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M A G A Z I N E

April / May
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by *Stewart Wieck*

Some of you are going to be upset, but instead of the regular 60 pages, we are only giving you 56 pages of fantastic game material this issue. There are 60 pages in this magazine, but four of those were allocated to a pair of very important items.

We'll make this up to you. Next issue, there will be 60 pages plus a special insert from Lion Rampant (some Whimsy Cards -- a great role-playing device). Then, with issue #22, we will expand to 64 pages.

The very important items? If you open the magazine to the center fold, you'll see our reader survey and the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design's Origins Award Final Ballot. Here's the plan: fold the center staples back and pull out the center four pages, fill out the forms, fold the sheets on the lines, tape them shut, add a stamp on each, and drop them in the mail. The deadline for the ballot is June 8 and the reader survey doesn't have an official deadline (we'll take your comments whenever you're willing to offer them), but I encourage you to do this immediately. Also note that once these pages are removed, the art on page 28 is now next to the adventure it illustrates.

Why take the time to fill these forms out? That's simple.

In the case of WHITE WOLF Magazine Reader Survey, your answers and comments will help us determine the kind of material you want to see in WHITE WOLF Magazine. I will carefully scrutinize every survey which is returned and will pay careful attention to your requests and answers. I think WHITE WOLF Magazine is the best gaming magazine available, and if you want to enjoy it to the fullest, then please take a moment to tell us what you want to see in these pages.

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The Awards Ballot is being printed as a service to the game industry. Just like other industries (music, movies, television, etc.) honor outstanding achievement, the game industry recognizes excellence. This final ballot was prepared by the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design from a list of all possible entrants in each category. Only four to seven nominees make the final cut. I'm happy to announce that for the first time, WHITE WOLF Magazine made the cut to the Best Professional Adventure Gaming Magazine category. That's a long way from receiving the Strontium-90 Award (see RUNES in issue #17).

In my next RUNES, along with whatever else comes up, I'll share the choices of WHITE WOLF Magazine's panel of experts: Ken Cliffe (miniatures), Jim Trunzo (computer games), Richard Thomas (Graphic Presentation), and the Wiecks (everything else).

Contributor Bylines

Ken Cliffe: This Canadian pal of mine came through in a crunch and provided a pair of last minute maps. This is despite a new love interest (does she know about the statue, Ken?).

Albert Deschesne: Albert is no stranger do superhero art. He has done work for V&V, Champions, Supers and Enforcers. He also runs Majestic Graphics.

Kevin Murphy: A member of the freelance design group Jovialis, Kevin has written a variety of game material. And thanks, Kevin (you know why).

Sandy Petersen: Perhaps best known to gamers as the designer of Call of Cthulhu, Sandy is currently trying his hand at computer game design.

Greg Stafford: The President of Chaosium, Greg is a superb game designer and has several remarkable games to his credit, including Pendragon (a new edition is coming soon).

Lisa Stevens: The President of Lion Rampant, Lisa is more successful in RPGs than in PBMs. Her entire 5-man Blood Pit team, Lion's Pride, has fewer wins than but one of my own warriors.

Richard Thomas: The old man of the WW crew, Richard still manages to create wonderful art. At his age, it's remarkable he can still paint covers like this issue's tribute to the final installment of Demon Killer.

Larry Troth: A silent partner in the original 21st Century Games, Larry has valiantly stepped forward by creating Twenty-First Century Games to continue designing for his co-creation, Enforcers.

Jim Trunzo: Jim prepares computer game reviews for a number of magazines, but he sends his best prepared reviews to WHITE WOLF Magazine (right, Jim?).

Steve Tymon: Steve has been a regular fixture in the pages of WW since the first installment of Demon Killer appeared back in issue #13. The last installment runs this issue.

Stephan Wieck: He thinks he's going to make black belt in Kung-Fu by May '91. What a dreamer!

Stewart Wieck: That's me, and I encourage you to stop reading these non-sensical bylines and get to that reader survey and awards ballot.

Shawn Wilson: Since Shawn's a California resident, I can understand why Disk goes overboard in his plan to destroy the plants in Shawn's DC Heroes adventure.

Do it With Mirrors

a one-on-one adventure for Mayfair Game's DC Heroes

by Shawn Wilson
(characters by Albert
Deschesne)

DC is trademark DC Comics, Inc.

Player's Introduction

You wander the streets after dark. You fight for those who can't fight for themselves. You're a brown belt in karate. You're tough and fast. And you can't be killed.

In your short career you've fought criminals from muggers to drug lords. Even a few supervillians. They could hurt you, but you had the edge: they couldn't kill you. So they couldn't stop you.

Now, as you patrol the night, you start to wonder... are you getting too cocky? You haven't been beaten...

The sound of a blast distracts you. You run off to investigate, never bothering to finish that last thought.

You haven't been beaten. Yet.

Player Character

Diamondfist

DEX:9 STR:4 BODY:9
INT:7 WILL:7 MIND:5
INFL:7 AURA:5 SPIRIT:5
Initiative: 27 Hero Points: 85

Powers: Invulnerability:22,
Regeneration:6, Systemic Antidote:10

Skills (* = linked): Acrobatics:9*,
Charisma:7*, Detective:7*,
Gadgetry:7*, Martial Artist:9*,
Thief:9*, Vehicle:9*, Weaponry:9*.

Advantages: Connections: Police
(Low); The Street (High); Intensive
Training; Iron Nerves; Lightning
Reflexes.

Bonuses: Invulnerability affects
BODY, MIND, and SPIRIT.

Drawbacks: Age (17), Catastrophic
Irrational Attraction to Seeking Jus-
tice, Mistrust, Secret ID, Traumatic
Flashback (viewing dead bodies).

Alter Ego: Douglas Long

Motivation: Seeks Justice

Wealth: 5

Background: Doug Long dis-
covered that he was a mutant on the
terrible day he witnessed death of his
family. They were all dining at a
small restaurant that was suddenly
stuck by mob hitmen. All the patrons
died but Doug -- and he had been
struck by six bullets.

They'll pay for this, he vowed. In
the months that followed, he put on a
mask and fought his way through the
underworld until he'd located the
killers.

Unfortunately, coming face to face
with the hitmen was too much for
Douglas. He lost his temper and near-
ly killed the men. When the police
came, they tried and failed to arrest
him as well. Now he was wanted by
the police as well as the underworld.

Despite this, Douglas decided to
keep fighting crime. On his very next
case he saved the lives of two police
officers, Shade and Helmond. The
cops thanked him by offering to
secretly share information on crimes
with him. As long as he is never seen
in the company of the two policemen,
the criminals will know that neither
guns nor the law will protect them
from Diamondfist.

Personality: Because of his Invul-
nerability, Diamondfist usually begins
a fight by neglecting defense in favor
of offense. He's fought few super-
powered opponents, so he's likely to
be overly confident in his abilities
until the day he finds himself outnum-
bered or outclassed.

GM's Introduction

This is the day that Diamondfist
finds himself outnumbered and out-
classed. If he wants to think with his
fists during the first encounter with

Diamondfist



Disk, let him. With luck, you won't have to convince the player to use his head from then on.

Instead of Diamondfist, the player can substitute another character of roughly the same power level. The PC should be able to take one or two EV:15 attacks before being knocked out. Gadgetry and Detective skills are highly recommended.

Time is an important aspect of this scenario, because the PC has a deadline. The action starts at 3:00 am; try to keep track of the time from that point on. An exact counting is not necessary; just remind the player of every half-hour of game time that passes.

The setting can be any town or city with a substantial number of tall buildings, in the DC Universe or not. In fact, you can even substitute part of a real map for the one provided.

The Garden Plot

Nelson Brown, the high-tech mercenary known as Disk, maintains a secure telephone line for prospective clients. This number was used recently by Dr. Michael Randall, a researcher at En-

vironmental Research Enterprises. Randall is head of a project to produce a nutritious strain of wheat. The results looked promising, but when Randall tested the wheat he found it effectively inedible. With a week to go before the final presentation was due, Randall decided to have the samples -- growing in a greenhouse downtown -- destroyed.

After some searching, Randall learned Brown's phone number. Identifying himself only as "Mr. X," he hired the villain to steal or destroy the plants in the test greenhouse. Disk doesn't know or care who Mr. X is, or why he wants the plants destroyed. Only two things mattered to him: he was being well paid, and the crime allows Brown to showoff.

Brown had read of an astronomical observatory in the next state which was about to install a telescope which used twelve ten-foot mirrors. The mirrors are about to be transported through this town.

Disk formulated a plan. He and his three agents, the

Diskettes, would construct twelve metal frames, each one big enough to hold a mirror. Then they'll install the

frames on the roofs of twelve buildings in the neighborhood of the greenhouse.

The next part of the plan requires more hands, so Disk will hire a street gang for one night. When the truck delivering the mirrors passes through town, Disk's team will hijack it. Disk's operatives will split into three teams of four -- three gang members lead by a Diskette -- and take four mirrors to their frames on the rooftops.

When installed and properly oriented, the mirrors will reflect the light of the rising sun. At exactly 8:00 am, the beams from the twelve mirrors will converge on the greenhouse like a solar furnace, scorching the plants in less than ten minutes.

Villains

Disk

DEX:11 STR:4 BODY:6
INT:10 WILL:5 MIND:9
INFL:5 AURA:4 SPIRIT:5
Initiative: 28 Hero Points: 50

Skills (* = linked): Gadgetry:10*, Martial Artist:11*, Scientist:11*, Thief:11*, Weaponry:11*

Advantages: Intensive Training; Iron Nerves.

Drawbacks: Catastrophic Irrational Attraction to Money; Serious Irrational Attraction to toying with heroes; Secret ID. Miscellaneous Drawback: any stack of disk-gadgets counts as one object vs. Take Away attempts.

If any disk gets wet, the power cells discharge in a show of sparks that can be painful to the person holding it. (Attack Vulnerability: -3 CS vs. water-based attacks; Loss Vulnerability: All Equipment Powers, and BODY of Ribbon Disk, drop to 0 when wet.)

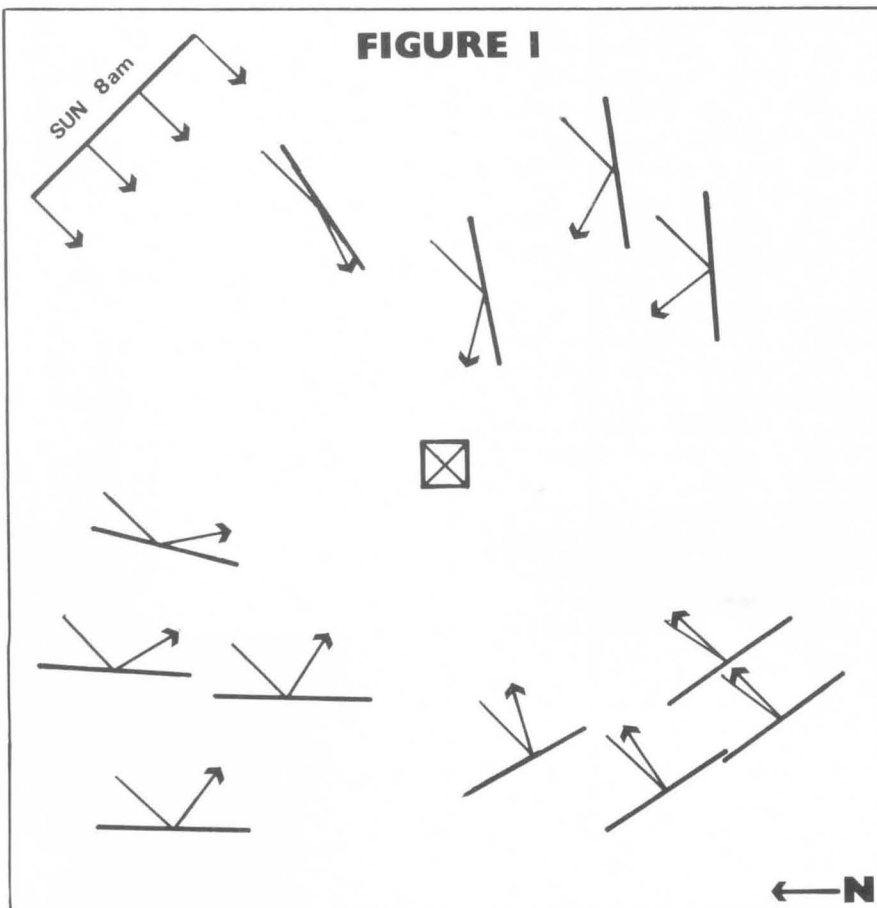
Equipment: Throwing Disks: [BODY:2 (except Ribbon Disk); Gliding:4, R#:5] The distance that these 4-inch disks can be thrown equals their Gliding APs plus the thrower's STR. Each disk comes in stacks of 10 and each stack is only a centimeter high; each disk (except for Razor and Stun Disks) can be used only once.

Electrodisk [Lightning:15]

Fire Disk [Flame Project:15]

Freon Disk [Ice Production:15, can only entrap target or do simple damage.]

Strobedisk [Flash:15]



Ribbon Disk [BODY:15. Ribbon unwinds to Grapple target.]

Grenade Disk [Bomb:15]

Plasma Disk [Energy Blast:15]

Razor Disk [EV:15, normally considered Killing Combat]

Smoke Disk [Darkness:15 The goggles in Disk's and the Diskette's costumes allow them to see in this darkness.]

Warp Disk [BODY:2, Warp:6, R#:2] This disk is useful for entering buildings and escaping dead ends. When stuck to a wall and activated, a warp 10 feet (0 APs) high is formed. Each disk in the stack of 10 can only be used once.

Stepping Disk: [BODY:2, Teleport:18, R#:5] A user can travel anywhere he knows by setting down one of these disks and stepping onto it. These disks --ten to a stack -- use a variation of the Warp Disk technology. Each can be used once.

Mini-Teleportation Disk [BODY:1, Teleport:7, Misc. Drawbacks: only teleports Disk and 10 lbs. of extra mass to his workshop.] Disk keeps this getaway device concealed, between his gum and cheek. When he presses it with his tongue, it sends him to his workshop. It only works once, and he can make no new ones during this adventure.

COSTUME: [STR:5, BODY:15, Flight:8, Reflection/ Deflection:15 Sealed Systems:15, R#:7] Disk's costume includes a pair of 12" Flying Disks that expand from the soles of the boots (their lift capacity is the costume's STR). The disk on his left wrist expands to become a reflective shield. If the shield is used to Block, it provides a -1 CS bonus due to its size.

Omni-Gadget Disks: ABCD, 10 APs, stack of 2. Disk has access to teleportation and anti-gravity, so his Omni-Gadgets can duplicate Teleport, Warp, Gravity Decrease, etc. Other than these, (and that fact that he can fit all that technology into disks a millimeter thick), his gadgets must have a more "real-world" explanation. (E.G., Telescopic Vision could be provided by high-tech binoculars. Illusion would be limited to holograms and sound effects. Animate Image is right out.)

Walkie Talkie

Alter Ego: Nelson Brown

Motivation: Thrill Seeker

Wealth: 15

The limitation on Disk's Omni-Gadgets applies to anything else he (or the PC) may build in his workshop. His technology was bought and stolen from other sources, so although he can modify science-fictional gadgets, he can't invent shape-shifter pills or a transmutation ray.

Diskettes (3)

DEX:5 STR:2 BODY:4

INT:3 WILL:2 MIND:3

INFL:3 AURA:2 SPIRIT:3

Initiative: 13 Hero Points: 10

Skills: Martial Artist:5*, Weaponry:5*, Vehicle:5*

Advantages: Attractive; Connection: Disk (High)

Equipment: COSTUME [BODY:15]

CARGO DISK [STR:7, BODY:11, Flight:6, R#2] These disks are eight feet across and can carry up to three tons. A four-inch lip around the rim keeps objects on, and there are holes for lashing cargo. The disk is piloted by a control panel that stands at chest-level. Because the disk is open to the elements, any attempt to push its Flight may knock passengers right off. (Make an Action check: Passenger's AV/EV is his DEX or Acrobatics skill; OV/RV is the flight speed. Positive RAPs show that the rider stays on.)

Omni-Gadget Disk: ABCD, 10 APs

Stun Disks: stack of 10 [BODY:2, EV:15, does Bashing damage only.

Teleport Tracer: [BODY:1, Teleport:7] This very limited device is designed to let the Diskettes follow Disk when he teleports. If Disk uses any of his Teleport Disks (including the miniature one), it sends out a signal (14 AP range) giving its destination to the Tracers. The Diskette may then teleport next to him if she chooses.

Motivation: Mercenary

Wealth: 4

Each Diskette carries a copy of an itinerary which lists the locations to install mirrors and at what time.

Gang Members (9)

DEX:3 STR:2 BODY:3

INT:3 WILL:2 MIND:2

INFL:3 AURA:2 SPIRIT:2

Initiative: 9 Hero Points: 5

Weaponry: 4

Occupation: Thugs

Motivation: Mercenary

Wealth: 3

These juvenile delinquents were hired by Disk for this one job. All

Disk



carry switchblades, three have .45 pistols and one has a mini-Uzi sub-machinegun.

Ecounter 1: Hijack

Read this to the player:

"You're patrolling the streets tonight. You've already slept most of today and your first class isn't until noon, so you can keep going until nine. Now it's almost three a.m.

"You're near the corner of Eighth and Green when you hear an explosion and a crash."

Have Diamondfist make a Perception Check vs. OV/RV:9 to determine how well he hears the sound and how quickly he finds the source. Read the next part aloud; when you reach a parenthesis, read the first selection if he received an "N" result, and the second if he got positive RAPs.

"You approach the sound and you see a medium-sized truck that's crashed into the curb. An oblong hole is in the windshield, and another in the grille. The driver seems conscious but dazed.

"There's no traffic, but at the rear end of the truck are (about ten/about a dozen) people. Most are clearly street thugs. The rest are wearing bright red-and-white costumes. A costumed man is floating two feet above the ground on a pair of silver disks.

"The others are unloading a stack of four ten-foot wide circular pieces of

glass from the truck. On the ground are some round platforms. As you watch, four of the figures step onto a platform and the whole thing rises into the air. The floating man attaches the frames around the glass to a hook beneath the floating platform, and the whole thing flies off to the south.

"The floating man and (four, eight) others are left. They don't see you."

Diamondfist is 4 APs from the truck. Disk and one or two Diskettes, three or six gangsters, and one or two Cargo Disks remain.

The mirrors are ten feet (0 AP) in diameter, four inches thick, and weigh 1300 pounds (5 APs). They aren't too fragile (BODY:5), but most attacks striking the mirrored surface will ruin it. The exceptions are light attacks such as lasers or Flash; these will be reflected at full intensity. In fact, if a light-wielding attacker fires at his target's reflection in the mirror, the beam will bounce toward the target with no penalty -- and may get a blindside bonus!

Disk intends to leave with the last of the Cargo Disks.

If Diamondfist accosts the crooks, or if someone sees him lurking about, Disk will fight the PC in order to allow the others to get away with the mirrors. Once they are gone, or Diamondfist is incapacitated, Disk will break off the fight and fly away.

If Diamondfist manages to capture any of the crooks, even Disk, he still

has learned what the plan is and stop it. The captured Disk will, at his first opportunity, pull a variation of the old poison-in-the-fake-tooth trick. In this case, though, he activates the miniature Teleportation Disk.

Captured enemies will respond to Interrogation as follows (remember, they are Opposed to Diamondfist):

Gang Members

RAPs (Information)

1 (The boss is named Disk He hired us to do this job tonight.)

1/2 RV (We're just supposed to go with the girls. We're supposed to put those mirrors in some places. I don't know where, honest!)

RV (Oh yeah, I remember now.. [He tells the four locations where he was to install mirrors.]

Diskettes

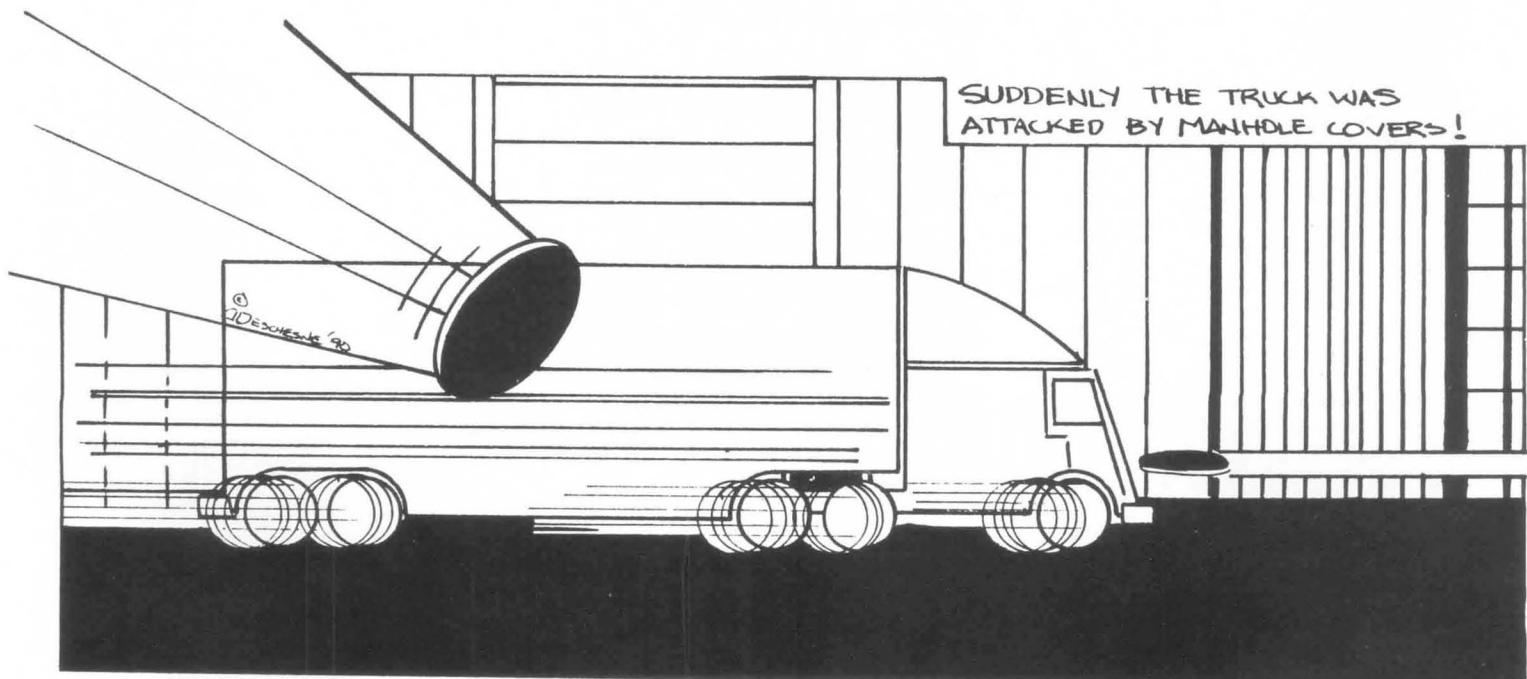
RAPs (Information)

1 (We're supposed to set up the mirrors [give locations and orientation.]

1/2 RV (There are three teams of us. We hired the Wolves to help us.)

RV (The mirrors are supposed to concentrate sunlight on something. Even four mirrors are enough to do some damage. Disk didn't tell us what the target is.)

The truck driver is pinned in his seat by a manhole cover. It only weigh about 100 lbs. (1 AP), but he doesn't have leverage to move it. He won't



move until paramedics come, but he'll gladly tell his story:

He was delivering twelve mirrors from the optics manufacturing plant to an observatory in the next state; they're to be used for a new telescope. When he drove down this block, two manhole covers suddenly flew off the street and hit the truck. One wedged him into his seat, and the other crashed into the engine compartment, stopping the vehicle. He caught glimpses of the rest of what happened in his rear view mirror.

If the PC asks for more information, treat it as an Interrogation check with the modifier for Friendly (Total OV/RV: 0/0).

Truck Driver

RAPs (Information)

N (Lessee; I saw the guy in the red-and-whites; there were girls dressed the same way as him, and they came on those flying saucers. There were three of the saucers -- there must have been three girls too.)

A (There must have been twelve or thirteen of them altogether. And the flying guy kept calling out the time; "Three-oh-five, three-oh-eight," like that. Must have been on a schedule. One of them said if they fell behind that they wouldn't be done by eight.)

If the player says he's "looking around," he'll find any disks that were left behind.

Using Detective skill on the items here will yield the following results: [OV/RV:7 For each]

Manhole Covers

RAPs (Information)

N (The covers have a familiar-looking silver disk attached to the underside.)

1 (These covers don't quite fit the manholes on this street).

1/2 RV (The pattern on the covers hasn't been used by the local utility company since about 1915, when they only serviced the industrial section of town.)

RV (The serial numbers "82-Rose" mean that the covers had been installed near the intersection of 82nd St. and Rosecrans Ave.)

Abandoned Disks: (any on the street, including commandeered cargo-disks.)

1 (One of these disks has a tarnished spot where it touched the ground.)

1/2 RV (The tarnish was caused by a rain puddle on the street; yet the disk had been there only briefly.)

RV (These disks must be very sensitive to water.)

If the PC uses Identify Gadget on the abandoned disks and gets more than 1/2 RV, he will learn that the disks are useless once they've gotten wet. The disks under the manhole covers [BODY:2, Gravity Decrease:10] were radio-controlled to fly into the truck.

If Diamondfist doesn't call the police or an ambulance, a squad car will arrive at about 3:30. Diamondfist knows that in this neighborhood, the officers will be his friends Shade and Helmond. Remember, they don't know his secret identity, and no one must see them talking to him.

If the player says he's trying to get more information, go to Encounter 2. If he wants to go to the industrial district, go to Encounter 3.

