

BASIC ROLEPLAYING

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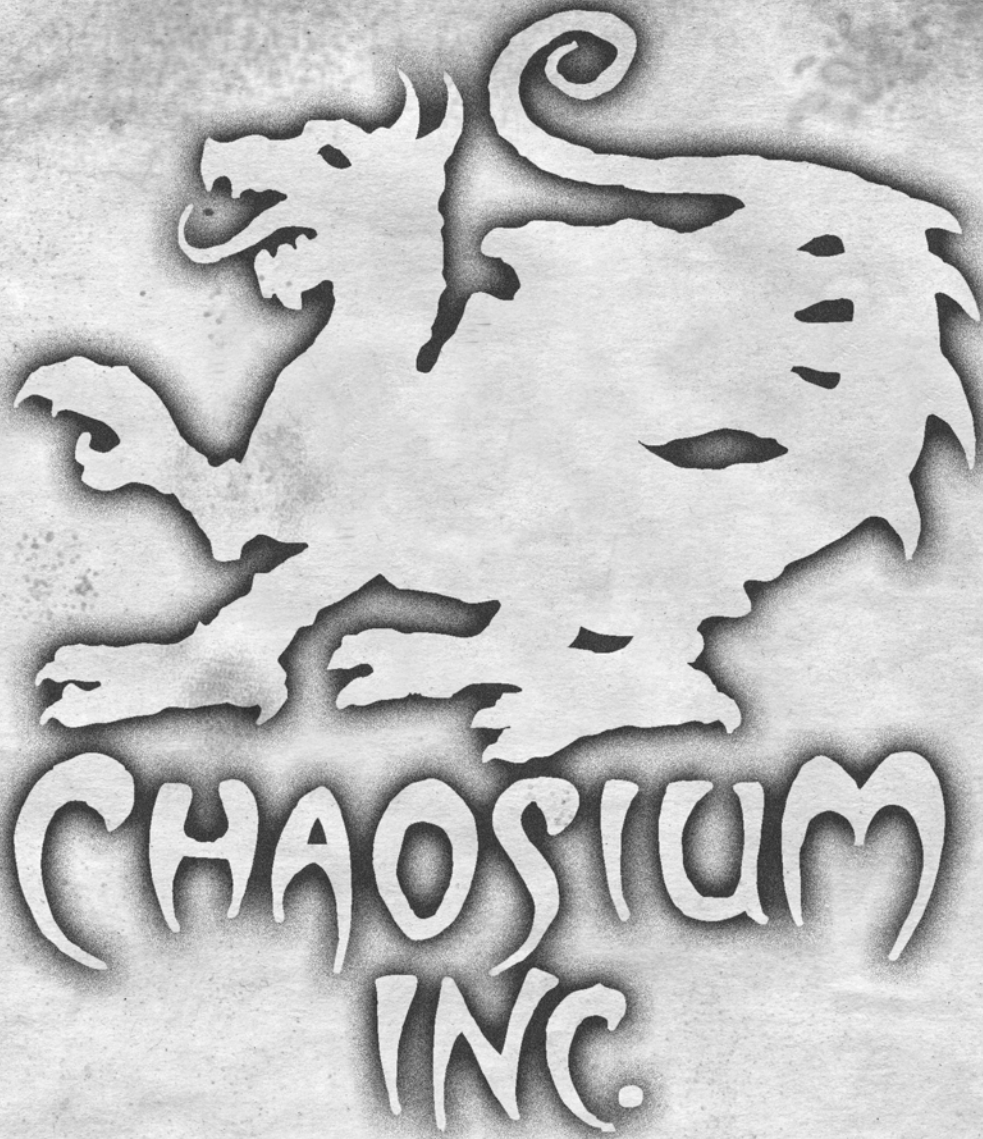
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# BASIC GAMEMASTER



## MASTERING THE BRP SYSTEM





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# BASIC ROLEPLAYING

The Chaosium Roleplaying System

# Basic Gamemaster

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BASIC ROLEPLAYING is a Chaosium Game

Published by Chaosium Inc.

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# Gamemastering

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Your skill at gamemastering will grow with experience. Present simple storylines at first. More complex plots will develop as your campaign matures. Your players will soon suggest their own scenarios.

This book is intended for gamemasters. Nothing in it must be kept secret from players, though it would be better if players do not read the "Money Tree" scenario before playing it.

Five main sections make up this book. The first one concerns the duties of the gamemaster: devising and presenting roleplaying adventures. Much of it is general in tone, though even old hands will find valuable the discussion of treasures as related to classes of creatures.

The next section consists of scenario-construction aids for the gamemaster: encounter tables (both for the mundane plane and for the otherworld), notes on languages, treasures, and danger classes.

The third chapter treats in more detail the social organization postulated in the *Basic Roleplaying* rules, particularly as they affect adventurer occupations, income, magic, experience, skills, and training. Throughout this section every effort has been made to present social models general enough to be pertinent and self-consistent when used in any fantasy world. Of immediate use are the price lists.

The fourth chapter discusses ships and the sea—supplementary rules to add a special air to your *Basic Roleplaying* games.

The final chapter contains a ready-to-play scenario: The Money Tree. It is intended to be used with average beginning adventurers played by average beginning players. It is also an excellent introduction to the art of gamemastering.

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## The Gamemaster

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In *Basic Roleplaying*, you as gamemaster prepare an adventure for the players, and then present it to them in an interesting and even-handed fashion. During the session you also interpret and apply game rules to resolve particular actions and situations within the adventure.

The last of these tasks is the simplest to explain: a gamemaster tells the players when to roll the dice, and answers questions concerning the results. *Basic Roleplaying* itself is the best reference. If you don't remember a rule, ask your players. If they seem to agree on a point, they are probably right. Your players are your second-best source of information. But if a point isn't covered by the rules, and if the players strongly disagree, you will have to decide: be guided by what is reasonable and fair, and by what will cause you fewer difficulties later.

Other aspects of gamemastering require more discussion.

## Gamemaster Style

The competitive GM emphasizes the game in *Basic Roleplaying*. Rules and game relationships are very important. Game mechanics and results are applied as strictly and as impartially as possible in order to emphasize the personal skill of the players in maneuvering their adventurers through challenge after challenge.

The dramatic gamemaster emphasizes the storytelling and roleplaying elements inherent in *Basic Roleplaying*. He willingly subverts strict application of the rules to better serve the dramatic objectives of his scenario.

The effective gamemaster balances style against objective. Overemphasis on competitive gaming reduces fantasy roleplaying to a version of chess. Overemphasis of storytelling may rob the players of satisfying struggles and victories. Suit your tastes, but try to accommodate your players' tastes as well.

## Presenting an Adventure

As the gamemaster, you must present an adventure to the players, or there can be no game. In doing this you'll introduce and dramatize the situation, play the roles of the adversaries, allies, and disinterested bystanders, develop an unfolding story, and finally resolve it in a final episode. Before each session of play begins, you must prepare yourself and the players for the adventure, and after each session you'll attend to bookkeeping and out-of-session player activities.

Published scenarios provide copious text and details, but your own scenarios need only your memory, some notes on the important subjects, and your imagination. Though both can be satisfying to a gamemaster, you'll be prouder of your own. This book contains a complete scenario. Whether you play it or not, you should read it through, keeping in mind the ideas in this chapter.

## Conditions for Play

Your player group probably numbers between one and ten gamers; three to six is optimal. While One-on-one gaming permits a good deal of individual player action, it limits roleplaying—too many players in the group decreases the opportunity for each individual to contribute. Orchestrating groups of a dozen or more players can be a horrendous experience for even the most experienced gamemaster.

To help players plan for later sessions, establish a regular time and place for the game. Strive to make it a pleasant ritual; dedicated players can adapt to wretched conditions, but it is better to have a table around which all the players can sit, and upon which visual material can be comfortably studied.

In designing scenarios, presume that players occasionally must miss game sessions. Never pressure a player to attend—be flexible. Once you compromise the optional

nature of the game, the sessions become an obligation, not a pleasant pastime.

## Adventurers from Other Worlds

You may have to choose whether or not to admit adventurers from other gamemasters' worlds into your campaign. How you decide depends upon how you view your game world. There are three nominal viewpoints.

**Closed World:** adventurers can take part in only the world for which they were designed. This is the best and easiest way to maintain a coherent and self consistent universe. It may not be the answer which makes your players happy.

**Multiverse:** adventurers can enter a number of related universes controlled by different gamemasters; here the gamemasters have made similar basic assumptions about their games, and cooperatively permit communication and travel between their respective game universes. When doing this, you may find it progressively more difficult to rationalize implausible occurrences and contradictory ideas.

**Open World:** adventurers from every other universe are welcome. This approach is very difficult to balance and to consistently maintain. Players usually try to shift adventurers to more favorable universes; your players who do not have such adventurers and therefore cannot take advantage of such dispensations may feel envious and grumble a bit.

Regardless of approach, as a gamemaster you always have the right to inventory entering adventurer's powers and possessions, and always have as well the right to demand suitable alterations or deletions as conditions for admission. Never admit an adventurer who has more power (in terms of skills or possessions) than you are willing to handle in your campaign.

## Preparing for a New Campaign or Player Group

At the first game session set aside time to create characters. Guide the players in designing characters appropriate to your setting and background who will fit comfortably into the sort of adventures you want to conduct. Walk new players step-by-step through adventurer creation so they won't become frustrated and unreceptive to the coming adventure. Keep copies of the player-characters for your own reference.

One adventurer to a player is an elegant ratio, but sometimes a larger party may be necessary to handle a certain scenario. Permit each player an extra adventurer or two, or add some non-player-characters who will be controlled by you, but who can provide skilled support for the adventurers. In case of serious adventurer casualties, the presence of extra or peripheral characters allows players otherwise out of the game to actively participate throughout the session.

As the primary source of information about your game universe, you play its creatures, characters, and environment, and apply the *Basic Roleplaying* rules to the flow of play. To do this smoothly, you'll need to assemble player materials

beforehand, study and be familiar with notes describing the scenario, and organize those notes so that you can quickly find the information you want. You'll need to be able to recall or locate specific *Basic Roleplaying* rules to swiftly resolve conflicts, and be well-prepared and flexible enough to adjust for an unanticipated flaw in scenario design, or an unexpected player response. This sounds like a lot, and it is—but you'll be among friends: with a little experience you'll be running a smooth, brisk session.

## Organization

Know your scenario. Study and review your material before you run the adventure. Don't hesitate to rehearse. Remember, you are at once the director, set crew, and actors in a large-scale dramatic presentation. Fumbling through notes consumes time, destroys pacing, and implies that you are clumsy and unprepared (even though you may have spent hours preparing).

Prepare maps, diagrams, floor plans, character statistics, background information, and documents in advance. Clearly label your material so that you can find it quickly.

Make sure you have materials for mapping, for taking notes, and for displaying the positions of adventurers, non-player-characters, creatures, and physical settings. Use visual aids: they are more explicit and more effectively draw players into the scene. Use miniature figures and battleboards to display tactical situations. Most players like to identify with miniature figures representing their adventurers.

Reading background material out loud to the players is usually a bad idea, particularly at the beginning. Start with action! Prepare background material ahead of time, photocopy it, and hand it to your players before the session starts. They can read and refer to it as they wish, without disturbing the flow of the game.

## Presentation

When introducing the adventure, try to create a comfortable atmosphere, one in which each player trusts the gamemaster and the other players to act fairly and considerately. "Play hard, play fair, nobody hurt" is a good motto. Discourage intra-party treachery and backstabbing. Define the party goals so that they apply to all of the adventurers; emphasize cooperation.

You may seat players around the table in the order which you want them to declare their intentions during play. One way is to start with the player whose adventurer has the highest DEX, since that adventurer reacts the fastest. Another approach is to first seat the player with the least intelligent adventurer, so that his statement of intent is made first, giving the player little time to think (and thereby simulating his adventurer's limited wit). The player with the least intelligent adventurer presumably would not have the advantage of knowing other player's intentions. Use either system, or your own: get the players in the habit of stating intent in an orderly fashion.



During the session you may need to give your players hints when their adventurers are bogged down or if they are in serious trouble. Hint generously with beginners; confine yourself to fewer and more subtle hints with experienced players.

Permit players to state procedures that their adventurers will use in recognizable situations. ("Whenever we get in a fight, I'll cover the group's rear.") This encourages the players to think ahead, and eliminates repetition.

Be generous and detailed in response to questions about the setting. When asked to amplify a description, do so as long as you have anything to say, then state that nothing more can be perceived. Remember that a player is entitled to understand your fantasy world from his adventurer's point of view—the adventurer's sight, hearing, taste, sense of smell, and so on—as the gamemaster you are the only channel through which your world can be explored.

Avoid speaking game lingo; use dramatic narrative. Compare the following interchanges.

#### **Gamespeak**

*Player: I rolled a 32—got 'em.*

*Gamemaster: The troll tries to parry. Miss on an 86.*

*Player: I got him in the 02 for 7 points.*

*Gamemaster: The troll's armor absorbs 4 points of damage, and that takes him down to 1 point in that location.*

#### **Dramatic Narrative**

*Player: Cormac chops desperately—and connects!*

*Gamemaster: He tries to parry with his spear and, uhh, misses completely.*

*Player: Good solid hit here, 7 points. Caught him flatfooted, chopped him in the right leg.*

*Gamemaster: Sure did! The sword slashes through the leather, blood gushes out, and he is staggering around on that leg. But he looks more mad than hurt.*

Colorful, interesting language helps everyone participate more fully in the fantasy. Use it whenever you can, and encourage your players to do the same. Indulge yourself; make dramatic flourishes; step through the game rules onto the stage of your drama, and put on a good show.

