apply)

##### 4.2.1e Code: MA

**Action:** Movement, Attack

**AP Cost:** Variable

**Format:** MA(Mode-of-Travel),(TargetNo.#),(Direction Moved)



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**Example:** MA (F)(2005) 2,2,3 (Character moves by foot, 2 squares NE and 1 Square East attempting to find and attack player#2005).

This order moves your character by the indicated Mode-of-Travel, in an attempt to locate and attack the indicated target.

The target must be an animal, monster, NPC or Player-Character.

The order can be used to hunt or forage for food as well as for combat.

AP Costs for this action depends on the mode-of-travel and terrain encountered:

**On Foot:** 30 APs per square moved.

**Horseback:** 15 APs per square moved.

**By Ship:** 10 APs +/- Ship's movement modifier, per square moved. (No terrain modifiers apply)

### 4.2.1f Code: MS

**Action:** Movement, Steal

**AP Cost:** Variable

**Format:** MS(Mode-of-Travel),(TargetNo.#),(DirectionMoved)

**Example:** MS (H)(2005) 2,2,3 (Character moves by horse, 2 squares NE and 1 Square East attempting to find player# 2005 and steal something from him).

This order moves your character by the indicated Mode-of-Travel in the desired direction in an attempt to locate and steal from the indicated target.

The target can be an item, animal, monster, NPC or Player-Character.

AP Costs for this action depends on the mode-of-travel and terrain encountered;

**On Foot:** 30 APs per square moved.

**Horseback:** 15 APs per square moved.

**By Ship:** 10 APs +/- Ship's movement modifier, per square moved. (No terrain modifiers apply)

### 4.2.2 COMBAT:

Combat Orders are used primarily when the character is leading a group or military unit and not for routine encounters/combat. (Standing Orders are used for that purpose.)

### 4.2.2a Code: DF

**Action:** Defend

**AP Cost:** Variable

**Format:** DF (Item# or Character # or Area) (Action Points Expended on Action)

**Example:** DF (Castle) (50) indicates the character is defending the Castle he presently occupies for 50 Action Points of time.

Defend indicates that the character is defending either a person, building or item against attack or theft. Once this order is issued the character will stand his ground until removed by force or the order expires or is withdrawn.

### 4.2.2b Code: AK

**Action:** Attack

**AP Cost:** Variable

**Format:** AK (Character# or Area)

**Example:** AK (Camp) indicates the character is attacking a camp.

Attack is used to launch attacks against other parties or units. It is also used to capture a designated target such as a castle or hilltop.



**4.2.3 STANDING ORDERS:**

Once issued, these orders remain in effect until a different Standing Order is set. Standing Orders give the Game Moderator what a character would do in the absence of orders. By setting various Standing Orders, you can tell the GM that your character will: run if faced with danger, steal if he thinks he won't get caught, make friends if given a chance, etc. It does not cost you Action Points to set or reset a Standing Order. All Standing Orders have to fall within a range of 1-10.

**4.2.3a Code: BD****Standing Order:** Boldness**AP Cost:** NA**Format:** BD#**Example:** BD5 indicates the character has set his Boldness Standing Order to a medium level of 5.

Boldness is an indication of what degree a character is willing place himself at risk in order to complete his actions.

A low setting will indicate that your character will be extremely cautious and will abort an order if faced with superior opponents or a particularly dangerous situation.

A high setting indicates your character is reckless and willing to take considerable risk while completing his orders.

**4.2.3b Code: OP****Standing Order:** Opportunist**AP Cost:** NA**Format:** OP#**Example:** OP10 indicates the character has set his Opportunist Standing Order to a high level.

The Opportunist Standing Order allows you to tell the Game Moderator what your character would do if faced with unforeseen opportunity. For example, during a Turn Resolution your character may suddenly have an opportunity to steal a large sum of money with little risk of being caught. Normally, such an opportunity might pass the player by because he could still have stated orders to perform. By

comparing the Opportunist Standing Order with the Boldness Standing Order, the GM is able to determine if the player would take advantage of such an opportunity or decline.

**4.2.3c Code: FR****Standing Order:** Friendliness**AP Cost:** NA**Format:** FR#**Example:** FR10 indicates the character has set his Friendliness Standing Order to a high level.

Friendliness is a measure of how friendly your character will act toward other characters (players or NPC's) when encountered during the game. A high setting indicates that your character is very friendly and engaging. A low setting indicates that your character is unresponsive and perhaps even hostile toward strangers. This Standing Order is used only for initial encounters with new characters.

**4.2.3d Code: WP****Standing Order:** Weapon**AP Cost:** NA**Format:** WP(Item#)**Example:** WP101 indicates the character has set his preferred weapon as a knife.

Weapon tells the GM what weapon a character will attack and defend himself with. As long as the character possesses the stated weapon, he will use it during combat.

**4.2.4 MISCELLANEOUS ORDERS:****4.2.4a Code: XF****Action:** Transfer Item**AP Cost:** NA**Format:** XF(Item#) TO (Character #)**Example:** XF101 TO 2001 indicates the character is giving a knife to character# 2001.

This order allows the character to transfer an item to another character.

**4.2.4b Code: CO**

**Action:** Change Occupation

**AP Cost:** NA

**Format:** CO (New Occupation)

**Example:** CO (Politician)

This order informs the GM that your character is changing his stated Occupation.

**4.2.4c Code: DR**

**Action:** Drop Item

**AP Cost:** NA

**Format:** DR (Item no.#)

**Example:** DR (102) indicates that character is dropping a dagger.

Use this order to drop things from your character's inventory. Once dropped, the item is lost. If you wish to retrieve the item later, you should use the XF order.

**4.2.4d Code: EQ**

**Action:** Equip Item

**AP Cost:** NA

**Format:** EQ (Item No.#)

**Example:** EQ(151) Character is equipping (putting on) a suit of chainmail.

Equips your character with the stated item. In order to Equip an item, the character must currently have it in his inventory.

**4.2.4d Code: PM**

**Action:** Post Message      **AP Cost:** NA

**Format:** PM (message)

**Example:** PM (Saul, Meet me in Soult Tet at the Bitter Root Inn. Rathar)

Use this order to post a message in an Inn or Town Notice board for other players to read.

## 5. HEIRS

If you choose to age your character during the Start-up process, your character may start the game with an heir: a blood relative who stands to benefit

from your character's experience and wealth.

If you have an heir you can prepare him for a life of adventuring by sending him to school, leaving him stashes of money and magical items, etc. Should fate catch up with your character and he dies, then you can begin the game again with the heir becoming your new character.