Encounter 2: Contacts

Diamondfist should try to find out more about what's going on by asking around. Here's what he can learn from:

Shade and Helmond: "A firm called Environmental Research Enterprises received a note yesterday. It said 'I am hereby cancelling the Alpha-Triticum Project as of 8:00 tomorrow morning. Don't bother trying to stop me. You can't. -- Disk.'"

"ERE has four facilities in the area, and we've got men watching them all. They've got an office building about five blocks east of here, an greenhouse on the roof of a office tower about a mile south, a hydroponics lab in [the next town north], and a test farm in the suburbs 10 miles south.

"The lab boys will be here soon, so you'd better get going. Give us a call in an hour and we'll let you know what they've found."

If Diamondfist calls them back at the station, they tell him the complete information on either the manhole covers or the abandoned disks. Also, read this:

"They also ran tests on the note. The paper's old, like its been sitting around a long time. And the watermark is registered to the Baxter Paper Co. Baxter's been out of business for about two years."

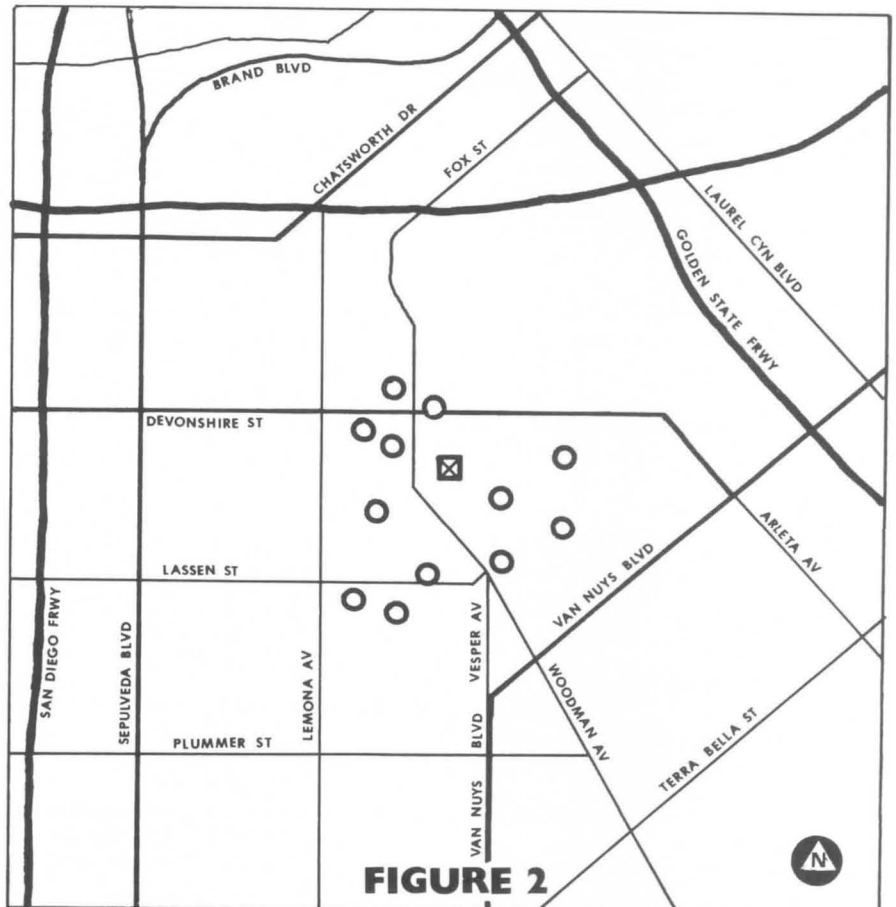


FIGURE 2

Street Informants: This is an Interrogation check vs. a Friendly source (OV/RV: 3/2, -1 CS).

RAPs (Information)

1 (You know that gang, the Wolves? Some guy in a costume paid them to do a job with him tonight.)

5 (I heard tell of a flying saucer, only it was just about two, three yards across, and some guy was standing on it. It was down on Rosecrans Avenue, near the factories.)

Over 5 (In fact, it landed on a factory roof. That old paper factory. Can't remember its name. It's near 80th, 85th street, somewhere around there.)

Mirror Manufacturer: Closed until 8am. No info.

Observatory: There are two researchers here who are more than willing to talk.

"We're about to install an innovative telescope. Most astronomical telescopes use a huge mirror to gather light, but those mirrors are very hard to construct and move. The new telescope will use a dozen smaller mirrors, only 10 feet in diameter, linked by a computer to move together. They're very valuable -- about \$400,000 each -- so we can't afford a ransom, but no one buys hot telescope mirrors, so I can't imagine why anyone would steal them. Listen, if you see them, make sure nothing touches the surface, okay? It's real easy to ruin them.

Telephone Book: The PC can learn the addresses of the various ERE facilities here.

Environmental Research Enterprises (any facility): Until

9:00, only the night guards will be here. Because of the threat, there will be at least four guards and two police at each facility. The guards have no way of contacting any of the executives or employees of ERE, but if they are Persuaded (RAPs= RV), they will put the PC in touch with the chief of security, who can provide the same information that Shade and Helmond can.

Encounter 3: Workshop

The industrial district is comprised of factories, warehouses, and some vacant lots. Disk's workshop is deep in the center of the old Baxter Paper Company, near the corner of 82nd St. and Rosecrans Ave. Baxter is a sprawling, one-story vacant plant, nearly a full block long on each side.

If Diamondfist looks for the two coverless manholes, he will find one in the intersection and the other near Baxter.

A successful Perception Check (OV/RV:5) will reveal the hum of a generator inside what is supposed to be a vacant building. If he goes inside, read this:

"You enter the deserted factory. Once your eyes adjust to the dark, you see that the building is a warehouse. The floor is dotted with large machines. There are a few offices. One, in the center of the building, has a light on."

The door to this office is not locked, but it is booby-trapped. A Perception Check (OV/RV:10) reveals that the doorknob is coated with a contact poison (Poison Touch: 16). Disk himself opens the door by ignoring the knob and pushing on the door.

Inside, Diamondfist can see that Disk has converted this set of offices

into a workshop and occasional living quarters. There's a workbench, drafting table, personal computer, bed, refrigerator, a wall map of the city, a bookshelf of technical texts, a Frisbee collection, and a TV, VCR, and CD player. Diamondfist can take a closer look at each of these if the player desires.

Computer: The computer is a standard system with modem and some fancy security software, making it difficult to trace from over the phone lines (Gadgetry vs. OV/RV:15). However, none of the security applies to someone using the computer, so the OV/RV at the keyboard is only 4.

A successful "hacking" roll will produce a series of communiques between Disk and a client calling himself "Mr. X." It reveals that Disk was hired a week ago to destroy some plants in the experimental greenhouse belonging to Environmental Research Enterprises. If the character gets positive RAPs in Perception Check vs. OV/RV:9, he notices that one time, Mr. X refers to ERE as "here."

CD Player, TV, VCR: The entertainment center has a pressure-sensitive plate underneath a throw rug. (Perception Check vs. OV/RV:11 to notice the wires from beneath. A device in Disk's costume automatically disarms the trap when he enters.) When Diamondfist steps on the rug (as he must do to take a close look), the CD player will fling Razor Disks at him (BODY:2, AV:7, EV:15, Initiative:30), for three phases. Nobody touches Disk's CD player.

Drafting Table: This table is cluttered with plans and papers. On top is a hand-drawn diagram. (Fig. 1; copy it or cut it out and give to the player.) Stuck to the top of the table is a note: "Find way to waterproof equipment before Seattle job. It's always raining there."

Wall Map: Twelve buildings are circled in magic marker; another has an X through it. These are the mirror sites and the greenhouse. Copy or cut Fig. 2 and show it to the player.

Workbench: There are half a dozen disassembled disks here. If Diamondfist wants to try to assemble and use any, read the names to the



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player (but not the information in parenthesis) of the disks:

Shield (BODY:15, Reflection/Deflection:15) A detachable version of the shield on Disk's costume, this one also gives a -1 CS bonus to Blocks due to its size.

Flying, pair (BODY:2, Flight:8) A detachable version of the disks built into Disk's costume. (Because these disks clip onto the user's shoes, pushing the Flight is hazardous (see CARGO DISKS)).

Ribbon, stack of 10 (BODY:20, Gliding:4)

Stun, stack of 10 (BODY:2, EV:15; Gliding:4, Bashing Damage only)

Omni-Gadget (ABCD, 10 AP)

Teleport Tracer (BODY:2, Teleport:7, Limitations: (see Diskettes: Equipment))

The PC need not make a Build Gadget roll to assemble the disks, but he must make an Identify Gadget check to see he can use it. If he fails a check, say that he can't tell which frobozz chip is supposed to go in that disk's reblimator, and must choose another. When he succeeds at a roll, tell him the information in parenthesis. There are only enough parts here to construct three of the sets of disks. Diamondfist may find himself with more than one opportunity to examine a type of gadget (for instance, he may have picked up a used Omni-Gadget after the first encounter, and another herein the workshop.) A second attempt to Identify a type of gadget gets a -1 CS bonus to the OV/RV.

If the PC wishes to use the workshop to build a device of his own, let him do so, but you may want to remind him of his time constraints.

(Note that the APs of the workshop are too low to build most of Disk's equipment. Remember, he gets the vital components elsewhere, and only repairs or modifies them here.)

Encounter 4: Up on the Roof

Diamondfist will eventually go to the rooftops, either to disable the mirrors or to capture the crooks. Each rooftop is 2-3 APs per side. The mirrors are bolted into upright metal frames and they cannot be moved or re-aimed without tools. The three

teams are carrying tools which Diamondfist may appropriate.

A mirror need not be adjusted very far in order move its away focus from the greenhouse. Covering a mirror with a tarpaulin or paint would work too, but paint could never safely be removed from the surface.

If the adventure is going too well for the hero, here's a way to slow him down and make it more interesting: As a precaution against the mirrors being discovered and removed before 8:00, Disk has attached a clearly visible and plainly labeled Grenade Disk to the base of each mirror. Any movement will set it off. (AV:10, EV:15, Explosive Effect.) Disarming the disk requires Military Science (Demolition) or Thief (Security Systems) vs. OV/RV:10. The first attempt takes 8 APs of time, and attempts on subsequent grenades takes only 4 APs. (Police Bomb Squad members have Military Science:4, body armor of RV:5, and 5 Hero Points apiece.

They get team-attack bonuses for 6 persons.) A failed roll means that the grenade explodes.

When and where Diamondfist encounters the crooks depends on their itineraries and his knowledge of them. Actually, its too much trouble to keep time precisely, especially with the hero doing his best to upset the schedule. Instead, play it by ear. Keep in mind that once a team is aware of him, they'll call the others. Disk will have a personal score to settle with the hero who not only stole his devices and ruined his scheme, but didn't have the good sense to stay down after Disk beat him up the first time.

Here's one way to play it. Say that Diamondfist searches the rooftops until he sees a team putting up a mirror. It's after 7:30, so the GM rules that this is the last stop for the team. As Diamondfist attacks, the Diskette contacts the others on her walkie-talkie. Diamondfist wins, but the other

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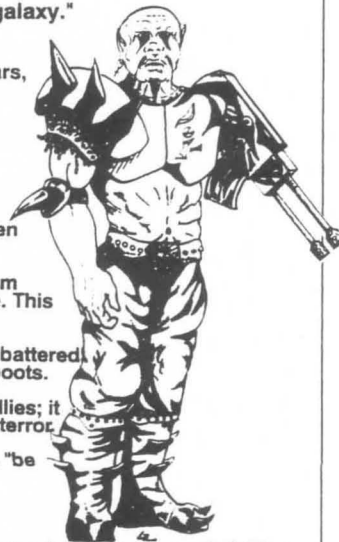
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teams get together and rush him on their Cargo Disks. If the hero somehow wins again, Disk will come gunning for him next.

Or Diamondfist may risk arrest by calling the police to head off the teams on the roofs. Disk appears and fights Diamondfist while police in a helicopter battle the Diskettes and the punks. If Disk starts to lose, he'll teleport to his workshop. The Diskettes will use their tracers and blink out right after him. If Diamondfist has a tracer, he can go too, and fight the four of them. If he hasn't got a tracer, he can fly to the workshop on one of the Cargo Disks.

Encounter 5: Greenhouse

Because of the threat, there will be four armed security guards and two policemen at the greenhouse at all times. If Diamondfist appears, remember his Mistrust drawback. The guards and police will consider him a dangerous wild card who could be on either side -- unless he comes in wearing Disk's equipment, in which case they'll suspect that the two are in this

together. (They will be Suspicious to him in the former case, and Opposed in the latter.)

If he gains their trust and explains the plan, they will be willing to try to deal with the sunlight beams that will strike the greenhouse at 8:00 am. The wheat itself is in 20 x 60 x 1 foot flats filled with earth. They're too big and heavy to move out in time.

The light will come from all directions, so it's hard to block. Let the player make suggestions first, but some possible protections are: use the greenhouse's sprinklers and misters to keep the air and plants moist; open all the vent windows, or even demolish the roof, to let the heat escape (an expensive solution); cover the plants with tarpulins; cloud the air by burning rags or paper; paint the greenhouse walls or cover them with boards or cloths. Painting the greenhouse will take four man-hours.

At full intensity, the heat needs 7 APs of time to scorch the wheat. The light will be hot enough to raise the temperature even with the precautions mentioned above. Each of those measures will add 1 AP to the necessary time. Disabling six of the mirrors will also add 1 AP, and disabling nine of them will add 2 APs. When the time needed reaches 10 APs, the plants are safe: as the sun moves, the beams will not stay focused on the greenhouse long enough.

If the PC finds some way of setting up a continuous reflective barrier -- such as aluminum foil, or some of the mirrors themselves -- the plants are automatically saved.

If Diamondfist is at the greenhouse between 8:00 and the end of the crucial time, don't just tell him whether or not the wheat is going to fry. Describe what happens. Make it dramatic. The whole building fills with light, the temperature rises slowly at first, then faster. "Ten minutes, 85 degrees...fifteen minutes, 100...the wheat doesn't look too good; better try the sprinklers too..."

Endgame

If Disk is captured, he'll try to buy some leniency for himself by volunteering the fact that he was hired by an ERE employee (see Encounter 3: Computer). Then when the wheat is

tested as scheduled, Randall will be arrested.

If the wheat was destroyed and never tested, Diamondfist can try to learn who hired Disk. (Remember, he may know that it was an insider.) Randall, the head of the Alpha-Triticum project, will be very "helpful", willing to show the hero phony notes that show that the project was succeeding. In the course of his investigation, the hero can learn that Randall's career was riding on this project, that he'd been under a lot of pressure, and that there may have been a second set of notes. If Diamondfist gets too close to the truth, Randall will hire some thugs or another supervillain to silence him. In the end, Randall may even plead with the hero: the greenhouse was insured, and Randall knows where he went wrong with the first crop. All he needed was an excuse to start over, and no one was hurt. (Actually, several people may have been hurt during this adventure, but Randall won't think of that.)

Capturing Disk isn't crucial to saving the mirrors and the greenhouse; in fact, the PC should get a Hero Point bonus for accomplishing it at all. If Disk gets away, you can make his capture the goal of another adventure.

If any of the mirrors were ruined, they can be replaced (they were insured too), but at the cost of several months reconstruction time.

Hero Point Awards:

Level of opposition: Superior 20
 Critical points:
 Discover that greenhouse is target 3
 Discover how greenhouse was to be attacked 1
 Area of consequence: local 3
 Severity: Permanent nonfatal 10

Total Standard Award: 37

(If mirrors were booby-trapped, Severity was Fatal. Add 5 points to Standard Award.)

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Expanding Skills in Enforcers

a new skill system for Twenty-First Century Games' Enforcers

by Larry Troth

The Enforcers game system was designed to be expandable. Like most games, it's not perfect, so I've developed a more useful skill system for the game. Presented here is the basis for the new skill system. Many more skills may be defined, but these examples should give you a good starting point for expanding your Enforcers campaign.

The change involves modifications to the Training Bonus System. Consider the following: 1) you may spend 1 Creation Point (CP) to buy two Training Bonus points and 2) Training Bonus points bought with CPs may only be spent on skills, unlike bonus points gained through game experience which may also be spent to a) increase a statistic or b) add 1 to any power's DAM#, or c) increase a skill's BCS by 10%. A Training Bonus point gained from CPs may also be used to increase a skill's BCS by 10%.

Skills remain optional in Enforcers, but they can help develop a character. The number of skills that a character may start with is limited to the character's original, unmodified INT roll. However, there is no limit to the number which may eventually be learned. Characters may also purchase skills after they have earned more experience (see below).

Each skill has a BCS. Refer to the adjacent table to determine which attribute is the BCS for a given skill. The maximum chance of success is 95%. If your BCS is less than that amount, you may apply Training Bonus points to the skill in order to improve it. If the 10% from Training Bonus would make your BCS greater than 95%, then set that skill at 95%. Please note that you must spend CPs to buy your initial skills.

Skills that a character starts the game with are assumed to have been acquired before the campaign begins. Time must be spent to learn any new skills. This is also why a skill does not go up when (and if) an attribute does. A skill must



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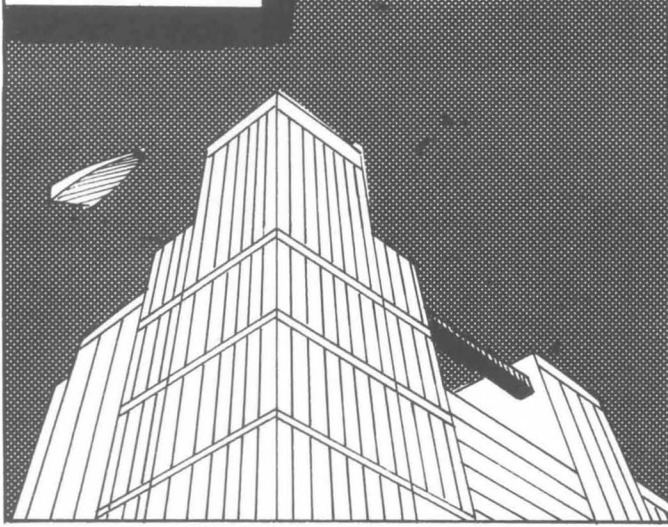
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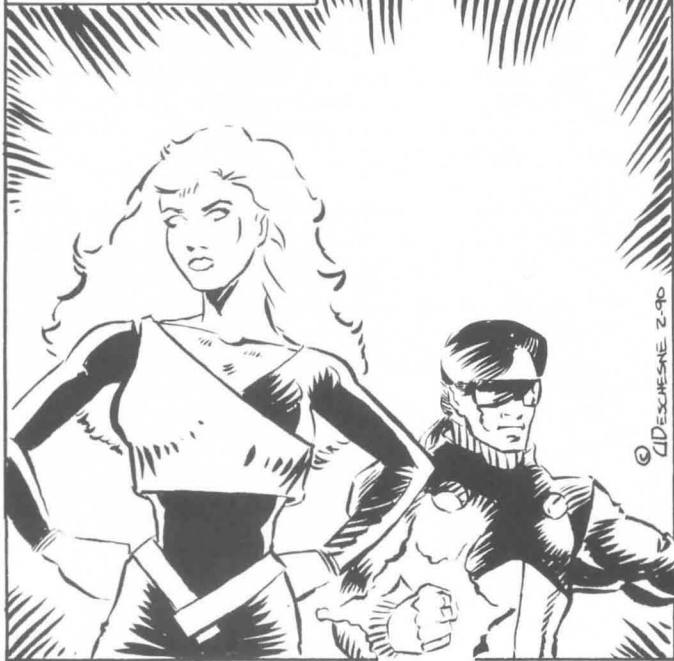
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Enforcers Skill Table

| Skill | STAT | CPs |
|-----------------------|------|-----|
| Acrobatics | ADX | 3 |
| Acting | INT | 1 |
| A.I. Specialist | INT | 2 |
| Animal Training | INT | 1 |
| Anti-terrorist | INT | 2 |
| Archaic Weapons* | ADX | 3 |
| Archaeology | INT | 1 |
| Automated Systems | INT | 2 |
| Communications | INT | 2 |
| Computer Prog. | INT | 2 |
| Computer Security | INT | 2 |
| Construction | INT | 1 |
| Criminology | INT | 2 |
| Dodging Defense | ADX | 5 |
| Demolitions | INT | 2 |
| Electric Design | INT | 2 |
| Electric Surveillance | INT | 2 |
| Extortion | INT | 1 |
| Field Engineer | INT | 2 |
| Gymnastics | ADX | 3 |
| Info Extraction | INT | 2 |
| Installation Security | INT | 2 |
| Journalism | CM | 2 |
| Law | INT | 1 |
| Leadership | CM | 1 |
| Lobbying | CM | 1 |
| Martial Arts* | ADX | 3 |
| Medical | INT | 2 |
| Military Strategist | INT | 2 |
| Modern Weapons* | ADX | 3 |
| Mystic Lore | INT | 1 |
| Pilot | ADX | 2 |
| Robotic Dsgn./Rep. | INT | 2 |
| Salesmanship | CM | 1 |
| Smuggler | INT | 1 |
| Space Pilot | INT | 2 |
| Street Wise | INT | 1 |
| Terrorist | INT | 2 |
| Thief | ADX | 2 |
| Tracking | INT | 1 |
| Trucking | ADX | 1 |
| Vessel Navigation | INT | 1 |
| Wilderness Survival | INT | 1 |
| Xeno-biologist | INT | 1 |

* = skills which affect HTH combat

be studied/practiced in order for it to improve. Training Bonuses applied to skills also represent this training time.

The time required to learn a new skill is equal to the initial skill's BCS in game weeks. Example: Clyde has an INT of 68 and wishes to learn tracking. He spends 1 CP to buy the skill, and must spend 68 game weeks training to reach 68% BCS. During this time, he may use the skill, but only at a % equal to the number of weeks spent training so far. After training to the maximum BCS, Training Bonuses may be spent to raise the skill to 95%.

With the original skill rules, certain skills were needed if a character wanted to use weapons without a reduction in ABCTH. This has been expanded under these rules to increase the character's ABCTH with weapons if a high enough skill level is attained.

Archaic and modern weapon skills should be applied as follows: when using a weapon, the formula for determining the additional adjustment to BCTH is $((\text{skill}\% + 5) / 3) - 20$. Example: you have archaic weapons skills at 50% and pick up a samurai sword. Applying the formula, $((50 + 5) / 3) - 20$, yields an adjustment of -2%. A person without this skill would automatically be -18%!

Characters skilled in acrobatics, dodging defense, or gymnastics will receive a defense bonus as follows: $\text{skill}\% / 4$. The bonus may be applied to any attacks the GM deems appropriate.

Martial Arts note: In addition to the ABCTH adjustment for this skill, the skill % is added to DAM+ as a bonus to indicate the additional damage that martial artists can inflict in HTH combat.

After a skill reaches 95%, specialties may be purchased. Example: Joe has Acting 95%, and decides to enhance that by taking the skill Acting: Television. This would provide additional ability to succeed in TV situations. Any time the Joe's acting skill is used on TV, the BCS is the sum of the skills. Because of the almost limitless number of skill specializations, it is up to the GM to determine if one is reasonable. Specializations cost 1 CP to purchase.

Skills that relate to HTH may also be specialized. Specific weapons may be studied, martial arts techniques perfected, and so on. These skills add their BCS to your ABCTH.

When a skill is used, the GM must determine the difficulty involved. The level of difficulty is subtracted from the BCS. The new BCS is the result. Skills roll are made on d100; 96% and up always fails and 5% and down always succeeds. At the GM's discretion, attempts to perform actions which require a skill the character does not have may only succeed 1% of the time.

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Superhero Game Reviews

reviews of SHRPG products from two publishers

New editions of well-known superhero RPGs have been released in the past several months. *Champions* and *DC Heroes* have both received facelifts.

Iron Crown Enterprises

Champions (reviewed by Ken Cliffe)

publisher: I.C.E. Inc., PO Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA 22902

design: George MacDonald, Steve Peterson and Rob Bell.

price: \$28

"With these rules and your pencils, paper and imagination, you can recreate the fanciful world of the comic books and adventure novels." But, as the authors say, "Beware! *Champions* is not a game for the weak of heart. It takes guts, intelligence and imagination to succeed."

They aren't kidding. While this 4th edition of the game organizes, clarifies and redefines many of the rules previously published, *Champions* continues to suffer from the same ailments it's had since its inception.

The 352-page hardbound book is impressive and sports an attractive cover by George Perez. For \$28 you certainly get a lot. The book is divided into three sections: the Rulesbook, Sourcebook and Campaign Book.

The Sourcebook provides a wealth of information both for the player on how to bring life to his character and for the GM on how to deal with different kinds of players. This section alone is a value and would prove useful to GMs and players of any SHRPG. The Campaign Book includes two adventures to start the cam-

aign and offers profiles of numerous super-powered NPCs, some of which *Champions* players will already know from the earlier rules.

The Rulesbook is the heart of the package. It contains all the mechanics necessary to play the game, but cannot be used without the Sourcebook, which puts all the rules in perspective. The Rulesbook incorporates many rules from previously published *Champions* products, including material from "Adventurers Club." Some material even comes from Hero's other games, like *Danger International* and *Fantasy Hero*.


Yes, this means that the book contains a lot of rules. One hand, this may be a blessing, particularly to those who enjoy highly complex, realistic games. On the other hand, gamers who enjoy relatively simple, fast-paced games may be turned off by the


deluge of technicalities incorporated into *Champions*. You know which sort of gamer you are and that will probably determine whether you will enjoy this game or not.

Character creation in *Champions* is based on a point system. Players spend points to buy attributes, skills, talents and powers. Nothing is chosen randomly. This character creation system is one of the most extensive and comprehensive I've ever seen. Likewise, the combat system covers virtually every possible contingency and valiantly represents many of the combat moves we see comic books.