As a gamemaster, you have the peculiar problem of keeping your gamemaster information secret from your roleplaying self while you're maneuvering your non-player-characters. It can be tempting to act on knowledge that your non-player-characters could not have. Resist the temptation: you'll feel like a cheat, and your players may agree.

Players must believe that they control the fate of their adventurers, or they will lose interest in the scenario. If you do too much of the talking and acting, your players will begin to doubt that they are significant to the game. A player must feel that his character has freedom to choose his actions; he must not feel like a puppet who must do whatever the gamemaster tells him to do. On the other hand, the gamemaster must channel the adventurer along the plotline or all his hard work preparing a scenario has gone for nothing. You may subtly use rewards or threats, or candidly admit that you aren't ready for the choice they want to exercise. Inevitably, to preserve the illusion of free will, you must occa-

sionally follow the adventurers as they wander away from the scenario. Submit to the impulse to improvise when a dramatic opportunity presents itself. The more experienced you become, the more comfortable you will be in diverging from the original scenario notes. Flexibility and improvisation permits you to exploit your immediate responses and those of your players—often the most pleasure in gaming comes from these creative and whimsical moments. Make a virtue of necessity: relax, and enjoy the opportunity to improvise. Your best work may be done when your imagination is most responsive to the players and the setting.

Keep the game moving. Maintain rapid flow to the play. Shift time scales to compress unimportant action. Fumbling with papers and puzzling over forgotten details stifles the drama in your adventure. Keep all the players involved. Games crawl for players who have no adventurers in active play.

Give your players tasks to keep them busy while you organize or refer to your materials, or while you speak privately with a particular player. If you've been playing for a while, call a break.

Use the pressure of time to build tension. Be consistent. Don't run a leisurely adventure, then suddenly demand an instant response when the adventurers are confronted with danger.

Balance the value of continuous rhythm of play against decreased pleasure as players become desensitized and fatigued. Sessions typically last three to six hours. It is better to cut a session short while interest is high than to keep playing after some players have lost the energy to enjoy it. If interest is still running high after a few hours, take a complete break for 15 minutes—run around, throw the Frisbee, hike to the market for munchies—then return to the adventure with your second wind.

After the game session, find out what players liked and didn't like so you can improve your performance and scenario design next session. Ask the players to summarize what occurred, so that everyone is in agreement. Ask them to state a general plan of action for future adventures, and use this information in planning for the next session. Arrange the time for the next meeting and solicit questions that the players would like answered at the beginning of the next game session.

## **Principles of Gamemastering**

Know the *Basic Roleplaying* rules and game mechanics, and teach them to your players.

Be fair and consistent in rulings and judgments. Experience must be a reliable guide, or player knowledge and skill can be only frustrating and unfruitful. Write down important precedents.

Expect to interpolate and extrapolate the *Basic Roleplaying* rules: inevitably, some situations will not have been explicitly covered by the game designers. As complete as these rules are, they do not pretend to cover everything.

Don't waste time looking up obscure points—use common sense and rule quickly.

Provisional judgments are acceptable. Judge quickly, but always reserve the right to change the ruling when you have sufficient leisure to consider the ramifications.

Don't give your players everything they want. Limiting power and tactics is implicit in roleplaying; limits make the game challenging.

Don't hesitate to backtrack on a rules judgment if it crucially affects an adventurer. Players will accept and forget minor errors of judgment, and major ones which are made right.

Help new players design their characters. This is their initial contact with the rules, and it is important that they not be frustrated nor confused.

Keep separate your non-player-character tactics from your gamemaster role. As adversary, be as cunning, as ferocious, or as stupid as called for by the role. As gamemaster, favor neither adventurers nor their opponents in applying the rules.

If you must intervene to protect the drama of the adventure, do your best to conceal it from the players. Arbitrary action diminishes the challenge of the game.

## Bookkeeping Between Adventures

Supervise the bookkeeping on your player's sheets. Make sure everyone remembers to roll for improvements in skills. Record any significant adventurer change (gain or loss of possessions, alteration of statistics, powers, or knowledge) while still fresh in the player's mind. Encourage players to keep an informal history about their adventures—time will quickly blur important details and events.

Update your notes for any non-player-character or setting data that may have changed during the adventure. Assess the impact of the session's play on the scenario or campaign and adapt accordingly. The consequences of a single session may require extensive revision of the adventure and campaign. (You mean that we killed the high priest? Oh dear...)

If your campaign has hooked your players, they will discuss it and plan for it between sessions. This may involve a number of game activities between games. Help them work on the background and development of their player characters—biography; training and research in skills, martial arts, and magic; information-gathering; earning a living between adventures—whatever enhances the illusion of the adventurer as a living being.

## Planning a Campaign

If a group of players intends to play together for more than a few sessions, the scenarios should fit together into a coherent campaign—most players enjoy campaigns because in them they better perceive the continuing growth of their adventurers.

A campaign can be defined as a series of linked scenarios, but for a while we will discuss the campaign as though it had little relation to scenarios.

You may need to analyze your nascent campaign in order to present to the players the best possible adventures and encounters. Fortunately such analysis has proceeded for thousands of years in another guise—the elements of fiction.

Narrative fiction nominally has five elements: plot or incident, character, setting, theme, and style, elements always present in traditional literature. Since fantasy roleplaying stems directly from traditional epics like Beowulf and the Song of Roland, and from modern treatments such as the Conan stories and the Lord of the Rings, these elements are always strongly present in fantasy roleplaying as well.

The elements of fiction therefore can be used as guidelines for creating campaigns. These elements are also useful in devising scenarios, but single scenarios have a somewhat different focus; each emphasizes different amounts of the five elements.

## The Setting

In a campaign, setting is the most important element, for only in a campaign can you have enough time to evoke and detail a world both broad and deep. Sojourning into another world strongly attracts many people; the atmosphere of your sessions should evoke the sense of wonder for which readers and gamers yearn.

Four sources provide most campaign settings: campaign packs, fiction and film, works of history, and your fertile imagination.

Published campaign packs provide by far the easiest and quickest way to run or to learn to create campaigns. Intended as fantasy roleplaying aids, they already have been tested for effectiveness. It may be a good idea to rely on published material at first; such work saves time and can give you a practical guide for organizing and developing your later campaign.

Next-easiest to comprehend are those settings presented by films and other narrative material. Since film rarely lavishes systematic detail, you'll get inspiration and characters from it, but little else. Fantasy and science fiction stories are often action-packed, excellent sources for settings, characters, and narratives!

Historical materials are omnipresent. Better encyclopedias, such as the Britannica III, contain thousands of topical essays, systematized and cross-referenced. Any librarian can direct you to a plethora of easily-photocopied sources for costumes, places, people, royal houses, and maps; all of it will lend you confidence and credibility. Using historical conditions insures that your setting will be coherent and logical, satisfying to your players and a great aid to you. You'll want to introduce fantasy elements, but they can be easily interpolated from traditional fantasy sources. The juvenile book section of your library, for instance, has superbly-illustrated fantasy sources emphasizing alien places and moods, violence and warfare, and magic, religion, and the supernatural.



If you decide to create your own fantasy world, be prepared to do a lot of work while designing from scratch the physical, social, and political elements of a world. Your world must withstand logical scrutiny, and must be internally consistent—your players will spend months or years poking and prodding it, and wringing out its secrets. Creating a believable world is both incredibly difficult and supremely rewarding.

Most campaigns draw from all the sources. The world of Cormac emphasizes narrative and historical sources, affording gamemasters the opportunity to use materials which are readily available and which are quite familiar.

Warning: make the time you spend designing your world proportionate to the time spent playing in it. It is discouraging to slave over a masterpiece that never comes to life in play.

Detailed settings are the most effective, but a high level of detail requires the gamemaster to have a lot of carefully-prepared material on hand. Find a manageable level of detail that will create the proper atmosphere, yet will not overload your memory and record-keeping.

## Character

Campaigns have little room for characterization of gamemaster-controlled characters. Exhaustive characterization is, after all, mostly the job of the players. Occasionally a superb warrior, powerful sorcerer, or great leader becomes important, but this is more likely to occur in individual scenarios.

The great villain usually is the most important non-player-character. Though such a powerful figure rarely appears himself, this fiend steadily dispatches countless henchmen to thwart the adventurers. He and his minions may drop out of sight for a while, especially after a defeat, but they'll continue to lurk about, adding depth and range to otherwise disconnected scenarios. Eventually the players will generate their own scenarios as they hunt down their old foe.

Leaders are more likely to favor the adventurers. They may be private patrons, political kingpins, heads of religions, or shadowy forms with unfathomable motives. They can supply information and special items, and occasionally dispatch some men to strong-arm the adventurers out of trouble.

A stable of minor characters is invaluable, since adventurers always want to talk with someone you didn't anticipate. Keep a file of names, dates, and places for reference.

You should also help guide the development of the adventurers. Help the players visualize their characters. Work out a vivid background history in conjunction with the players, and explain how the adventurer fits into the societies and cultures of the campaign.

Decide how much you will rely upon randomly rolled statistics and how strictly you will follow the *Basic Roleplaying* rules. Negotiate with players to balance their knowledge of the rules with an adventurer they can handle. Some players will try to wrangle a more powerful adventurer out of the negotiations, so make it clear that the rules are an aid in organizing a campaign, not tools by which to chisel out the most powerful adventurer possible.

## Plot and Incident

The most important element in a campaign is suspense, which acts structurally something like the refrain of a song, unifying the direction of the piece and reminding singers and listeners alike what it means. Similarly, suspense keeps the players interested in the campaign. Each session should hint at actions in the world beyond which may affect the adventurers, who will seek to penetrate this shroud of mystery. These will be heightened by the uncertainties about the character's fate, and maintain suspense in the campaign.

Lavish most of your work on the opening scenarios. Once you have intrigued the players, later adventures will be richer and easier.

Don't plot out the entire story line before you begin to play. Have several possible developments in mind to be chosen on the basis of the initial sessions results. As you come to better know your players and their adventurers, you can select a storyline likely to interest everyone.

Don't be too novel. Most campaign plots vary familiar story ideas offering dozens of sessions of play: the return of and triumph of the rightful king, the abduction of and rescue of the princess, the quest for the magical artifact, the search for a lost heritage, and so on.

## Theme

Theme plays an important part in campaign strategy, and shapes events in individual scenarios. One or two main themes give coherence and significance to the campaign. They should engage most of the adventurers' self-motivations. Present several possible themes to start, and pursue those which interest most players. Some themes which are also skeletal plots include freeing an enslaved people, saving the universe from forces of evil, reestablishing an ancient ideal, and making the world safe for democracy. More pervasive thematics, such as proving that love is real, will require careful plotting and relating of the adventurers to specific incidents—an elaborate and risky procedure in the long run.

Fantasy gaming is escapist, a journey from the mundane to the perfect, where justice triumphs and where heroes never fall. Most players do not want tragedy or ambiguous (realistic) resolution. They may be disappointed and discouraged when you peddle the theme that everybody dies, often inappropriately, and that the rules of existence do not conform to human desires. They want a happy ending.

There should be personal tragedy. Failure and the deaths of adventurers make the eventual triumphs more poignant. But the benign universe is a major theme throughout fantasy literature.

## Style

You'll also be choosing a style of presentation. Will events be humorous and light, or grim and dangerous? Will your rewards and triumphs be scarce or generous? Will adventurers grow regularly and lushly, with generous dollops of power, wealth, and success? Will you emphasize combat and



tactics, problem-solving, or dialog and roleplaying? Will the background be subtle and detailed or broadly-brushed? Should adventurer options be many, or limited and carefully directed?

Style is difficult to discuss. Roleplaying is a new narrative mode, with little resemblance to previous literary forms. In a small way, devising and running a roleplaying scenario resembles the writing, directing, and acting all the roles in a film, except that the analogy fails crucially—the artist and the audience of a film do not interact.

Roleplaying resembles jazz. One artist, the gamemaster, interacts spontaneously with several other artists, the players. Creation is shared. Roleplaying is not a spectator sport—everyone adds theme, melody, and harmony.

You can get hints about gamemaster styles from fantasy-gaming magazines, fanzines, games, and books. Seminars and conversations at game conventions can be valuable, as can observing the style of other gamemasters and borrowing what you like.

Your style will develop as you gamemaster. Do not be intimidated. Excellent gamemasters can develop with little conscious thought. As you encounter problems and resolve them, your presentation improves. Your improvement will be faster, though, if you make an effort to review your gamemastering experience, and then emphasize in later sessions what seem to be your strengths, while working to minimize your weaknesses.

Plan your campaign and scenarios by how best you can present your material. The style you evolve will be your own, organic to your abilities and predispositions. Gamemastering can be improved with dedication and hard work.

## Scenario Design

Scenarios are the discrete building blocks of campaigns. They may be resolved in an evening, or last for a couple of sessions. A scenario by definition is one or more closely-connected encounters between the adventurers and the non-player-characters, creatures, traps, natural environment, and so on that you play.

Scenarios can be isolated as well, unconnected to a campaign. Isolated scenarios are ideal for times when the players may not be able to meet again.

A scenario need not be elaborate or highly original. A simple twist to a conventional situation is easy and effective: staging a melee is hardly unique, but setting your melee on a cliff face at the end of a rope, or on a flying carpet thousands of feet in the air is intriguing and interesting.