## 6. BANKS:

Banks can be found in any town of moderate size. Known as Varder Halls, these businesses are not the type of banks you may be familiar with. At the Varder Hall, clients 'pay' to have their money and valuables protected. Varder Halls are merely fortified buildings with a contingent of guards. The client pays 5% of the total value of goods placed in the Varder Hall as a fee. Once placed within a Varder Hall, a document with a wax seal is given to the client as a receipt. Any one can present this receipt and remove the items, so it is wise to closely guard them.

Deposits are not guaranteed. The Varder Hall Master promises to defend the contents of the Hall with the lives of his men. Not to worry, however, Varder Halls are rarely robbed.

Varder Halls do not issue loans or give credit!

## 7. TAVERNS AND INNS.

Taverns and Inns are the great meeting places. Most cities and towns will have 1 Tavern per 100 residents. If you want to meet other players, seek out a local tavern. Here you can listen for rumors, meet other players, etc.

Most Taverns will allow you to post a message on a Notice Board. There are a limited number of slots on Notice Boards. Every time a new message is posted, the oldest message on the board is dropped.

You can also spread rumors and bits of news at the taverns. Once you start a rumor there is a chance that rumor will spread to other towns and other taverns. If your rumor makes it's way to a Capital City there is a good chance your rumor will be listed in SHADIS magazine.

## 8. RACE

Players are currently limited to the human race and to an area within the borders of the Ragean Empire. In the near future other races including the Grevans, Dralch and the Sarlangans will be open to players.

## 9. MAGIC:

Magic does exist in Alderac and there are Magic Users though you will be hard pressed to locate one. The problem is that magic is shunned by most societies as something borne of evil. It is very dangerous to openly use magic or to even discuss magic.

If your character wants to be a Magic User, he will have to seek out and learn of magic on his own during the game.

## 10. MAPS:

A map of the starting playing area has been provided with this issue of SHADIS. This is the only map that will be given to you. New maps will have to be obtained during the game. (Hint: Veteran readers of SHADIS will note that the maps are the same scale and format as other maps that have appeared from the Alderac Milieu in prior issues.)

You can travel off the edge of the map in any direction. If you do not have a map of the region you are moving into then you will only be given a map of the square you occupy or have passed through.

## 11. THE GODS:

It is up to you if your character worships a God. You will have to determine for yourself, if any benefit is derived from such ceremony. Information on the Gods can be gleaned from prior issues of SHADIS.

## 12. TIME:

Each Turn in APBM represents approximately 2 weeks of game time which is close to the 'real time' turn around for a complete turn to be processed.

This correlation is a loose one. In many instances it has been ignored for the sake of game play and enhancement.

## 13. PLAYING TIPS:

You will be presented with detailed rules in future issues of SHADIS on a variety of topics, (such as politics, sailing, warfare etc.) For the present, you have enough information to get started and to begin adventuring.

If you are confused about exactly what to do, don't worry. Your first Turn Resolution will be filled with tips and helpful information to get you started. Here are several tips from Play-testers to get you going.

### • Plan Ahead!

One of the advantages in a play-by-mail campaign is that you will have ample time to plan and think ahead. Having your character wander aimlessly around the countryside may be fun the first few turns but you need to be thinking of how to acquire power and wealth. Remember, your fellow players will be rising in levels and power quickly, you won't want to be left behind.

### • Join a Group!

Find one or more allies as soon as you can. Besides mutual protection, good allies can be valuable sources of information. You can write or call other players and make in-depth plans and coordinate your actions.

### • Don't Think in Game Terms!

This is role-playing! Put yourself in your character's shoes. If you think of your character as a series of numbers you'll miss the main attraction of this simulation. Don't limit yourself to the rules you see in print. If it seems feasible try it.

That concludes this first installment of the rules. Watch your back and keep a firm grip on the hilt of your sword. Good Luck!

## APPENDIX A

### Completing the Start-up Worksheet.

**Control Data:** This block is for Game Moderator use only. Enter nothing in these blocks.

### I.a Player Data



## Alderac: The Play-By-Mail Game

Fill in your name, address and phone number in the appropriate blocks.

### I.b Character Data

Fill in your character's name (limit 20 characters, including spaces.)

Fill in your Player No.# (If you are a subscriber you will find your player no.# on your mailing label.

### II. Character Generation (Section 2)

#### A. Occupation. (Section 2.1)

Enter the Occupation that most fits your character.

#### B. Primary Attributes. (Section 2.2.3)

Record your Primary Attribute adjustments and BP expenditures in the appropriate blocks.

#### C. Secondary Attributes. (Section 2.2.4)

Record your Secondary Attribute adjustments and BP expenditures in the appropriate blocks.

### III. Beginning Assets (Section 3.)

#### A. Origin/Starting Place (Section 3.1)

Enter the place of Origin/Starting Point for your character.

#### B. Character Age. (Section 3.2)

Enter your adjusted Character Age and BP Credit.

#### C. Citizenship (Section 3.3)

Mark off the appropriate box. Deduct 35 BPs if you decide to purchase Citizenship for your character.

#### D. Pre-Fab Package (Section 3.4)

Enter the Package number purchased and its cost.

#### E. Beginning Money. (Section 3.5)

Multiply your Ending BP Balance by the appropriate Social Class Multiplier. Record the result in the appropriate box.

### IV. Checklist

Completing this checklist will ensure that you haven't forgotten anything.

### V. Private Information Release

By signing this block you give the GM permission to release your phone number and address to other players you chance upon during the game. This allows you to coordinate actions and work out alli-

ances and plans. Information will not be released without a signature.

## APPENDIX B

### Completing a Turn Sheet

**Control Data:** This is for GM use. Do not enter anything in this block.

**Post Mark Deadline:** Your initial Turn Sheet will be blank in this block. However, when you receive a new Turn Sheet with your Turn Resolution Packet, there will be a date stamped in this block. This is the date your return envelope must be postmarked by in order to have your Turn processed. Turns received after the deadline will be considered missed Turns and no actions will take place for your Character.

**Character Name:** Enter your character's name.

**Player No. #:** Enter your Player Number, (This is the same as your Membership Number.) You can get this number from your mailing label.

**Orders:** List your orders in sequential order in the space provided. Be sure to keep an accurate tally of Action Point Expenditures.