However, character creation and combat are troubled by the extent of realism they seek to achieve. Efforts to make rule mechanics and powers all-pervasive and realistic (at least by comic book standards) result in an overcomplication of the rules. Techni-


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cal terms and modifiers of all kinds reduce the potential for fast-paced action. They also make mastering the game difficult, especially if you hope to play strictly by the book.

For some, Champions' complex combat rules may pose a problem. The task of learning and remembering all the formulas, modifiers and values involved makes play more an exercise in mathematics than role-playing. Where the rules may accurately reflect the way superpowers would function in real life, they tend to drain the fantasy and imagination from the genre. You may disagree, but I'd rather spring from my chair at a gaming table shouting defiance at my arch-enemy than juggle numbers to see if some thug's bullets hit my hero.

As a final point, I believe it's necessary to analyze the need for this book. Almost all the rules provided have appeared elsewhere so followers of the game already have the contents of this book. Is the new book really necessary? Yes.

As previously mentioned, this book effectively cleans up previously inconsistent rules, it also puts all the rules in one place, making them easier to access during play. Plus, it makes the game universal, honestly allowing you to learn one system that may be applied to other genres. Even if you want to keep using the old rules, this book may resolve any difficulties you experience with those rules.

So, I recommend this book to anyone already familiar with the hero system, and suggest the Champions game to anyone who enjoys exact, complicated role-playing. To those looking for slick, fun role-playing, I say look to other SHRPGs and other game systems.

Appearance (4), Content (4), Components (n/a), Playability (3), Complexity (5), Sum (3)

Mayfair Games

The Batman Role-Playing Game
(reviewed by Ken Cliffe)

DC Heroes Role-Playing Game
(reviewed by Stewart Wieck)

publisher: Mayfair Games, Inc., PO Box 48539, Niles, IL 60648

design: Batman (Jack A. Barker, Greg Gorden and Ray Winniger), DC

Heroes (Greg Gorden and Ray Winniger)

price: Batman (\$9.95), DC Heroes (\$25)

Batman RPG: This 192-page softbound book has the dimensions of a comic book and sports the familiar bat symbol on its cover. The text of the game is divided into two columns of print large enough to read comfortably. Artwork of Batman, his allies and enemies adorns every few pages, but rarely commands the eye. Still, the use of blue and grey colors in the book helps to break the doldrums of constant black and white.

The Batman RPG is yet another product of Batmania that thrives in the wake of last summer's film. So, if you think this game is just another product of strategic marketing, you're right. However, it still has its merits.

The game is based wholly on the rules of Mayfair's DC Heroes RPG, so does little to advance game design techniques. DC Heroes (1st or 2nd editions) already allows us to play Batman. You might wonder how justified the release of this game is.

Granted, if you own either edition of the original game, you don't need the Batman RPG. Still, this game organizes everything needed to play and design adventures for Batman. The game also defines Batman in RPG terms. In the boxed set, Batman is just another hero among hundreds. The DC Heroes rules have to cover a lot of material that's extraneous to Batman's world. How often does the Caped Crusader enter space or find himself in combat at the bottom of the sea? By ignoring such unnecessary rules, the Batman RPG doesn't let other heroes distract you from your favorite crime fighter.

I also feel that the game's release is justified for those who liked the film and want to play Batman, but don't own DC Heroes. The \$9.95 price is reasonable and shouldn't frighten off prospective SHRPGers. Furthermore, the rules are clear and concise and could act as a primer for the more complex DC Heroes game. Gamers new to the comics genre don't need to know a lot about Batman's complicated character and history to have fun -- the rules make it easy to play Batman any way you like.

Although there is no desperate need for the Batman RPG, the game still finds a niche in the game industry. I recommend it to all Batfans, whether you own DC Heroes are not. The book might seem small and limited, but it offers everything you need to play the Dark Knight Detective, including an invaluable map and index of Gotham City and a section for creating your own characters to fight with or against our hero.

Appearance (3), Content (4), Components (n/a), Playability (4), Complexity (3), Sum (4)

DC Heroes RPG: The 2nd edition of the DC Heroes RPG is basically the same game system as the first edition, but some major changes have been made to correct problems of the 1st edition. The game's box is as packed as ever and contains these pieces: a "Read This First" introduction booklet, Rules Manual, Character Handbook, Background/Roster Book, a GM screen, an adventure for Justice League International, a handy 9" wheel, and 75 character cards.

The game system is no less complicated than before; in fact, in order to resolve the problems of the 1st edition, more intricacies were put into the game. While the system rates high on complexity, the "Read This First" booklet effectively introduces the game to a newcomer and honestly makes it possible to learn the basics of the system within a couple hours. Also, most of the system involves the use of a few easy-to-use tables, so little memorization is necessary. In fact, the game does better than tables. The 9" wheel can be used to calculate numbers and results in the blink of an eye.

Character attributes are an excellent example of some tricky concepts made simple by effective explanation in the rules. Characters still have nine attributes which can be divided into six groups of three (each attribute is part of two groups). Physical, Mental and Mystical Attributes are three of the groups and the others are Acting/Opposing, Effect and Resistance Attributes. Dexterity, for example, is both a Physical and Acting/Opposing Attribute. Strength and Body, the other Physical Attributes, are also part of the Effect and Resistance groups, respectively. You use Dexterity to try

and hit an opponent (act) or dodge a blow (oppose) while Strength determines how much damage you do when you hit (effect) and Body helps you resist the blow which connects (resist).

All attributes, indeed all measurements in the game, are rated in Attribute Points (or APs). APs start at 0 and theoretically continue infinitely. The scale of APs provides for each AP to represent a value twice that of the number below it. Therefore, a character with a strength of 5 APs is about twice as strong as a character with 4 APs of strength. Superman has a strength of 25 APs, so he can lift over 400,000 tons!

The Rules Manual discusses all pertinent rules but includes some new additions to game. Of special note is the chapter on Sub-plots, "a story which is secondary to the main adventure [that] gives Players a chance to deal with other aspects of their Characters..." Role-playing is most ignored in superhero genre games, so it's great to see Mayfair take a stab at introducing elements beyond constant battle

with super-villains (as fun as the latter may be).

Gadgetry, always a thorn in the side of the game, was fixed again in these rules. The attempt in the Hardware Handbook didn't do the job, so the designers introduced the idea of a reliability number for devices. Devices no longer have charges, they just have better chances of breaking down.

The Character Handbook helps you create your own characters and provides lists of powers, skills, advantages, drawbacks, and more. This aspect of DC Heroes received a lot of attention and character creation in the game now rates highly when compared to other superhero systems.

The 96-page Background/Roster Book is a treat. It provides character data for a host of heroes and villains from the DC Universe. This information is extremely useful for play and makes good reading too.

The only disappointing part of the game is the adventure. "Exposed" is a weakly plotted adventure for Justice League International. Of course, I

have a prejudice against the flippant and ridiculous JLI characters, but this adventure is too much to stomach. A television reporter gets a hold of a tape which supposedly contains confidential information about the JLI members and he uses it as a ratings gimmick. The Injustice League gets involved in the bargaining to gain the tape.

The character cards, each about the size of a playing card, are wonderful play aids which list all valuable information about the hero or villain in question.

I liked the DC Heroes game before, but I find this new version to be excellent. The care taken in the preparation of this game (excluding the adventure) is wonderful. DC Heroes also includes more high quality components than any game ever produced.

Appearance (4), Content (5), Components (5), Playability (4), Complexity (4), Sum (4)

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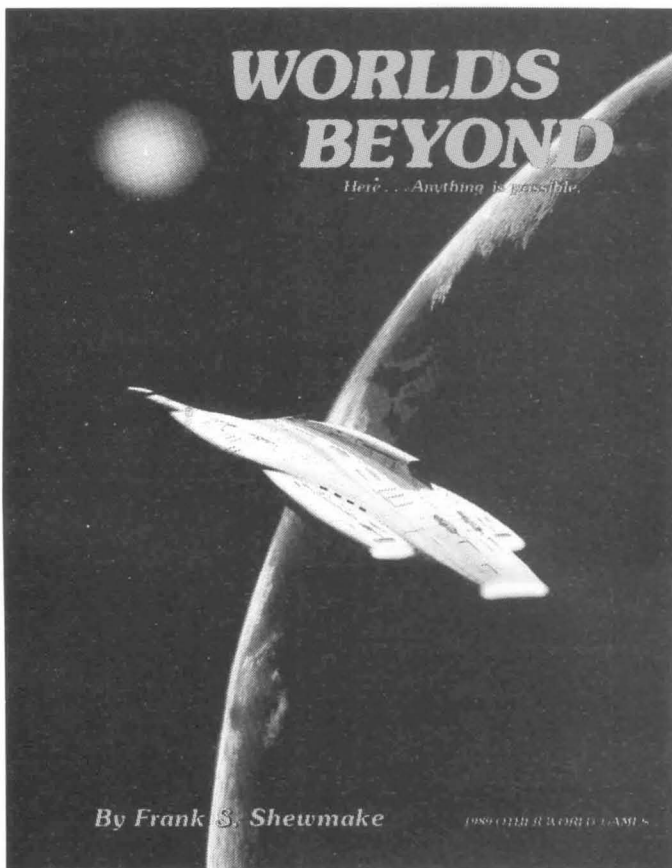
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PEOPLE of the LAND



The Cult of Lodril for RuneQuest

by Greg Stafford and Sandy Petersen

I. Mythos and History

Father Aether, the One Before Fire, called his three sons before him. He knew of some hard work which needed to be done, and asked who would do it. The eldest, lethargic and egocentric, turned his back. The second, who always seeks subtlety, asked if there was a different job he could do. Lodril, the youngest, volunteered. Thus he received the grandest portion of the inheritance: a huge family, care of the Central World, and

great inner strength. The second son got his wish: a more difficult job, a disloyal family, and a strength which waxes and wanes. The eldest son also got his reward: emptiness.

In the Gods War the Golden Lands were broken up, but Lodril was always with his followers. In each place his leadership proved critical to survival. In compiling the stories about him, we can see that he was many places at once, sometimes in many different forms: an immortal man among the Doraddi, a magical demigod among the Kralori, successive members of a dynasty among the Dara Hap-pans, and an ancestor who regularly possessed his descendants in Caladraland. Lodril never wavers in his efforts to aid, protect, and cheer his frail flock of humans, whether he is leading the masses to safety as celebrated in Darjiin, fighting bravely to the end as in Kimos, or just building a strong house to weather the Thunderstorms of Rock, the Ocean Rainstorm, or the Winter of Entropy when the other gods hid, sleeping like cats upon the warm hearth.

Lodril has a secret power smouldering deep within him. His heart is the source of the Wildfire, an untamable demon of conflagration which once threatened to destroy all of creation until silenced by Lodril. Lodril has since used that power many times, notably in the Holy Country, exploding and destroying his foe both with hot lava, where the Vent volcano is still visible for many kilometers above the sea, and with the fall of ash, which buried both friend and foe in the place called the Footprint, where the Stone Forest's petrified creatures maintain an eternal stance against their undying chaos foes.

Lodril's protective nature coordinated the preservation of the families and clans who survived the many disasters of the darkness. When the sun rose, and Yelm again returned

to his duty, Lodril's children and followers were patiently waiting for him.

Lodril has no cosmic ambitions or pretenses. He knows his job, enjoys it, and does not care whom his overlord is. He is willing to give a share to the noblemen, soldiers, and priests; that is his duty. Respect for the commoners' traditions is required, however.

After death, good Lodril men and women go to his warm paradise under the Earth, where all the good things in life are found. After a time, they return to the world. Deceased cultists are normally buried.

Lodril's Runes are Heat and Disorder.

II. Nature of the Cult

Lodril is the god for most adult males of Peloria. He is a sort of idealized Everyman. This peasant image, though held in scorn by the Yelm-worshipping ruling classes, is essentially correct: the consummate Lodril worshiper is a robust, cheerful, generous man, unambitious, reluctant to fight yet willing to die for his family, and completely without guile.

Lodril is worshiped by most men in lowland Peloria except by those in the military, aristocracy, or slave classes; those minorities who never conform to the social norm; and those of Lunar inclination. Lodril's worshipers include many diverse occupations, including some people who belong to another cult as well, such as merchants who join Lokarnos or Etyries and minstrels who join Donandar.

This cult opposes the powers of darkness, winter, and chaos, all foes of humanity. It is friendly to the earth and sky pantheons.

The cult of Lodril fits within a complex of deities, often only of local importance. This pantheon, called in Genertela the Pelorian farmer religion, revolves around the earth cycles, resulting in six major ceremonies each year: one each

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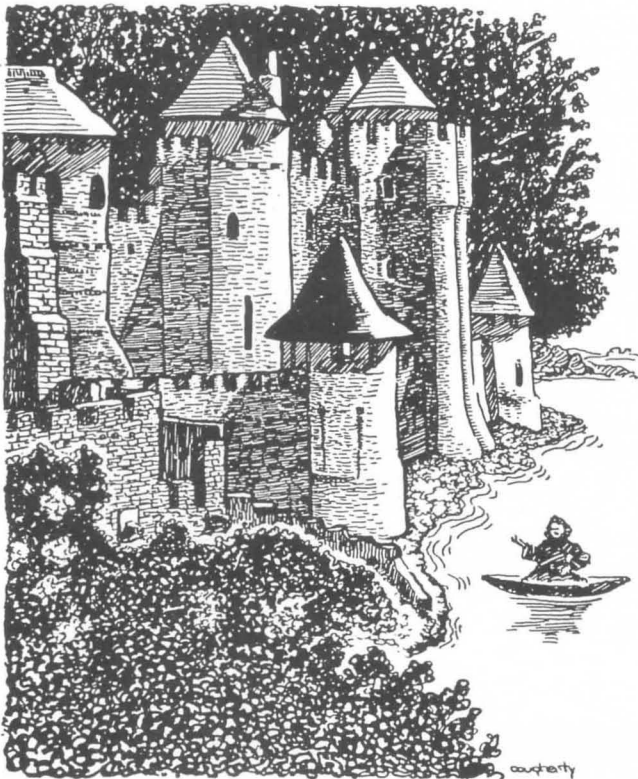
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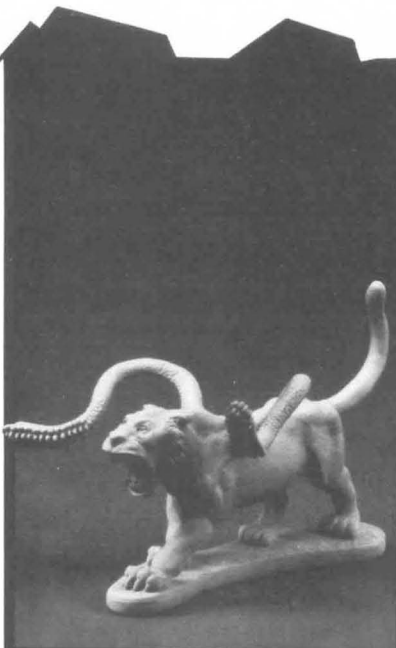
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season plus one at Sacred Time. The same holy days are followed in Teshnos and Pamaltela, though different gods and goddesses are honored.

RICH EARTH DAY: Sea Season, Fertility week, Clayday. This holiday celebrates the Grain Goddess (Pelora, Teshna, etc., depending upon locale), other local earth spirits, and Lodril the Farmer. At dawn, the people view a dance, "Rasala's Song of Thanks," followed by a humble meal of food left over from winter stores. The men go out to check their fields and the women check their garden plots, orchards, and fishponds. Everyone gathers the first fruits of the year. After everyone returns, another half day of ceremony called "How the Gods Made Life" ends with a meal of the first fruits, followed by everyone's dispersal (including unmarried men and women) to fields and gardens to sow the first seeds of spring.

In Pamaltela, Lodril the Maker is celebrated instead of Lodril the Farmer. And the non-agricultural Doraddi do not check their fields, but instead the women (only) go out to gather the first seeds, roots, and flowers of the new year.

THE DAY OF WITNESS: Fire Season, Harmony week, Clayday. This celebration is in honor of Dendara and Yelm. The day includes reenactment of "The Three Brothers' Inheritances," and an assessment of the crops, herds, and health of the community. In the evening everyone assists in "The Promise of Yelm," portraying his forced betrayal of Lodril and Dayzatar. That night, one of the shortest of the year, villages everywhere perform community healing ceremonies at their shrine.

In Pamaltela, Faranar is honored at this time, though the plays enacted are the same. Instead of healing ceremonies, that night the tribe goes into brief mourning for the Old Gods.

THE DAY OF THANKSGIVING: Earth Season, Fertility week, Fireday. In honor of Lodril. This harvest festival begins with a day of fasting before seeing the "Story of the Scythe" and having a massive feast, often days long, punctuated by professional and amateur entertainment. The next morning, the people watch

"Lodril Builds His House," and the entire season's marriages are performed.

In Pamaltela, the "Story of the Scythe" is replaced with the "Story of the Sickle" and "Lodril Builds His House" is replaced by "Lodril Finds His Tribe."

THE GATHERING DAY: Dark Season, Death week, Windsday and Fireday. Asrelia is traditionally the goddess of this ceremony, but almost all the activity praises Lodril. At midafternoon, the priests and acolytes present the drama of "How War Came to a me of our village." At dawn the next day they show the "Lament For the Young Man." At dusk comes "Tramping of the Borders," and at midnight, "How Lodril Stores His Food."

The Pamaltelan ceremony bears little resemblance. The gods celebrated are Pamalt and Lodril together. On the first day, a twelve-hour passion play is presented: "The Orogeny." The second day is devoted to sports and games, ending in the evening with "How Lodril Stores his Food."

THE HUDDLING DAY: Storm Season, Fertility week, Wildday. No earth holiday marks this period. Instead, the widespread cult of Kalikos Icebreaker is popular. The people gather in temples of Lodril to make war and love. Then they feast while cogitating upon the result of the yearly battle.

In Teshnos, the cult of Furalor is the only fire cult worshiped at this time, and all honor goes to him. In Pamaltela, the people simply have no holiday at this time.

THE DANCE OF CREATION: Sacred Time. "The Dance of Masks" is a festive occasion in which all the spirits known to the worshippers parade forth and introduce themselves, sometimes stalking among the gathered crowd. Each tells the story of his, her, or its part in creating the world. Lodril takes the lead role, accompanied by his local wife.

III. The Cult in the World

Lodril's cult is widespread and important. It possesses little political authority, for it seeks none. But its prejudices must be taken into account

by the land's rulers. Many a tyrant has been overthrown when his measures went too far, and the simple peasants rebelled against his authority.

Lodril is recognized in many Gloranthan religions. Even the wild Orlanthe barbarians know legends and myths about him. His worship is dominant in Peloria and Teshnos, where almost every farmer worships him. He is common in Kralorela and Pamaltela, too, but in those places he is not the universal farming deity.

Lodril's cult organization mirrors village organization. Lodril is like the village head man for peasant gods. He tries to coordinate the lives of many individual, often quarrelsome, lesser deities. Since most villages are self-sustaining, its single acolyte provides all the magic it needs. Acolytes are always subject to the nearest full priest, whose temple is usually in a nearby market town.

Lodril's temples come in all sizes. Interestingly, Lodril's Rune magic is available in a different pattern than the Gloranthan norm.

SHRINES: Create Bonfire, Create Wildfire, Earthwarm, Reduce Flame, and Worship Lodril.

MINOR TEMPLES: add Command Salamander, Cremate Dead, Divination, Extension, Heal Wounds, Soul Sight, and Spirit Block.

MAJOR TEMPLES: add all remaining common spells, plus Firespear and Summon Lodril.

GREAT TEMPLES: as per normal great temples.

Ruling lords generally suppress major or great temples, to keep Lodril's most dangerous spells out of the hands of potentially rebellious peasants. The rulers usually pick their own High Priests to head major or great temples in regions where such positions are necessary for the needs of the people.

IV. Initiate Membership

Lodril's initiation requirements are standard. If one of the candidate's parents was a member in good standing, and the candidate has never worshiped another deity, he can join by simply sacrificing a point of POW. Other candidates must pass the usual test: skills checked include Ceremony, Climb, Jump, Spear Attack, and any Craft. In any case, no candidate is ac-

cepted who has practiced sorcery, is a shaman, or who has worshiped an enemy god, especially one of chaos.

Spirit Magic: Disrupt, Endurance, Extinguish, Heal, Heat Metal, Ignite

V. Acolyte Membership

Acolyte requirements are identical to those for priests. Most acolytes are part-time farmers who tend the village shrine, helping their neighbors obtain the necessary magic and spiritual support they need.

VI. Priesthood

Candidates for the priesthood must meet the standard RuneQuest requirements. Priests are not as common in this cult as in many, for most of their congregations' simple needs are met by local acolytes. Nevertheless, the greater spiritual power of full priests is sometimes needed and appreciated. Also, only a full priest can begin the spell of Smouldering Rebellion, though once begun, any acolyte can sacrifice to it.

Common Divine Magic: all
Divine Magic: Command Salamander, Create Bonfire, Create Wildfire, Cremate Dead, Earthwarm, Firespear, Reduce Flame, Summon Lodril

VII. Lodril Special Cult Spirit Magic

Heat Metal
variable
touch, temporal, passive
This spell causes one ENC of metal to heat up and become malleable. It takes about a minute for the metal to become red hot. Each point of the spell creates 1D6 intensity of heat. Use the Fire and Heat table on page 81 of the RuneQuest Players Book to determine how much heat is needed for a particular metal. Thus, a 7 point Heat Metal cast on bronze would bring it to its very softest for hammering and smithing, while an 8 point spell would simply melt it.

VIII. Lodril Special Rune Magic

Create Bonfire (Enhance Mahome)
1 point
ranged, instant, stackable, reusable

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This must be cast on a fire. Each point increases the fire's diameter by 1 meter, but the fire's intensity does not increase. If no substance is available for the increased fire to burn, it rapidly dwindles back to its former status.

This spell has no effect on a Fireblade or similar spells. It increases a salamander's size by one cubic meter per point of spell, but does not change the elemental's hit points or damage.

Create Wildfire (Enhance Gustbran)

1 point
ranged, instant, stackable, reusable

This must be cast on a fire. Each point increases its intensity by 1 level, adding 1D6 to the damage it produces, and increasing the fire's heat output. It also, naturally, causes the fire to burn itself out much sooner.

This spell works on Fireblade, but the affected weapon takes 1D6 damage per point of the spell. This spell does increase the damage done by a salamander, but also does 1D6 damage per point when cast to the elemental.

Cremate Dead

1 point
ritual Ceremony, nonstackable,
reusable

This spell allows an official (usually a priest) to fully destroy the bodily remains of any one cult member after death. It guarantees that the ghost will not return to haunt the family. It also burns all goods sent along with the corpse, allowing the deceased to carry some weapons and other supplies into the land of the dead. It can be used on the still-animated skeleton, zombie, or even vampire form of a former Lodril initiate or priest to burn it, though the target's magic points must be overcome in this case.

Earthwarm

1 point
ranged, duration 12 hours, stackable,
reusable

Causes an area of soil or rock 50 meters by 50 meters square to increase in temperature by 5 degrees C. Each additional point either increases the area by another 50x50 square or raises the temperature by 5 more degrees. This spell is normally used to protect fields and orchards against

frosts, but can also be used to protect travelers in frigid climes when no other heat is available.

Firespear

1 point
touch, temporal, stackable, reusable
This is cast upon a spear, causing its point to burst into flame. The normal damage done by the weapon is replaced by a 3D6 roll. The wielder of the weapon still adds his damage bonus when he strikes. The weapon is unharmed by this magical fire. The spell is incompatible with Fireblade, Bladesharp, and Truespear.

Each additional point of Firespear increases damage done by 1D6.

Reduce Flame (Suppress Oakfed)

1 point
ranged, instant, stackable, reusable
This must be cast on a fire. Each point decreases both the fire's diameter by 1 meter, and its intensity by 1D6. If both size or intensity are reduced to nothing, a candle-sized flame remains.

One point of this spell reduces the damage done by a Fireblade or Firespear by 1D6, or decreases a salamander's size and damage done by one cubic meter and 1d6, respectively. The salamander can resist with its own magic points vs. the caster's.

Summon Lodril

1 point
ritual Summon spell, stackable,
reusable

This spell must be cast on the lip of an active volcano. Each point in the spell gives a cumulative 1% chance of starting an eruption. Several priests can all add their spells together to increase the total chances for success, though all must also succeed in their Summon ritual. The actual explosion is usually delayed for several hours after the first rumblings begin, so most Summoning groups have time to escape the volcano's fury.

IX. Subcults

Spirit of Retribution

Lodril has two spirits of retribution. One, Jonben, punishes only petty offenders. Jonben comes invisibly to the culprit and curses him. From then on, whenever the cursed individual gets drunk, he is certain to get a severe

hangover, which lasts twice as long as usual.

Jamin is reserved for those who actually betray the gods in some way. He comes as a series of fevers at night. Each night, the victim must roll his CONx5 or less on 1d100 or get severe chills and fever which sweat out his magic. Each time the CON roll is failed, the victim loses 1 point of spirit or divine magic, chosen by him. Initiates are only affected for two weeks. Priests and acolytes are attacked by the Jamin fevers for an entire eight week season.

Lowfires

Lodril's most famous children are Oakfed, holy fire; Gustbran, the work-fire; and Mahome, the hearth-fire. These deities are sometimes worshiped on their own, either as spirit cults or simply gods in their own right. When they are worshiped by themselves, they can provide their worshipers with their special spells (only).

Oakfed is the source of Lodril's divine magic of Create Wildfire and Cremate Dead.

Gustbran is the source of Lodril's divine magic of Create Bonfire and the spirit magic Heat Metal.

Mahome is the source of Lodril's divine magic of Reduce Flame and the spirit magic Ignite.