### Storyline

The adventurers will have to overcome one or more situations and/or solve one or more problems as the session evolves. The sort of encounters they have indirectly make up the theme of the scenario. Sometimes your scenarios may simply be naturalistic encounters; at other times the incidents may coordinate in secondary meanings as well.

Sometimes the theme simply is the storyline—the reason why the adventurers agree to be endangered and discomforted in the first place. There are lots of rationales; they may or may not have anything to do with the theme of the campaign.

**Into The Unknown:** a search for loot and adventure.

**The Quest:** a search for a specific object or person, usually at the request or order of a superior or patron.

**Solving The Mystery:** unusual events require investigation, and any menace must be dealt with.

**Revenge:** the adventurers have the opportunity to seek justice or revenge against foes who have victimized them or others.

**The Challenge:** honor requires that an adventurer achieve a task or be branded an unworthy coward.

**Vile Intrigue:** a plot threatening friends or lords of the adventurers must be unraveled, and the villains must be brought to justice.

**The Escort:** the adventurers must journey with and protect a lord, employer, or valuable item.

**The Puzzle:** a riddle or puzzle will, if solved, gain someone something desired.

**The Rescue:** victim must be discovered and freed unharmed from the captors.

**The Crusade or The Police Action:** criminals must be captured or eliminated before they cause further harm.

**The War or The Assault:** the adventurers have a military objective.

**The Feud:** the adventurers take sides in a conflict between traditional enemies.

**Monster Peril:** a peaceful village must be protected from the ravages of a lion, dragon, or bandit gang.

**The Research Expedition:** a party is dispatched to study and map an unfamiliar region.

**Banditry:** if honorable, the adventurers live like Robin Hood and steal from the rich to give to the poor.

**Bounty Hunt:** a price is on a criminal's head, the adventurers want the reward.

**The Hunt:** the adventurers seek to capture or to kill a beast for sport or for its economic value.

**Messenger:** the adventurers must overcome obstacles to deliver an important message.

**Smugglers:** the adventurers transport something at great risk for substantial profit.

**Meet The Aliens:** the adventurers encounter an alien creature or culture, and may need to defend themselves or may want to establish friendly relations.



## Relating The Elements

Once you have chosen a theme or storyline, relate to it the other elements of the narrative—plot, character, and setting. (Your style remains recognizably yours; once evolved and working, don't mess with it.)

**Scenario Plot:** what hooks the attention of the players? What hooks the adventurers into the story? How is the scenario introduced to them? How should they resolve its challenge? What problems will confront them? What other ways might they solve it?

**Scenario Non-Player-Characters:** who and what will be met? What do they look like and sound like? Who among them need personalities outlined? What abilities do they have to threaten or help the adventurers? Will they appear in several scenarios?

**Scenario Setting:** what are the physical and cultural backgrounds? Where does the action take place? What does the region look like? Smell like? How long will the adventurers be there?

The key to roleplaying's popularity is its ability to carry us into an imaginary world in a peculiarly personal way. Well-thought-out streets and rooms leave the players with the feeling of looking through their adventurers' eyes.

Know the scene well. Use familiar real-world settings as models. Photographs of ancient castles and taverns, scenes from favorite fiction, or fantastic scenery by surrealist painters will help you with less-familiar fantasy elements. The more incisive and interesting your detail, the more convincing is your setting.

If useful, prepare a map or plan for each incident, and provide player copies. The copies you have should be annotated with the specifics of the location and encounters to be faced there. Illustrations, no matter how crude or how schematic, help players to see the scene. Published photos and illustrations suggest terrain, architecture, costumes, and battle regalia.

Cultural settings should be consistent to their own laws of science and society. You may want to use known societies as analogs, but leave yourself room to be flexible and to maintain wonder.

## Plotting The Scenario

You need strong plots. Repeating similar encounters ruins player interest. Your plots should engage and entice the imagination. The action should move directly and tersely from the hook—the situation or statement which attracts the initial interest—to the ultimate showdown. Along the way, the adventurers face a series of incidental or incremental challenges.

Your scenario outline should list the initial action, the challenges or incidents, and the climax. The storyline already has determined the climax. Lavish attention on the first incident; it must attract the players and amplify or echo the motivations of their adventurers.

## The Hook

Open with action. Don't detail background until players ask for it. One way to keep up suspense is to parcel out to the players a little less information than they want; then make them struggle for the rest of the information they need. You may add the pressure of a time limit within which they must act or all is lost.

The adventurers may be motivated by appeals to their greed, pride, honor, lust for power, or guilt. But if you can find a goal that relentlessly draws your players to the climax, then your scenario will succeed, even if the adventurers fail.

## Complications

Having established motivation, create one or more incidents to overcome or suffer through. Give them variety; make some friendly and some not. Violent conflict is a roleplaying staple, since it threatens the lives of the adventurers, and is inherently dramatic. But adventurers should not habitually fight everything they encounter, nor should they expect every combat to annihilate the opposition. Sometimes the opposing force should have clearly superior weapons, abilities, and numbers, forcing the characters to parley, flee, or surrender when attacked. Steady violence will dull the appetite, offends those who seek more subtle adventure, and makes for lopsided adventurers. A good gamemaster also will rely on other types of challenges to provide action and conflict.

Traps can give another kind of challenge. Interpreted broadly, traps include ambushes and impeding obstacles as well as deadfalls, pits, and automated contraptions. Remember that traps may solve problems for the adventurers as well.

Riddles and other puzzles are fine complications: word games, devious logical traps, and obscure prophecies can be very entertaining.

Man-against-nature incidents occur in many adventures. Typically, wild creatures are encountered, but the natural elements are a wonderful way to make trouble for adventurers. You might have them search for water in a desert, guide a raft down a raging rapid, try to survive a blizzard, find their way through a jungle, climb a dangerous peak, and so on.

Non-player-characters are another familiar source of conflict and adventure, though many such encounters should be more than excuses for swordplay. Design incidents which force the adventurers to negotiate or to act on the basis of incomplete information, perhaps tense situations or with the handicap of a greedy informant. Create a non-player-character who is the only source for particular information, but who cannot be frightened into revealing what he knows. They'll have to talk him into it, through argument, reason, and persuasion.

## Transitions

Transitions occur when one incident concludes and another has not yet started. Logical transitions are familiar activities like traveling, resting, eating, and sleeping. While not dra-

matic, such scenes lend an illusion of the flow of time. Try to use them smoothly, compressing them whenever possible—summarize, then fade to the next incident. If nothing important is to happen, why talk about it?

Transitions are excellent places to take breaks during play, or at which to halt when a scenario takes more than one session to resolve. Breaking in the middle of a melee or an escape is a bad idea. It's hard to reenter the scenario with the same enthusiasm; frequently important details will be forgotten or confused during the break.

## The Climax

The climax must resolve the problem presented in the book; the resolution of the climax determines the success or failure of the adventure.

Typically, physical action resolves a scenario—the final battle or confrontation with the antagonists. A subtle or open-ended intellectual or moral climax may leave the players frustrated. A good fight releases all the tensions and neatly wraps up the narrative as well.

## Creatures and Characters

After outlining and developing the incidents of your scenario, prepare the descriptions of the non-player-characters. You need not specify every skill, ability, and spell, nor feel obliged to let the dice determine important facets for your non-player-character. Tailor the statistics to fit the scenario. In the *Creatures* book, you'll find statistical ranges and averages for each *Basic Roleplaying* creature. There are summary forms available, designed to compactly hold such gamemaster information.

Depending on his importance, a non-player-character's appearance and personality, statistics, tactics and strategies may be valuable.

Appearance and personality need only brief notes. You'll want this for most individuals who make even a brief appearance—minor characters, information sources, and rabble.

*Basic Roleplaying* statistics are necessary if a non-player-character is active in the scenario. Active characters also need appearance and personality notes. Active characters include villains, patrons, and allies.

Fighting foes require notes about favorite tactics, strategies, abbreviated statistics (typically supplied by the squad sheet or the leader and followers sheet), personality and distinguishing features for leaders. Monsters, beasts, and common sword fodder may need nothing more than statistics and a number.

Great villains, such as the Sheriff of Nottingham or Elric's foe, Theleb K'aarna, may require expanded notes indicating how they fit into the campaign, their status and relations in the Empire or Kingdom, areas where their influence is weak or strong, and who are their traditional foes.

# Conclusion

Fantasy roleplayers need gamemasters. To be a gamemaster, you'll need a certain knack for storytelling and communicating. You'll also need work, dedication, and a willingness to extend yourself.

There are commensurate rewards. It is immensely flattering to have your fellows be as interested in your fantasy world as they are in the worlds of Tolkien or Howard. You'll be a better and a more subtle leader, with increased self-confidence. Best of all, you'll have the joy of creation and the warm applause of your players. Few hobbies offer more.

# Scenario Aids

These aids can be used to add depth to your scenarios. Do not rely exclusively on these tables though, or your games may grow stale. Instead, use these tables only as a foundation for your imagination, and change them as befits your needs.

# Languages in Roleplaying

At least for major campaigns, the gamemaster should determine language families, so that he can decide whether or by how much an adventurer from one country can understand a speaker from a neighboring land. The simplest system is to state that all human languages within the campaign area are related, while non-human languages are entirely different.

The gamemaster should also determine the percentage difference in related languages, and use this either to subtract from an adventurer's language ability with a related language, or for resistance rolls as a difficulty factor to be overcome. Suppose, for instance, that Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish have a 20% difficulty factor with each other. All could have a 50% difficulty factor with German, English, or Dutch, and an 85% difficulty factor with French and the other Romance languages.

Trade languages usually develop between human societies with limited contact. Often this is a highly-abridged and refitted version of the language of the dominant employer (pidgin English, for example), but when two or more roughly-equal cultures interact, whole new languages (based on the languages of the participants) emerge. Swahili is one such example.

Outsiders generally pick up such a language easily (it was designed to be easy, after all). Later they may be embarrassed if they assumed that the language they learned was the real language of the area. Any adventurer who comes from outside the region of the campaign generally will have first learned some trade patois.

In much of medieval Europe, the international language and the language of literacy was Latin, a holdover from the long-dead Roman Empire. Probably many would have

learned Greek as well, but Greek happened to be the language of the competing Orthodox bishops of the Eastern Church. Arabic, the other important tongue, was completely outside the Christian scholastic's pale—though many nominally-Christian merchants and traders knew it well.

## Encounter Tables

Encounter tables are one way to quickly create random meetings with non-player-characters and creatures. Those of this chapter are included to provide incidents during adventurer movement between specific places in other scenarios. Using the encounter tables alone, without any plot or rationale, makes for a dull game.

Tailor these tables to specific needs, or make up your own. While supplements to *Basic Roleplaying* will include tables designed for specific locations, thereby accounting for the particular nature of individual locations, the charts presented in this chapter necessarily cannot detail appearance, motivation, or other relevant facts. Determine those as appropriate to your scenario.

One good way to use encounter tables is to ignore the suggested random-roll and instead study them for interesting encounters for your scenario, then draw up the specific non-player-characters you need.

There are five encounter tables for the mundane plane: urban, rural, the wilds, wasteland, and magical terrain. There are three for the spirit plane: frontier, outer, and inner.

### Mundane Plane Encounters

These encounters occur in the physical world, even though a magical place may be a portion of an encounter. The physical world is otherwise assumed to resemble the one we know. Compare with spirit plane encounters.

#### Urban Encounters

An urban area consists of a city of any size. But also use this table for encounters along any well-established road. Roll 1D6 for frequency of encounters. A 1 result means one encounter and a roll of 6 means six encounters that day.

#### Rural Encounters

In rural regions people live in villages and work the land or sea. Rural lands always intervene between urban and the wilds or wastelands. Normally there are 1D3 significant encounters daily.

### Urban/Road Encounter Table

<i>r</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>l</i>
<i>D100</i>	<i>result</i>		
01	Group of traveling nobles, with extensive entourage.		
02	Rowdy rich nobleman, may be seeking trouble.		
03	Servants of noblemen with entourage.		
04-05	Servant of noblemen with modest following.		
06	Priest or priestess traveling with entourage.		
07	Priest or priestess engaged in some activity.		
08	Lone mendicant monk, or paupered priest or priestess.		
09-10	Adept sorcerer with entourage.		
11-14	Soldiers—passing by, on guard, etc.		
15	Soldiers—questioning or searching party.		
16-17	Large merchant caravan passes.		
18-19	Small merchant caravan passes.		
20-25	Peddlers on foot.		
26-27	Wagon of goods driven by crafter.		
28-29	Cart of goods driven by crafter.		
30-35	Crafter bearing goods on back.		
36-40	Farmers in wagons.		
41-55	Farmers in carts.		
56-65	Farmers with livestock.		
66-90	Farmers on foot.		
91-95	Thief or pickpocket.		
96-00	Party is lost—roll encounter from the rural table.		

### The Rural Encounter Table

<i>D100</i>	<i>result</i>
01-05	Lost—roll encounter from urban table.
06	Lord of nearest town, with entourage.
07	Priest or priestess of nearest town.
08	Soldiers from nearest town.
09	Townspeople traveling on business.
10	A town.
11	Peddler on the move.
12-14	Traveling farmers.
15-16	Empty dirt trail.
17-26	Plowed fields.
27-29	A village.
30	A lord's country manor.
31-50	Empty fields suitable for grazing.
51-55	Domestic herd animals with herdsman.
56-59	One large wild herbivore.
60	One large carnivore.
61-65	Primitive hunters.
66-70	Country boys intent on mugging the party.
71-75	Highwayman, or a group of bandits.
76-80	Enemy scouting party.
81-00	Lost—roll event from the wilds table.