**GAME DATA:** Useful Game information is provided here for your convenience.

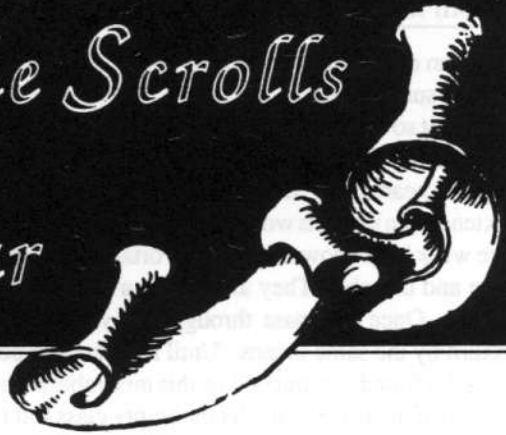
**Narrative of Turn's Actions:** This space is provided so that you tell the GM exactly what you are doing. A narrative can help the GM to resolve unforeseen events.

**Comments:** This space is provided so that you can suggest new rules, criticisms and other comments.





# From the Scrolls of Greytar



*Editor's Note: For those of you who are new to SHADIS, Greytar is our in-house expert on the world of Alderac. He tends to ramble, but eventually he manages to shed some interesting light on the stories presented in the Alderac Anthology.*

Greetings dear readers,

I've been worked to the point of complete exhaustion by our dear tyrant of an editor. I've been toiling day and night over my maps of Alderac and I'm afraid my poor hands are forever disfigured, of no practical use other than holding a quill cradled in them. I was promised an ample supply of Sarentian wine for my troubles and I've yet to see the first bottle. What's an old man to do? I've a good mind to take my wealth of knowledge and lore and move on to another magazine. At the risk of boring you, let me tell you about my ordeals.

You see, about a year ago, just after Halloween, Jolly, Frank and B.A. showed up at my doorstep late one night. I knew I was in trouble when I opened the door and found them standing there clutching each other and bearing an array of presents comprised of wine, cheese and bread.

"What ya want?" I asked, not sure if I wanted an answer.

"Hey Grey," said Jolly, "Uh, we just wanted to chat with you for a bit."

"Uh uh, and if the answer is no, do I get to keep the

gifts?"

"Oh sure." they all rang out in unison.

Not being one to turn away good wine, I let the conspirators in. As we took our seats, I noticed that Frank and Jolly were giving B.A. anxious looks and prodding him into action. So, B.A. was the designated spokesman, I thought. They must have really been desperate to choose him.

I poured a glass of wine and sat back for the inevitable question. I've quickly learned during my tenure with the Alderac Group that my presence is rarely requested unless there's a little favor needed.

Finally, B.A. cleared his throat and began. "Uh, Greytar, sir, we need your help."

Hmmrrfff, that 'sir' remark was a dead give away. These guys must have really needed my services. They were to the point of groveling.

I nodded that I was listening and motioned for him to continue while I sipped from my glass.

"Well," he continued, "We've found a new portal to Alderac."

I choked and sprayed a shower of wine across the room. "WHAT?"

"We found a new portal and it looks like this one is going to stay open for quite sometime."

"A new portal? You did say a new portal?"

The conspirators nodded in agreement. I was dumbfounded. Why this meant...

"You mean I can go home?" My heart was beginning to soar with the prospect of finally seeing Alderac again. I suddenly saw myself basking on a terrace just on the edge of Yistain Hill, gorging myself on

## From the Scrolls of Greytar

Haagan cuisine and basking in the warm rays of my native sun. Then....

"Not so fast Grey, there is a small problem. This is a Vetian Portal, like the one that brought you here."

My heart sank. Did the cruel pranks of my Gods extend even into this world? My knowledge of portals are weak but I know that Vetian Portals are extremely rare and unstable. They are strictly a one way ticket affair. Once you pass through one you can never return by the same means. Until a different breed of portal is found, I'm trapped on this miserable planet. I slouched in my chair and let the empty glass roll from my fingers. Depression. I stared across the room at the conspirators, their empty foolish smiles turned my remorse to anger. Of all the nerve, building an old man's hopes up, only to be bashed down again.

"So?" I finally asked, a trace of my great annoyance showing itself in my voice. "What's the POINT?" The last question rang out like a gunshot.

B.A. smiled and motioned to Frank who pulled out a piece of paper from his pocket. He unfolded a small flyer and shoved it in front of me.

I read the large bold letters that were carelessly scrawled in brick-red crayon across the top of the flyer. "Greytar's Traveler's Guide to Alderac"

"What the hell is this?" I asked.

"A brainstorm in the making! We're going to let our readers pass through the portal!" cried Jolly.

"Think of it! We could call it Alderac Travels Inc. You write the travel guides and we send volunteers through the portal for the thrill of a lifetime." added Frank.

"And here's the best part." said B.A. "In addition to commenting on the Alderac Anthology, you can give our readers tips and advice on adventuring in Alderac."

I was speechless. I wanted to slap them, but they would more than likely slap back. They couldn't be seriously contemplating sending a horde of crazed gaming fanatics into my homeworld. It just isn't done.

"Let me get this straight. You're going to send hundreds of your readers into Alderac?"

"Well, yeah," they replied, again in unison.

"Did it occur to any of you that these readers will not be coming back? You know, the Vetian Portal draw-

back???"

Jolly frowned and the conspirators huddled for a discussion. Finally, they sat back up and shrugged.

"We'll have them sign release forms resolving us of any responsibility." said B.A. "I went horseback riding once and I had to do sign one of those things."

"O.K.," I snapped back, "Have you thought about how these readers are going to impact my home world?"

They looked at each other and laughed. "Yeah, they're going to kick mega butt and stomp some heads!" said Frank, slapping his knee in a hysterical fit of giggles and laughter.

I sat back and observed the conspirators as they relished the thought of my homeworld being ravished and overran. "And just what makes you think I would have any part of this insane plan? Hmmm?"

It was Jolly who cast the lure. "Well, we've uncovered another case of Sarentian wine. Thirty-six bottles..."

"Uh, thirty-five Jolly." interrupted Frank.

"Oh..yeah, thirty five bottles of wine. We are prepared to give you one bottle of wine for every column you finish.

They had me. Call me a lowlife. I'd sell out my own world for just one bottle of Sarentian wine. "Uh, payable in advance?"

Jolly sensed he had me now and he tightened the reins. "Sorry guy, payable upon publication."

So in addition to my normal duties I have now been assigned as Technical Consultant to the Alderac Play-By-Mail game. I'll officially start my duties in this capacity next issue. For now, I wanted to make sure to get one piece of advice out to you readers who are thinking of traveling to Alderac. Stay away from my riverside villa. I mean it!

Till next issue. □



## EDITORIAL

### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

• **It's FREE!** We are about to attempt something that, to my knowledge, has never been tried before; offering free participation in a very complex and detailed PBM game. The only requirement is that you are a paid subscriber to SHADIS and that you provide a self-addressed-stamped envelope with your turn sheets to cover postage for the return of your Turn Resolution Packet. Non-subscribers will be allowed two free turns as a courtesy. There are no start-up-fees, no requirements to purchase a rulebook and no hidden charges.