Monster Man

This creature is the dark side of Lodril. He incarnates everything fearful: seething rage and eternal pain without solace. He is the final rebellion of decency distorted by impossible pressures. The spell he offers is only available at Lodril's great temples.

Smouldering Rebellion

1 point
ritual Summon, one-use

This is a secret, long-term spell which has a life of its own. When a priest has been offended by his land's ruler beyond recourse, he can perform this ritual. Once POW has been put into the spell, and the miscreant ruler named, the spell dwells on the spirit plane. If the ruler continues in his wicked ways, other priests and acolytes are inspired to sacrifice to this spell, which thus feeds and grows. Naturally, with every crime the ruler

commits, more priests are inspired to put POW into this spell. As the spell gets stronger and stronger, each point adds to the final effect, which requires hundreds of POW points to have any chance of acting at all. No one knows just how many points of POW are needed, and different rulers may require different sizes of spell. However, once initiated, it cannot be dispelled. It waits and grows until the ruler permanently retires or dies, or the spell activates. No one knows exactly what sets off the spell's effects, but "when the grey dog rises, the black cock crows thrice at midnight, and the invisible bell tolls, all men march off to revenge."

Only when the spell takes effect, the whole land's peasant population rises in revolt. The spell was last effected in 1460 (Lunar time 4/51) when Darjiin and the Lunar Heartlands rose against Sheng Seleris. Since then the Lunar emperor has always been careful to respect the rights and privileges of the common people.

The Spear

Lodril first fell to Earth in the form of either a spear-wielding warrior or a spear itself to stab a chaos enemy (usually recognized as Krarsht). Lodril's subcult of The Spear commemorates that first deed, which resulted in the world's first volcano and the famous Petrified Forest. The subcult is only found in great temples and gives a spell good for protecting militant farmers against their enemies.

Lava Spear

3 points
ranged, temporal, nonstackable, reusable

This spell must be cast upon a spear. It permits the user to fire sparks of molten rock from the tip of the spear by expending magic points. For every 2 magic points spent, the lava does 1d6 damage on impact (armor protects against this damage). The lava has a range of 100 meters, and it has a chance to hit equal to 25% plus the user's Attack modifier. The user's chance to hit can be increased through experience.

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X. Associated Gods

Caladra and Aurelion

These are two more of Lodril's children. They are worshiped in Kethaela and have virtually replaced Lodril in Caladraland. Elsewhere, they are considered to be a mere sub-cult of Lodril. They provide their spell of Firedwell, available to Lodril at great temples.

Dendara

The wife of Lodril's most important lord provides Regrow Limb.

Pamalt

In Pamaltela (only), this ruling god provides Earthtouch.

Yelm

The King of the Gods, Lodril's liege lord, provides Shield.

XI. Miscellaneous Notes

The Brotherhood of the Invisible Spear

Among the peasants of Peloria is a persistent belief in the secret Brotherhood of the Invisible Spear. It was started in the First Age by a young man who survived the Rebellion of Growth. This movement insisted that all farmers must be allowed to reach their full potential by bearing spears in warfare, sacred to the god. At the time, the ruling class were newly installed native Yelm warlords who had recently driven out barbarians from the south and who gloried once again in battle. Despite their courage, the peasants were crushed, and the sacred objects gathered together and sent to temples in Dara Happa.

The young man, whose name is revealed only to initiates, seized the ruined spirit of the rebellion and preserved its truth in secret. He took it to Gustbran, who forged the Invisible Spear of Manhood so that anyone who

dares to carry it can conceal it. Thus, hidden among the masses are men who sneak off at night to train in secret with masked leaders -- not to rebel against their rightful rulers, but to attain the full potential of their god.

Lodril in Pamaltela

In Pamaltela Lodril is recognized as one of the Old Gods, who preceded Pamalt. One prominent Doraddi deity, Vangono, is Lodril's son, and Lodril is one of the few Old Gods who obtained a place on Pamalt's Council of the Gods.

When the steaming jungle hell swept south from the coast to overwhelm and destroy Pamalt's mild savannah, Lodril, at Pamalt's urging, raised a range of mountains to stop the invasion. The mountains have been weathered by age, but their remnants are still visible as the Palarkri, Mari, and Tarmo ranges. Pamalt himself lives in the mythical Enmal mountains, which are full of volcanoes.



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Tabletop News

our miniature review column

by Ken Cliffe

Almost every genre of gaming has miniatures designed and produced especially for it. Naturally, the popular genres, like fantasy, receive the most attention from miniature manufacturers. Some companies even limit themselves to working with a single genre. Still, there are a few genres that have yet to be paid their due, like superhero RPGs. This installment of Tabletop News is devoted to those who take pleasure in models sporting cape and cowl.

The latest editions of Champions and DC Heroes may rekindle interest in superhero games and related miniatures. The Batman movie proved motive enough for Grenadier to release models of the Caped Crusader. Let's hope these new games do the same.

Some fairly recent miniatures are reviewed, but more emphasis is given to cataloging many superhero models that have been released over the years.

Villains and Vigilantes miniatures

licensed by: Fantasy Games Unlimited

manufacturer: Lance and Laser Models, Inc., PO Box 14491, Columbus, OH 43214

sculptor: Bob Charrette

catalogue numbers: 10-24

price: \$1.25 each

At present, the V&V line consists of fifteen miniatures from the introductory V&V adventure Crisis at Crusader Citadel. They're sold separately but are securely packaged in foamed-lined blister packs. From the super-villain team, the Crushers, are the following: FIST, Mercury Mer-

cenary, Temper, Vulture, Bull, Shrew, Hornet, Mocker and Shocker. The entire superhero team, the Crusaders, is also available: Manta-Man, Evergreen, Blizzard, Enforcer, Dreamweaver and Laserfire. My favorites are Vulture and Bull. Both strike impressive poses, look physically imposing, and are the most detailed. Three Crushers have yet to be immortalized in lead, but it seems as though L&L will continue to release new models as the line begins with #10. Maybe we can expect miniatures from other V&V adventures [EDITOR'S NOTE: like one of your published V&V adventures, Ken?].

One the whole, the models are cleanly sculpted -- flash and seam lines are minimal. With no long, fragile parts like swords, the figures can withstand rough handling. Detail varies from average to excellent, though features tend to be understated, making the models seem somewhat indistinct. However, facial and clothing designs come to life when painted. The smooth, unexaggerated muscles look particularly realistic once painted. I'm also pleased to say that the models remain true to the designs of the artist of the adventure, Jeff Dee. Bob Charrette clearly took pains to maintain the integrity of the characters when he sculpted the models.

My only real complaint is with the size of the miniatures. Compared to most other superhero miniatures, these are somewhat small in stature and build. The subtle detailing may be partially responsible for this. The effect is that the miniatures look less imposing and commanding when used with the products of other companies. The female models are particularly small -- Shrew, a formidable hand-to-hand combatant, looks like a pushover. Still, proper proportions are maintained so the line as a whole remains consistent.

Overall, a devout SHRPGer has every reason to pick up these minia-

tures. The low cost, a refreshing change from the prices of overseas companies, doesn't hurt. Although designed for V&V, these models could be used with any SHRPG. With a copy of Crisis at Crusader Citadel, you could even convert the characters to your own system.



Ratings (1=worst, 5=best)

Animation (2-4), Detail (3-4), Production (4), Originality (5), Sum (3-4)

The following paragraphs summarize many of the superhero miniatures already on the market. Company addresses are included where they're available, but some of these models or

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no longer in production and some companies are no longer in operation. Look for these rarities at your favorite store or write to the companies for catalogs (some companies charge for catalogs).

Castle Creations:

This early incarnation of Lance & Laser released Captain Generic and Super Heroine. Both are \$1.25, but they're not very impressive. The latter is definitely the better of the two. Figures in the company's SF line also look conspicuously like some well-known comic characters.

Dark Horse Miniatures:

(address unknown) This company produced Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles models. They include the four turtles, Splinter, the Foot, Mousers and those dinosaur-like aliens. I don't think Dark Horse is still around.

Games Workshop US:

(3431 C. Benson Ave., Baltimore MD 21227) A few years ago, Games Workshop released their own super-hero game, Golden Heroes, and followed it up with two boxes of miniatures, one of heroes and one of villains. The game's now out of production, but you might find the miniatures still floating around somewhere. The models are rather ridiculous looking, but not totally without value.

Grenadier Models, Inc.:

(PO Box 305, Springfield, PA 19064) A few years ago, Grenadier released official Champions miniatures. There were two boxed sets, one of heroes and one of villains, and numerous blister packs containing three figures each. These models depict characters that appear in various Champions releases, but also

include generic heroes/villains and normals.

Grenadier has also released a number of boxed DC Heroes miniatures. They include the Teen Titans, the old Justice League of America, the Outsiders, and all these groups' villains. Grenadier now offers large models of Batman and the Joker. These miniatures are collector pieces and too large to use with standard 25mm models. Grenadier's supers are generally well-made and worth looking for.

Superior Models:

(address unknown) If you look hard enough at game conventions, you may be lucky and find a dealer with Superior Models for sale. There are only two figures: a generic sort of hero and an aquatic-costumed model. Both are of excellent design and detail.

TSR, Inc.:

(PO Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147-0756) TSR produced miniatures of their own for use with Marvel Super Heroes. Three boxes were released featuring various Marvel heroes and villains. Unfortunately, these models aren't that great.

As a final note, although not officially lead miniatures, many companies supply cardboard figures that can be used in lieu of lead. Steve Jackson Games immediately comes to mind. Some were even made for use with Champions. And don't forget that many super hero games provide cardboard characters, including Villains and Vigilantes and Marvel Super Heroes.

A Brush with Destiny

Lat issue I discussed prepping miniatures. The next step is to begin painting the model, but before I get into that I need to mention the tools you need to bring the lead to life. Here's a list of tools I find useful: brushes (4), common sewing pin, paper towel, bottle of water or turpentine, mixing pallet, and paints. You may use variations on these or develop a style that requires different tools.

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Turn Fees: \$3.50/turn

Game Entry: \$10.00 (Rules, set-up, 3 free turns)

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Variable Turn Fees: \$2.25 to \$4.25

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A different type of brush is needed for virtually every task in miniature painting. With practice and varied techniques, I've found that any job can be done with one of four brushes. Scales for brush sizes vary from company to company, so I make generalizations about which sizes are useful. A fine point brush (about 1-2mm tip) lets you get into hard-to-reach places and is useful for fine detail. A medium point brush (2-3mm) is for average jobs like painting tunics and backpacks. A large point brush (4-5mm) allows you to cover large areas quickly. The back of a cape is a prime example. The fourth brush should be of medium size, but one you don't care about. An old, worn-out brush is ideal. This is used for drybrushing (to be discussed later) which wears the brush down even further.

Be sure to buy quality brushes. \$3-\$4 isn't too much to pay. Cheap brushes wear out quickly and cost more in the long run. Poor quality brushes, particularly ones with plastic handles, can break down when exposed to the chemicals in paint -- oil-based paints are especially guilty of this. Wooden handles can withstand the beating. Also be sure that any loose bristles are pulled from the brush or they may come out and cling to your miniatures. Bristles can be difficult to remove once the paint dries.

Regular maintenance keeps brushes like new, though bristles inevitably become stained with use. Never dip a brush more than a few millimeters into paint. Dipping the brush to the base of the head traps paint at the base where it's difficult to remove. Subsequent paints will be tainted.

To maintain the shape of the brush, wet the bristles with clean water when you've finished painting for the day. Mold the wet bristles to a smooth point and let the brush dry overnight. Don't soak a brush overnight unless paint is caked on. In that case, you probably need a new brush anyway.

A sewing pin is used for painting hard-to-reach places and adding small details. Coloring eyes is a good example.

A mixing pallet should be made of a non-absorbing material like plastic or metal. When a bottled color doesn't suit your needs, mix the paints on the pallet to achieve the color you're

after. Make sure the pallet has a large enough surface area that a number of paints can be mixed without forming one big blob. My pallet is simply a metal lid from an old coffee jar.

Water or turpentine is used to clean brushes. The bottle shouldn't be so large that brushes disappear when dropped inside. Change the contents when the liquid obviously becomes polluted. Important safety tip: don't keep turpentine in a plastic jar as the solvent will melt the plastic with time.

The paper towel is for wiping wet brushes, cleaning the pin, wiping the pallet and is even useful in drybrushing. If you find that the towel leaves lint on your equipment, try a soft cloth instead.

Finally, we come to paints. I strongly advise water-based over oil-based paints. Water-based is easier to work with, cheaper by volume, and more available. The more colors you own, the broader your painting horizons. The necessary colors, found in any starter kit, are black, white, flesh, green, yellow, blue, red, green and

brown. These can be mixed to make other colors, but you'll want more colors before long.

I also advise testing new paint before applying it to a model. Some are too thick (add water), need stirring, or become shiny once dry (and I ask you, have you ever met a person dressed head to toe in glossy clothing?). Apply some paint to the underside of a primed lead base and let it dry. If the paint is somewhat shiny, thinning the paint with water will dull the shine, but usually not entirely. Drybrushing also tones shine down a little. Otherwise, there's not much that can be done to remove the sheen of some paints.

Most water-based paints are of good quality, so you can't really go wrong no matter what you buy. The paints made by miniature companies are the best.

That's it for this issue. Please address questions/comments to me in care of WHITE WOLF Magazine.

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14: Please rate the following WW features (if you do even read the section, please put an "X" in the blank):

____ Adventure Scenarios
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____ PBM reviews
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____ RUNES
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Final Ballot for the

Origins Awards 1989

Presented by the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design

1. **Best Historical Figure Series, 1989**
 - American Civil War, 15 mm, Stone Mountain Miniatures, Inc.
 - American Civil War, 25 mm, Connoisseur, USA.
 - Aztecs, 25 mm, Falcon Miniatures
 - Republican Romans, 15 mm, Frontier Miniatures
 - Seven Years War, Hungarians & Russians, 25 mm, RSM Ltd.
2. **Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Figure Series, 1989**
 - Dragonlance AD&D Figures, Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
 - Fantasy Adventurers, Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
 - Official AD&D Monsters, Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
 - Ork Horde, Warhammer 40K, Games Workshop, Inc.
 - Shadowrunners, Shadowrun, Grenadier Models, Inc.
 - Skeleton Army, Games Workshop, Inc.
 - Star Wars Series, Grenadier Models, Inc.
3. **Best Vehicular Miniatures Series, 1989**
 - Battle Titans, Games Workshop, Inc.
 - BattleTech Mechs and Vehicles, Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
 - Dwarf War Machine, Games Workshop, Inc.
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 - Renegade Legion: Centurion Line, FASA Corp.
4. **Best Accessory Figure Series, 1989**
 - Cities of Mystery, TSR, Inc.
 - Colonial Guns and Machine Guns, 25 mm, Lizard's Grin
 - Hovels, Medieval and Northern European Buildings, Stone Mountain Miniatures, Inc.
 - Warhammer Mighty Fortress, Games Workshop, Inc.
5. **Best Miniatures Rules, 1989**
 - BattleSystem Miniatures Rules, TSR, Inc.
 - Napoleon's Battles, The Avalon Hill Game Company, Inc.
 - Soldier's Companion, Space:1889, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
 - Tactica, Arty Conliffe
 - Warhammer 40K Compendium, Games Workshop, Inc.
6. **Best Role-Playing Rules, 1989**
 - AD & D -2nd Edition, TSR, Inc.
 - Champions (hardback), Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc.
 - Ghostbusters II, West End Games, Inc.
 - Shadowrun, FASA Corp.
 - Space:1889, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
7. **Best Role-Playing Adventure, 1989**
 - Alice Through the Mirrorshades, Paranoia, West End Games, Inc.
 - Curse of the Azure Bonds, Forgotten Realms, TSR, Inc.
 - Empire of the Witch-king, Middle-earth Roleplaying, Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc.
 - The Great Old Ones, Chaosium, Inc.
 - The Ice Man Returneth, Paranoia, West End Games, Inc.
 - In Search of Dragons, Dragonlance, TSR, Inc.
 - Waterdeep, Forgotten Realms, TSR, Inc.
8. **Best Role-Playing Supplement, 1989**
 - Creatures of the Dreamlands, Call of Cthulhu, Chaosium, Inc.
 - Imperial Sourcebook, Star Wars, West End Games, Inc.
 - Monstrous Compendium, AD&D 2nd Ed., TSR, Inc.
 - Shadow World: Master Atlas, Rolemaster & Fantasy Hero, Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc.
 - Spelljammer, AD&D, TSR, Inc.
9. **Best Graphic Presentation of a Role-Playing Game, Adventure or Supplement, 1989**
 - AD & D -2nd Edition, TSR, Inc.
 - Creatures of the Dreamlands, Call of Cthulhu, Chaosium Inc.
 - Imperial Sourcebook, Star Wars, West End Games, Inc.
 - Lace & Steel, The Australian Games Group
 - Shadowrun, FASA Corp
 - Spelljammer, AD&D, TSR, Inc.
10. **Best Pre-20th Century Boardgame, 1989**
 - A House Divided, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
 - Guns of Cedar Creek, Simulation Design Inc.
 - Napoleon at Leipzig, Clash of Arms Games, Inc.
 - Rise and Fall, Engelman Military Simulations
 - Siege of Jerusalem, The Avalon Hill Game Company Inc.
11. **Best Modern Day Boardgame, 1989**
 - 5th Fleet, Victory Games, Inc
 - Desert Steel, West End Games, Inc.
 - Europe Aflame, TSR/SPI.
 - Modern Naval Battles, 3W
 - Red Storm Rising, TSR, Inc.
12. **Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Boardgame, 1989**
 - Battle for Endor, West End Games, Inc
 - Dungeon!, TSR, Inc.
 - The Great Khan Game, TSR, Inc.
 - Space Hulk, Games Workshop, Inc.
 - Web of Gold, TSR, Inc.
13. **Best Graphic Presentation of a Boardgame, 1989**
 - 5th Fleet, Victory Games, Inc.
 - Battle for Endor, West End Games, Inc
 - Red Storm Rising, TSR, Inc.
 - Space Hulk, Games Workshop, Inc.
 - Web of Gold, TSR, Inc.
14. **Best Play-By-Mail Game, 1989**
 - Family Wars, Andon Games
 - Illuminati, Flying Buffalo, Inc.
 - It's A Crime, Adventures by Mail
 - Kings & Things, Andon Games
 - Mobius I, Flying Buffalo, Inc.
15. **Best New Play-By-Mail Game, 1989**
 - Beyond the Stellar Empire-The New System, Adventures by Mail
 - Orion Nebula, Orpheus Publishing Corp
 - Space Combat, Twin Engine Gaming
 - Supremacy, Andon Games
16. **Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Computer Game, 1989**
 - Curse of the Azure Bonds, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
 - Dragon Wars, Interplay Productions
 - MechWarrior, Activision
 - Sword of the Samurai, Microprose, Inc.
 - War of the Lance, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
17. **Best Military or Strategy Computer Game, 1989**
 - Battles of Napoleon, Strategic Simulations, Inc.
 - F-15 Strike Eagle II, Microprose, Inc.
 - M-1 Tank Platoon, Microprose Software, Inc.
 - Sim City, Maxis
 - Their Finest Hour, Lucasfilm
18. **Best Professional Adventure Gaming Magazine, 1989**
 - Challenge, Game Designers' Workshop, Inc.
 - Computer Gaming World, Golden Empire Publications
 - Dungeon Magazine, TSR, Inc.
 - GM, Croftwood, Publishing
 - Strategy & Tactics, 3W
 - White Wolf, White Wolf Publishing
19. **Best Amateur Adventure Gaming Magazine, 1989**
 - The Canadian Wargamers Journal, The Canadian Wargamers Group
 - ETO, Bill Stone
 - Savage & Soldier, Lynn Bodin
 - Volunteers, The Newsletter of Civil War Gaming
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Splendors of the Past

a fantasy adventure for 3-5 high level characters

by *Kevin Murphy*

Character Information

Princess Soufie Zarmiv, the sole heir of the tiny (but rich) mountain principality of Zarmipan, lies dying, the victim of an ancient curse on the Zarmiv dynasty. If she perishes, the Empire of Frazia to the west will invade, enslaving the principality and looting its riches and magic. The Councilors of Zarmipan wish to hire powerful adventurers to go on a secret and daring quest, find a cure for Princess Soufie, and save the land.

Game Master Information

The Councilors of Zarmipan and Princess Soufie are lying through their teeth. The curse of which the Princess is supposedly dying killed its last victim over three hundred years before with the end of the last dynasty -- a fact known only to a few reticent sages. Princess Soufie and the present aristocracy of Zarmipan are completely free of the curse -- and also of a certain amount of legitimacy.

Some of what the Princess and Councilors say is true. The Frazian Empire does intend to invade as soon as the Princess dies. Princess Soufie has been feigning illness so as to discourage assassins as well as prepare her people for war.

Zarmipan is the last stronghold of the Zarmi people. The Zarmi, a race standing about 5'2" to 5'8" with straight black hair, brown eyes, dark skin, and fine features, ruled Zarmipan and all the lands of the Frazian Empire a thousand years before. Then came the Frazian Conquest. The Frazians -- huge people, standing 6'6" to 7' or more, with golden blond to white hair, blue eyes, and heavy build

-- came from across the sea and conquered the Zarmi. They tore down the Zarmian Cathedrals of the Spiral Queen and in their place erected Missions of the One True Emperor and his Countless Daughters. Wars raged for years until finally all of the Zarmi were enslaved except for the tiny mountain stronghold of Zarmipan. Within the Frazian Empire, all Zarmi are serfs, possessing little or no rights.

Both religions -- the Cult of the Emperor and his Daughters and the Church of the Spiral Queen -- are pantheons aligned to Law, basically good, though running the gamut from good to evil in specific aspects. "Law," however, does not mean the two religions follow the same laws.

The Councilors' quest is a fool's errand, designed to bring about a revolution in the new Frazian capital of Koritsi Rimi. Trouble in the Empire means safety for the principality of Zarmipan, and a successful revolution means a return to power of the Zarmi and the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen.

The Council Chambers

Adventurers, famed for their great and glorious deeds, receive secret missives, summoning them to Zarmipan. The Councilors (seven aged wizards, skill levels 4-8) greet them, and tell of Princess Soufie's horrible plight and the danger to Zarmipan.

Two thousand years ago, the Councilors relate, the demon Velamirr cursed the royal line of Zarmiv, dooming heirs to die of the Fainting Sickness whenever their people were in greatest need. Such, they say, is now the case. However, they add, the Spiral Queen, the patron goddess of the Zarmi, sent an angel to the Zarmiv family, giving them a holy spell which would overcome the demon's curse. This spell was written on a jeweled scroll, kept in a sacred niche in the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen in Zpiragrad, now Koritsi Rimi. The

scroll is feared lost, destroyed along with the other holy books when the Frazian's burnt the Great Library. However, the tale of Velamirr and the Spiral Queen was painted in frescoes on the ceiling of the Great Library -- unfortunately also destroyed when the Frazians tore down the Spiral Queen's cathedral to build the Mission of the One True Emperor and His Countless Daughters.

All is not without hope, say the Councilors. There is a wizard -- actually an illusionist, known only as Carlin the Trickster -- who has authored a potent spell known as "Past Glories." From reports, this spell may temporarily rebuild any great structure of the past, in the full glory of its heyday, for a short period of time. This Carlin has so far used his enchantment on the ruins of the Clock Tower of Caran and the Great Bridge of the Hajar Gap.

The Councilors propose that adventurers find Carlin and gain knowledge of his spell. By its power, the Mission of Koritsi Rimi could temporarily be restored to the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen, and the curative spell could be copied from the ceiling of the Great Library.

Carlin is an elusive man, and even the Councilors' most powerful divinations cannot determine his location. However, more mundane research has revealed that he is apparently a shapeshifter, and is known to take any form he pleases. His looks, however, are his vanity, and regardless of the race, sex, or creature whose form he takes, he is always unusually handsome. He usually takes the form of a hugely muscled Frazian man in his early thirties with blond-white hair and blue eyes (possibly his true form, though he is known to be sympathetic to the Zarmi plight). He is known to frequent a small dockside tavern in Koritsi Rimi, known as the Trysting Wyvem.

The Trysting Wyverns

The pub is like a hundred other dock-side tavern, though smaller, cleaner and poorer than most. The proprietress, Nollie, is a statuesque Frazian woman (6'9", 17 Appearance), who desperately tries to keep her pub clean and orderly. It's on the far end of a pier which lists badly to one side, making the floor slope sharply to the back and accounting for the lack of clientele. The fish stew is good and the ale salty.

Nollie has two Zarmi servant girls, Roselle and Calinda, both of whom she treats well. Nollie says little about Carlin if asked. She only reports that he comes in from time to time and pays his bills regularly. If given a piece of gold, she will take any note characters wish to give her and give it to Carlin if and when she sees him.

Carlin the Trickster

PS 20; KNO 19; INT 12; END 13; AG 16; CHM 15; APP 17. 12th Level Illusionist. body points: 29. Armor

Rating: 5 (from ring). 6'9" 270 lbs. 33 yrs. old. White hair, blue eyes. Special Mental Power: Shapeshift.

Carlin is a veteran of many adventures, so he's assembled an interesting collection of magical gewgaws and toys -- his prodigious strength, for example, is the result of an accident with an artifact. Carlin considers his strength rather useless -- except when he's impersonating stupid barbarians, one of his favorite pastimes.) He also possesses the following: Boots of the North; Lorgnette of True Seeing (usable only by illusionists); Wand of Fear (carved green ivory); Amulet of Non-Detection (unremarkable scrimshaw depicting a black cat); Amulet of Psyche (ornate platinum and sapphire pendant -- protects completely from any mental or possession attacks); Ring of Invisibility and Protection +5 (plain silver band set with a large peridot).

Carlin is a trickster. He enjoys life, and he enjoys mischief, usually only at the expense of people who annoy him, though almost anyone is fair game. He fancies himself a rake and pretty women are his weakness.