## Encounters in the Wilds (Wilderness)

Human habitation occurs in the wilds, or wilderness, but neither in large numbers nor under comfortable conditions. Peoples native to such areas usually are of nomadic or primitive cultures. Roll twice daily.

### Wasteland Encounters

Wastelands include forests, deserts, icelands, mountaintops, swamps, and other regions not normally settled by humans. Here monsters may live. Roll once daily.

## Magical Terrain Encounters

In such regions magic lies heaviest, and odd things occur for no reason. Sometimes an ordinary region becomes magical for a while—perhaps after some great ritual, magical battle, or mysterious birth. Roll once daily.

## The Spirit Plane

The spirit plane is a featureless place, marked only by the auras of the beings who inhabit it. Ordinary senses are useless here, but every consciousness generates a field of presence around itself with a strength equivalent to one meter per point of POW.

Awareness of such auras is sometimes called "spirit sense." Humans recall only shifting shapes and lights, as do other beings who rely primarily upon sight. A recognizable form or definable shape is rare. Creatures relying on other senses recall the entities by means of those perceptions.

Use the spirit plane encounter tables whenever an adventurer travels the otherworld. The tables show the types of creatures which inhabit the otherworld. Adventurer shamans might search the planes seeking a particular type of spirit or if pursuing some unusual or powerful entity. The gamemaster should make one encounter roll per hour of disincorporate travel.

Shamans are trained to navigate the spirit plane. Whenever an encounter is rolled for by the gamemaster, the shaman may alter (raise or lower) the D100 roll by a number of percentiles equal to or less than the POW of the shaman's fetch (not including the shaman's personal POW). He may use these encounter die-roll alterations to find particular types of spirits or to pass between adjacent regions of the spirit plane. Thus, a more powerful shaman will find the required spirit or reach the desired portion of the spirit plane more easily and quickly than an inexperienced shaman. Traveling deeper into the spirit plane requires that the shaman receive a D100 encounter roll result indicating passage to the deeper level (consult the proper spirit plane encounter table). If the shaman is moving outward from the inner region to the frontier, he must achieve an encounter roll result less than 01. A shaman is never obliged to change regions. He may also return to his body instantly at any time, regardless of his position on the spirit plane, unless engaged in spirit combat.

### The Wilds Encounter Table

D100	result
01	Lost-roll event from rural table.
02	Traveler headed toward a village.
03-04	Tilled fields.
05	Village buildings and residents.
06-10	Primitive or nomadic culture, human family.
11	Primitive or nomadic culture, human clan.
12	Shaman with entourage.
13	Holy man. (Hermit, vision-quester, etc.)
14-15	Primitive or nomadic culture, non-human group.
16-18	Brigands or outlaws.
19-20	Enemy scouting party.
21-30	Empty pastures.
31-35	Pasture with herdsman and domestic animals.
36-45	Fields of wild herbivores.
46-50	Fields with wild carnivore(s).
56-60	Trees and rough terrain.
61-70	Scrub and rough terrain, with wild herbivores.
71-75	Scrub and rough terrain, with carnivore(s).
76-80	One monster which is dangerous to humans.
81 00	Lost-roll on wasteland table.

### Wasteland Encounter Table

D100	result
01	Village.
02	Hermit or other holy person.
03-05	Human trappers, etc.
06-10	Friendly creature.
11-70	Wild herbivores.
71-80	Wild carnivore.
81-90	Unfriendly monster, dangerous to humans.
91-95	Deadly location (quicksand, poison dust, sheer cliff, avalanche, flooding river, volcano, etc.)
96-00	Lost-roll on magical terrain table.

### Magical Terrain Encounter Table

D100	result
01	Magical ruler of region.
02	Village of immortals.
03-05	Dance of nature.
06	Neutral demigod.
07-16	Non-human intelligent group or species.
17	Leaders of non-human group or species.
18-20	Servants of local non-human species.
21-45	Large herbivore.
46-50	Large carnivore.
51-65	Magical herbivore.
66-70	Magical carnivore.
71-75	Invading enemies.
76-85	Deadly location (quicksand, carnivorous plants, magical destruction, etc.).
86-99	Monsters.
00	Demonic demigod.

A non-shamanic adventurer forced to disincorporate moves about the spirit plane suffering from random encounters: he cannot influence the encounter die rolls using his POW. He cannot return to the mundane plane without help, though he may accidentally travel deeper into the spirit plane through encounter table results.

## The Frontier Region

The frontier region is the area which seems closest to the mundane world. Disincorporation sends a spirit to this region of the spirit plane. Those spirits most commonly interacting with the living are from this region. The frontier must be traversed in order to reach the outer region.

## Outer Spirit Plane

In this outer region dwell more powerful spirits which are often malevolent towards the living, but which are not powerful enough to find a more secure spiritual refuge in the inner region.

## The Inner Region

The inner region is the core of the spirit plane. Here eddy the most powerful, the most exotic, and the rarest spirits.

# Treasure and Reward

Treasure is an ultimate reward for an adventurer. It is portable, concealable, and can be used to exchange directly for training, research, or equipment, making the adventurer stronger physically or intellectually, and just that much more likely to survive the next brush with death. Treasure is also countable, and its existence at the end of a game gives players and adventurers alike a way of understanding the success of the session or scenario. Men and women who wager their lives expect good reward in return.

As well as cash, rewards can be articles of worth, usable magical items, or information. A few adventurers might say that having eliminated a source of danger to themselves and their people is treasure enough. Most (but not all) feel that a triumph over their foes is adequate recompense. An adventurer rarely declines when pennies accompany the less tangible gifts of thanks and glory.

Adventurers might receive as tangible reward for their deeds either guaranteed wages or performance bounties, or some or all of the loot gathered during the expedition. Accepting payment in loot risks that there will be none, or that it will be lost; on the other hand, guaranteed wages may be dishearteningly less than the loot actually recovered.

## Guaranteed Income

You might assume that the employer of the adventurers handles all the finances. Then you'll just tell the players when their adventurers get new armor, new horses, or whatever. This method would be best, for instance, when adventurers

## Frontier Region Encounter Table

<i>D100</i>	<i>encounter</i>	<i>INT</i>	<i>POW or MP</i>
01-02	chonchon	4D6	3D6+6
03-08	disease spirit	--	3D6+6
09-10	ghoul spirit	3D6	2D6+6
11-25	ghost	2D6+6	4D6
26-27	wraith	2D6+6	3D6+6
28-30	nymph	varies with type	
31-60	spell spirit	per spell	3D6
61-70	intellect spirit	1D6	2D10
71-80	power spirit	--	2D6+3
81-85	disincorporate shaman	1D6+12	3D6+6
86-00	to outer plane		

## Outer Region Encounter Table

<i>D100</i>	<i>encounter</i>	<i>INT</i>	<i>POW</i>
01-03	chonchon	5D6	5D6+6
04-10	disease spirit	--	5D6+6
11-12	elemental	--	varies
13-15	hellion	4D6	3D6+6
16-25	ghost	3D6+6	6D6
26-28	wraith	3D6+6	5D6+6
29-35	healing spirit	--	4D6
36-45	intellect spirit	1D10	3D10
46-55	magic spirit	3D6	3D6+6
56-60	power spirit	--	3D6+3
61-70	spell spirit	per spell	4D6
71-80	passion spirit	--	3D6+6
81-85	other spirit or demon	varies with type	
86-90	disincorporate shaman	1D6+12	3D6+6
91-00	to inner plane		

## Inner Region Encounter Table

<i>D100</i>	<i>encounter</i>	<i>INT</i>	<i>POW</i>
01	Bad Man aspect	20	35
02-10	cult/religion spirit	varies with type	
11-25	elemental	--	varies
26-35	ghost	4D6+6	8D6
36-40	hellion	4D6	6D6+6
41-45	healing spirit	--	6D6
46-50	intellect spirit	2D6	4D10
51-60	magic spirit	4D6	5D6+6
61-65	power spirit	--	4D6+3
66-70	spell spirit	per spell	5D6
71-80	passion spirit	--	5D6+6
81-85	disincorporate shaman	1D6+12	3D6+6
86-00	gamemaster's choice		

work within a clan, with the clan lord as the employer. Alternately, such an employer might be a local potentate, a temple head, or a gang leader. Experienced adventurers can settle down for awhile and work as bodyguards, watchmen, enforcers, or soldiers.

Alternately, you may assume the same circumstances, but allow the adventurers to handle their own finances. Pay them regular wages; leave it to them to do their own book-keeping. Occasionally, therefore, they'll run out of money—a great time to tempt them with dangerous propositions.

Adventurer salaries should be a function of the work done and of the arrangements made. An adventurer living with his home clan as a full-time warrior should certainly receive high status. But, all things being equal, a mercenary of equal skill who is hired by the clan for a specific job should be paid about twice the daily rate of his clansman counterpart, since the mercenary is without guarantee of full-time work. (The clansman's daily rate is about 16 pennies per day; a first-class hired swordsman could get 32 pennies per day.)

Adventurers who want cash without fixed responsibility may prefer working for bounties—specified rewards for specific jobs. Suppose a dragon ravages the countryside: the authorities are likely to have posted a reward for its demise. If the adventurers slay the monster, then they can be assured of that reward, and perhaps even collect something extra if the dragon has a treasure hoard (assuming that the adventurers can slay the dragon).

## Loot by Speculation

A popular form of adventure is the free-lance expedition, usually destined far from civilization (easy-to-get-at loot presumably has already been grabbed by predecessors). The rewards may be chimerical despite the risk, but generally high risk should mean high reward. The free-lance party remains the quickest road to riches. Normally, such adventurers will have one of four identities—as raiders, bandits, grave-robbers, or monster-hunters.

**Raiders:** in war, or in situations reflecting interspecies enmity, normal banditry becomes an act of war. Loot so obtained is rightful plunder, and considered to be the property of the looter by his side. Such proceeds mostly will consist of goods, not money. The adventurers may find themselves at the mercy of prize courts, regimental loot divisions, ridiculous shares schemes, taxmen, and other government interference with their rightful gain.

**Bandits:** Adventurers who rob their own people are bandits. Their presence ensures that a standing army, clan warriors, or mercenary adventurers will exist to try to eliminate them. As gamemaster, bear in mind the contrasting social definitions of raider and bandit, and use them in play. Think out the retaliation likely to pursue malefactors within the settled areas of your campaign. Remind your players to insure their adventurers with the guise of respectability. Brawlers, robbers, and pick-pockets deserve to be pursued by lots of other bounty-hunting adventurers armed with sword and noose.

**Grave Robbers:** many a hero has won vast treasure by looting the tombs of the great. Remember that tombs exist to honor the dead. Plunderers of such places are desecrating ancestral resting-places of peoples who may still be living, powerful, and vengeful; tomb-robbers are scum and the lowest of scavengers to those who care.

In the worlds of *Basic Roleplaying*, defenses for the great tombs will be much more effective than the vaguely-worded curses and tricky deadfalls of this world. Adventurers daring the living and dead defenders of rich tombs deserve any treasure that can get.

**Monster-Hunters:** Killing dumb, dangerous beasts has a lot in its favor. No one questions the adventurer's rights to such gains. Morality is rarely a question. Unlike raiding, once the monster is dead, the adventurers usually don't have to fight their way back for days through wild and hostile terrain—and monsters usually do not have kinsmen to wreak vengeance, Grendel's mother excepted.

Unfortunately, monsters will not have much loot. Monsters do not sit in the wilderness hoarding loot. The dragons Fafnir (who guarded the Rhinegold) and Smaug (who sat on the riches of Erebor) seem like exceptions, but remember that they hoarded the wealth gathered by others. Destroying Fafnir and Smaug was a service to civilized beings; their hoards comprised a just reward for the slayers—it's not easy to kill a dragon.

Unintelligent monsters have no use for gold and silver. Treasure found in their lairs is incidental to the skeletons of victims littering the floors. Some usable (blood-stained) armor and weapons might be present, but rarely money or other objects of value: stoorworms and lions, for example, do not bother to haul back loot to their lairs. If they have taken over someone else's home, then they incidentally might control treasure commensurate with the normal possessions of the former inhabitants. Goods still present would range in condition from the merely dusty to the befouled and mutilated. The previous owners may be dead, may no longer have use for their goods, or they may offer a reward for their recovery or for the freeing of their residence.

Intelligent monsters are as likely as anyone to possess treasure. As intelligent beings, they have organized uses for money, goods, and luxuries. Their defenses likely will be in part magical, and will be as systematically designed as the technical level of their culture allows. Intelligent monsters will cooperate at least as much as will intelligent adventurers.

## Other Treasures

Strange and outre items might appear in a hoard, including enchanted artifacts, maps and documents, and arcanities such as poisons, healing herbs, pet monsters, etc.

These items should be devised and put into treasures by the gamemaster. The Other Treasures table suggests some guidelines for possible items, your imagination will arrive at many more.



## Other Treasures Table

r	o	l	l
D100	item		
01	unique magic item		
02-10	any enchanted magical item		
11-35	book/scroll about the use of a skill*		
36-40	book/scroll about a sorcery spell*		
41-45	book/scroll about a ritual spell*		
46-55	map to important location		
56-60	book/scroll on interesting lost knowledge		
61-75	book/scroll containing interesting obscure knowledge		
76-85	gem or item of jewelry worth 10X D100 pennies		
86-90	herbal healing potion capable of healing 1D6 hit points of damage, 1D20 doses.		
91-95	poison potion of 3D6 potency, 1D20 doses.		
96-00	useless, valueless item which looks vastly important and valuable.		