• **A Single On-Going Campaign.** Most play-by-mail games group players into manageable numbers and then place them in different campaigns (i.e. in various campaigns that are separate and unique games in which players from different campaigns are not allowed to interact with one another.). The Alderac PBM has only one campaign and it never ends. All players who enter the game play in the same world at the same time. If one player becomes too powerful it will be up to the other players to group together and bring that player down, just like in real life. Obviously, players who begin the game in the early turns will have an advantage over newer players, again, just like in real life. This forces players to work together to overcome more powerful players.

• **An Established Magazine to cover the PBM game in detail.** Every issue of SHADIS will have a section devoted to new rules, rule changes/errata, Top-Players, rumors, remarkable events, etc. SHADIS will become a valuable link between players. Where as most PBM games put out a quarterly newsletter for this purpose, SHADIS, with its bi-monthly schedule, will go much further in keeping players updated and informed. If your character rises to glory in the game, you can be sure he'll be mentioned in the pages of SHADIS for all to see.

• **A Large and Detailed Fantasy Setting.** The first maps of Alderac were created in 1977 as a setting for fictional stories. Since that time, Alderac has logged over 12 years of Role-playing and a four-drawer filing cabinet filled with fictional material and artwork. Over 16,000 square miles of the Alderac Milieu have been transferred into computer graphics, as presented in SHADIS MAGAZINE from time to time. Since players will be playing in the same time period as the stories presented in the Alderac Anthologies, you'll have some insight on what is going on in the world around you. Your character won't be dropped

in a stagnate world, awaiting player interaction to liven things up. The world is already in motion, alive and thriving.

• **A World of Opportunity!** These rules underwent a major and difficult rewrite because play-testers made it clear they wanted to be able to do Everything! They didn't want their characters limited in their choice of actions, simply because there were no rules to cover such actions or because they chose a Character Class that precluded them from even trying.

If you want to perform an action and do not see it listed in the rules, you simply enter **New Action Attempted** on your turn card and record the action you are attempting. If the Game Moderator accepts your action, it becomes a legal move and it will be entered into the official rules.

Best of all, your character isn't locked into a class or occupation. There are no penalties for changing your character occupation.

Characters in the Alderac Milieu are free to pursue military careers, political careers, business endeavors, adventuring/exploring or any combination of the above. Of course, pursuing such careers and finding success in those ventures are two different stories.

• **Player Participation.** Like most role-playing games these rules are in a constant state of evolution. Early play-testing demonstrated that our best source of inspiration is always from the players. (They know what they want their characters to be and to be able to attempt or do.) During the On-going campaign about to unfold, you, the players will be pioneers and playtesters. Every turn card you submit will have adequate space for you to comment on the Rules System and to make suggestions for rules modifications, additions or even deletions. New rules and systems will be added, old ones deleted or altered as we progress. The Alderac PBM has been a team-effort from the beginning and we intend to keep it that way. Input from players and readers is encouraged.

I ask each and everyone of you reading to take a few minutes to look over the rules and then fill out the forms and mail them in. At worst, you could be out 29¢ for a stamp. On the other hand, you could be embarking on the adventure of a life-time.

That should do it for this issue. I hope you enjoy the offerings. Now get out those pencils and start filling out those Turn Sheets. The game's afoot! □

*Jolly R. Blackburn*  
Jolly R. Blackburn  
November 17, 1991





*Welcome to our new feature. This will be a showcase for those little magical items tucked away in the dark recesses of the Wizard's attic.*

*We encourage our readers to submit magical items of their own creation to share with others.*

### **Zarba's Enchanted Saddle**

This saddle appears quite ordinary. However, as soon as it is placed upon a horse, the following benefits will be bestowed upon the horse:

- The horse will be able to carry its maximum weight allowance without any effect on its movement rate.
- The horse will be able to endure 7 days without food or water and suffer no ill-effects.
- Once per day, the horse will be capable of leaping a span of twenty-five feet.
- The horse will receive +3 on saving rolls vs. fear.

Once placed upon a horse, the saddle can only be removed by saying the proper command word. The saddle has one other remarkable characteristic. If a horse wears the saddle for an extended period of time (at least 1 month), there is a 15% chance that the horse permanently acquires the saddle's powers as its own. If this happens, the saddle loses its magical properties and becomes an ordinary saddle. Only one check for power-acquisition is made per horse.

B.A. Felton

### **Rod of Cannon Balls**

To pick up this rather large rod, a character must have at least a strength of 14 or better. The rod weighs about sixty-five pounds. A strength of 16 or better is required to use the rod properly.

To use this rod, a character must hold the rod firmly and point it towards the target. They must then push the insignia device and make a save vs. strength. If the save is not made, the user will be promptly knocked on his ass and, in doing so, will take 1d10 points of damage and suffer a -4 on his next roll to hit. If the save is made, the to-hit roll is normal.

The rod has a range of 100 yards outside. (I wouldn't advise its use indoors.) It can be used on buildings,

# All Things Magic



## All Things Magic

walls, boats, people, dragons and just about anything else you can aim at.

Attacking structures (forts, walls, buildings, etc.) are at a +2 to hit because they are immobile. Damage is 10-100 structural points. Living creatures receive a saving throw vs. petrification when targeted by this rod. If the save is made the creature successfully dodges out of the way. If not, 1-100 points of damage are taken and the target is knocked unconscious for 1-6 rounds.

EPV: 6,000      GPV: 20,000

James Shipman

### Morzin's Cards of Mist

This is a deck of 30 cards made of thin wooden panels, each of which bears a detailed painting.

*(Note - This deck can be constructed from a normal deck of playing cards by removing all the Diamonds and 2 thru 9 of Spades. If you have a 30-sided die, you can simply make a roll to determine which card has been drawn.)*

On page 57 is a table listing the cards and the results of drawing each card.

As you can see, the deck is full of nasty surprises. The great wizard Morzin developed this deck to punish the greedy at heart. When a player draws from the deck for the first time, his draw will always be advantageous. (In other words, the DM disregards a draw with negative results and substitutes a result that is advantageous.)

This is the bait. If everyone in the party draws from the deck, it will seem that the deck can only do good things for them. After the first draw, however, the results stand. The deck is bent toward negative results and the players will most likely lose any of the benefits they derived from the deck.

Most players will keep drawing, hoping they will hit it "BIG" again. After all, they'll reason, the cards brought good things once, why not again?