In combat, he's a coward -- and proud of it. He fights from the back of any group -- indeed, from a few miles away, if he can manage it. If an encounter goes badly, he uses *Wraithform* and *Invisibility* to escape -- often coming back with reinforcements. He has a *Contingency* spell upon himself, set to cast *Wraithform* whenever he panics, and uses his ring of invisibility incessantly. Carlin will not abandon friends, but is unwilling to die a martyr's death.

Carlin loves to disguise himself with his shapeshifting powers. His favorite is an inept, though promising, barbarian.

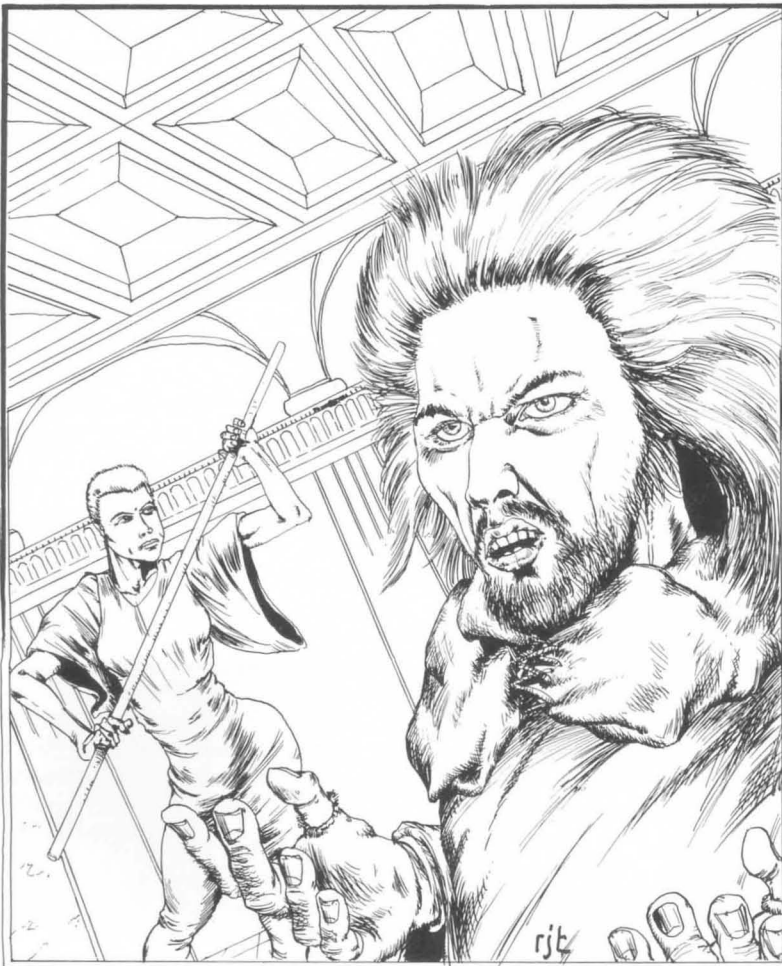
Anyone who attempts to contact Carlin will first meet him disguised as some other person. If asked to join the quest, he negotiates for a high fee, though will do it for free if necessary. He's insatiably curious, and exploring the Great Library of the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen would be worth almost any price. He believes in the Zarmi cause anyway and will easily swallow the story about Princess Soufie's illness.

Like most wizards, Carlin selects his spells on a daily basis. He loves *Past Glories*, however, and keeps as many on hand as possible.

The Mission of Koritsi Rimi

Koritsi Rimi is a bustling city and capital of the Western Frazian Empire. There are distinct castes, pure Frazian from across the sea the highest and pure Zarmi the lowest. Foreigners are accorded status in relation to their people's relation to the Empire and their racial appearance. If their people have no relation to the Empire, status is calculated by wealth, equivalent to different levels in the landed Mestizo caste. The Emperor's eldest daughter, Koritsi Uma, rules Koritsi Rimi and the surrounding lands.

The heart of the city is the Mission of Koritsi Rimi. It is a sprawling complex of golden sandstone, filled with statues of Emperors past and beautiful images of the Countless Daughters, deified princesses both living and dead. Gardens and courtyards abound inside the mission, open to the faithful (any Frazian) and honored guests. Zarmi and half-castes are only al-



lowed into the kitchens and a few lesser areas.

Priests wear their golden hair long, combed and starched into a lion's mane, their beards clipped short. They are known as the Lion's of the Emperor, and wear glorious golden robes in many layers. Each ranking Lion (skill levels 6-10) is attended by 7-12 priestesses, the Lionesses (levels 1-16).

The Emperor's Lionesses are the true power in the Empire and the Mission. Each wears her hair clipped to one-inch and is clothed in a form-fitting gold jumpsuit. They are huntresses, and all Lionesses have the ability to Move Silently (progression identical to rogues).

Each Lion must have a minimum strength of 18, and may have exceptional strength as per fighters. Lions of sixth level and above are also empowered to give the Emperor's Roar, a magical ability identical to the roaring of the androsphinx. To progress beyond fifth level, however, Lions must gain a Pride of Lionesses by defeating another Lion in combat. Lions who lose their Pride may not progress in levels until they regain it. Young Lions and older priests who have lost their Prides loiter in the mission's gardens, sparring, planning adventures and generally getting into trouble.

Lionesses are unhindered by these restrictions and may progress freely, explaining the higher levels of the priestesses. Both priests and priestess wear their holy symbol, the Lion's Claws, fur gloves ending in three-inch long steel claws. (Damage 1d6 per glove in combat, plus strength bonuses.)

On the dais in the center plaza of the Mission are the images of the present Emperor, Yarak IV, and Koritsi Uma, Patron Daughter of the city and Grand-Lioness of the current dynasty. She is a fifteenth level cleric. Worshipers leave flowers, food and money before the statues.

Restoring the Cathedral

To cast his spell, Carlin must find the heart of the old Cathedral of the Spiral Queen. As the Mission of Koritsi Rimi is built on the Cathedral's ruins, the ancient

heartstone is most likely in the catacombs beneath.

Carlin disguises himself as a novice Lion. If necessary, he can cast a mass invisibility, though characters should come up with their own means of sneaking into the Mission.

There are several entrances to the crypts, some more obvious than others. Combat is not necessary to gain access to the catacombs -- the Mission has lax security, not believing such sacrilege could occur.

The Catacombs

Passages wind in all directions, filled with the sarcophagi of dead Lions and Lionesses, the royalty of Koritsi Rimi. The ancient character of Koritsi Rimi can be seen in the catacombs, where the blocks are larger and carved in unusual patterns not seen above ground -- twining serpents and vines, honeysuckle and seaweed and periwinkle shells. These are the foundation stones of the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen.

After a bit of exploring, it becomes obvious that the catacombs are a spiral maze. All paths lead to the center where lies the heartstone of the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen. Atop the stone lies the sarcophagus of Koritsi Rimi herself.

Carlin insists that the sarcophagus be moved aside so he may examine the carvings on the stone. If the crypt is disturbed, however, this arouses Koritsi Rimi. She is a lich (20th level cleric) armed with a gold scepter (Rod of Rulership), a ruby ring (Human Influence), a Scarab of Insanity, and wears a gold and diamond crown worth 20,000 gold (non-magical). In the sarcophagus are 30,000 gold worth of topazes in a gold urn (5000 gold value), and a lioness-headed canopic funerary urn containing her heart and soul, the subject of a Separable Soul spell. She's partial to the Flame Strike spell during combat and is almost completely invulnerable because of the combination of the Separable Soul and the standard lich immunities to enchantment/charm.

Koritsi Rimi is protective of her sarcophagus and the canopic jar inside. It is an elegant porcelain jar painted with scenes of lionesses on the hunt and can be easily opened or shattered. A dragonne with maximum hit points

will rise out of the pieces. Once it is killed, a lioness with maximum hits emerges from the corpse. This is followed by a nonafel (cat o' nine tails), which immediately splits into all nine "children" which try to escape down the maze-like passages of the catacombs. Within one of these (equal chance for each) is a caterwaul and the following beasts will emerge from the corpse of the proceeding creature: mountain lion, wildcat, kitten, and, finally, a lion-colored butterfly. This is Koritsi Rimi's heart. If the butterfly is destroyed, Koritsi Rimi crumbles to dust.

The Cathedral of the Spiral Queen

After the battle, Carlin casts Past Glories with the heartstone as the focus. Years fall away from the stones and the sarcophagi disappear one by one. The roof of the catacombs disappears and the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen rises over them in all its past glory.

The party stands in the center of the Cathedral, the heartstone polished and shining. Above them, hundreds of feet high, is the vault of the Cathedral. The ceiling is whorled and spiraled like the inside of a periwinkle shell. Fantastic and beautiful frescoes ornament the walls in all colors of the rainbow, blending into a harmonious whole.

Pillars stand at even intervals, spiraled in the form of kelp columns, morning glory vines and natural rock formations. Each archway leads to an identical hall, staircases spiraling up to minarets and domes. All the walls shine with a dull light and are ever so faintly translucent, the obvious product of magic.

Each character who witnesses the transformation of the Mission to the Cathedral must make a saving throw versus Death Magic or be struck with Divine Awe for 1d6 rounds.

Characters are then free to explore the Cathedral. The architecture follows the geometry of nature, and there are no straight angles. Chandeliers in the form of honeysuckle vines and oil lamps made from nautilus shells illuminate the area. Galleries and promenades line the inner walls of the dome, and phantom images from ages past occasionally walk by.

Characters also encounter, at random, scattered groups of Lions and Lionesses, immensely confused and astounded at the goings on. Carlin plays dumb and other characters would be wise to do so as well. If the party is hideously damaged from the encounter with Koritsi Rimi, the Lions and Lionesses would readily believe tales of demons in the basement and might even heal characters. Reactions, whatever they are, are solely dependent on the characters' appearance and demeanor. If the priests find out that the characters are responsible, they'll be the center of a witch hunt.

The Great Library

It doesn't really matter whether characters find this room or not or succeed in getting the spell. So far as the counselors are concerned, once the Past Glories is cast, the objective is accomplished. The characters, however, don't know that.

Unless some form of divination is used, the party discovers the Great Library in 1d4 hours. Inside are twisting shelves with rows upon rows of phantasmal tomes, none of which may be touched, though the spines and the books open on the tables -- which are tangible -- may be investigated. Phantasmal scholars wrapped in the ceremonial sari-cloths of the Spiral Queen go about their research. On the ceiling is the fresco telling the tale of the devil Velamirr and the angel of the Spiral Queen. In the final panel, the angel holds forth the scroll with the spell.

Characters must use Comprehend Languages and Read Magic to understand the nature of the charm, as well

as some means of getting to the top of the 30 foot ceiling of the library. It takes two hours to transcribe the spell. There is a balcony open to the outside of the Cathedral, however, and characters inside the Great Library may be more interested in what is going on without.

The Cathedral rises two thousand feet into the air, shining like a beacon to the city around. The towers and minarets of the Cathedral, topped with spiraled periwinkle domes, are interconnected by trellises of winding bridges and ramparts. The whole is veined with silver and gold and covered with intricate mosaics. At the base of the Cathedral lie the gardens of the Mission, bereft of the buildings which surrounded them.

Around the Cathedral lies the city of Koritsi Rimi, which is lit with the flames of burning buildings. The Zarmi serfs have taken the restoration of the Cathedral as a divine sign to rise up and slay their oppressors, which is exactly what they're doing.

In 1d3 hours, the Cathedral is stormed by revolutionaries, seeking to lynch the Lions and Lionesses of Koritsi Rimi, especially the high Priestess, Koritsi Uma. Characters still disguised as such must then contend with Zarmi lynching parties in addition to Frazian witch hunts. Carlin turns into an albatross and flies off, horrified by what he's done and seeking to save Nollie and other friends.

Aftermath

Characters who escape the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen and the revolution in Koritsi Rimi and travel back to Zarmipan are in for a surprise. The Counselors of Zarmipan take the spell

thankfully, then invite characters to a special private banquet. The food is poisoned, and soon the Counselors hope the adventurers will be as well.

The Counselors and Princess Soufie have proclaimed the restoration -- albeit temporary -- of the Cathedral of the Spiral Queen to be a divine miracle, and they want to get rid of anyone with evidence to the contrary, namely the characters. Needless to say they won't be paid. If the characters escape the Counselors and the palace guard, they are denounced as Frazian assassins sent by the Emperor in a desperate last attempt to keep hold of the Empire.

The Counselors of Zarmipan send assassins after any characters who survive, and the Frazians do the same as soon as they figure out what happened. The only way for characters to win in this adventure is for them to take the Counselors' advance money and run, never going on the quest.

New Spell for the Adventure

Past Glories

Level: 5

Components: V, S, M

Range: 0

Casting Time: 1 turn

Duration: 7 days + 1/level

Saving Throw: None

Area of Effect: Special

By the power of a past glories spell, an old or ruined building may be restored to its former glory, a broken tower made strong and new, or even a shattered bridge may be made to once again span a chasm. These changes, however, are only half real, and will melt away into nothingness when the spell's power is spent. However, the spell fades as slowly as it rises up -- a full ten minutes either way -- allowing any creatures within the conjured structure time to escape during its destruction. A dispel magic spell will only negate a section of the area of the past glory equal to its area of effect.

To cast this spell, the ruined structure must first be visible, at least in part. If not some excavation may be in order. The wizard must then find the cornerstone of the building, though if none existed or the stone is irretrievably lost, any suitably large and important piece of masonry may be substituted. The illusionist must

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also have at least a vague image of the building as it looked in its prime, whether simply from extrapolation, as in the case of a fairly well preserved structure, or perhaps a drawing or sketch from archives or even a vision from another spell. When the chant begins, fallen and shattered blocks rise back into place and quasi-real illusion fills in the spaces left by crumbled stones and rotted beams. The illusionary parts of the building emit a very soft glow, visible only at night.

Any creatures living within the ruins will be unharmed (though doubtless surprised) by the transformation of their home. Any original furnishings will be likewise restored. Those who possess magical sight will see the insubstantial phantoms of times past going about their daily lives as they did at the time of the site's highest glory.

This spell may also be used to restore broken weapons or jewelry, though magical powers will be lost unless the fragments still possessed these virtues.

Wizardss have also found that this spell may also be used to restore living matter to life temporarily, though the duration is severely curtailed. Use of a past glories to restore a dead tree, or any other type of lifeless vegetation, lasts only one turn plus one turn per level, and use on animal matter will only restore it to life and health for a maximum of seven rounds plus one round per level. Knowledge of what type of tree a trunk came from and whose bones are on the floor is of course absolutely

necessary before any such use can even be attempted. Casting times, however, are quicker, with only a minute required to restore a tree and a mere segment to return a human or animal to life, albeit temporarily. Undead, if they fail a saving throw, will be returned to the height of the power they held before undeath for the duration.

This spell may also be reversed (Future Shame) to ruin a building, kill a tree, or even a human for a very short while.

Separable Soul (Necromantic)

Level: 9
 Components: V, S, M
 Range: 0
 Casting Time: 1 day
 Duration: Permanent
 Saving Throw: None
 Area of Effect: One person or creature

By means of this dweomer, the caster places the soul and life force of the subject into a single portion of the body. This becomes his "Achilles' Heel" or "Sigfreid's Shoulder," the only place he can be injured, though any injury to that portion is death to both soul and body. The rest of the subject's body is invulnerable to all weapons and all offensive spells except alteration and enchantment/charm. The material component for this portion of the spell is a fresh bath of dragon's blood or water from the River Styx.

If a Magic Jar is cast subsequently, the caster can safely remove the portion of the body containing the soul

and life essence. Internal organs are best used for this purpose. The removed organ must then either be placed in a special canopic jar, costing 10,000 g.p. in materials, or within the body of another living creature where it will immediately take hold, becoming a part of that creature and taking the place of one of its organs.

Polymorph Any Object may then be used on the creature housing the organ, turning it into a similar organ which may be placed into a larger creature and so on, nesting the Separable Soul within a set of animals like the smallest in a set of Russian dolls. When the animal housing the soul is killed, the next animal in the chain is freed from the polymorph spell and escapes from the body. This animal must then be killed, releasing the next animal and so on. The largest animal in the chain may also be enchanted into an organ, which may be placed in a canopic jar and hidden.

If the portion of the body containing the soul is removed, the subject becomes a lich of sorts, immune to the effects of age and the passage of time, unchanged from the moment of the spell.

If used upon a subject who is dead, the Separable Soul creates a true lich, though those at peace with themselves at their time of death may simply wish to sleep in their crypts unless disturbed. This use is most often performed on the relics of saints and kings for ease of consultation with the dead. Liches created by this spell are just as invulnerable as other subjects of the spell.



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Demon Killer

the double-length conclusion of an eight part serial

by Steve Tymon

Tereth noticed that Lord Azoth was staring intently at him. Picking up his goblet, he inclined his head slightly, a gesture the castle lord returned. Both men sipped their wine, or so it appeared. Tereth barely allowed the foul mixture to touch his lips.

"Don't drink anything," he warned, returning his goblet to the table. "It's a mixture of blood and wine. A bad year."

She was still shivering from her outburst of a moment before, but she managed to look at him. "I see no humor in this."

He shrugged. "It's better than being frightened."

"Fright is a healthy emotion," she countered. "It has saved my life many times."

"And I shall save it all the other times." He kissed her gently on the cheek, then added, "Be calm. We have been in worse places than this."

She sighed and took a deep breath. Color returned to her cheeks. "I don't remember them," she answered, "but I'll try to do as you wish. Let's hope we live to do more."

"We will." He nodded toward her belt. "Anyway, you do have your sword."

She shook her head. "Little good it will do here."

She glanced at the castle lord. He was staring intently at her now. She made no attempt at a smile this time, but nodded instead. Azoth did not react. He only continued to stare with grey and clouded eyes. A moment later, the castle lord turned away, his attention diverted by a misshapen dwarf who climbed onto the table. The dwarf spun around, rolled, and finally tumbled into a bowl of pudding. It brought forth round of laughter. Cimir was not amused. She looked back to Tereth, who was still watching her.

"The castle lord," she continued. "Do you know him?"

He nodded. "Of course, my love," he answered. "Azoth was assassinated, poisoned by his wife so that his brother could claim the throne of Azamir. That was three years ago."

Cimir again grew pale. She shoved her plate away, upsetting her goblet. The thick red wine splashed onto the tablecloth, staining the white material. Those seated across from her stared with hunger at the spreading pool. The dwarf ran across the table and started licking at the cloth. There was no laughter this time. Cimir shivered again.

"No more," she whispered, trying to avoid seeing the dwarf. "For this once, let us forget the answers you seek. They will not stop you if you should desire to leave. They cannot."

Another voice interrupted. "Your lady is troubled?"

Cimir gasped in surprise. She turned -- behind them there stood a sorcerer, his features vaguely familiar. Nervous, she glanced at Tereth. He touched one finger to his lips -- a request for silence. He already knew him -- it was Dravos, once court sorcerer to Lord Kesroth.

"She spills her wine and has not touched her food," Dravos continued. "Is it not to her liking?"

"A discomfort of the stomach," Tereth answered. "It is perhaps the cold weather."

"Aye, it does seem to affect those who come from the warmer climes of the south."

The sorcerer smiled. His teeth were pointed, and they were stained with blood and bits of meat. A thin stream of blood trickled down his chin.

Tereth leaned forward. "Tell me of the demon of this castle," he whispered.

"The demon," Dravos began. He paused before continuing. The smile faded. In its place, a look of fear. He looked about himself, as if someone were watching his every move. He leaned even closer before he spoke again, and then, it was almost a whisper.

"The demon," he hissed again. "Beware. All of this is a trap, a means of capturing you, demon killer. We are but pawns, souls damned to Hell and again given flesh for this moment. It is all because of you."

Tereth nodded. "Dravos," he asked, "is it Arek?"

The sorcerer smiled again. "You remember my name," he answered. "Good." And then the smile was gone once more. He glanced around a second time, then leaned closer and nodded. "Yes," he whispered. "It is Arek."

He suddenly seemed to grow more fearful. He started to tremble. When he spoke again, there was a pleading in his eyes, his voice. "You must kill the demon," he begged. "It is the only way we shall be free of Hell, free of its grasp. It is the only way we shall be able to rest." He seemed about to cry. "Demon killer, you must set us free."

The doors of the hall burst open. A chill wind howled through the room. Tereth turned toward the doors. Behind him, Dravos' eyes rolled upward in their sockets. He turned and slowly walked away, not waiting for Tereth's reply. Cimir stared after him, and at the far end of the hall, the doors slammed shut.

"Freedom," came a voice of a thousand voices, cold and familiar. "There will be no freedom for you, Dravos, nor any of the rest. Not the dead, not you, and especially not the demon killer."

Tereth noticed the sorcerer was gone. Turning, he found Dravos standing by one wall, his eyes staring out at nothing. Frowning, the demon killer turned back and shook his head slowly. He knew the voice. "You are still a poor actor," he commented.

Cimir began to scream. The bodies in the hall -- Dravos, the castle lord, and all who attended, those across the table, all of them -- fell to the floor or slumped forward. The flesh flowed from their bones and the stench of rotted meat filled the air. Maggots crawled through dripping eye sockets. Cimir screamed again.

Tereth gestured. The room was suddenly empty save for Cimir and himself. He held her close. "The show is ended, Arek," he said. "The dead are returned to rest. Now come forth. Your duel is with me. We have unfinished business."

"We do indeed." The torches flickered, then faded altogether. But Tereth quickly threw a spell of confinement, and the walls suddenly danced with blue light. He also surrounded himself and Cimir with the blue glow of protection, but he made no move to stand or even draw his weapon.

A shadow in human form stepped forth. It held a black sword in one hand. "You have destroyed my army," said the shadow, now using Gynar's once-voice, "the last army of my kind."

"So?" said Tereth. "Your kind rarely care what happens to one another."

Arek chuckled, but it was a strangely cold sound. "Ordinarily not, mortal," he agreed, "but this time, there were no survivors, not one. No one remains to regain the world. You destroyed everything."

"No, not everything," said Tereth, shaking his head. "There remains you."

"Yes," answered the demon. "There remains me, the only one who ever survived your damnable blade."

"A pity. Innocents have died for my failure."

The demon laughed -- a loud, booming laughter that echoed throughout the great hall. "Murderer of my race," he said at last, "what do you care who lives or dies?"

"I care more than you could ever imagine," the demon killer answered.

"You spout madness in your last moments," it hissed, then paused. "No matter. Either way, you are mine. So too your woman."

Tereth glanced at Cimir. She stared back at him, the fright evident in her eyes. The demon noticed. "Tell me, demon killer," he continued. "Do you love her?"

Tereth's eyes narrowed. He gave no answer.

"Of course you do," the demon answered for him. "But do you think you can protect her from me, in your weakened, wounded state? Do your miserable powers have a limit?"

At last Tereth pushed back his chair and stood. He held Cimir's hand with one of his own, but the other went to his sword. He drew it out, the sound of metal ringing in the silence.

"Why don't you come and find out?" he suggested.

Arek laughed again. "You use a damaged sword," he said, "a blade that no longer has its strength. I saw what you did with its jewel."

Cimir glanced fearfully between Arek and her warrior. The demon knew, but Tereth seemed undisturbed.

"There's enough to finish you," he said.

"Is there?" Arek's voice was mocking, overconfident. "Is there really?"

The demon paused, waiting for an answer, but none came. "Then let us add something for you to deal with," he continued at last, raising one hand, then clenching it into a fist. "The fires of Hell for one..."

Flames exploded upwards from the floor, but Tereth made a quick gesture at the same moment. Around them, the tables and chairs ignited but, strangely, they were not consumed -- hellflames could only destroy flesh. And though Tereth and his lady now stood in the center of the flames, they were unaffected by the fires.

Arek recognized the spell. He had expected it. Quickly, the demon made another motion with his hand. "And what will you do if we duel within stone itself?" he asked.

He reached up, as if pulling down on something. Above, the ceiling sparkled with a brief red light, then became as fluid -- the stone itself flowed down toward the demon killer and his lady, the ceiling melting down toward the floor.

Tereth looked up and saw what was happening. He turned to Cimir. "Don't fear, my love," he whispered. "Whatever happens now, you are protected."

Cimir nodded slowly. Turning, Tereth made another gesture with his free hand. Green light sparkled over the surface of his armor and flesh and around Cimir.

The stone flowed down around them, and soon they were engulfed. The spell allowed them to see, so it was like a grey fog. But in truth, it was they who had become as shadow, with no real substance for the stone to crush. So long as Tereth lived, the spell would hold. The blue light of protection grew brighter around Tereth and extended several feet from his body. Arek was outlined by a red light that flickered like flame.

Arek spoke, "I made a mistake the last time we duelled, demon killer," he said, his voice echoing. "I let your woman escape. That will not happen again. This time, she lives or dies with you. This time, you must protect her and keep her as shadow or the stone shall crush her."

Tereth said nothing. He kept his sword ready, waiting for the inevitable attack. He moved Cimir behind himself for her own protection.

"Come," Arek continued, raising his black sword. "Let us finish what was begun in another time long ago. Let us duel."

The demon suddenly lunged across the space between them, slashing down with his dark blade. But Tereth countered, bringing up his own sword.

The impact was fierce -- the metal clanged like a great bell within the fog of stone, and the demon killer was knocked off his feet by the force of the blow. He crashed to the ground and skidded across the floor, slamming into a chair that did not shatter or move at the impact. Unlike Tereth, the chair was held fast in place within a block of solid stone.

Stunned, the demon killer fell to his side, shaking his head. But Arek did not follow up his attack. Instead, turning, he advanced on Cimir.

Retreating, she reached for her sword, realizing as she did that it would be useless against the demon.

"Cimir!" came Tereth's voice. "Move back! Move back!"