\*These writings teach a particular skill, spell, or ritual up to a certain percentage of proficiency. To use such a writing, use the research rules. Roll 2D6 and multiply by 5 to determine the actual highest proficiency gain.

## Unique Magic Items

Some magical items cannot be duplicated with known magic. How the magic works, or how the item was created is unknown or is the result of known, one-of-a-kind events which cannot be duplicated.

The following effects are guidelines for developing uncommon magic items of your own. They spice up a campaign and give adventurers a quest-object.

Usually such items have specific limits and a POW of their own due to their potency (divine or spirit). To use them, adventurers must, with their own magic points, overcome the magic points of the item on the resistance table. Unless otherwise specified, the item employs its own magic points to accomplish the magic possible to it, and can do nothing when it is out of magic points.

Set up limitations for such items; tailor them to the situation and to the needs of the campaign.

**Effect-Doubling:** this effect, often part of an object holy to some cult or one with strong spirit connections, can double the effect of a particular spell or spell type. For instance, a cup holy to the Earth Mother might double the effect of a type of Healing magic if wine is drunk from it by the victim at the same time the spell is applied. The magic point cost, or POW sacrifice, is normal for the spell, but the effect is doubled.

Such an item may be good for only one use per day, because it uses its magic points in the process, or it may have some divine or spirit power to continually repeat its ability without spending its magic points.

**Sensory Magic:** allows magical detection of a particular substance, species, intent, or situation. There is usually no magic point cost for its user, and the matrix will act characteristically—glowing, for instance, when the object it senses approaches within a certain range, usually ten meters.

Though some are limited in duration, they must be consciously used to detect. Their POW usually limits such items to how many times they may be used per day, and how they may expend magic points to do their work.

Others work continuously, although they, too, may cease to function for the rest of any day in which they have detected as many objects of the type desired as they have points of POW.

**Magic Point Enhancement:** these items are usually of divine or of spirit origin and are used to reinforce the magic points of the user much as a fetch's magic points reinforce those of his shaman when the shaman is under magical or spirit attack.

The POW of the item is added to the magic points of the user in different ways. Usually the item will work only in one of several possible manners. It could reinforce the magic points of the user in (pick one) defensive or offensive spirit combat. It could reinforce the magic points of the user in (pick one) casting or defending against offensive magic. And it could boost the magic points of an offensive spell, so that an item with a 3 POW, for instance, would add its POW to the magic points in an offensive spell to help push the spell through defensive magic.

**Spell-Effect Enhancement:** such an item might seem to act as a normal spell, but has added effects for no increase in magic point cost.

For instance, an item may be used in casting Disrupt, but the resulting Disrupt does 1D10 damage (instead of 1D3) for the normal magic point cost. Similarly, a spell matrix for a divine spell might activate for only one sacrifice of POW, and from then on work for free.

Naturally such items will be immensely rare and enormously valuable.

**Flawed Effects:** these items may use one of the above effects or one of the powers normal to an enchanted object, but which have been subtly changed so that they operate abnormally.

For instance, the previously-mentioned Disrupt spell in a magical item might still do 1D10 damage instead of 1D3, but cost 4 magic points instead of 1.

In another approach, an item might work well, but exact an extra POW sacrifice before it works normally for the user. For instance, a sword which is holy to the Death god and which will cast Sever Spirit against the first foe it touches may also take a point of POW from its user for every foe so slain.

**Specialized Magical Effects:** these are usually normal enchantments on which a supernatural force has placed conditions. A weapon might do only part of its normal damage unless used against a particular creature or individual, for instance, or the cup of Healing instanced above might work only for devotees of the particular god and members of her pantheon.



# Gems and Jewelry

Gem values are measured in carats. One carat equals 200 milligrams; five carats equals one gram. A small gem is about 1-20 carats (.2-4 grams). A medium gem is about 21-100 carats (4.2-20 grams). A large gem is over 101 carats (more than 20 grams).

## Cut-Gem Values By Stone Type

type	pennies per carat	pennies per gram
diamond	10	50
ruby	8	40
emerald	7	35
sapphire	6	30
pearl	6	30
amethyst	2	25
opal	4	20
amber	4	20
jade	3	15
topaz	2	10
turquoise	1	5

Value per carat varies by the kind of stone, and by its clarity, cut, and source. Values shown are for cut stones. Uncut stones are worth only a tenth of cut stones.

## Jewelry

Gem settings affect value. These values stem from metal weight and the quality of the work which created the setting. In both setting qualities described below, the metal used is roughly of coinage purity; extra-pure precious metals lack strength and durability, and the best jewelers use alloys tailored for the structural requirements of broaches, rings, necklaces, cirques, and so forth.

Good quality indicates professional execution of average or perhaps out-of-fashion design.

Excellent quality requires intricate or elegant design, normally of currently-recognized fashion. More awesome pieces will be beyond the reach of fashion: a massive gold ring crafted into the shape of a dragon might only appreciate in value as it passes from hand to hand. The value of the finest jewelry is incalculable.

## Setting Multipliers Table

Metal	good setting	excellent setting
silver	1	2.5
gold	10	25

Multiply the value of the stone by the appropriate factor to find the average worth of the setting. Vary the price by the purpose of the setting—a necklace is significantly larger than an earring and should be more valuable.

## Sample Jewelry

description	value in pennies
simple silver ring	9
sculpted silver ring	25
elaborately cast silver ring	60
silver ring with medium emerald	360
simple gold band	90
elaborate gold ring	225
gold ring with small ruby	475
gold ring with small ruby and 7 small diamonds	3600
two gold teardrop earrings	30
diamond earrings	120
narrow silver wrist bracelet	90
wide silver wrist bracelet	150
wide gold wrist bracelet	1500
heavy gold armband	3000
gold torque	1500
silver brooch	300
silver diadem	600
gold diadem, with 7 rubies	9000
gold crown, with 25 medium diamonds	13,500

## Special Devices

Though anachronistic technical devices often appear in modern fantasy literature, be wary of them in your campaign. Avoid the player cry of "If lenses why not telescopes?" by reserving any such devices for your non-player-characters. If the campaign lacks all but the simplest machinery, it is easier to maintain fantasy orientation. The *Basic Roleplaying* rules are not much concerned with technological progress, and cannot be of much help to you.

Most adventurers have no notion of technology; to them, arcane devices are simply magic items. Being so rare, today's mundane item can be of inestimable value in a campaign world. If you wish, a clever artificer might charge a high price for something from the following list: start the bidding at 5000p for a single device or a small amount of substance. Many more such entries exist.

range finder	invisible ink
water clock	two-way mirror
telescoping staff (5m)	Greek fire
magnet	convex lens
compass	periscope
arquebus	fireworks
unbreakable cipher	an accurate map of anything
very small steam engine	variable scale w/ sliding weight
signal mirrors with shutters for coding	

# Danger Classes (optional)

*Basic Roleplaying* supplies a simple method to determine the plunder appropriate as a reward for the defeat of a particular creature. The procedure admittedly is artificial; gamemasters may properly wish to refuse even to associate loot with unintelligent monsters. Other gamemasters may find this system handy. Use the description in the *Creatures* book to choose likely lairs, habitats, and so on. Note that in this section the



creatures have been arranged both by class and by alphabetical order.

Creatures are classed for average skills. If yours have superior abilities, then increase the class by one or two.

Danger Class / Treasure Table		
class	pennies possible	chance for other treasure
I	D10	01%
II	D100	05%
III	D100 X10	10%
IV	100+(D100 X20)	15%
V	1000+(D100 X50)	20%

### Procedure

Basic Roleplaying creatures are divided into five danger classes; each general entry compares the creatures of that class to a range of human fighting skill.

Determine the class of the creature in question. Then roll D100 to determine the number of pennies in the treasure. Make only one such roll for each type of creature, no matter how many are (or were) present.

Make a second D100 roll to determine if other treasure is present. This roll gives the percentage chance that something unusual will be found. If the roll is equal to or less than the percentage shown, refer to the Other Treasures table, on p. 14.

### Nature of Treasure Rolled

While treasure value is shown in pennies, the coins actually present might be coins of higher value and fewer number. Often treasure consists of other things entirely.

A castle conquered by a dragon may have many pennies-worth of furnishings, ornaments, and useful articles, rather than bags of pennies stashed in odd corners. Bandits may have many pennies worth of trade goods like fabric, metal, and foodstuffs. Most of this material is less portable than coins, and presents problems in disposal.

Do not neglect the weaponry of intelligent creatures. Much of their loot has been spent for the equipment they use daily.

### Creature Classification

#### Class I

Human standard: weak, unarmed person.

Creature comparison: weaker in combat than a typical human.

#### Class II

Human standard: Militia-quality fighter, or a commoner.

Creature comparison: in combat, equivalent to a typical armed human.

#### Class III

Human standard: Well-equipped fighter.

Creature comparison: superior in combat to a typical human fighter.

#### Class IV

Human standard: superhuman.

Creature comparison: generally superior in combat to any one human of any quality.

#### Class V

Human standard: none.

Creature comparison: so powerful they are undefeatable except by other creatures of similar class.

### Creatures By Class

creature	class	creature	class
Allosaur	IV	Insect Swarm	II
Ant, Giant	II	Jabberwock	IV
Baboon	I	Lamia	III
Bandersnatch	III	Lion	III
Basilisk	III	Lizard, Rock	II
Bear	III	Manticore	III
Bear, Polar	III	Minotaur	III
Beetle, Giant	II	Mummy	IV
Behemoth	V	Nymph (dryad)	IV
Brontosaur	IV	Nymph (hag)	IV
Broo	II	Nymph (naiad)	IV
Cattle	III	Nymph (oread)	IV
Centaur	III	Octopus	III
Chimpanzee	I	Ogre	III
Chonchon	III	Orc	II
Crocodile (small)	II	Panther	II
Crocodile (medium)	III	Plesiosaur	III
Crocodile (large)	IV	Python	III
Deer	I	Satyr	III
Dog	I	Sea Serpent	IV
Dragon	V	Shark (medium)	III
Duck	I	Shark (large)	V
Dwarf	II	Skeleton	I-III
Elemental (gnome)	I-IV	Spirit (disease)	III
Elemental (salamander)	I-IV	Spirit (healing)	I
Elemental (shade)	I-IV	Spirit (intellect)	I
Elemental (sylph)	I-IV	Spirit (magic)	II
Elemental (undine)	I-IV	Spirit (passion)	III
Elephant	IV	Spirit (power)	I
Elf	II	Spirit (spell)	I
Fachan	IV	Stoorworm	IV
Ghost	III	Tiger	III
Ghoul	III	Toad, Cliff	I-IV
Giant	III-V	Troll, Cave	III
Gorgon	IV	Troll	II
Gorilla	III	Unicorn	III
Grampus	III	Vampire	IV
Griffin	III	Werewolf	III
Halfling	I	Whale (sperm)	V
Harpy	I	Whale (killer)	V
Hawk	I	Whale (dolphin)	II
Headhanger	IV	Wolf	I
Hellion	III	Wraith	III
Horse	II	Wyrm	IV
Human	II-IV	Wyvern	IV
		Zombie	II

## SIZ Equivalency Table

Use this table to equate an actual or estimated weight (in either kilograms or pounds) to its game SIZ. This can be used when superhuman feats are called for—lifting the leg of a dead giant to free a trapped friend, loading a Roc's egg into a wagon, or any other adventure event which calls for resistance rolls of STR against SIZ.

SIZ	kg	lbs	SIZ	kg	lbs
1	up to 5	up to 12	56	3200-3489	7040-7679
2	6-11	13-25	57	3490-3809	7680-8379
3	12-17	26-37	58	3810-4149	8380-9129
4	18-23	38-51	59	4150-4529	9130-9969
5	24-35	52-77	60	4530-4939	9970-10899
6	36-41	78-90	61	4940-5379	10900-11799
7	42-49	91-108	62	5380-5869	11800-12899
8	50-54	109-120	63	5870-6399	12900-13099
9	55-58	121-129	64	6400-6979	14100-15399
10	59-64	130-142	65	6980-7609	15400-16699
11	65-70	143-155	66	7610-8299	16700-18299
12	71-76	156-168	67	8300-9049	18300-19899
13	77-83	169-184	68	9050-9869	19900-21699
14	84-91	185-201	69	9870-10799	21700-23799
15	92-99	202-219	70	10800-11699	23800-25699
16	100-108	220-239	71	11700-12799	25700-28199
17	109-118	240-261	72	12800-13999	28200-30799
18	119-129	262-287	73	14000-15199	30800-33399
19	130-140	288-309	74	15200-16599	33400-36499
20	141-153	310-338	75	16600-18099	36500-39799
21	154-167	339-369	76	18100-19699	39800-43299
22	168-182	370-402	77	19700-21499	43300-47299
23	183-199	403-439	78	21500-23499	47300-51699
24	200-217	440-479	79	23500-25599	51700-56299
25	218-237	480-523	80	25600-27899	56300-61399
26	238-258	524-569	81	27900-30399	61400-66899
27	259-282	570-622	82	30400-33199	66900-72999
28	283-307	623-677	83	33200-36199	73000-79599
29	308-335	678-739	84	36200-39499	79600-86899
30	336-366	740-806	85	39500-43099	86900-94799
31	367-399	807-879	86	43100-46999	94800-102999
32	400-435	880-959	87	47000-51199	103000-112999
33	436-475	960-1049	88	51200-55799	113000-122999
34	476-518	1050-1139	89	55800-60899	123000-133999
35	519-565	1140-1249	90	60900-66399	67-72 tons
36	566-616	1250-1359	91	66400-72399	73-79 tons
37	617-672	1360-1479	92	72400-78999	80-86 tons
38	673-733	1480-1659	93	79000-86099	87-94 tons
39	734-799	1660-1759	94	86-93 tons	95-102 tons
40	800-871	1760-1919	95	94-95 tons	103-105 tons
41	872-950	1920-2089	96	96-97 tons	106-107 tons
42	951-1039	2090-2289	97	98-99 tons	108-109 tons
43	1040-1129	2290-2489	98	100-101 tons	110-111 tons
44	1130-1229	2490-2709	99	102-103 tons	112-113 tons
45	1230-1349	2710-2969	100	104-105 tons	114-115 tons
46	1350-1469	2970-3229			
47	1470-1599	3230-3519			
48	1600-1739	3520-3829			
49	1740-1899	3830-4179			
50	1900-2069	4180-4549			
51	2070-2259	4550-4969			
52	2260-2469	4970-5429			
53	2470-2689	5430-5919			
54	2690-2929	5920-6449			
55	2930-3199	6450-7039			

Etc.—increase size by 1 metric ton each SIZ point thereafter.