**Notes:** This deck is extremely dangerous. Some cards will cause character death without a saving throw. You might try to impress upon your players that the cards 'look and feel' evil to them. Once warned, however, let their own greed decide their

fates.

\* An Anti-wish works just like a wish, but the opposite of the stated wish (or the closest approximation of what the opposite might be) takes effect. For example, a player wishes for one million gold pieces and instead everything he possesses of value vanishes.

J.R. Blackburn

### Staff of the Ice Wizard

This staff may only be used by those of the magic-user class and is highly sought after by wizards and magicians.

The staff appears to be made of ice. If any non-magic-using class touches this staff, they will take 5-8 (1d4+4) points of cold damage. When the magic-user first grasps the staff, he will feel a great surge of power rush from the staff.

If this staff is used as a weapon, it will function at +3 to hit and damage. Besides the normal damage, it will do an additional 5-8 (1d4+4) points of cold damage with no saving throw. Creatures immune to cold damage will take normal damage but no cold damage. In addition the staff does double damage to fire using creatures.

This staff makes the possessor immune to normal cold (up to -50 degrees). It also allows the possessor to save vs. cold related magic and breath weapons for half damage or none.

The wielder of this staff can also use the following powers: Cone of Cold, Wall of Ice; Ice Storm; and Flesh to Ice. Each use will expend one charge.

The Staff of the Ice Wizard will contain from 5-50 charges when it is found and it can be recharged.

EPV: 8,000      GPV: 40,000

James Shipman

### Zarba's Ruby

Zarba's Ruby appears as a small red gemstone. When placed against the flesh of a living creature, the gemstone begins to glow and then burns brightly without producing heat. The gemstone will then emit light equal to that of a normal lantern for 1d4 hours. The stone can be 'lit' once per day in this manner.

NAME	CARD	RESULT
1. House of Stone 2. Veil of Mist 3. Broken Um 4. Tiger Claws 5. Sharp Blade	(2C) (3C) (4C) (5C) (6C)	Character's skin becomes AC 3. Character's friends become enemies. Character loses 1d4 hp per level of experience permanently. Character's hands will now render 1d8 pts of damage. Character susceptible to blade attacks (+4 to hit).
6. Ice on the Trail 7. Full Pouch 8. Mourning Widow 9. Delight! 10. Bridled Horse	(7C) (8C) (9C) (10C) (JC)	Characters DEX goes down 1d4 permanently. 1d100 x 10 gps appear before the character. Character's most prized possession vanishes. Character's most sought after item appears. A Magic War House appears in 1-3 days.
11. Storm 12. Hail 13. Eye of the Needle 14. Gale Force 15. Ruby	(KC) (QC) (2H) (3H) (4H)	Entire party takes 1d20 pts of damage. Entire party takes 1d30 pts of damage. Character's weakest attribute goes up 1d4. Character's strongest attribute goes down 1d4. Zarba's Ruby will appear for 1d4 days.
16. Copper Piece 17. Flood 18. Bliss 19. Gargoyle 20. Troll	(5H) (6H) (7H) (8H) (9H)	20,000 cp's rain down on character. Character's closest friend drops dead. If female, character is pregnant. Strange creature appears, grants limited wish. Strange creature appears, grants anti-wish.*
21. Fire Fly 22. Boils 23. Waves 24. Bone Chip 25. Wheel	(10H) (JH) (KH) (QH) (AH)	Character is blinded. Character breaks out with boils, causes disfigurement. (-3 to Charisma) Character's items catch fire. Anything susceptible to flames is burned. Crushing Blow from Invisible Force (5d10 pts). Must draw 1d4 more cards.
26. Helm 27. Manure 28. Screaming Owl 29. Deep Well 30. Revenge	(10S) (JS) (KS) (QS) (AS)	Character must drink fresh Orc Blood in 1d2 days or die! Entire party is blinded for 1d4 days. Character vanishes. Reappears 1d4 turns later as a mangled corpse. Wish granted. A loud wailing screech fills the air and the cards vanish. If the players are in a dungeon or wilderness area, a monster encounter will occur every round for 1d20 rounds.



## All Things Magic

The stone has another power. If the proper command word is spoken, while rubbing the stone, it will cause any magical item within 100 feet to glow. The glow will be undetectable to anyone but the owner of the gem.

B.A. Felton

### Staff of Quick Escapes

This staff appears as a magical +1 Quarter Staff, but if the command word is spoken, the possessor will instantly be teleported exactly 1 mile from the spot where he once stood (random direction determined by the DM). The possessor will always materialize without error and will never materialize high or low.

This staff contains 5-50 charges when found. When the last charge is expended, the staff will turn to dust.  
EPV: 2,000 GPV: 10,000

James Shipman

### Wand of Pleasantries

This wand has three powers. Using each function costs one charge.

The abilities are as follows:

**Clean:** This will cause an area of up to 20 x 20 feet to be instantly rid of all dust, dirt, rubble or trash. This power will also clean dishes, windows, polish boots etc.

**Cloth:** This function will cause the subject to be endowed with nice new clothing, such as hats, shirts, pants and boots. This power however will not make armor or anything composed of metal.

**Feast:** This last power will allow the party to travel with less provisions. It creates enough food and wine to feed up to eight people one meal. The food and wine created is 'real' and provides the same amount of nourishment as normal food. Excess food and wine created with this power can be saved and will last as long as regular food.

This wand may be recharged and will have 5-50 charges when found.  
EPV: 3,000 GPV: 20,000

James Shipman

### Robar the Judger

Robar is a magical +2 Long Sword. It is intelligent and will speak its name if asked. It will also speak its name if its rightful owner calls for it, thus helping its master to find it.

The sword will consider any human its rightful owner if he manages to retain possession of the sword for 30 days. The sword will behave as a normal sword and will demonstrate no magical powers or abilities until the thirty day period has elapsed. In addition, if the owner is not at least half-human, the sword will refuse to function at all.

Once ownership has been established, Robar will have the following powers:

- If Robar is within eyesight of its owner and the owner utters the sword's name, the sword will teleport back to its owner's hand. (50% chance of success.)
- If its rightful owner loses more than 50% of his hit-points during combat, the sword will have a 30% chance of teleporting itself and its master up to 500 feet away if its name is called out.
- If the owner of the sword loses 50% of his remaining hit-points in a **single blow**, the sword will automatically attempt to teleport itself and its owner as described above.
- If the rightful owner dies, Robar will instantly teleport itself back to the spot where it was originally found by that owner. Even if the owner is later resurrected or reincarnated the sword will not return.