Arek turned at the demon killer's shout. Cimir used the moment to run to another side of the room. Sensing the motion, the demon looked toward her, and it was then that Tereth struck.

He quickly lifted one hand and fire burst into being within it. He hurled the flame at Arek.

The demon turned only to have the flames explode directly in his face. He hissed, retreated and frantically clawed at the

air -- the flames had spread to his upper torso, encompassing his neck, chest and arms.

Tereth came to his feet at the same time and charged across the distance between them, bringing up his sword.

His blade hacked deep into the demon's side. Screaming, Arek was still able to twist around, a surprisingly quick and powerful motion, bringing up his blade in a wide arc. It was an attempt to cut the demon killer in half. Too close to retreat, Tereth barely managed to block.

The heavy impact came again. He was lifted off his feet and hurled through the air. He crashed to the floor just beyond the table.

Leaping upon it, Arek brought up his sword. In the same motion, he gestured slightly with one hand --- the flames that burned upon him went out.

"Now!" the demon hissed as he brought his sword down. It struck the metal of Tereth's blade, raised just in time to block.

The swords came together with a crack like thunder. The rumbling echoed through the room, and sparks erupted between them, so strong was the blow. The magics of the demon, and that of the demon killer, screamed and howled at the powerful contact, for the two blades had locked and the opposing magics unleashed their forces against each other.

"Once you were able to withstand me," the demon hissed, "but now---"

He forced Tereth down. For all his strength, the demon killer could not stop him. Sweat poured down his face.

Suddenly, he fell back. Off-balance, Arek was pulled forward with him. Tereth brought up his feet and caught the demon on its stomach and used the momentum of the fall to hurl the demon through the air.

Arek had no time to react. He slammed into a wall, and the magics there pulled at him, spreading his arms and legs as if he was crucified. Around him, the glow spluttered, crackled, and grew blindingly bright.

The demon screamed.

Tereth came to his feet. He raised one hand, pointing it at the demon. From his fingertips, a narrow beam of blue flame leaped across the room and slashed into Arek.

The demon screamed again. The blue flame threatened to burn him in two.

But suddenly, he was gone.

In the demon's place, a black fluid flowed down from the wall and rippled across the floor toward Tereth.

The demon killer had only a moment to glance toward Cimir. "Move back!" he warned, motioning with one hand. "Quickly!"

She nodded and retreated to the wall behind Tereth. In front of the demon killer, the black fluid came to a stop and suddenly boiled up from the floor, assuming a new shape.

It was a giant, scale-covered fist, with long and glistening black claws. It slammed down on the demon killer, but Tereth was prepared-- the glow around him sparkled and grew even brighter, almost white in its intensity. The fist struck Tereth's glowing shield and the force sent Tereth to the ground. But his protection held.

Again and again, the fist slammed down, but each time, the light that surrounded Tereth shielded him.

Bringing up his sword, Tereth struck back. The metal cut deep into the black shadow-flesh, but it seemed to have no

effect. The thing that was the demon suddenly leaped full upon Tereth and the giant hand of glistening shadow, severed at the wrist, hung above the demon killer.

Its fingers opened. On the palm was a gaping mouth, lined with long, dagger-like teeth. It snapped viciously at him. Saliva dripped, igniting as it fell. A rain of flames flashed down around the demon killer, each drop vanishing before it touched the floor.

Twisting to one side, Tereth shoved upwards with his sword, jamming it straight into the open mouth.

Arek screamed and the hand suddenly became black fluid once more, flowing back down to the floor. It drew together again, just beyond the edge of the protective glow. Bubbling up from the floor, a new and even more nightmarish shape appeared.

A giant shadow-spider stood in front of Tereth. Even as the demon killer got to his feet, it attacked, long metal-clawed legs slashing into his protection. Before Tereth could block, one claw struck his chest and caused a deep wound.

Gasping, Tereth fell back, clutching at his chest, but the thing of shadows followed, pursuing the advantage. Desperate, Tereth slashed quickly with his sword, striking out against the spider's legs. He felt the satisfactory impact of sword against demon flesh and a spider leg fell to the ground.

Screaming, the giant spider fell back, twitching and convulsing. It collapsed to the floor, the legs writhing like tentacles. Arek continued to scream, the demon's voice echoing loudly within the stone that surrounded them, then the spider ceased moving and melted into a black puddle. A moment later, even that was gone.

Slowly, Tereth fell to his knees, still clutching at his chest. Glancing down, he saw that blood poured out between his fingers. Behind him, across the room, Cimir could only stare in horror. She saw him close his eyes and concentrate on his chest. The blood stopped flowing and was gone.

Breathing rapidly, Tereth dropped his hand. The wound was sealed, but at best it was a temporary measure.

The demon killer stared at the floor. Almost touching his knee was the portion of the spider leg he had slashed free. Inexplicably, it had not vanished with the rest. Puzzled, he reached for it.

Suddenly, it transformed into a woman's slender hand with long sharp nails, severed at the wrist. Two red and glowing eyes sprouted from the top, and from somewhere came Arek's laughter.

Tereth jerked back, but he was too late. The hand leaped, landing on his chest. The long fingers clawed into his wound and tore it open.

Frantic, Tereth clutched at the hand. He managed to pull it away, but blood sprayed. In his grasp, he felt the woman's hand change yet again. He now held a human skull with long, spiked teeth and slender, skeletal legs protruding from beneath. A hellish red glow came from within the eye-sockets, and it stared at him and began to scream, this time in a woman's voice.

Desperately, Tereth shook his hand, but the nightmare thing clung to him with its long legs. He could not shake it free. Then it leaped and dug its long teeth into his neck. Tereth screamed, but it suddenly died to a choked gurgle

when blood poured into his throat. Dropping his sword, he clutched at the black skull, trying to rip it free.

Instinctively, Cimir dashed forward. Using the butt of her sword, she smashed the demon skull from where it clung to Tereth's neck. The skull flew across the room, where it smashed into the wall, returning immediately to a black fluid that flowed down onto the floor. A second later, Arek stood there in his true form -- twice a man's height, with leathery wings, reptilian features, and a long tail. He stared at Tereth and Cimir with glowing red eyes.

Cimir did not notice. She held Tereth where he had fallen. The demon killer's eyes were closed, his face covered with blood. She could not tell if he still lived. "My love!" she said, her voice desperate. She shook him. "My love!"

Slowly, Tereth moved his head. He blinked, then looked up at her. Somehow, he managed a painful smile. "Almost a terrible accident," he whispered.

From across the room, Arek spoke, "You have grown weak in your old age, warrior," said the demon, approaching them. "This was almost too easy."

Tereth did not answer. Instead, he gently pushed Cimir to one side. "Get back," he warned her, his voice hoarse. Nodding, Cimir retreated again to the wall behind her.

Tereth reached for his sword, then slowly stood.

"Now," said the demon, "shall we try again?"

Tereth raised his blade. The demon brought up his own, then gestured. In its claw, the sword changed in shape. It became a giant battle-axe and in the same motion he slammed it down at Tereth.

Considering his wounds, the demon killer sidestepped with surprising speed. The axe slammed into the floor. The impact rocked the hall and the castle. At that moment, Tereth attacked.

He leaped forward, slashing at the demon's exposed neck. Bellowing, Arek staggered back, clutching at the wound. Flames poured like blood between his claws.



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Tereth followed, not giving the demon a chance to recover. Arek pulled the battle axe free, but could not find the opportunity to bring it up in order to strike again. At best, he was only able to defend, trying to block each slash of the demon killer's sword. He was only partially successful. Cuts appeared on his arms and chest. His wings were torn.

Desperate, he grabbed the blade itself. Screaming in pain as Tereth tried to yank the weapon free, Arek brought up the battle axe. He struck the demon killer with the flat of the axe, knocking Tereth across the hall and slashing his claw as the force of the blow pulled the sword free.

The demon killer crashed into the wall. The glow around him howled. The two magics --- that of confinement and that of protection --- clashed and violently attempted to neutralize each other, their energies similar yet vastly different. Lightning flamed around the warrior, and, stunned, he could not move.

Arek saw. He took advantage of the moment, and with all his strength he hurled his axe across the room.

From some strangely distant place, Tereth heard Cimir's scream. He looked up and saw the axe, spinning toward him.

The axe hit the wall and shattered with a roar. The walls rocked with the impact, and the pieces of broken axe fell to the floor.

But the demon killer was gone, nowhere to be seen. Puzzled, Arek looked slowly around the room, waiting for Tereth to reappear. But nothing happened.

He turned to Cimir. He slowly advanced on her.

She brought up her blade. The sword shook in her hand and her eyes were wide with fear.

Suddenly, flames erupted all over the demon.

Bellowing, Arek tried to beat them off. He gestured frantically, but the spell failed. Staggering, he turned back to Cimir, trying to continue toward her.

Then the flames poured down in front of him, drew together and coalesced into human form. It was Tereth.

The demon killer stabbed his sword full into the demon's neck. The blade came through behind at the base of the skull. Arek fell to his knees and jerked backwards. Tereth followed him down, holding his sword now hilt-deep in the demon's neck. His smile was cold and confident -- surely there was enough power left in the jewel to kill Arek.

Tereth then stared, disbelieving, as the demon reached up, grasped the hilt, and pulling the blade free. Stunned, Tereth completed the motion, yanking it out. Arek rolled onto his side, then retreated, crawling across the floor. Leaning on one arm, he stared back at the surprised demon killer.

Arek started to laugh, though it was choked and painful. "I took ten thousand souls," said the demon, "and made them part of me. And then I took another ten thousand, and again. I prepared myself as I had in the ancient days, when we made war against the Gods. I went beyond it. You cannot kill me now. It is over."

Tereth said nothing. He glanced at Cimir, then again at the demon, and last at his sword. His uncertainty was apparent. Arek laughed at his enemy's bewilderment, then slowly stood, still clutching at his throat. He towered over the demon killer.

"Don't look so helpless," Arek hiss, his voice again that of Gynar. "You fought as a God. Never have I found one of your kind with such strength, such power."

But still Tereth was silent. He did not even look up at the demon, but continued to stare at his sword.

The demon added, "In a way, I am almost sorry to end your existence. But fear not. You shall continue as part of me forever. And your woman shall breed a new race of demon-kind."

In reply, Tereth finally shook his head. He stepped back and gestured at Cimir. "Protect," he whispered.

Cimir gasped in surprise. Walls of flame exploded into being around her. It was transparent, a red and glowing haze, and she could hear what occurred outside, their words. Yet when she touched the flames with her hands, it seemed she touched walls of cool glass. She was trapped.

"Fool!" Arek hissed. "You seek to protect her even now?! You have lost! You cannot win!"

"No," said Tereth, looking up. He brought up his sword. "I haven't lost yet. It hasn't even begun."

His eyes suddenly flashed red. Before the stunned demon could react, the demon killer drew forth his dagger with his free hand and suddenly ran at his enemy. He leaped and landed full on the demon, stabbing forward with sword and dagger, penetrating and hanging onto the shadow-flesh by the bite of his weapons. Around him, the blue glow howled, adding to the screams of Arek.

Arek clawed at the demon killer, his great talons tearing through the magics, through armor and flesh. His claws penetrated, laying open muscle down to the bone. Tereth screamed.

From her prison of fire, Cimir armor and flesh peel back. She screamed in horror for her beloved, pressing her hands against the walls of flame, trying to get through.

But Tereth fought. He sawed his sword deeper into the demon until the blade ripped completely through, spraying flames and shredded demon-flesh.

Bellowing, the demon staggered back across the room. He crashed into one wall --- the light there added to the howling of energies. Light leaped from the other walls, adding up the brilliance that surrounded them. Great flames exploded out from the demon's gaping wounds.

Arek fell, twisting and crashing down onto his back. And still Tereth cut at him -- yanking his dagger free, he brought it up and slashed at Arek's face but inches from his own. He slashed again and again, and the demon tried desperately to push away the knife. But Tereth stabbed at the demon's claw, forcing it away, then stabbed down, tearing open one eye. With his sword, he continued to widen the great wound he had already made.

Arek thrashed like a dying fish. Desperate, he tore at the demon killer's exposed back with his uninjured claw, exposing ribs and vertebrae, while the other flailed against the ground, near-useless now. But it touched a piece of the broken axe. With fingers that barely responded to command, he managed to gesture. In a flash of light, the fragment became a knife.

Within the flames, Cimir saw what was about to happen. She shouted a warning, calling Tereth's name, and then realized that he could not hear her, that her prison of flames allowed sound to enter, but none to go out.

And Arek, still screaming, brought up the dagger, raised it above and plunged it down.

Cimir saw the knife penetrate. She heard the meaty sound of impact, saw it pierce Tereth's back and go hilt deep. The point was well into his heart.

Tereth jerked upward, a surprised and horrified expression on his face. And then he twitched, once, twice, and fell forward onto the demon.

Arek shuddered. He gasped for breath, yet managed to speak. "You're dead," he hissed. "Your soul is mine."

Slowly, Arek tried to stand. He failed at first, crashing back down onto his side. Struggling, he tried again. This time, he was successful. Swaying unsteadily, flames poured out from his many wounds, he stared with his one remaining eye at the motionless demon killer.

Pleased, he turned to Cimir. She was watching him from within her flames. Slowly, painfully, he limped toward her.

In response, Cimir brought up her own sword, then hesitated. It would be of no use. Realizing what must be done, she tossed aside the blade, then drew her own dagger, slowly bringing its point to just above her heart.

Arek stopped, not because of her action, but because of something else. His eye blinked in confusion. "The flames," the demon whispered, staring. "His protection. It still remains."

He turned to look at the corpse on the floor. "But he's dead," he finished, suddenly fearful.

Cimir heard the demon's words. Puzzled, she looked at the flames around her. Uncomprehending, she also looked at Tereth's body.

Then a sudden wind howled through the room. Blue flames leaped from the walls and converged on the demon killer's corpse. His sword suddenly glowed a brilliant and blinding white, even brighter than the explosion of the jewel.

Both Cimir and the demon shielded their eyes, yet both tried to see what was occurring.

Soon, the brilliance of the sword flowed from the hilt, up Tereth's arm and then to the rest of his body, becoming one

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with the demon killer. His body became a pure white light in human form, then grew even brighter before it began to dim. As it faded altogether, so did the wind, and the walls of light returned to as they once were -- simply a glow over the stones. But now a blue light once again surrounded Tereth.

All was still for a long moment. Neither Arek nor Cimir made any motion. They both stared as if frozen, waiting to see what would occur.

As if in response, Tereth's sword hand twitched and clutched at the blade. Cimir's eyes grew wide. Trembling, she dropped her knife.

Arek, stunned, began to back away, feeling a dark fear. "No," he whispered, shaking his head.

On the floor, Tereth twitched again, this time his full arm. Slowly, he pushed himself up with a jerky and unsteady motion. Tereth turned to Arek. The light that surrounded the demon killer no longer seemed so much a spell as it did an aura of great power. It grew brighter, almost pure white and Tereth seemed different, stronger. When he spoke, his voice was loud, all cold and steel, like thunder.

"Gods do not die as mortal men," he said, and the stones seemed to shake at the voice. "Surely you did not believe the lies I told you?"

Watching, Cimir trembled violently. She did not know this voice, and he who stood before her was not the Tereth she had known.

"That voice," Arek whispered, shaking with fear.

"Do you not remember me, Arek?" Tereth asked. "Have all the years dulled your memory? Ten thousand years..." He paused, then added, "Perhaps a reminder."

He raised his arms. At once, the light from the walls again leaped out to him. His black armor was gone and in its place was the golden armor of an ancient warrior, the armor of a god.

"Kysra!" Arek hissed, remembering. He feared greatly. "God of war, we thought you were dead!"

"No more than Cimir," he answered, turning slowly to his lady. He gestured, and the walls of flame vanished from around her. He held out one hand.

Dazed, she slowly crossed the room to him, careful to avoid Arek, then took the outstretched hand in her own.

Tereth turned back to the demon. "Surely you recognize one of those you cleansed of memory?"

Arek stared at Cimir, then sagged to the floor, defeated. At last, he looked up. "It was a trick," said the demon. "You entered the trap, but you knew all along--"

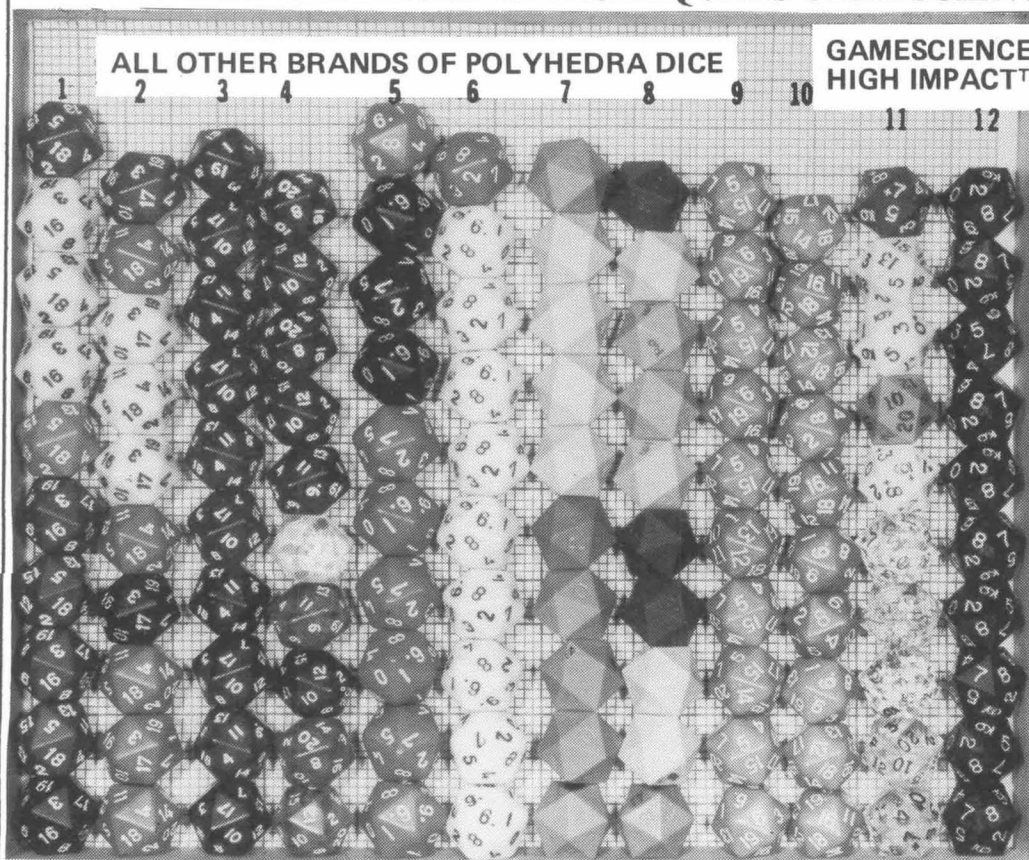
"---that I had to win this one," the demon killer finished for him, "even at the cost of my life."

The demon stared, his shock apparent. "Then you were dead a moment ago."

Tereth nodded. "It was something I had prepared for, long ago." He held up his sword. "I put that which made me a god into this blade. For all the time I made war against your kind, I had no choice but to live as you -- by the life force of others, by souls."

He lowered the blade. "With the death of the Gods, you made me near-mortal, for I am nothing without the others."

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You left me no choice but to be ready to cheat death when it came, and now I have. And this time you will not be able to destroy me, not weakened as you are."

Cimir stared at him. At last she understood the many killings, his need for souls. At last she knew.

But Arek only nodded at the words. And then suddenly started to laugh. "Then you realize," he began, "that you can't kill me either. Even were you to cut me into a thousand pieces, I would not die, and if I did the same to you, it would hardly be over. The most either of us can hope for now is a temporary end to combat. It is stalemate, a draw."

He gasped suddenly, and clutched at the gaping wound on his chest. "Neither of us can kill the other," he hissed, continuing. "It is ended. Let me go."

Tereth shook his head. "It is far from over."

Arek laughed again, though his pain was apparent. "And what do you propose?" he gasped. "Shall we hack at each other for all eternity?"

In answer, Tereth held out his sword, holding it before himself with both hands. "My sword," he said. "I had hoped I could end your existence without losing it, but I have no choice. You have cost me my sword."

"What do you mean?" the demon asked, his voice quiet and wary. He was not certain he wished to hear the answer.

"The blade is no longer occupied by my essence," Tereth said. And added, "Surely you've heard of blades possessed by demons?"

Arek said nothing. He understood well enough.

"It is done this way," Tereth continued.

But the demon leaped for him, even as the demon killer spoke, but it was too late. Tereth twisted the sword slightly in his hands. There came a crack of thunder, and in mid-

leap, Arek became a black mist that was sucked into the blade. The demon was gone.

Silent, Tereth stared down at his sword for a long moment, remembering the ages it had served him, the battles and duels.

"To the far side of the moon," he finished.

With a flash of light, the sword was gone. In the same moment, the golden armor vanished, to be replaced by the black armor of the demon killer, and the fog-like stone that was around them faded, as did the hellfire, and then even the fortress of Horodarth itself. Tereth and Cimir stood alone in an empty field. To the east, there was the first glow of dawn.

Slowly, Cimir looked around herself, then turned to her warrior. She was no longer fearful -- only uncertain.

"The castle," she said at last, "the stone, and the flames--- where are they?"

"Gone," he answered, with the voice she knew, that of Tereth. "Gone with the last of the demons."

"And all that you said was true?" she whispered. "Of your need for souls, and your name, your true form?"

He nodded silently.

"Then why," she asked, "why did you stay with me?"

He hesitated before answering. "Because you were mine once," he managed to say at last, "a very long time ago."

Slowly, she her head. "I don't remember."

He pulled off one metal glove. "Then remember now, if you can," he said quietly, reaching out to gently touch her on the forehead, "for all the demons are gone, as are their spells of forgetfulness."

At his touch, it came back to her: echoes of another time, of another place, of other worlds. They all came back, the whispers and the sighs and the laughter, even tears, all of them returned to memory.

"What is your name?" Tereth asked, lowering his hand. It was the second time she had heard the question from him.

"Ci - Cim -" she began, then stopped, knowing that was wrong. And then her eyes grew wide with the last of the knowledge. "Cyzhira," she finished, looking at him. "Cyzhira, Goddess of the Moon."

And slowly, trembling, as if she almost disbelieved what she knew to be truth, she reached out to touch him gently on the cheek. "My love," she whispered. "My husband."

"It has been a long time since I last heard you call me that," he managed to say, though his voice was choked. He kissed her lightly on the palm of her hand, then added, in a stronger voice, "But it's over now, at last."

She nodded, then noticed the sky above. She gasped. It was clear of clouds, something she had not seen on earth in all the time she had spent there. For the first time in ten thousand years, the sunrise would be a clear one.

Tereth looked up too, then smiled and held out his hand.

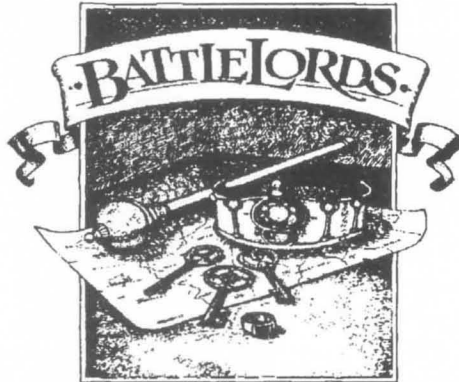
"Come, my love," he said softly. "Take my hand. We have much to do."

Hesitantly, she slowly reached out to touch him. And then they were gone.

Here ends the tale of Tereth, demon killer.

The Sixth Age is born.

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BattleLords is a 100% computer-moderated medieval war game where eight to twelve players strive to be the first to find and retain three treasures, using cunning, diplomacy, military might and economic prowess. Each turn, players receive a seven-color map and a multi-page scouting report detailing their progress. Many game maps are available for play, including Europe, Great Britain, and Africa, as well as several fictional areas. Starting positions ready now! Team competitions and configurations available.

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BLOOD PIT INTRODUCTORY RULES

PART I – INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS BLOOD PIT?

BLOOD PIT is an exciting game of gladiatorial combat, set in an era where men were men, women were women and a good steel blade was justice! Legends of dueling were created in this time, though not without generous portions of broken weapons, bones and dead fighters.

In BLOOD PIT you assume the role of a manager of a team of fighters who are armed and armored at your behest, then sent into the arena to cross blades with other warriors from other teams. Some of your warriors will be slain, others will survive and prosper and a few, a very, very few, may become legends! Throughout, you will learn how to fight your warriors, which weapons are most effective for them, which strategies they prefer and much, much more.

This package is a simple overview of the game system and a quick way to setup your team in BLOOD PIT. There should be a printout enclosed with additional instructions and your starting team statistics. It is that form which you will return to us to allow us to start your team of fighters. If there is no Team Creation form enclosed, please phone or write us and we will get you one immediately.

WHAT TYPE OF GAME IS BLOOD PIT?

BLOOD PIT is played using an exciting and enjoyable system known as Play-By-Mail gaming. Although it is processed completely by computers at our headquarters, no player of BLOOD PIT has to know anything about computers, nor would such knowledge benefit them in any way.

Play-By-Mail gaming, as experienced through BLOOD PIT, is probably the fastest-growing part of the entire gaming field, and for good reason! It is cheap (about the cost of a movie or a good book each turn), competitive as all get out (you are competing against hundreds of other players, after all!), easy to learn and VERY difficult to master.

If you are interested in other aspects of Play-By-Mail (often abbreviated to just "PBM"), such as other games we run, just ask us for our free information package!

COST TO PLAY

BLOOD PIT is played in a series of turns. Each turn, you will receive a printout showing you the results of your fights and a new strategy sheet to send in for your warriors for the next turn. Once we receive your strategy sheet, our staff inputs the data into our com-

puters and once the deadline (see below) comes due all of the fights for that turn are processed and the computer determines the winners and losers.