# Civilization

Certain patterns occur in the growth of human societies. This chapter explores these patterns. If applied during the construction of a roleplaying world they can give a feeling of reality to your adventures.

As social creatures, humans collect into groups which naturally tend to increase in size and complexity. If they can, groups increase toward the limits of their food supply; when food production improves, population increases. If food is imported, eventually additional hungry mouths will appear to consume any surplus.

Certain other patterns in human society, such as distribution and pricing, also occur. This chapter explores those patterns and their consequences for adventurers. Such idealized patterns have been included as elements to be used whenever the gamemaster needs something which feels right for his campaign, or whenever players need to learn the resources of a place. So far as the patterns actually occur in this world, they occur only where geography, soil, climate, plants, and population come together perfectly—rare places such as the Nile delta and the state of Iowa.

The distances between cities, towns, and villages given below are drawn from what is known as central place theory—a scheme presenting a hierarchy of settlement derived from a day's travel. A few general rules can be deduced.

First, most people live in the countryside: urban population makes up 5-10% of the total population of the land in pre-industrial times. A large city of 10,000 souls therefore must be supported by some 90,000 more, working the soil or sea all about. A city requires a lot of support.

Secondly, large cities are surrounded by smaller cities. Every large grouping has smaller settlements surrounding it. In an ideal urban central-place situation, a city is the center of a web of other, smaller cities, towns, and villages roughly equidistant from their neighboring peers.

Finally, growth occurs when five settlements of equal size generate enough surplus to increase the size of the central one, raising it to the next largest grouping. For instance, a region with seven small cities will probably have at least one medium city as well. If you map or plan using this scheme, compensate for fractions by making one or more cities slightly larger, or by ignoring the anomalous fractions altogether.

## Group Sizes

Whenever possible, humans enjoy gathering into semi-fixed camps or permanent settlements. Such groupings provide important benefits like food-sharing and mutual defense, and allow specialized occupations. Settlements in *Basic Roleplaying* are of several standard sizes, presented here in ascending order of population. Game functions are emphasized in the comments. The price lists referred to in the text



will be found later in this chapter. Usually stated population sizes overlap from one type of grouping to the next largest or to the next smallest.

Travel distances and times are always given in terms of land travel.

## The Hearth

The smallest organic social unit, a hearth is defined as a single (perhaps extended) family of some ten people including children. In a literal sense, a hearth can be a small cooking fire on bare ground; here it indicates an intimate, small-scale sharing of shelter and resources.

## The Village

Several hearths may neighbor. When they do, they form villages. Villages are the most common settlements in densely-populated agricultural lands, and may be the largest existing settlements in wilderness, lands. Villages usually have at least one shrine, a carpenter, a thatcher, and a simple tool smith. Peddlers visit once a week or so. Residents average 50-350 in number. When adventurers shop in a village, use the Wilderness or the Rural price list, at your discretion.

In agricultural lands, villages stand about 1.6km (1 mile) apart. Plowed land around a typical village extends out for about 0.4km, with an interval of pasturage, waste, and woodlots of another 0.8km before the next tilled ground is encountered. In the superb ricelands of Manchu/late China, there might be little but paddies and dwellings, with some villages at closer intervals.

Most villages include a resident priest, priestess, or shaman who looks after the shrine. The shrine usually is dedicated to the local agriculture deity, or perhaps to the state religion.

The village is the largest grouping normal to primitive peoples, and the largest one normally functional to nomads.

## The Town

A town is a substantial settlement, with a population of 300-1000 permanent residents. Each town has a smith, a priest or two, and a weekly market where the local peddlers get together to sell to customers and to buy from merchants from distant towns and cities. Town markets use the Rural price list. Towns are, on the average, about 8km (5 miles) apart and usually unwallled; if built of stone or other non-combustible material, the houses may be clumped wall-to-wall on a hill for defense, as in Asia Minor, Italy, etc.

Towns commonly cluster about the residence of the local landlord. In European terms he is a knight or a similar low noble. A town and the surrounding villages must produce enough extra food to support that noble's family and following.

A town includes several small shrines—one to the agriculture deity, one to the state religion, one to the lord's favorite god or goddess. Alternatively, a town may have a minor temple to one of those gods, or to a local godling. In barbarian lands there may be a resident shaman in addition to priests.

## The Small City

A small city contains 500-3000 residents. By definition, a city has a permanent marketplace where its wares can be purchased daily. Use the Small City price list.

Cities always have at least one armorer, several smiths, and many permanent retail shops which sell goods collected from surrounding districts and goods brought from the nearest large city. A small city typically manufactures most simple wares.

This is the largest size that an average city reaches before it must bring in food from beyond the immediate region. Small cities average 48km (30 miles) from the nearest grouping of equal or larger size.

Holy places in a small city usually include a small temple and several shrines to local spirits, etc. There may be a single medium temple instead.

A sorcerer likely will be here.

Each year nomad families, clans, and tribes may meet for a few weeks or a month in encampments which have the population of a small city, or perhaps even the population of a medium city. How long the encampment lasts depends on the ritual or social purpose, and the immediate food and fodder supplies.

## The Medium City

A medium city has 2000-8000 residents. This urban center has an excess population, requiring that food be imported from a distance. Its central market is always in business and includes permanent facilities for wholesaling, storage, and transshipment of goods. Weapons and armor, fine clothing, ships (if on a coast), etc., are manufactured here. Use the Large City price list.

Medium cities are usually about 80km (50 miles) apart, a very long day's march.

Most medium cities have at least one major temple (often two) and a number of shrines. Usually there will be no shamans, though they may reside in the nearby countryside. Almost certainly several adept sorcerers will be present.

## The Large City

A city of 6000-25,000 permanent residents is very large for pre-industrial times. The largest provincial capitals in the Roman Empire were this size, definitely larger than most cities of feudal Europe. A large city is typically the center of a small kingdom or the capital of an imperial province. A large city is the largest grouping that a barbarian culture can build.

A large city is a major importing center. It is also a major manufacturing center of luxuries such as good musical instruments, brocaded and lacy finery, and works of art. Use the Large City price list.

A large city averages a week's travel from the nearest neighboring city of comparable size, about 320km (200 miles).

Great temples are often found in large cities, usually to the major god of the region. There may be other great temples to other deities in the local pantheon. Minor temples to lesser deities of the pantheon are present, as are temples for foreign gods worshiped by immigrants or visitors, and as are many small shrines devoted to obscure spirits and godlets.

Large cities are the natural home of sorcerers, containing several or many adepts and perhaps a magus as well.

## The Metropolis

A metropolis is the largest city grouping in *Basic Roleplaying* numbering above 25,000 or so up perhaps to one million. A metropolis requires good transport (usually water) and a strong central administration to acquire and distribute food to the residents. Here importers sell their wares. Use the Large City price list for the several or many marketplaces.

A city with 50,000 residents is extraordinary, but history has recorded many which are larger, even in ancient times, including imperial Rome (possibly 1,000,000 at its height) and Byzantium.

A metropolis usually has a great temple dedicated to its state religion or deity and others of the same pantheon. Several other great temples to the same deities may be within its walls. It has the same mixture of other cults, religions, and approaches to magic as a large city.

Sorcerers always will be found in a metropolis, probably organized into one or more guilds or colleges.

## Standards of Living

### 360 Pennies Yearly

(1 per day, 7 per week, 30 per month)

**Status:** menials, prisoners, slaves, drafted common soldiers, beggars, recluses, etc., and their children.

**Food:** turnips & sauerkraut, or beet soup, or potatoes & onions, or carrots and acorns, or a cereal (choose one of the series). Little or no meat among unlanded peasants and day-laborers. Drink is buttermilk or water.

**Housing:** perhaps none; maybe a tiny room or hut for a family; no furniture.

**Clothing:** sackcloth, homespun, rude leathers, nudity. Primitives, nomads, and barbarians will have usable winter clothes if appropriate.

### 1440 Pennies Yearly

(4 per day, 28 per week, 120 per month)

**Status:** most landed peasants, minor crafter, civilized soldiers of rank corresponding to sergeant or lieutenant, servants to those of moderate wealth, peddlers, captains of large boats and small ships, minor priests, most shamans, assistant sorcerers, etc.

**Food:** as per previous income tier, plus gruel, barley bread, cheese, and eggs. Meat or fish at least 1-2 times weekly. Beer, ale, and porter available. Nomads may regularly eat meat; their drink may be koumiss.

**Housing:** single dwelling per hearth protects animals, too. Furniture includes a chest or two, bench and tables, lamps. Nomads may have a wagon, and up to 6 riding animals.

**Clothing:** shoes, 1 new suit of clothes a year; winter clothes will be warm and protective.

### 6000 Pennies Yearly

(16 per day, 112 per week, 480 per month)

**Status:** master crafters, servants who command other servants or who have other independent responsibilities, professionals, merchants, traders, knights, thanes, other minor nobility, outstanding warriors, well-to-do priests, powerful shamans, sorcerers, etc.

**Food:** as per previous income tier, plus meat or fish with most meals. Meat and table wines.

**Housing:** hall or greathouse. A good bed, several tables and benches, stools, possibly chairs, perhaps one or more decorated walls or a small fountain, or other display items. Nomads may have a large tent, good blankets, fine furs, metal goods.)

**Clothing:** high-quality linens and cottons, occasional luxury such as imported dyes, fur trim, or jewelry. Styles are important to such folk, the first tier for which this is true.

**Other:** status includes one servant and two mounts, or three servants.

### 24,000 Pennies Yearly

(64 per day, 688 per week, 2000 per month)

**Status:** counts, earls, ealdormen, sheikhs, secretaries and factotums to nobility, important priests, shamans with direct connections to rulers and other powerful personalities, locally-important sorcerers.

**Food:** as per previous income tier, plus plentiful beef or other herbivores, fowl, shellfish, etc. Homemade pastries and breads. Good wines. Occasionally imported fruits and fine wines.

**Housing:** multi-roomed dwellings housing the noble family and servants, guards, etc. Furnishings now include thrones, chairs, valuable artworks, tapestries, panelling, and fine rugs.

**Clothing:** imported silks and satins, and decorative trims including gold and silver threads. Such folk frequently set (or always quickly follow) the latest fashion. Gold jewelry with gemstones.

**Other:** Includes several to many servants and mounts, other staff, wagons, guards, etc.

### 90,000 Pennies Yearly

(250 per day, 1750 per week, 7500 per month)

**Status:** dukes, high priests, magi, great shamans (perhaps one or two of these last would exist during any one century).

**Food:** as per last income tier, plus luxury items such as birdnest soup, stuffed peacock, candied fruits, and rare beasts. Drinks include the finest wines. Large banquets and parties may be given.

**Housing:** several large dwellings including a country mansion or castle, a stronghold, and a townhouse or small palace.

**Clothing:** trend-setting, exquisitely-made garments of the rarest materials, fine jewelry and other accouterments.

**Other:** many servants, guards, secretaries, and mounts; much land.

### 365,000 Pennies Yearly

(1000 per day, 7000 per week, 30,000 per month)

**Status:** archdukes, princes, archpriests.

**Food:** as per previous income tier, plus rare or outre luxury items such as hummingbird tongues, enormous and complex meat pastries, elaborately-prepared platters, strange fruits, and rare beasts. Drinks include brandies and rare wines.

**Housing:** palaces.

**Clothing:** beyond style, one-of-a-kind items, accenting large and beautiful precious gems.

**Other:** many servants, mounts, concubines, staff-members, accountants, secretaries, etc. Many guards and personal soldiers.

### 1,440,000 Pennies Yearly

(4000 per day, 28,000 per week, 120,000 per month)

Status: king, queen, pontiff.

**Food:** as per previous income tier, only more elaborate, larger, and more bizarre presentations. Throws enormous parties, may invite the whole kingdom.

**Housing:** large palaces.

**Clothing:** as per previous income tier, but designs which accent the wearer's ritual or political functions. Likely has the largest diamond, ruby, amethyst, emerald, sapphire, pearl (choose one) known to exist. Several exquisite crowns, scepters, keys, etc.

**Other:** includes hundreds of servants, riding animals, mounts, estates, herds, castles, and trade/tariff monopolies, armies, navies, etc.