Jolly R. Blackburn

### Wand of Improved Magic Missiles

This wand is similar to the normal variety of Wand of Magic Missiles, but it is a little more potent.

This wand can be used to shoot up to four magic missiles at any one target, always hitting the target aimed at for 1d6+1 per missile.

The Wand of Improved Magic Missiles may be recharged, but when it is found it will have 5-50 charges.

EPV: 5,000 GPV: 40,000

James Shipman

**Zarba's Collar of Rings**

This magical device is a ringmail collar that is worn in a fashion similar to a necklace and drapes over the wearer's shoulders and chest. A person wearing the collar can place a magical ring of any variety on the collar and the ring will instantly and permanently become part of the collar. The ring will resize and restructure itself to appear as another link in the ringmail.

The collar can absorb up to 10 rings in this fashion. If the wearer wishes to use a particular ring's powers, he simply touches the collar and thinks of the ring he wishes to use.

Rings can be 'turned-off' in the same fashion until needed.

Zarba's Collar of Rings has a few inherent spells as well.

- **Friend to Canines.** Animals in the canine family will be attracted to the wearer. Trained attack-canines will only have a 25% chance of obeying an order to attack the wearer.

- **Protection Against Backstabs** (-3 to all attempts to backstab wearer.)

There is a major drawback to the collar. If an eleventh magical ring is placed on the collar, the collar instantly constricts and chokes the wearer to death.

When the collar is found, there is a 50% chance that there are already 1-4 magical rings on the collar.

Jolly R. Blackburn

**All Things Magic Contest No.#1**

**Deadline for Entries: December 15th**

Winners will have their entries published in All Things Magic and will receive a free SHADIS T-Shirt.

Enter as many times as you like. Any type of magic item may be submitted; rings, swords, potions etc.

**"SSSHHH!!**  
**There are some**  
**positively shocking**  
**things going on in**  
**the next issue of**  
**SHADIS!**  
**I sure wouldn't want**  
**to miss it."**





# The Market Platz

The MARKET PLATZ is a meeting place where readers pass along information, barter, trade and gossip. Readers are invited to place classified ads, announce group meetings, seek out other players etc.

Subscribers may place classified ads free of charge with a limit of one ad per issue and a maximum of 25 words. Non-subscribers can place ads for 10¢ per word with a limit of 25 words.

Convention announcements, group meetings and public service notices can be placed free of charge.

Ads will be placed on a first-come-first serve basis with Subscribers having priority.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### • WANTED •

Lead Minatures, (fantasy, military) produced prior to 1980.

I will pay top dollar.

Send List and Prices.

Please note manufacturer if known.

Damaged figures O.K. I do repairs.

Mark ASimes 1507 Lisbon

Evanville, IN

The Drexel Coalition wishes it known that all territories west of the Mississippi are hereby claimed in the name of Zerbeth the Great. I hereby decree that the official speed limit is now 98 miles per hour. Alcohol Sales are now legal on Sundays and all subjects will mail \$5.00 dollars to King Zerbeth in care of

Mark Drexel  
P.O. Box 176  
Joplin, MO.

Mail your taxes today and I'll make December 5th a Federal Holiday.  
This AD paid for by the Drexel Coalition

Hello to the center of the Universe. Hope things are okay with you. I miss you very much. Please call.

Andy

Donna,  
You hell-hacking bitch! Hope all is well with you. Please call me!

Andy

Q: What did the Barbarian say when he saw the Orcs coming?

A: "Oh my God! The Orcs are coming!!"

Q: What did the Barbarian say when he saw the Orcs coming with sunglasses on?

A: Nothing, he didn't recognize them.

## PBM CONTACTS

### • WANTED •

Players for the Alderac PBM game who wish to form a gang for mutual protection and profit-sharing activities.

Contact Player no.# S0991 at the Broken Toe Inn in Raga.

### • WANTED •

I would like to coordinate start-up options with at least five other players. Purpose: to build a party of characters with occupations and assets that compliment each other.

Contact Player no.# S0877 at the Blind Wench Inn, at Porary. Leave message with Bar-Keep.

### • WANTED •

Alderac PBM player with character who owns a good ship and crew. I have a mapto treasure. Passage and protection will reap you 30% of any realized profits.

Contact Staga at the Lion's Fang in Farrel. Will consider other offers.

## ORGANIZATIONS

Have you heard the senseless accusations?

*"Gaming is Satanic",*

*Gaming causes drug & alcohol abuse"*

*"Gaming causes violent crime"*

*"Gamers are a secret cult which dabbles in the occult and make unholy sacrifices"?*

**WE SAY IT'S A BUNCH OF HOOEY!**

If you are tired of right-wing fundamentalist disinformation slandering you and your hobby, maybe it's time you joined CAR-PGa.

*The Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games* is an international nonprofit organization of gamers like you who want to advocate the hobby to the public as fun, healthy family entertainment.

**SAY NO TO CENSORSHIP!!**

There are many organizations working hard to outlaw RPGs, live role-play, paintball games, video games and other innocuous hobbies. Their aim is to control the "acceptable" forms of entertainment in the world, and consequently, you!

We need your help; we need researchers, talented individuals, and professionals (such as police, educators, clergy, and doctors) to assist us in our efforts. We need *YOU*. For more information, please send 52¢ US postage or an IRC for our free information kit & application for membership; write to:

CAR-PGa Inc. International HQ  
Attn: Free Information Request  
8032 Locust Avenue  
Miller, IN 46403-1349 USA  
or call:

(219) 938-3382



## OTHER RAGS

### SELF PUBLISHER

Devoted to small press/self published materials. New Releases, Reviews, Cartoons etc.

Send: 75¢ for sample copy to:  
Dimstore Stories Productions  
P.O. Box 360041  
Strongsville Ohio

### EGG

Experimental Game Group  
Newsletter devoted to new game ideas.  
Features articles and rules on 'game philosophy'. Matrix-Games, Miniatures, RPGs etc.

Send \$7.00 for yearly subscription to:  
Chris Engle  
209 N. Clark  
Bloomington, Indiana 47408

### STAR SONG

A quarterly magazine of fantasy, science fiction and horror.

Send \$18.00 for year's subscription or \$5.00 for single issue (postage paid) to:  
Larry D. Kirby, III  
Rt. 2 Box 260-B  
St. Matthews, SC 29135

### THE SCROLL

Publisher: Sage Lore Productions, Inc.  
Editor: Bob Anderson

A quarterly magazine devoted to role-playing games. Covers both fantasy and sci-fi.