The deadline is the date on which the game (also called an arena) is run. Your strategy sheet must make it to our offices by this date or you will miss the turn and your fighters will not fight.

Each turn, along with your fight results and your new strategy sheet, you will receive a newsletter for your game. It will have every team in the game ranked from top to bottom by win/loss record, lists of the best and the worst fighters in the arena, personal ads written by the players, a listing of armor and helms from most to least popular and the most and least popular fighting styles.

If your fighters fight on a turn you will be charged a turn processing fee of \$5.00 to cover our expenses, such as postage, printing, ribbons, etc. If you miss the turn you will be sent the newsletter and a new STRAT SHEET. You will be charged a flat fee of \$1.00 to cover this.

PART II – HOW TO START PLAYING

WARRIOR STATS

Each warrior has six attributes or statistics which make him unique. These are as follows:

STRENGTH: This represents your warrior's physical power as demonstrated by his/her ability to move objects. It also affects, to a limited extent, your warrior's ability to take damage and recover from exhaustion. It is a warrior's strength that determines which weapons can be used to full effect.

DEXTERITY: This statistic represents both hand-eye coordination and his/her to control the gross motion of his/her body. This means that it affects both your warrior's ability to hit and to avoid being hit. Dexterity is also a key factor in determining initiative in an exchange of blows. Overall, it is an extremely vital characteristic for most combat styles.

CONSTITUTION: An indicator of your warrior's general toughness, health and resistance to pain. It affects a warrior's ability to take damage, to recover from exhaustion and to carry large loads. Also, it is this score which determines how easily a warrior may improve other statistics through rigorous training and patience.

INTELLIGENCE: This measures many things, not the least of which is the ability to think quickly. It governs the learning of all skills (as opposed to characteristic scores). Intelligence also partially determines whether or not your warrior decides to conserve stamina or not in the midst of a fight.

PRESENCE: This represents your warrior's inherent impressiveness. Together with your accumulated popularity, it becomes at once your most important statistic and your least important, depending on your status in a fight. If your warrior is about to be slain, the Ref may take mercy on him/her due to your warrior's impressiveness as a fighter. Then again, he may not...

SIZE: This characteristic determines your warrior's height and, along with your Constitution, your weight. In addition, size influences how much damage a warrior can take, how much damage he can deal out and how easily he/she is knocked over by a shield bash.

For a general idea what a good score is in any area, take a look at this chart:

| | |
|---------|---|
| 3 - 4 | the warrior is disabled! |
| 5 - 7 | very low; the warrior will have trouble due to this |
| 8 - 10 | for a fish-monger, this is okay |
| 11 - 13 | an average score for a Blood Pit warrior |
| 14 - 16 | a good score, worthy of a gladiator |
| 17 - 18 | excellent; this ability will affect combat greatly |
| 19 - 22 | an amazing score; difficult to train it this high |
| 23 - 25 | the greatest of the greats; a legendary score! |

RACES

There are six races available to be chosen from in BLOOD PIT. A fighter's race will affect what weapons he can use to best effect, perhaps how he prefers to fight and, to some extent, how he does against fighters of other races. The six races and the more obvious effects of each are listed below. The subtle effects are left up to each manager to learn.

#1 — HUMAN: The baseline race of BLOOD PIT. HUMANS are able to use all weapons equally well (that is, they have no particular advantage with one or another) and are typically good opponents against all other races.

#2 — DWARF: As you might expect, DWARVES favor all axe-type weapons and are absolutely pathetic with any of the long pole-arm types (halberd, maul, pole axe, etc.). DWARVES typically fare better against foes of extreme sizes, either tall or small.

#3 — HALF ORC: To be concise, these guys are BRUTES! They really go for heavy weapons, ESPECIALLY those of a bashing nature (as opposed to lunging, for example). HALF ORCS are not typically into any sort of finesse, believing that the best finesse is a good offense (or something along those lines...). They fare well against very small opponents but are somewhat lacking against anyone with quick thrusting weapons and perhaps a good dodging ability.

#4 — HALFLING: Though often derided as "shorties", HALFLINGS have considerable offensive and

defensive advantages. Their preferred weapons exclude only the largest and heaviest quarter of the total available and as to their defense, have you ever tried hitting a fast 23 inch tall warrior?

#5 — HALF-ELF: A cross between HUMANS and ELVES, though they mostly favor the former half. Relatively tall and lanky, their weapon selection is limited by racial preference rather than size and strength. They favor most bladed weapons (swords, not axes) and are known for the accuracy of their thrown weapons. They typically fare badly against fighters who can take a lot of punishment and deal it out as well.

#6 — ELF: An odd race, if there is such a thing, in that they prefer to use small, light and fast weapons against any opponent. Any of the knives, the epee and any of the thrown weapons with pointed tips are preferred. ELVES are renown for their accuracy with thrown weapons but seem incapable of defeating most large/powerful opponents.

PART III — WHAT'S NEXT?

Okay, are you ready to get started? Great! What you need to do, then, is as follows:

- Find your BLOOD PIT TEAM CREATION FORM and fill it out
- Make out a check to EMPRISE GAME SYSTEMS for at least \$5.00 to cover the startup charge, which will pay for your rulebook, setup and first turn of fights.
- Get a business-size envelope and write our address down carefully on it. Also put your full name and address on the outside, in case it gets separated during our processing.
- Put a stamp on the envelope so the Post Office will send it to us and drop it in the mail.

This rulebook is printed for your use if you wish to play in BLOOD PIT. You don't have to rip this out of your copy of White Wolf, however, as we will be supplying a new copy of the introductory rulebook to all that write in.

Good luck to you on the arena sands!

Jim Townsend
Emprise Game Systems

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the SWORD OF DUNGEON

our computer game review column

by Jim Trunzo

Sword of the Samurai

produced by: Microprose Simulation Software, 180 Lakefront Drive, Hunt Valley, MD 21030

Sword of the Samurai is a compelling game that combines role-playing and wargaming with stimulating graphics to create a demanding, realistic adventure set in the exotic world of feudal 16th Century Japan.

Basic play falls into four stages: your career as a young samurai, your appointment as hatamoto (head of the clan), your self-declaration as daimyo, and your ascendancy through conquest to the supreme position of Shogun. Each of these stages is unique and there is no guarantee that you'll continue to advance. Rivals, assassins, loss of honor, and even age can stop you.

The samurai stage of the game begins after you select a name and one of the 48 provinces to serve. Each province is uniquely rated in four areas (honor, generalship, farming land, and swordsmanship) so choose well.

This stage of the game could be viewed as a tutorial because the tasks are limited and easier than later ones. You'll be called upon to defend your clan's honor in one-on-one duels of swordsmanship with rogue samurai, melee with bandits who are harassing a village under your protection, and maybe even lead your army into battle.

You have the right to refuse to enter any of these fights, and there are times

you should. Each time you refuse, however, you lose honor.

While a young samurai, you must also consider aspects of your life beyond battle. You can also train troops, raise taxes, travel, and more. The matter of a wife must also be addressed. Marriage is not a simple matter of "I do" in *Sword of the Samurai*. Primarily, you must be aware of the honor of your potential wife's family. The greater the difference between your honor and hers, the more honor you stand you gain or lose when you marry. However, the more honorable the family, the more difficult and expensive the negotiations for her hand.

After increasing your skills, landholding, and honor, you'll be ready to enter the second stage of the game. Your hatamoto will eventually retire, die of natural causes or be killed and your daimyo will select the samurai from your clan most worthy of promotion to the position.

Rival samurai in your clan will constantly vie for favor and increase their power, often at your expense. You can monitor your position relative to theirs by calling up the Status Scroll screen. You must advance to the "most favored" position by the time of the hatamoto's passing to be named successor.

If you aren't "most favored," you will continue play as a samurai, aging all the while. In all likelihood, you'll be too old to make a serious run at Shogun if you miss any promotions, but you can relinquish your position to an heir who can continue the quest. There is no shame in this and only the most skillful players will be able to attain the status of Shogun within a single generation.

Once you become hatamoto, you must concentrate on forming alliances

and mastering the art of battle. There will still be plenty of opportunities to fight duels, especially against ninja assassins who might attempt to kill you. Plus, your daimyo may call upon a "volunteer" for the glorious opportunity to fight an assassin who has been cornered in the castle.

The third stage brings even more options, but to reach it you must again you must be in position to ascend to daimyo when the position opens. Your fame will be so widespread by this time that jealousy among the other lords becomes the rule. Diplomacy evolves, becoming more important and intriguing.

For example, your castle might be raided and your family members carried away. Soon, a rival lord will inform you that members of your family are his "guests" and will be treated well as long as you support him in his endeavors. Decisions must be made, rescues attempted and revenge quietly taken in order to preserve your honor and retain a viable position among the other daimyos.

Sword of the Samurai, while preaching the importance of honor, doesn't ignore the other side of the coin. There are many ways to walk the line between treachery and honor, and you must decide what risks you will take. For example, you might be forced to take a hostage in return for a similar offense against you. More treacherous acts include stealing an heirloom or even attempting to assassinate a rival.

Obviously, getting caught while attempting one or more of these acts will result in shame upon your family's name that only seppuku will cleanse. This assumes that you're still alive to perform the ritual suicide. Like any good role-playing game, *Sword of the Samurai* leaves the decision to you.

Perhaps the most important aspect of being daimyo is conquest. If you are to ever become Shogun, you must begin to unite the provinces through conquest. You must invade neighboring lands prepared for battle while hoping that the enemy will submit and become a willing vassal.

The moment will come when you have amassed such stature and that the option to "Declare Yourself Shogun" will appear on the screen. Doing so is a move providing for no return, so it's

crucial that you consider a number of factors first.

Unlike being hatamoto or daimyo, becoming Shogun isn't a matter of being promoted. As long as you have rivals, the 48 provinces will band together to oppose you. Therefore, you must determine your chance against such a combined force. Also, Sword of the Samurai will judge your rule as Shogun against the historical rulers of Japan, so you'll want to be sure you have enough strength to hold the title when and if you gain it.

The graphics of the game are superb and employ the stylized art of ancient Japan to capture the mood of the period. The screens are colorful, clear and varied. Even the lettering on the screens was formed using a Japanese-character based style, though in English of course.

Combat screens maintain the high graphic quality found throughout the program. The one-on-one duel graphics are especially good. All three types of combat are handled in different ways. Duels are fought using a behind the back view and are quite detailed.

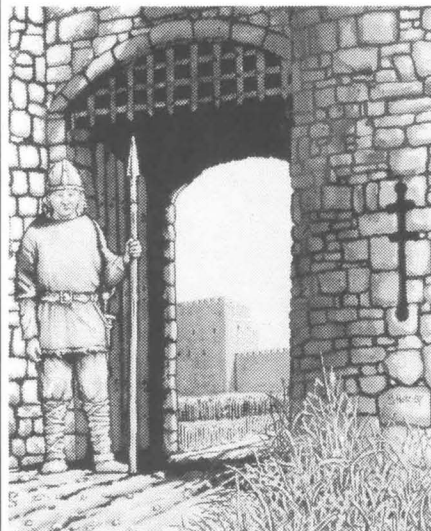
When fighting in melee -- usually against a dozen or more bandits, rogue samurai, or ninja assassins -- you are given an overhead view of the action. The figures are small, but clearly defined.

The last form of combat, large scale battles, uses icons to represent cavalry, infantry, archers and musketeers. Following the dictates of Sun Tzu, you must select one of three offensive and one of three defensive formations.

Sword of the Samurai is one of the most complete programs designed. Virtually all aspects of the period of the genre are covered. The storyline is complete and effectively mixes warfare, domestic concerns, and political matters. Thanks to numerous menus and good programming, overall play is easy to implement in spite of the depth and complexity of the game.

If you attempt to unite the war-torn provinces of 16th Century Japan, I only hope the word "seppuku" is never on your list of options.

Ratings (1=worst, 5=best)
Complexity (easy), Graphics (5), Role-playing (3), Strategy (4), Sum (4).



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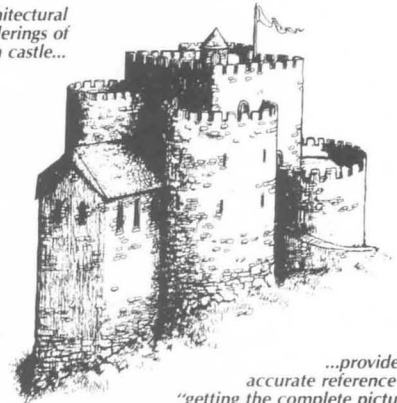


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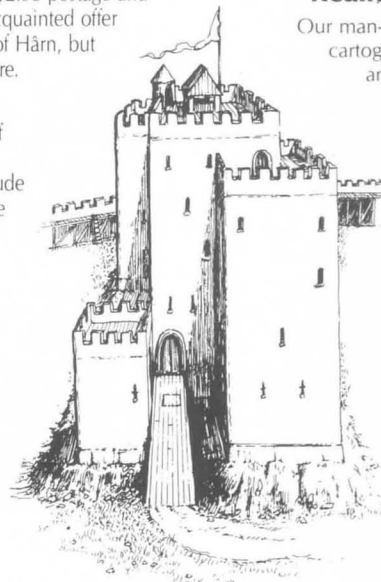
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WHITE WOLF Submission Guidelines 1990

General Information

The editors of WHITE WOLF Magazine are very interested in your writing or artistic talents. We will continue to encourage unsolicited submissions from our readers.

Please precede all submissions with a query letter. In this letter tell us about your submission. What is the goal of the adventure? What information does your article provide? A query letter could save you time and money in the event we are not interested in the submission.

A Few Pointers

The following general guidelines should be kept in mind for any written submission:

- 1) Submissions should be typed and double-spaced on one side of 8 1/2" x 11" white paper.
- 2) ALWAYS include SASE (Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope) with any submission. If you do not include SASE we may be unable to report back to you.
- 3) Label your submission. Write "article", "adventure", or whatever is appropriate on the outside of the envelope. This could shorten the response time.

What Games do you Cover?

There is a great number of RPG products available. In order to focus the coverage of WHITE WOLF Magazine, we have developed the following criteria for governing the games which we will support with articles/adventures/etc.: "The game must be presently supported with additional publications from the company which released the game." Examples: FASA is publishing new Shadowrun adventures, so we will cover that game. TSR is not printing new adventures for Boot Hill so we will not cover that game.

Specific Suggestions

Adventures: Focus on plot and character. We do not want an adventure which is entirely a "dungeon romp" no matter how unique and creative the encounters. "Into the Heart of Darkness" in issue #19 is a perfect example of an adventure which combines role-playing and combat encounters. Characters should have reasonable motives and developed personalities. We use few game-specific adventures (they are only published in conjunction with the issue's special section).

Articles: Tell us about something useful. I don't think that too many of our readers really care about the volume of a pressurized slime creature. We want to print articles which present interesting, game-useful information. Most of the game-specific pieces we publish are articles. Feel free provide information for any RPG which meets the criteria for being covered in WHITE WOLF Magazine (see above).

Fiction: WHITE WOLF Magazine no longer prints fiction on a regular basis. Winning entries of fiction contests announced in the "On Your Mark" column are the only exception.

Single Items: Magic items, monsters, spells, etc. are the only sorts of submissions which we recommend you send without first querying. Be careful that you do not cover old ground with your single items. Magic items which simply reproduce the affects of a spell will not be printed in WHITE WOLF, e.g. new "fire spells" are generally out (no "new" fourth level fireballs, please).

Artists

Interior artwork for WHITE WOLF is done on assignment only. Please do not send B&W samples and expect us

to use them in the magazine. Any samples you send are just that-samples. We will use these pieces to judge whether or not we wish to give you interior assignments. Please be sure to include SASE with your originals as don't want you to lose them. Cover art for WHITE WOLF must be done in color. Paintings are preferred. As a final note, we are still not planning any cartoons in WHITE WOLF. Also, we are not interested in using artwork that has already been published unless it was done solely in the form of prints.

All artists should send their samples, etc. to our Art Director, Richard Thomas. He may be contacted at 320 Lemonte St., Philadelphia, PA 19128.

Payment Rates

Our current rate for written material is two cents per word. Interior artwork is worth \$30 per full page and cover art is worth \$250 for an original work.

Special Sections

We always appreciate support for our special sections. If you have a submission which fits one of our special sections, please submit it by the following deadlines:

- Superhero: February 1
- Science Fiction: April 1
- Play-by-Mail: April 1
- Fantasy: June 1
- Horror: August 1

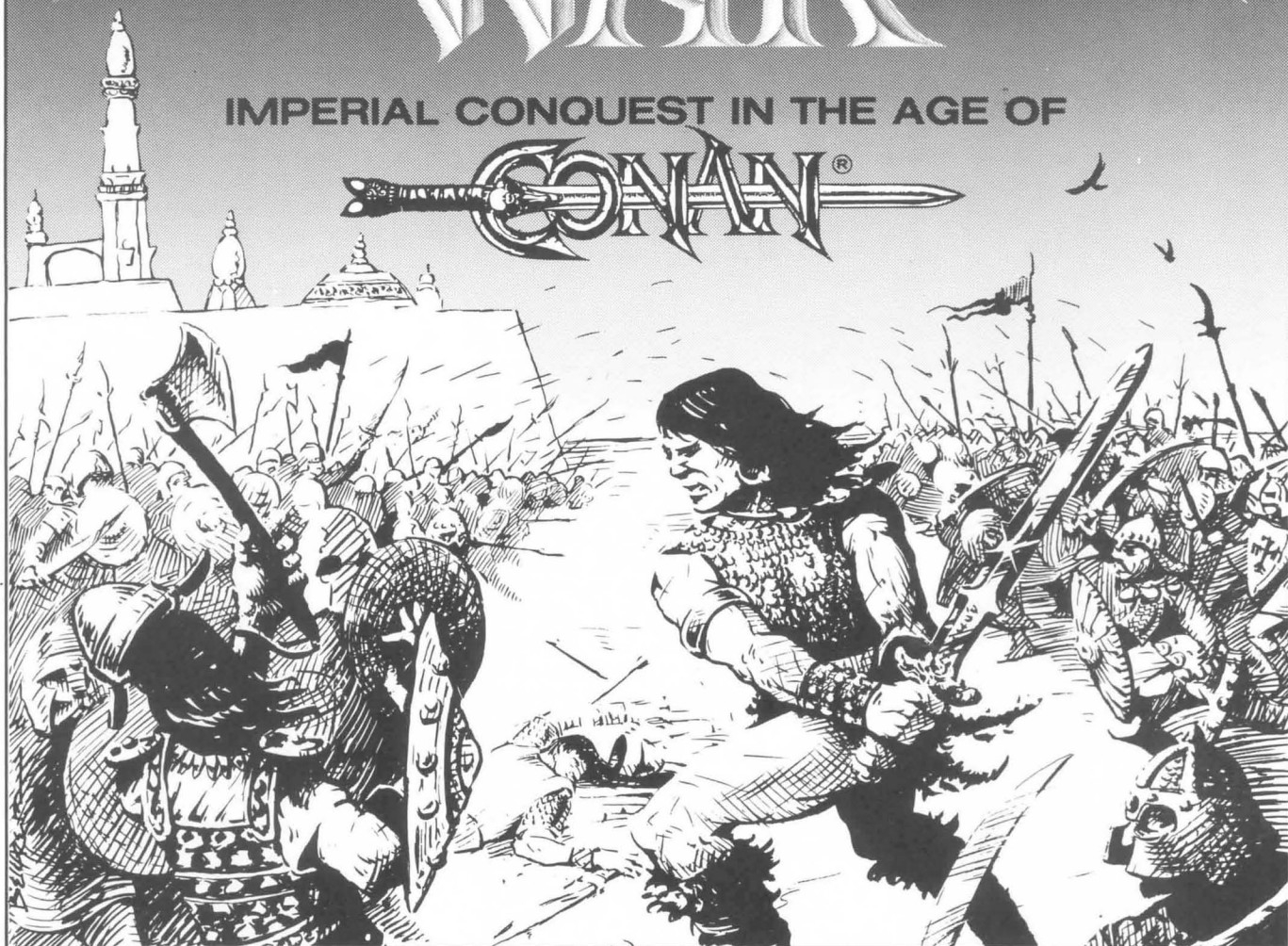
Closing

Hopefully this information will 1) encourage you to submit your work to us and 2) give you a better understanding of what we are hunting. Contact the editors at:

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Capsule Reviews

Following are brief reviews of several recent releases from various game companies. The listing is alphabetized by the name of the publisher. As with all capsule reviews, the products receive a rating in the SUM category only. On our scale of 1 to 5, "5" is the best rating possible and is reserved for outstanding products. "3" denotes a solid product.

Chaosium, Inc.

Cthulhu Classics

publisher: Chaosium, Inc., 950A
56th St., Oakland, CA 94608

price: \$18.95

sum rating: 5

reviewer: Stephan Wieck

Cthulhu Classics is a collection of the best Cthulhu scenarios published by Chaosium for their Call of Cthulhu game system. The book is a soft cover trade book with close to 150 pages of chills and excitement. Along with the reprinted scenarios, Cthulhu Classics includes interior color plates depicting the covers of the older publications which originally included the book's scenarios. The color cover of the book

is an awesome new piece by Gibbons depicting Cthulhu rising from the sea.

Cthulhu Classics includes one huge campaign adventure previously published as Shadows of Yog-Sothoth, as well as 5 shorter scenarios all previously published in various other Chaosium works. The campaign adventure, Shadows of Yog-Sothoth is a seven part adventure which takes investigators around the globe tracking an organization known as the Hermetic Order of the Silver Twilight. The adventure culminates with the emergence of Cthulhu from his watery tomb. I personally GMed much of Yog-Sothoth when it was originally released and I enjoyed the adventure tremendously. The plot structure runs very smoothly from an innocent introduction until it unravels into a global threat to mankind. Playing through the entire campaign will require several months for most gaming groups and players will undoubtedly go through several different characters before they reach the end (where there's a good chance their characters will be stomped into pudding by Cthulhu one last time). Shadows of Yog-Sothoth is a reward-

ing adventure to play not only because of its length and brilliance, but also because it pulls out all the stops and lets the players meet a lot of Cthulhu nasties that are normally held in reserve by GMs.

The five shorter scenarios in the book are excellent as well (I guess that's why they made it into Cthulhu Classics). I've played two of the five and I can vouch for their entertainment value. And after reading the other three scenarios, I found enough terrifying revelations in them to make them equally enjoyable.

If you have yet to play Shadows of Yog-Sothoth, then Cthulhu Classics is for you. The book will provide most gaming groups with at least six months worth of terror and SANity loss. One fair warning however, if your gaming group isn't ready to commit to as grandiose a campaign as Shadows of Yog-Sothoth, then perhaps your \$18.95 is better spent elsewhere. Generally, the book is worth its price and all of its adventure truly are classics.

Columbia Games, Inc.

Tome of the Ancient and Esoteric Mysteries of the Powers of Peleahn

publisher: Columbia Games, Inc.,
Box 8006, Blaine, WA 98230

price: \$6

sum rating: 3

reviewer: Stewart Wieck

This supplement for Columbia Games' HarnMaster contains 24 new spells dealing with fire, or the element of Peleahn. The spells manipulate every aspect of fire -- smoke, heat, and, of course, fire itself. Each spell is accompanied by improvements possible when the caster has a high ML.

The supplement also distinguishes between Ethereal Fire and Mundane Fire. The former only affects conscious creatures in the "mundane" world, but burns Ethereal creatures and objects just like Mundane Fire

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burns mundane objects. This concept is really the only thing which sets the spells in the supplement apart from other FRPG fire-related spells. A wide variety of spells are provided and they are certainly useful for HarnMaster players, but generally the spells offer nothing new or different.

There are spells which protect from cold, cause pyrotechnics, raise the temperature of the area, create fireballs, etc. However, a couple spells are a little more interesting. One takes advantage of the new Ethereal Fire and allows the caster to transform himself into a "creature of ethereal flame." Another interesting spell puts temperature manipulation to a finer use -- causing a fever.

So, while the spells are average overall, a HarnMaster fan will likely find the compendium useful.

Lion Rampant

Covenants

publisher: Lion Rampant, PO Box 621, Northfield, MN 55057

price: \$11.95

sum rating: 4

reviewer: Stewart Wieck

My major complaint concerning the 2nd edition of *Ars Magica* was the loss of the material governing covenant creation. I found the idea of a covenant intriguing. As *Lion Rampant* presents the concept, a covenant is more than simply a home for a group of magi (wizards), it is a super-character, or the center of a *Saga* (that's a campaign in LR jargon) which reflects parts of all the magi and other inhabitants.

Lion Rampant, with characteristic grace and style, managed to refine this idea for Covenants, certainly the most attractive product LR has produced. The covenant has been transformed into the framework on which a *Saga* is based. The flow of the campaign should follow the changes in the covenant and the people who dwell there.

Changes in a covenant occur in a predictable pattern, according to Dionasius of House Bonisagus who says, "As there are four seasons in a year, there are four seasons in the life of a covenant." The life of a covenant, of course, is much longer than a single year, but during the possible 500+

years such institutions can last, they are born in spring and eventually die in winter unless a miraculous rebirth takes place.

Previously, the process of creating a covenant was a simple matter of balancing points of strengths (eg. a well-stocked library) against an equal number of points of weaknesses (eg. a poor magic aura surrounds the covenant), but now the number of "positive" and "negative" points available for expenditure depends on the season of the covenant you are creating. Spring covenants have a few more negative, Summer a few more positive, Autumn several more positive, and Winter has a bunch of each. These points are spent in a variety of areas, and the weakness of the supplement is that there are too many ways to spend these points. For example, when planning the grogs of the covenant, you must consider number, quality of armaments, discipline, loyalty and morale, and training. Admittedly, each of these areas describes a different aspect of grogs and maybe needs consideration, but for a game system which prides itself in smooth

but realistic play it's a bit of an overkill.