### 5,760,000 Pennies Yearly

(16,000 per day, 112,000 per week, 480,000 per month)

**Status:** emperor, empress, sovereign, king of kings.

**Food:** as per previous income tiers, only better. State dinners are events talked about for months and years.

**Housing:** palace complexes the size of medium cities.

**Clothing:** wearable works of art, so costly and so marvelous that even the sophisticated are blinded by wonder and astonishment. Certain styles or garments may be reserved solely for the emperor's use. He never wears anything twice, except his crowns.

**Other:** includes thousands of servants, mounts, guards, messengers, and so forth: in theory everyone and everything belongs to the emperor, etc.

## Economics

The idea of money is relatively new to human societies. Before money, barter was universal: goods for goods, goods for work, or work for work. Every people developed standards of barter. Historically, for instance, one pig could be traded for five bushels of barley, or for one set of clothing, or for five bars of salt—a set of relationships nominally true across the globe. When economies became more complex, traders naturally converted such organic standards into cash values. Thus that pig also became worth 50 pennies.

*Basic Roleplaying* uses the penny (p) as its universal standard of value. A penny is equivalent in value to one day's food for an ordinary human in a city, or for a family of two parents and two children in the country. For ease of transport and account, most societies invent a succession of high-value coins as well: pounds, or talents, or nobles, or bezants, or pieces of eight, etc., but *Basic Roleplaying* gives all costs in pennies. The purchasing power of one penny represents the minimum daily amount on which an adventurer can survive in society. He cannot get by on less: less food, shelter, and clothing results in exposure and malnutrition. One penny also represents the minimum daily wage paid to city laborers.

Workers rarely actually receive coins, though. They may get the equivalent in food and shelter from their bosses, for instance, or receive the use of a specific plot of land which normally yields an amount per year equivalent to one penny daily. Perhaps, if the land prospers and their lord is kindly, they will receive more. But most people in the ancient historical world or in any fantasy world never will have seen money.

### Standards of Living

The necessities, comforts, and luxuries enjoyed by or aspired to by a person represent his standard of living. In a narrower sense, standard of living can refer to what is available to maintain or to increase the social status of the individual or

family (actual cash or goods usable for any purpose is disposable income).

The figures on the preceding page will vary by at least half, depending on the individual—the variance marks the individual as being higher or lower in his class.

This description assumes that everyone spends everything they earn. Frugal folk will save, of course; they'll show a low standard of living for their class. Misers are beyond the scope of this summary.

Remember that standard of living does not represent coins per se, but an equivalent purchasing power. A barbarian farmer, for instance, exists on the equivalent of 1440 pennies per year, but he may never handle a penny, even when trading for metal goods.

Another way to view these summaries is to imagine coming into the city with a bag full of money and plunder. The stats tell you exactly what it costs to "live like a king" (it costs 4000p per day).

Remember that these are standards. There will always be exceptions. The range is offered as a guideline, and gamemasters are urged to tailor it to their needs.

When developing these standards, we assumed that seven days always equal a week; 30 days always equal a month; 360 days always equal a year.

The incomes in the Standards of Living table represent total income amounts roughly four times the amount of the previous income in the table.

Note that social status often does not hinge on comparatively equal incomes: a nomad ruler might be accorded even more deference and power than his civilized counterpart, yet have nowhere near the same income in cash and property.

## Life Price

Life price is the value of a person's life as measured in goods or money. It is used in primitive, nomadic, and barbarian lands as a part of the legal system.

Life price is used to determine ransom, the price paid to have a captive returned alive, and weregeld, the price paid by murderers to atone for their crime.

Ransoms and weregelds are traditional amounts, varying from place to place. In general, the life price of an individual equals his annual income X7.

Ransoms for kinsmen generally are assured by the family. Wandering adventurers should stash a hoard with some trustworthy friend instead.

Murderers can buy their way out of their punishment by paying weregeld. Those with close or important family ties can get the costs assumed by their many kinsmen. Payment of weregeld officially concludes a feud and any bad blood between the killers and the victim's relatives, though an aggrieved family may refuse weregeld, preferring vengeance instead.

Strangers may not be offered the privilege either of weregeld or of ransom.

## Standard Weregelds Table

<i>yearly income in pennies</i>	<i>weregeld in pennies</i>	<i>weregeld in cattle</i>
360	2,520	10
1440	10,000	40
6000	40,000	160
24,000	160,000	640
90,000	640,000	2,560
365,000	2,560,000	none
1,440,000	10,240,000	none

## Prices

This section contains prices for a variety of items in four different markets; they indicate the nominal cost of a new item if it is available. This amount is called the buying price.

When an adventurer sells an item in good condition, he gets approximately half the amount which he originally paid—or would have paid if he bought the item in the sort of market where he is selling it. This is called the selling price.

The lists include set buying prices for items which are always available.

If an item is not always available, a note accompanies the entry for that item, stating the percentage chance that the item is available in this size of market. The entered price is the normal price of the object, if it is available. Unavailable items generally are pieces of metal armor.

Items not listed for a market are unavailable from any trader in that market.

## Calculating the Cost of an Item

An item is least expensive at its place of manufacture. An item transported to another level of market for resale multiplies in value by a factor of 2.5 each time it is moved to a different level (i.e., rural, the wilds, etc. ) of market.

Thus, so far as pricing is concerned, levels or kinds of markets are considered to be arranged in a linear series: the wilds, rural, small city, large city. While it is possible for individuals to take an item directly from one end of the series to the other, it is the normal nature of trade to plod methodically through each of the intervening levels, spreading the profits as the handling multiplies, and vastly increasing the price. Obviously, canny traders may be willing to bypass markets (and accept the risks of travel) in order to concentrate more of the profits in their hands.

Suppose a small-city-made suit of medium ringmail armor costs 1100p. Transported to a rural market, the armor will cost 2750p; transported one step further to a wilds seller, it will cost 6875p (or 138 sheep, or almost three horses), if a buyer can be found with that much free cash or so many chattels. The armor will not much change in price if transported to another small-city market; there it will face direct competition which holds down the price. If taken to a large city, competition again will hold down the price.

The reverse occurs when large cities import food. There 1p will buy a meal for one person, while anyplace else it will feed a family for a day.

Oddities in this scheme will occur. A large town, near an iron source, might manufacture quantities of armor. The price of armor in any city within a week's walk all about would have the lower price.

For another example, in a broad land dotted by small city-states there likely will be available every item from the large city price list even though no large city exists in the region: one place will be famous for its lace, another for its armor, a third for marvelous goldwork, and so on.

Standard prices can be found in small cities. Almost everything there, save luxuries like armor and writing materials made in large cities, is close to market and has not been marked up for transportation costs.

The scheme becomes more inflated when exotic objects are moved over great distances, a problem best left to the gamemaster.

### Warning to Gamemasters

The gamemaster must maintain firm control of the players when adventurers buy and sell items. Some enterprising players will try to manipulate this system to their adventurer's advantage. These prices are based on the assumption that high-priced goods are fairly rare; that there are significant dangers in transporting goods to and from markets; and that there exists a suitable demand at a market to take advantage of the merchants services. Carrying a wagonload of medium plate armor from the large city (buying price of 6750p) to the small city (selling price of 8435p) does not assure quick sales. Few if any of the small city residents will even have 8000 spare pennies. With so much armor available, the market will be flooded and the selling price will probably drop or the merchant will move on to another market.

## The Markets

All prices are in pennies. (m) indicates metal item. \* indicates limited availability. na indicates not available.

### Tools for All Markets

<i>type</i>	<i>cost</i>	<i>type</i>	<i>cost</i>
awl	2	lantern*	35
axe, wood	35	lamp oil* (liter)	4
2-hour candle	1	scythe	10
hammer	5	sickle	15
hatchet	15	spade	20
hoe	5	1-hour torch	1
knife	5		

\*available only in towns and cities.

### Weapons

(m)-indicates metal weapon

<i>type</i>	<i>wilds</i>	<i>rural</i>	<i>small city</i>	<i>large city</i>
ball & chain (m)	1500*	600*	250	250
battleaxe (m)	600*	240*	100	100
bolas	50	50	50	50
boomerang, hunt	20	20	20	20
boomerang, war	30	30	30	30
bow, composite	250	250	250	350
bow, long	350	350	350	350
bow, self	150	150	150	150
broadsword (m)	900*	350*	150	150
club, wood	4	4	4	4
dagger (m)	200*	80	33	33
flail, mil. (m)	1440*	576*	240	240
flail, 3-chain (m)	1440*	576	240	240
gladius (m)	600*	240	100	100
great hammer (m)	3700*	1500*	600*	250
greatsword (m)	5000*	1920*	768*	320
halberd (m)	1500*	600*	250	250
hatchet, stone	25	25	na	na
hatchet (m)	150*	60	25	25
javelin	100	100	100	100
knife	10	10	10	10
lance (m)	900*	360	150	150
mace, heavy	220	220	220	220
mace, light	100	100	100	100
pike (m)	390*	156	65	65
pilum (m)	750*	300	125	125
poleaxe (m)	900*	360*	150	150
quarterstaff	1	1	2	5
sling	10	10	10	30
sling, staff	10	10	10	80
spear, 1H short	20	20	20	20
spear, 2H long	30	30	30	30
sword, bastard (m)	1380*	800*	230	230
warhammer (m)	900*	360	150	150
war maul (m)	900	360	150	150

\*25% availability in the wilds; 50% in rural.

### Shields

<i>type</i>	<i>the wilds</i>	<i>rural</i>	<i>small city</i>	<i>large city</i>
buckler (m)	na	288	120	120
heater (m)	360*	144	60	60
hoplite (m)	900*	360	150	150
kite (m)	720*	288	120	120
target	120	120	60	60
target (m)	na	375	150	150
viking round	720	288	120	120

\*50% chance of availability.

### Leather Armor in All Markets (complete suit)

<i>type</i>	<i>small</i>	<i>medium</i>	<i>large</i>	<i>X-large</i>
cuirbouilli	180	225	270	315
soft leather	60	70	80	100
stiff leather	80	100	120	140



### Saddles

<i>type</i>	<i>price</i>	<i>chance to find in market: the wilds/rural/S. city/L. city</i>
knight's saddle	2500	na/05%/50%/100%
light saddle	200	na/25%/100%/100%
nomad's saddle	1000	15%/15%/05%/na

### Metal Armor Costs (complete suit)

**The wilds:** metal armor unavailable.

**Rural:** metal armor unavailable.

#### Small City Armor Prices

<i>type</i>	<i>small</i>	<i>medium</i>	<i>large</i>	<i>X-large</i>
bezainted	420	525	630	735
brigandine*	8750	11,000	13,250	15,500
chainmail*	9600	12,000	14,400	16,800
lamellar	2900	3600	4300	5000
plate*	13,500	16,875	20,250	23,625
ringmail	880	1100	1320	1540
scale	1920	2400	2880	3360

#### Large City Armor Prices

<i>type</i>	<i>small</i>	<i>medium</i>	<i>large</i>	<i>X-large</i>
bezainted	420	525	630	735
brigandine*	3500	4400	5300	6200
chainmail*	3840	4800	5760	6720
lamellar	2900	3600	4300	5000
plate*	5400	6750	8100	9450
ringmail	880	1100	1320	1540
scale	1920	2400	2880	3360

### Armor Cost by Piece and Size

Adventurers commonly wish to armor themselves to personal taste. The following list allows mixing and matching. All of these costs are place-of-origin prices.

<b>Armor Type</b>	<b>Cost by Size</b>
<i>Material</i>	<i>Small/Medium/Large/X-Large</i>

#### Greaves (pair)

Leather	24/28/32/36
Hard Leather	32/40/48/56
Cuirboilli	72/90/108/126
Bezainted	168/210/252/294
Scale	768/960/1152/1344
Ringmail	352/440/528/612
Lamellar	1160/1440/1720/2000
Chainmail	1536/1920/2304/2688
Brigantine	1400/1760/2120/2480
Plate	2160/2700/3240/3780

#### Pants/Trews

Leather	30/35/40/45
Hard Leather	40/50/60/70
Bezainted	210/262/315/368
Ringmail	440/550/660/770
Scale	960/1200/1440/1680
Chainmail	1920/2400/2880/3360
Brigantine	1750/2200/2650/3100

### Armor Cost (cont...)

#### Skirt

Leather	6/7/8/9
Hard Leather	8/10/12/14
Cuirboilli	18/23/27/32
Bezainted	42/52/63/73
Ringmail	88/110/132/154
Scale	192/240/288/336
Lamellar	290/360/430/500
Chainmail	384/480/576/672
Brigantine	350/440/530/620
Plate	540/675/810/945

#### Hauberk

Leather	18/21/24/27
Hard Leather	24/27/31/34
Bezainted	126/157/189/220
Ringmail	264/330/396/462
Scale	576/720/864/1008
Lamellar	870/1080/1290/1500
Chainmail	1152/1440/1728/2016
Brigantine	1050/1320/1590/1860

#### Byrnie

Leather	12/14/16/18
Bezainted	84/105/126/147
Ringmail	176/220/264/308
Chainmail	768/960/1152/1344

#### Cuirass

Hard Leather	16/20/24/28
Cuirboilli	36/45/54/63
Scale	384/480/576/672
Lamellar	580/720/860/1000
Brigantine	700/880/1060/1240
Plate	1080/1350/1620/1890

#### Sleeves (pair)

Leather	12/14/16/18
Bezainted	84/105/126/147
Ringmail	176/220/264/308
Chainmail	768/960/1152/1344

#### Vambraces & Rerebraces (pair)

Hard Leather	16/20/24/28
Cuirboilli	36/45/54/63
Scale	384/480/576/672
Lamellar	580/720/860/1000
Brigantine	700/880/1060/1240
Plate	1080/1350/1620/1890