Yearly Subscription is \$10.00  
Write to:

Sage Lore Productions, Inc.  
P.O. Box 14616  
Portland, OR 97214

### SILVER GRIFFIN

\$2.85 per Issue.  
Subscription rate: (?)  
Editor: Delvin Janax

Covers role-playing games, fiction etc.  
Write to:  
?????

## • NOTICE •

The Alderac Group is attempting to compile a directory to small-press publications which deal with role-playing and/or fantasy, sci-fi.

We are also interested in forming a Guild of small-press publishers. Members of the proposed guild would help one another by sharing tips, advice etc. They would also help promote each other's publications through free advertising etc.

IF YOU KNOW OF ANY SELF-PUBLISHED/SMALL PRESS PUBLICATIONS DEALING WITH FANTASY OR RPGs THEY CAN BE POSTED UNDER 'OTHER RAGS' FREE OF CHARGE. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE GUILD PLEASE CONTACT THE EDITOR OF THIS MAGAZINE.

## ART SHOW-DOWN

### ATTENTION ARTISTS!

THE ALDERAC GROUP WILL BE EXPANDING IT'S PUBLICATION LINE SOON.

TWO NEW PRODUCTS WILL BE RELEASED JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1992.

WE ARE NOW SEEKING PROFESSIONAL ARTWORK TO GRACE THE COVERS OF THESE TWO PRODUCTS.

SUBMISSIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED NOW FOR CONSIDERATION.

THE ARTIST CHOSEN FOR EACH OF THESE PRODUCTS WILL RECEIVE 10% OF ANY PRODUCTION RUN. FOR EXAMPLE IF 500 COPIES ARE INITIALLY PRINTED YOU WILL RECEIVE 50 COPIES OF THAT WORK. IF FURTHER RUNS ARE MADE IN THE FUTURE YOU WILL RECEIVE 10% OF THOSE RUNS AS WELL. THIS ALLOWS THE ARTIST TO SELL THE PRODUCTS ON HIS OWN AND POCKET THE PROFITS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROMOTING HIS OWN ARTWORK.

BELOW ARE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PRODUCTS:

### • THE ALDERAC ATLAS

This will be an 8.5 x 11 inch book compiling maps of the Alderac Milieu. Original cover ideas are welcomed, however, I am looking for something that shows a character(s) studying a map in a wilderness setting. The cover if SHADIS no.#1 kind of shows the general idea.

### • (UNTITLED)

This work deals with equipment. It will be comprised of several decks of cards comprised of various weapons and equipment.

I would like a humorous cover depicting a character(s) heavily burdened with backpacks and equipment; knees buckling, pots and pans hanging on belts etc.

This work will be a Game Master's aid to dealing with equipment and encumbrance.

BOTH OF THESE PRODUCTS ARE NEARING COMPLETION AND COVER ART WILL BE NEEDED SOON.

WINNERS OF THE COMPETITION WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN SHADIS MAGAZINE ALONG WITH THE WINNING ARTWORK.

## SELF PUBLISHING

THE ALDERAC GROUP IS CURRENTLY INTERESTED IN EXPANDING IT'S PUBLISHING LINE.

IF YOU HAVE ORIGINAL MATERIAL THAT DEALS WITH ROLE-PLAYING OR ROLE-PLAYING AIDS WE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN PUBLISHING IT. OUR STAFF WILL EDIT, TYPESET AND EVEN PRODUCE THE FINISHED PRODUCT. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PROVIDE THE MATERIAL.

COMPENSATION AND OTHER DETAILS WILL BE NEGOTIATED.

JOIN THE GROUP!

Shadis Magazine © 1991

# SHADIS

The Fantasy Games Magazine

## BACK ISSUES

Hurry!

Get your copies of  
these highly  
acclaimed issues  
before they're gone  
**FOREVER!**

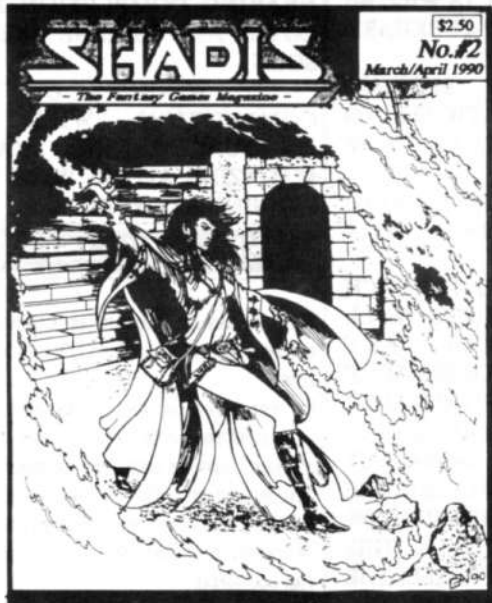
# SHADIS

\$2.00 No. #1  
PREMIERE ISSUE!

WITNESS THE BEGINNING OF A GREAT ADVENTURE!

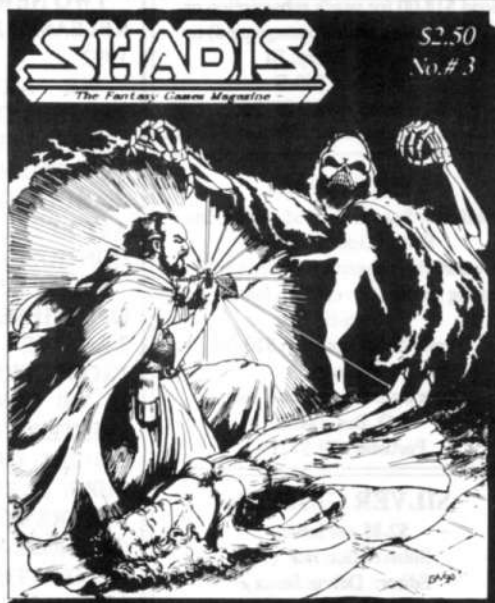


## SOLD OUT!



**ISSUE NO.#2 - \$3.50**

*The World Beyond Hack-n-Slash  
Criminal Justice for FRPGs  
Bones of Ruin*



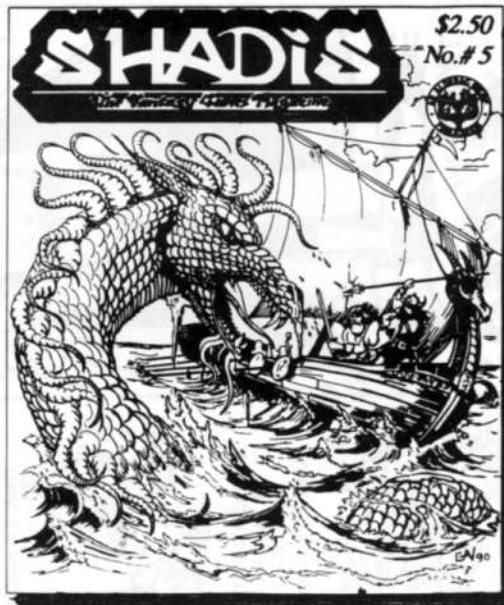
**ISSUE NO.#3 - \$3.50**

*Hungry Undead - a mini adventure  
Rustlers of the Night - new monsters  
Face Off! - Resurrection debate*