Other things considered in the creation process include details about the covenant's physical structure; where it's located; its laboratories, library, source of income, and relationship with the outside world; and more.

Finally, the 64-page supplement includes descriptions of four already created covenants (one for each season). These covenants are finely crafted, perhaps displaying detail which is beyond players not intimately familiar with the system, but also showing what the system is capable of creating. The infamous Doissetep is among the covenants.

West End Games

Tobin's Spirit Guide

publisher: West End Games, RD 3, Box 2345, Honesdale, PA 18431

sum rating: 5

reviewer: Stewart Wieck

WHITE WOLF Magazine readers got a taste of what this Ghostbusters International (GBI) supplement offers in issue #18 late last year. The 80-

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page book contains descriptions of almost fifty supernatural beings for use with GBI.

The spirits and spooks are divided into four geographic groups: Egypt and Asia, Great Britain and Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Eastern America. All sorts of beings are described, from the fabled riddling sphinx of Egypt to the Gozerian Cult (which worships the evil destructor from the original Ghostbusters movie) to Samhain, the lord of Halloween terror.

The is probably the best sort of GBI supplement possible for it describes a cast of spirits so diverse that dozens of adventures can be created without rehashing old ground, a problem in games with a humorous element like GBI.

Each spirit is accompanied by game statistics and lengthy background information. The stats are necessary, of course, but the background info is the real treat of the supplement. There're the heart of the material which should plant adventure ideas in the minds of greedy GMs. Most entries also have sidebar stories about past encounters with the spirit.

If you play GBI, this supplement is a better buy than any adventure West End Games could possibly produce for the game.

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Whit Productions

Mutazoids

publisher: Whit Productions, Inc.,
PO Box 1397, Murray, KY 42071

price: \$12.95

sum rating: 3

reviewer: Stewart Wieck

Mutazoids is a complete RPG game by a new, but ambitious company. The basic game is a 98-page, softbound book. The paper used for the cover is a little too flimsy and can be easily damaged, but that happens to all softbound games eventually.

The action of the game is set in the year 2073, over fifty years after a man-made plague practically wipes out humanity. Many of those who survived were contaminated and the children they birth are often mutated in some fashion. Under the rule a government calling itself the Second Republic, these mutants have been classified in two different ways: Acceptables and Mutazoids. Acceptables have a few mutations, but not enough to make them the overwhelming threat to stability that the government says the Mutazoids pose. PCs in the game are Enforcers, the police of the Second Republic, and they are charged with upholding the Quarantine Act.

The game system itself is functional but not flashy. All aspects of the game are controlled by the roll of 2d6. The skill system offers a well-rounded selection of skills, and while the list is a bit short, provisions are made for the creation of new skill descriptions.

As it should be in such a game as this, about a fifth of the rules are spent describing the various mutations which Acceptables and Mutazoids

might have. The latter not only have more mutations, but the ones they possess are also more severe. Similar to its predecessor, TSR's Gamma World, Mutazoids offers both physical and mental mutations. Some actually benefit the mutant (body armor), but others are outright defects (periodic amnesia).

The combat system is nice and allows combatants to perform a large number of maneuvers during a fight. Characters have shock points and hit points, so only the most severe of attacks actually have a chance of killing them (by causing hit points instead of shock points). An interesting game design touch allows both types of damage to be determined with the same roll of the dice. The face value of the roll of d6 indicate the number of shock points while a 1-3 on a die causes 0 hp, 4 or 5 does 1 hp, and a 6 inflicts 2 hp.

The background information provided is a bit sketchy, but there is enough to grasp the gist of setting. The rest can be tailor-made by the GM.


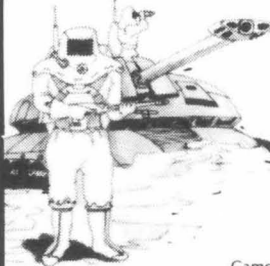
A main fault in the game is a poor introductory scenario. Like too many other games, the importance of a fine first adventure is sometimes ignored during the process of putting a game together. Less than two pages of the book are dedicated the task of providing an interesting first adventure in the world of 2073.

There is a lot of room for improvement in this game, and a long list of planned supplements may well do just that, but even now the game is a solid, and certainly playable, RPG.

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Cyberpunk Reviews

by Stephan Wieck

A Hot New Genre

What's the latest genre of science fiction and role-playing games? If you've been keeping up with SF or if you've been visiting your local hobby stores, you'll know that cyberpunk has taken the science fiction and role-playing game fields by storm over the past year. Novels by Gibson, Williams, and Sterling have created a new class of science fiction where the near future is run by megacorporations, the world is connected through an international computer matrix, and the lives of cyberpunk heroes are filled with drugs, cybernetics, and fast deals.

Several RPG companies have capitalized on cyberpunk's popularity by bringing it to us in role-playing games. R. Talsorian was first with *Cyberpunk* (reviewed in WW #14). Next came FASA's *Shadowrun*, a blend of cyberpunk and fantasy set in the near future (reviewed in *White Wolf* #17). Now, Iron Crown Enterprises (I.C.E.) has released its cyberpunk RPG called *Cyberspace*.

In this issue and the next, I'll take a look at the cyberpunk RPG market and fill you in on what's new and how good the products are. This month's article reviews all of the *Shadowrun* supplements that FASA has released to date. Next issue's article will feature a review of I.C.E.'s game *Cyberspace* and reviews of a couple of *Cyberpunk* supplements by R. Talsorian. All the reviews are followed by ratings on a scale of 1 (worst) to 5 (best).

FASA has published five *Shadowrun* supplements since they released the *Shadowrun* game in August of last year. These supplements include three adventures and two sourcebooks which are all reviewed below. FASA has also

released a Gamemaster's Screen for *Shadowrun* which includes a fairly long mini-adventure and there are *Shadowrun* miniatures by Grenadier, but these products are not reviewed here. Upcoming *Shadowrun* releases include the adventures *Bottled Demon* and *Queen Euphoria*, and the sourcebooks *Paranormal Animals of North America*, *The Advanced Magic Book*, *Seattle Sourcebook*, and *Neo Anarchist's Guide to North America*. Read WW for reviews of these products as they're released.

FASA Corp., 1026 W. Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60607

DNA/DOA

by Dave Arneson

DNA/DOA is a *Shadowrun* adventure written by Dave Arneson, the co-creator of *Dungeons and Dragons*. And in fact, *DNA/DOA* runs something like a dungeon adventure. The characters are hired to make a run against Aztechnology. They must enter the Aztechnology complex through the sewers and search the sub-levels of the Aztechnology complex. The adventure includes pregenerated characters that can optionally be used as NPCs, and also has stats for some new creatures the characters may run into.

I was generally disappointed with *DNA/DOA* for two reasons. First, except for a few deceptions, the plot is just a straightforward underground search. My second complaint is that the adventure never achieves a true cyberpunk atmosphere. Besides a few cyberpunk trappings in the setting of the plot, it doesn't have any themes that propel the characters into the cyberpunk genre. It's plot components dealing with genetics, which give the adventure its name, are done more in the style of post holocaust mutations

than in a cyberpunk organ grafting style. The adventure's saving grace is the large number of interesting NPCs in the storyline. I would recommend *DNA/DOA* only as a transition adventure if you're a Gamemaster trying to get diehard fantasy role-players to give *Shadowrun* a try. The adventure's dungeon atmosphere will make the characters feel more at home while still introducing them to some aspects of *Shadowrun*.

Sum: 2

Mercurial

by Paul R. Hume

Mercurial was the first adventure released for *Shadowrun*. The adventure is written by Paul Hume, one of the creators of *Shadowrun*. The adventure begins with the players being hired to protect the megapopular rock star Maria Mercurial. The plot of the adventure goes through layer after layer of deception and intrigue as Maria's mysterious past begins to catch up with her and everyone from corps to the Yakuza tries to get Maria away from the players. The players must unravel Maria's past to put a stop to the constant threats to her safety.

Mercurial succeeds where *DNA/DOA* fails. *Mercurial* throws the characters on a rollercoaster ride through a world of cyberpunk punctuated with occasional blends of magic and fantasy that are part of the *Shadowrun* world. The adventure features players fighting Yakuza and hacking a computer system located half-way around the globe. These are the things which make the adventure entertaining and make it cyberpunk. *Mercurial* also introduces players to futuristic rock-and-roll in a cyberpunk setting. I thought the adventure could have used a bit more source material on this since music is not only integral to the adventure's setting and charac-

ters, but is also a part of the cyberpunk genre.

Mercurial's only weakness may be that some of its storyline transitions are difficult for the players to follow and for gamemaster to run. Like DNA/DOA, Mercurial has a fine cast of entertaining NPCs. It's unfortunate that some of the NPCs in the adventure are not used more in the plot. Overall, I highly recommend Mercurial.

Sum: 4

Dreamchipper

by James Long

Dreamchipper was the second adventure released for Shadowrun. In the adventure, the characters are hired by a corporation to recover some experimental computer chips that have been stolen from the company. The players must find their way through corporate rivalries, street rumors, and more than a little danger to hunt down the missing chips. As the clues begin to pile up, it becomes clear that people are plugging into the experimental sensory chips and suffering bizarre personality changes as a result. I won't reveal anymore here, but suffice to say that the plot is quite original and very entertaining for players.

I found Dreamchipper to be a very good adventure. It's plot centers around cyberpunk technology and involves some of the psychological strangeness prevalent in cyberpunk literature. The storyline is very open-ended and ideal for experienced role-players. Again, the cast of NPCs is well thought out and adds nicely to the story. My only complaint about Dreamchipper is that many of its mystery elements are too easy for the players to discover, but this is balanced by the sheer number of revelations the players must make to see behind the scenes of the plot and complete the adventure. Finally, I found the art in Dreamchipper to be a step above par for FASA's productions.

Sum: 4

Street Samurai Catalog

by Tom Dowd

The Street Samurai Catalog was the first sourcebook released for Shadowrun. The 112 page book was

written by Tom Dowd, one of the Shadowrun designers. The catalog presents a bunch of new weapons, vehicles, cyberware, and other accessories for the Shadowrun world. After reading through the Street Samurai Catalog, I had mixed opinions of its value. The Catalog has a lot of essentials which are almost a must for a Shadowrun campaign, but the amount of material in the sourcebook doesn't justify the \$12.00 price tag.

The good things in the Catalog are the melee weapons, gun accessories, and the stats for Street Samurai Archetypes of each metahuman race. Several futuristic melee weapons are listed in the Catalog which will give Shadowrun campaigns an added future fantasy effect. Guns presented in the catalog expand and improve the arsenal available to characters. Heavy pistols are given enhancements to make them worth carrying, and the heavy gunnery is considerably expanded with the addition of rotating cannons and gyro stabilization vests.

One of the problems with the Catalog is that many of the items presented are nothing more than clones of items already presented in the Shadowrun rulebook. A lot of the weapons in the Catalog have only few trivial stat changes and a new name to differentiate them from old weapons. And the same goes for a few of the vehicles. However, the biggest disappointment of the Catalog is the cyberware presented, both the amount of it and the type. There are only fourteen new pieces of cyberware presented in the 112 page book. The majority of the new cyberware is head implants that are of more interest and use to NPCs than to player characters. Since most of the book is guns, vehicles, and accessories instead of cyberware, perhaps it should have been a Mercenary Catalog rather than a Street Samurai Catalog. Finally, the amount of material in the book is a bit skimpy. Each item is given a full page, but some of the items such as arrows only require a couple of sentences to describe which leaves a lot of blank space in the book.

Overall, there are several great pieces of equipment in the Catalog, but there are also a lot of redundancies. If you've got twelve bucks to spare I'd say buy it because you will enjoy it and the Catalog will enrich

your Shadowrun campaign, but you can get by without it.

Sum - 3

Sprawl Sites

by B. Peterson and J. Faughnan

I cannot recommend this sourcebook highly enough. If you gamemaster Shadowrun, you need Sprawl Sites. The book contains background information on life in a cyberpunk city which was edited out of the Shadowrun rulebook. Sprawl Sites gives the gamemaster a wealth of information and personalities right at his fingertips.

The sourcebook has four major sections. The first section gives maps and area descriptions for common city locations the characters will frequent such as bars, hotels, body shops, and hospitals. Although the material is not very exciting, having it means that a GM is never at a loss for description no matter where his players decide to go. The second section is the meat of the book. This section is made up of ideas for encounters which are formatted to be used on the spot. The 132 encounters are divided under headings such as Gang Encounters, Corporate Encounters, or Elven Encounters. Again, when players throw the gamemaster for a loop and venture off the beaten path of the adventure, the GM simply looks up an appropriate encounter and continues play without hesitation. The last two sections are filled with Archetypes and Contacts. The eight new Character Archetypes include Bodyguard, Combat Mage, and Troll Bounty Hunter. The section of Contacts includes over thirty stock NPC types almost all of which are new. The Contacts include Armorer, Corporate Scientist, and Taxi Driver.

The Sprawl Sites sourcebook is an incredible reference for Shadowrun GMs. The book is well organized and easy to use. Your campaign shouldn't be without it.

Sum: 5

TEMPLE OF THE BEASTMEN

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In *Temple of the Beastmen*, each player controls one of 10 adventurers, each with their own goals and special abilities, intent on rescuing slaves and treasures from the clutches of the wicked Martian king. Random map tile layout and card sequence make the temple, its treasures, and its dangers different with

every game. Stealth and strategy are essential to winning.

Temple of the Beastmen can be learned in under half an hour and can be played in under two hours. A well developed set of optional rules allows more elaborate strategies and lets you choose the level of complexity. Solitaire play is possible, and complete rules for it are provided.



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Who Knows What Dangers Lurk Within?

Review: The City of Greyhawk

by *Lisa Stevens*

publisher: TSR, Inc. POB 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147

design: Douglas Niles, Carl Sargent and Rik Rose

price: \$18.00

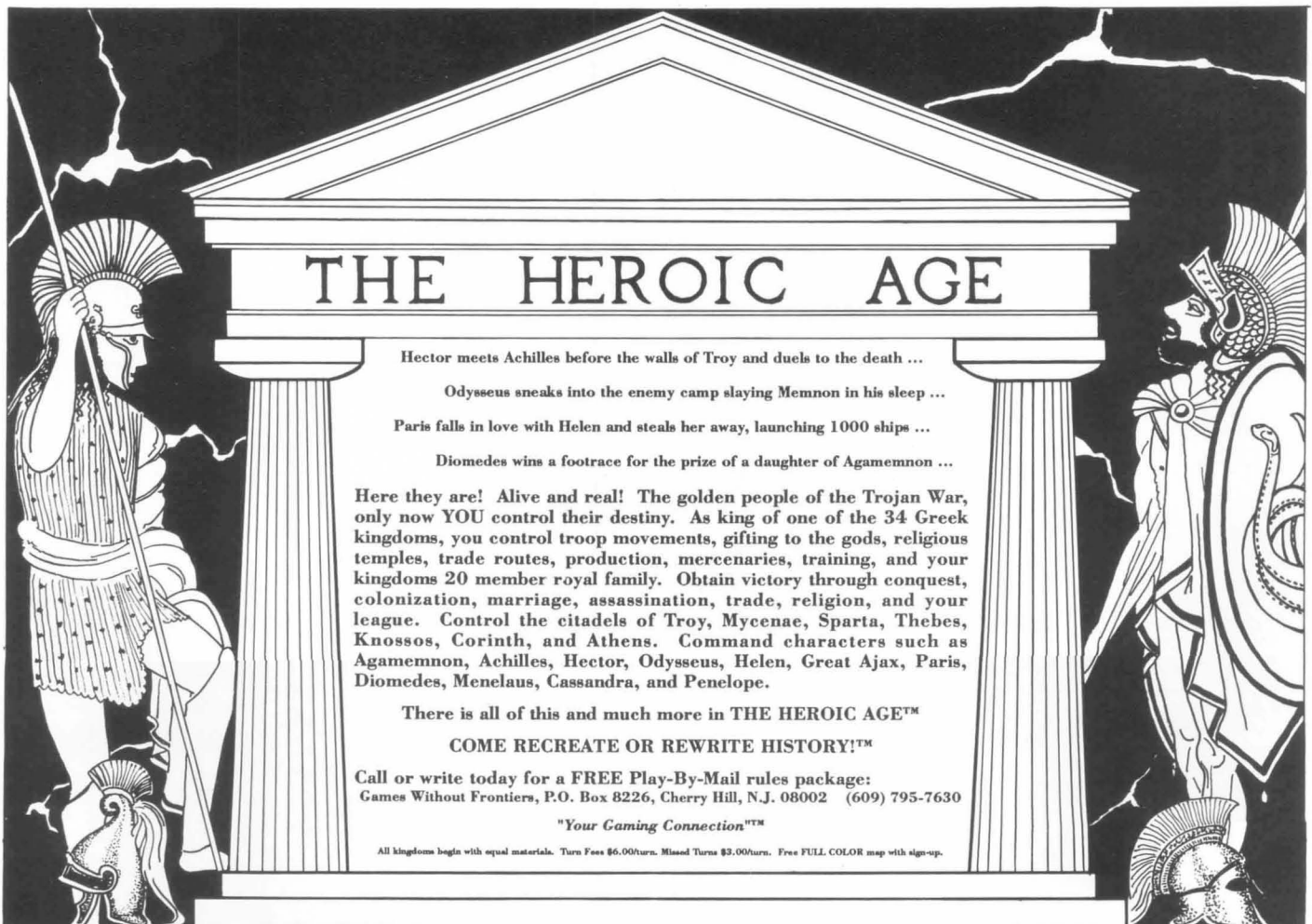
This product is heavy. The box contains two 96-page books, 24 8 1/2 x 11" card stock adventures, and four full-color maps. After the initial awe at the amount of material in this supplement left me, I sat down to the task of determining whether there was any gold beneath the glitter.

The first booklet, "Greyhawk: Gem of the Flanaess", is written by

Douglas Niles. Generally, it provides an overview of the City of Greyhawk and the surrounding countryside. It walks the line between giving DMs enough information to get a feel for the city, and avoiding giving too much information so that they are overwhelmed. There is a lot of territory to cover in this book. Instead of only concentrating on the major parts of the city, the author describes the various points of interest, big and small, in short, concise sections. Those areas outside of the city are amply detailed, but the actual city sectors average only 4 pages each, perhaps erring on the side of stinginess. The prose does tend to give the reader a good feeling for the sector and the

examples of establishments in that sector are interesting and stimulating. Ideas for various storylines seem to jump off the page as your read, giving one the feeling that further detailing of the city won't be much of a chore. Notes on dress, behavior, and personalities of the NPCs frequenting the various sectors add color and the realism that is missing from many other fantasy city supplements.

One chapter of note is the second one, which details the art of storytelling in a city setting. Further ideas about integrating character into the city, and how to appeal to different types of gamers in a city setting are provided. With this chapter, TSR has taken a step, along with many other



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gaming companies, towards making role-playing an art form and elevating it to a more respectable status. Since AD&D is still the major role-playing game, any effort on TSR's part to add quality to our hobby has to be applauded.

The second book, "Greyhawk: Folk, Feuds, and Factions," brings depth to Greyhawk by detailing the people who give a city its life. The economy, politics, military, and laws of Greyhawk are defined here too. One point worth noting is the change of TSR's stance on whether to include anything from the Gygaxian Greyhawk. In Greyhawk Adventures, the famous characters and places from Gygax's Greyhawk were noticeably missing. With relief, I found the pages of "Folk, Feuds, and Factions" to contain all of the old Greyhawk favorites; from Mordenkainen to Tenser to Bigby and all the rest of the Circle of Eight. The Rhennee, the gypsy barge-folk of the Nyr Dyv, are even detailed in depth. Sure we have some of the new characters from the hardback book, but they share Greyhawk with the old characters instead of displacing them. It seems that TSR realized that the charm and character of

Greyhawk lived, not in the geographical aspects of the world, but in the living, breathing characters whose exploits filled the minds of early D&D players. Greyhawk aficionados can breathe a collective sigh of relief. The Greyhawk they knew still exists.

Like the first book, this one is well written. The city comes alive with colorful NPCs and detailed background. How many commons would it take to buy a meal of kara fruit during Brewfest? I don't know, but this kind of detail can be uncovered from just a quick perusal of the contents. As in the first book, one isn't overwhelmed with details, but rather stimulated, by being given in-depth looks at small portions of the city. From these tidbits, other ideas spring forth and flourish.

The bulk of the box is taken up by 24 letter-size cards. Twenty-three of them have short adventures while the last one boasts a summary of all the monsters encountered during the adventures on the others. Each card is adorned with a color map, a number of lead-in ideas for the adventures, and a detailed description of the layout where the adventure is to take place. These aren't your run of the mill adventures either. How do you

protect a group of LG ogres on their pilgrimage to a LG shrine from a band of vengeful dwarves? How do you deal with a fun-loving pseudodragon and its band of merry leprechauns who are having a ball tormenting some goblins? Who is out to kill the goat running for local councillor? These are just a few of the varied plots running through these short adventures. Sure, some of the adventures are less than exciting, but there are a number of true winners.

Finally, there are four, full-size, color maps. The one showing the aerial view of Greyhawk is breathtaking and one can literally spend hours taking in the details of this rich drawing. I'm sure it will adorn many a gamer's wall. Though beautiful, the aerial view map is of little use in the actual game, therefore a more utilitarian map of the city has been provided, completely keyed with the shops from the 1st book. The sewer map is rather bland, with the sewers being sparse and poorly detailed. The final map shows where Greyhawk lies in relation to the surrounding territory. This map, though in color, lacks any excitement at all, with the locations shown in a rather bland and uncreative manner. It serves its purpose, like the sewer map, but won't end up on too many walls.

Overall, this product is the most exciting supplement to come out of the TSR stables since the original Player's Handbook took that first giant leap into role-playing. The quality of the writing and production gives the buyer more than his money's worth. The prose is interesting to read and stimulates the creative juices that so many other products leave stagnant. Unlike many attempts to create an interesting city environment, Greyhawk succeeds in a way that will amaze you. In short, the first book, along with the maps, builds the setting, the second book populates that setting with the supporting cast, and the adventures provide a number of scripts. All you need now are the main cast (your group's characters) and you are in for many sessions of wondrous excitement.

Ratings (1=worst, 5=best)
Appearance (5), Components (4), Complexity (3), Playability (4), Sum (4)

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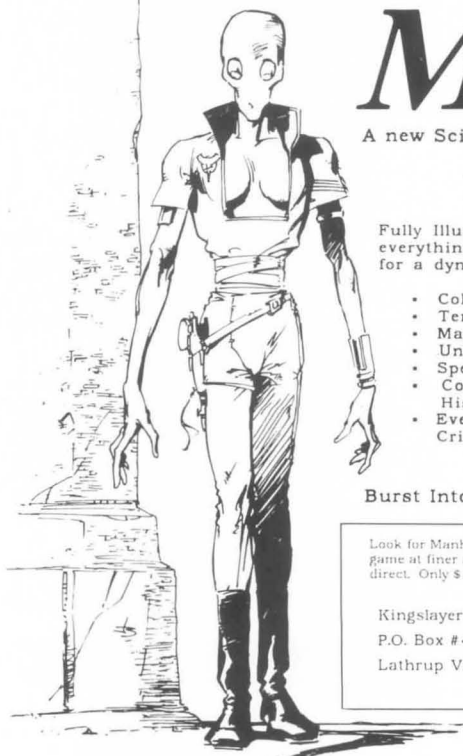
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ON YOUR MARK...

by *Stephan Wieck*

Alright. Here we are back again ready to announce a brand-spanking new WHITE WOLF Magazine contest. We're going back to basics this time. We've had monster and trap design contests, so it's time to complete the basic three of fantasy RPGs by having a magic item design contest. Let me run through the basic rules and then I'll give some design tips.

The Rules

The rules for the Magic Item Design Contest are the same as for all of our contests. You may enter as many times as you wish and no purchase is

necessary to enter. Each entry must be typed or printed clearly in pen. Ineligible entries will not be judged. The decision of the judge (that's me) is final. All entries become the possession of White Wolf Publishing. The winning entry and honorable mention entries will be printed in an upcoming entry of White Wolf Magazine. Send all entries to: White Wolf Magazine, Magic Item Contest, 1298 Winter Place, Anniston, AL, 36201. Each contestant assumes responsibility for the originality of his entry. All entries must be received by May 31, 1990.

Design

Now that the rules are out of the way, let's talk contest. Each description of a magic item must be less than

300 words. You're free to dream up any item with any powers just so that the item fits a fantasy campaign. Statistics for the magic item can be in any fantasy game system. The items will be judged for originality and usefulness. How powerful the item is has no bearing on the judging, except that I would discourage ultra-powerful artifacts. Each item can be presented as a general description (wand of flame spouting) or as a unique item (Sword of General Kane). Giving unique items a fictional history with their descriptions will have no bearing on the judging.

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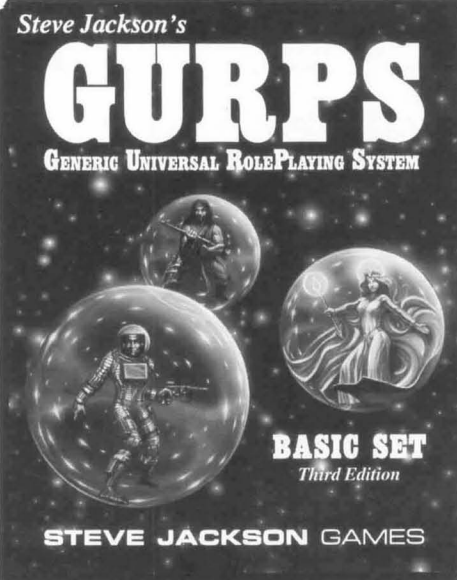
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