**ISSUE NO.#4 - \$3.00**

*Delving into the Greater Magicks  
a new magic system for AD&D  
Gary Gygax Interview*



**ISSUE NO.#5 - \$3.00**

*Plying the Trade Routes  
a system for maritime trade in FRPGs  
Kevin Stembleda Interview*

Comics, Baseball Cards & Supplies



LARRY LANIGAN

238-9975

**ATTENTION  
PUBLISHERS!  
SHADIS WILL SWAP  
AD SPACE  
AND ISSUES!**

**ADVERTISING SPACE  
AVAILABLE  
PLACE YOUR  
AD HERE FOR ONLY  
\$5.00**

INTERESTING FACT NO.#1

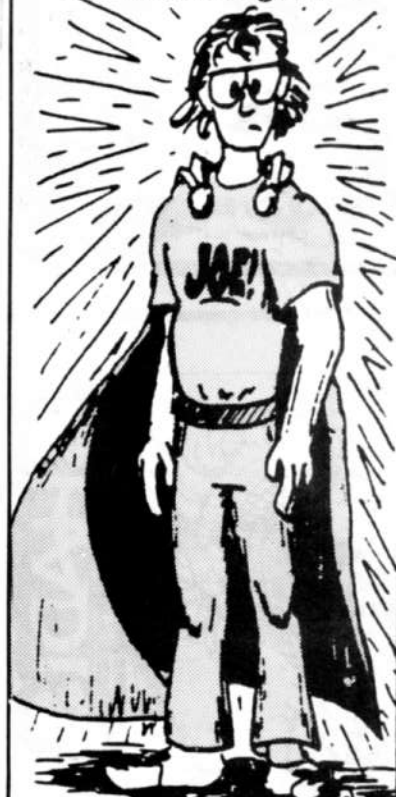


Women Who Read SHADIS can beat the tar out of  
Women who read ANY other Magazine!



# THE ADVENTURES OF JOE GENERO™

The Average Man!



THIS MONTH  
**JOE DIES!**

## HOW MANY PUNCHES DOES IT TAKE TO KILL JOE?

Call of Cthulu:  
**6**

Elapsed Time: 9.2 minutes!



Champions:  
**56**

Time: 5.6 minutes!



Shadowrun:  
**144!**

Time: 7.2 minutes!



Traveller:  
also **6**

Time: 0.6 minutes!



GURPS:  
**45**

Time: 75 minutes!



AD&D:  
**3**

Elapsed Time: 3 minutes!



## HOW LONG OF A FALL DOES IT TAKE TO KILL JOE?

Champions:  
**409 FEET!**

GURPS:  
**45 feet**

Call of Cthulu:  
**21 feet**

AD&D:  
a measly  
**10 feet**

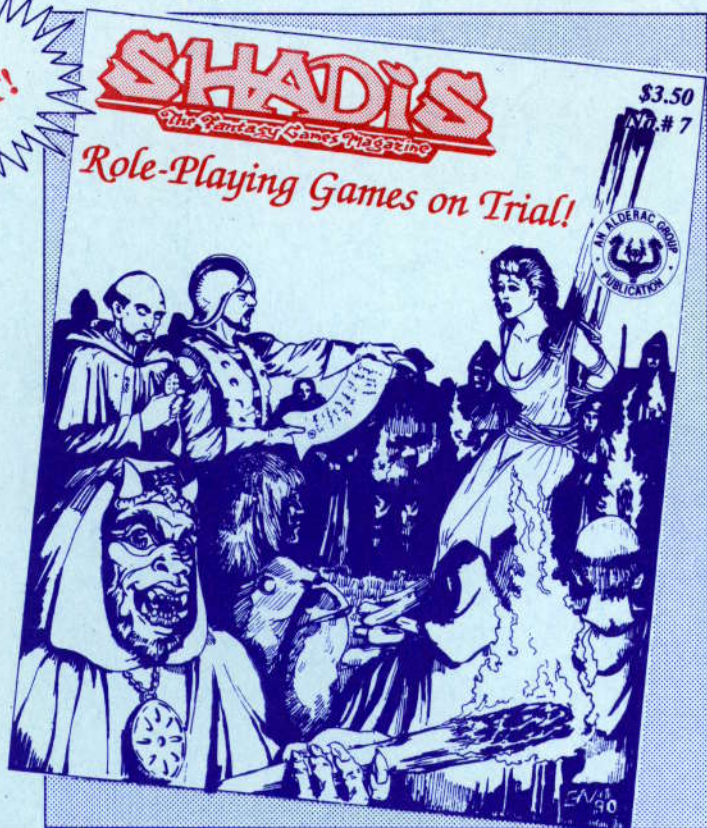
(He'd take no damage  
at all from 9 feet)



(NO STATS AVAILABLE FOR  
TRAVELLER OR SHADOWRUN)

# Coming Next Issue!

**DON'T  
MISS IT!**



**"DRUG  
RELATED!"**

**"IT'S JUST  
PLAIN EVIL!"**

**"POSSESSION!"**

**"CAUSES  
TEEN SUICIDE!"**

**"RELATED TO  
THE OCCULT!"**

**"SATANIC!"**

**"WARPS  
THE MIND!"**

**"INSPIRES  
VIOLENCE!"**

If you play role-playing games, you've undoubtedly confronted such accusations. What's a player to do? He knows such claims are ridiculous, but he doesn't have the facts or even enough information to attack these claims. How did these rumors start? Could there possibly be some basis of truth behind them? We are proud to announce that SHADIS #7 will be devoted to this topic. You will be presented with both sides of the issue;

**PRO and CON!**

Experts from both arenas will present their arguments, allowing the reader to decide. The purpose of this special issue is to arm role-players with facts and information.

**BUT DON'T WORRY**

Your regular SHADIS offerings will still be there. This is definitely a 'Don't-Miss-Issue' destined to become an invaluable reference for players and Game Masters alike.

Over 1 year of preparation and research went into the making of this issue!

**Coming January 15, 1992**



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"Warriors in Mortal Combat!"  
(Some in non-action poses)

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Female warriors, some in combat  
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