#### Coifs/Hoods

Leather	6/7/8/9
Bezainted	42/52/63/73
Ringmail	88/110/132/154
Chainmail	384/480/576/672

#### Helms

Hard Leather	8/10/12/14
Cuirboilli	18/22/27/31
Scale	192/240/288/336
Lamellar	290/360/430/500
Plate	540/675/810/945

### Food

<i>type</i>	<i>wilds</i>	<i>rural</i>	<i>small city</i>	<i>large city</i>
<b>human per day:</b>				
poor	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.6
common	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.25
superior	1	1	1	2.5
noble	na	na	2	5

**human preserved rations, per week:**

common	7	7	7	17.5
superior	na	na	15	37.5

**for horses:**

fodder, daily	0.75	0.75	0.75	2
fodder, weekly	5	5	5	13
grain, daily	1.5	1.5	1.5	3.75
grain, weekly	10	10	10	25

### Animals (wild, living)

<i>animal</i>	<i>the wilds</i>	<i>rural</i>	<i>small/large city</i>
small (rabbit, bird)	5	5	12
medium (dog, goat)	25	25	63
large (bear, lion)	100	250	625*
huge (elephant)	500	1500	3750*

\*25% chance of availability

### Vehicles

<i>type</i>	<i>the wilds</i>	<i>rural</i>	<i>small city</i>	<i>large city</i>
2-wheeled cart	na	45	45	45
2-wheeled wagon	na	175	175	175
freight wagon	na	na	500	500
war chariot (plain)	na	na	860	1200
sedan chair	na	na	na	200
palanquin	na	na	na	2000

### Clothing

**The wilds:** 10% chance to find pre-made cloth garments.  
**Rural:** 25% chance to find pre-made cloth garments.

<i>type</i>	<i>the wilds/rural/small city</i>	<i>large city</i>
cheap shirt or shifts	8	8
cheap outer wear	20	20
common shirt or shifts	10	10
common outer wear	45	45
common winter clothes	65	65
superior shirt or shifts	45	45
superior outer wear	100	100
superior winter clothes	175	175
noble shirt or shifts	na	150
noble outer wear	na	400

### Human Slaves (where legal and common)

<i>kind</i>	<i>the wilds/rural</i>	<i>small/large city</i>
human, male	2400	2400
human, female	1800	1800
human, child	800	800
skilled adult	na	3500
educated adult	na	5000

### Adventurer's Gear

**Standard Traveler's Pack: 50p**

Waterskin (4 liters), 30m weak rope, peasant clothes, hand axe, hammer, tarpaulin, fish hooks, fishing line, sack, cheap knife, bandages, cookware, blanket. The whole pack weight 14 ENC.

**Chain: 120p**

A standard 10m-long iron chain, which is capable of supporting a SIZ 60 weight. The chain weighs 14 ENC.

**Strong Rope: 45p**

A standard 30m fiber rope, which is capable of supporting a SIZ 30 weight. The rope weighs 6 ENC.

### Animals (domestic food/draft)

<i>animal</i>	<i>the wilds/rural/</i>	
	<i>small city</i>	<i>large city</i>
bull	1000	2500
calf	50	125
cow	200	500
fowl	1	3
goat	50	125
ox	300	700
pig	50	125
sheep	50	125

### Animals (other domestic)

<i>animal</i>	<i>the wilds/rural</i>	<i>small city</i>	<i>large city</i>
burro	500	500	1250
cat, common	5	0.5	free
dog, common	0.25	0.25	0.25
dog, hunting	5	20	20
dog, hunting breed	na	100	100
horse, average	2400	2400	6000
horse, racing	na	10,000+	15,000+
pony	750	750	1875

## Additional Prices of Goods and Services

The following miscellaneous sections will aid construction of background for *Basic Roleplaying* campaigns. The sections explain the costs for various goods (gems and jewelry, boats and ships, houses, castles, forts and bridges) and for a variety of services (hired soldiering, spell casting, major construction, ship repair). The prices are given to provide a foundation for your imagination. Please adjust them to the specifics of your world.

## Hiring Non-Player-Characters

Many times adventurers will desire to hire servants or aides. A healer non-player-character in the employ of the adventuring party is a major aid in battle.

### Spell Casters

Players will often have spells cast upon them by others. Standard costs for this are based on availability, the time required to do the spell, and the time required to replace the spell.

**Spirit Magic:** Shamans work spells for their followers at the following prices, and charge strangers that cost X10. In such cases the matter is not treated as a purchased service, but as a gift in return for a favor done. If the caster already has the spell in mind, the rate is 1p per point of spell. If the caster must Discorporate and search for the spell, the cost is 30p plus the following:

#### Shaman Per-Point-Of-Spell Charge (in pennies)

<i>magic point</i>	<i>cost*</i>	<i>magic point</i>	<i>cost*</i>
1	1	5	16
2	2	6	32
3	4	7	64
4	8	And so on.	

\*cost applies only to spells not in the caster's mind.

**Divine Magic:** Priests and priestesses will normally cast their spells on their initiates, and in return expect to receive a sacrifice equal to 30p per point of divine magic cast. A non-initiate may have a spell cast on him by a priest or priestess of a friendly cult. The cost is a gift to the temple equal to 100p per point of spell. Priests and priestesses do not cast spells for initiates of neutral or for enemy deities. Any one-use spells cast cost ten times the rates above.

**Sorcery:** The flexible spells of a sorcerer are the most likely to be bought without problem. They cost in pennies the points of magic squared, up to 18 points. Since few sorcerers have INT greater than 18, prices increase steeply thereafter and require the use of special enchanted items. Rare or exotic spells, perhaps known to one or only a few people in an area, cost their normal value X3. If extra duration is required, find the magic point cost in the sorcery Duration/Cost table and charge the equivalent amount from the table below.

**Enchantments:** When any caster enchants an item for someone else, the minimum cost is 1500p per point of POW expended.

**Summoning:** summoning costs are dual. There is a set cost, in pennies, of the square of the magic points expended. Secondly, the type of spirit determines an additional multiplier applied to the previous total. The multipliers are arranged by the dangerousness of the summoned entity.

#### Retail Sorcery Spells Cost Table

<i>magic points</i>	<i>cost in pennies</i>	<i>magic points</i>	<i>cost in pennies</i>
1	1	16	256
2	4	17	289
3	9	18	324
4	16	19	686
5	25	20	800
6	36	21	927
7	49	22	1065
8	64	23	1217
9	81	24	1383
10	100	25	1563
11	121	26	1758
12	144	27	1969
13	169	28	2196
14	196	29	2439
15	225	30	2700

#### Summoning Multipliers Table

<i>multiplier</i>	<i>summoned entity</i>
1	healing, spell, intellect
3	magic, passion, disease
10	ghost, wraith, elemental

### Couriers

Couriers are mounted messengers who carry small items, such as a letter or a verbal message, for 10p per day or portion thereof. A courier may carry more than one message, but the charge remains the same for each message.

### Mercenaries

Mercenaries may be hired individually for the day, week, or month.

They may also be hired by the squad, which consists of four men and a leader who makes double normal mercenary wages. A squad may be hired for the day, week, or month.

A mercenary company consists of 100 men in 19 squads, plus four leaders at double pay, and one commanding captain at quadruple pay. Companies are available only by the week or month. Discounts exist for greater lengths of time, but not for hiring larger groups. Mercenary foot soldiers work for common wages, doubled because of their irregular, mercenary status. Only the company captain rates as an excellent soldier, receiving commensurate pay.

#### Mercenary Rates for Foot Soldiers

<i>unit</i>	<i>daily</i>	<i>weekly</i>	<i>monthly</i>
soldier	8	55	220
squad	48	330	1320
company	1000	6900	27700

Cavalry receives four times the foot soldier rate.



## Builders

For convenience, standard work crews are assumed. All hiring is paid for in days of work, but may be commissioned by job. Hired individuals usually will be common workmen, or perhaps journeymen who make double common wages. A work crew consists of one journeyman and ten workers. Job foremen must oversee large tasks requiring more than one crew.

### Construction Wages Table

<i>builder</i>	<i>daily wage in pennies</i>
Worker	4
Journeyman	8
Crew	48
Foreman	16

**Sample Building Costs:** The following prices include labor and materials. These abstract reckonings are especially flexible, even among the speculations of this pricelist. Prices do not include furnishings.

### Construction Price Table

<i>construction</i>	<i>cost in pennies</i>
poor shack	400
commoner's house	1500
superior home	6000
noble manse	24,000
simple stone tower	10,000
small log fort	10,000
small stone castle	50,000
moderate castle	200,000
large castle	800,000
short wooden bridge	500
short stone bridge	2000
drydock	15,000
simple boatdock	100

**Boats and Ships:** Boats can be built anyplace that the materials are available and the workers know how. Costs assume

### New Boat/Ship Price Table

<i>type</i>	<i>cost</i>
rowboat	100
large rowboat	300
canoe	100
small raft	50
large barge	500
war galley	7,000
bireme	15,000
trireme	25,000
longship	3000
knorr	4000
large cog	10,000

### Comparative Freight Costs Table

<i>mode</i>	<i>standard cost/day</i>	<i>weight carried</i>
Man	6p	25kg
Horse	6p	75kg
Ship, Raft	6p	150kg

The nominal maximum load which a man can carry is 25 kilos. The nominal maximum load for a horse is 75 kilos. Ship maximums vary with rated capacity.

an existing ship of average value.

## Travel and Shipping

### Freight

The cost of transporting goods depends on load, distance, and mode of transport.

### Personal Travel

Travel costs mostly depend on the standard of living maintained. Land costs presume use of one or more pack or rid-

### Nominal Per-Diem Cost of Travel

<i>standard maintained</i>	<i>mode</i>	<i>day cost</i>	<i>room &amp; board</i>	<i>total</i>
poor	land	7	2	9
common	land	10	6	15
superior	land	22	20	42
noble	land	85	75	160
poor	boat	3	1	4
common	boat	6	4	10
superior	boat	17	16	33
noble	boat	70	60	130

Room or shelter is furnished aboard ship; food may not be furnished, and is subject to negotiation.

ing animals, and their feed costs and rental/amortization costs are built into the day cost of land travel.

## Ships & Sailing

Ship transport is an invaluable aid in the growth of civilization. Ships can cheaply haul large quantities of goods; and sailors and sea-merchants are an important source of news, gossip, new ideas, common and luxury goods, and more.

These ship rules are props and plot devices which can give *Basic Roleplaying* adventures some salty flavor. These

rules quantify almost a dozen types of craft selected from early human history. There was remarkably little major change in sailing technology or in shipbuilding technique for hundreds of years, though there were abundant local variants in rigging, hull design and proportion, sail shape and arrangement, etc.

Ships, sailing, and navigation are encyclopedia-length subjects. This rules sketch pretends no completeness about nautical matters; important aspects of ship-to-ship combat (boarding, ramming, shearing of oars, etc.) have not been covered, many other elements of ships and of sailing have been abstracted, and even ship hit locations are discussed only in passing.

Only the Shiphandling and Craft Wood skills are of importance to *Basic Roleplaying* adventurers. The gamemaster administers and roleplays battle, storm, and every other element of consequence in the ship rules.

## Ship Attributes

Organize information pertinent to ships on the ship sheet, the nautical equivalent of the adventurer sheet. A blank ship sheet is reproduced later in this book. We grant permission for you to photocopy it, but for personal use only.

**Length:** The distance from stem to stern.

**Beam:** The widest part of the ship. Don't forget that if a ship is rowed, the reach of the oars will further increase this distance. Trireme oars reach up to 4.5 meters in full length.

**Draft:** The depth of water needed by the ship to operate effectively and to avoid running aground. Measure this from the bottom of the ship's rudder or keel (whichever is deeper) to the waterline of the vessel. On some ships, portions of a deep keel or rudder can be retracted to reduce draft. Ship sheet draft always reflects the loaded state of the ship; it will be less if the ship's hold is empty.

**Freeboard:** The minimum height of the side of the ship above the waterline, as measured to the gunwhale. The lower the freeboard, the more easily water washes into the ship. Differences in freeboard heights reduce the jumping skills of adventurers jumping from the lower ship to the higher ship by 20 percentiles per meter of freeboard difference. For differences of more than three meters, two Climb rolls are needed instead.

**Capacity:** this number indicates the standard cargo capacity of the ship in metric tons. This number reflects excess ship capacity after accounting for the weight of ship's gear, ship's crew, and crew provisions and weapons.

**Ship Speeds:** the speeds at which a particular ship sails, as given below in the movement section.

**Seaworthiness:** A vessel must withstand the rigors of sailing and stay watertight. Even the best-made wooden hull shrinks, expands, and warps. Adventurers must persistently reapply

tar, wax, or other water-resistant or water-proof substances to the hull to maintain seaworthiness. Different hull types each have a maximum seaworthiness rating. All new ships begin at their maximum seaworthiness. A sailing craft gradually loses seaworthiness as it ages. Seaworthiness points can be lost quickly if a ship is in battle or storm.

At-sea repairs can raise Seaworthiness somewhat. A ship can be repaired fully, up to the maximum for its hull type, if it is beached and then repaired by the crew.

**Hull Quality:** Although there is some degree of standardization in ship design among shipbuilders, no two ships ever have the same overall hull integrity—even by the same shipbuilder.

Hull Quality is to a ship's structure points as armor is to a man's hit points—as long as hull quality is not exceeded by storm or melee damage, no ship structure points are lost.

**Structure Points:** This number measures the amount of damage that the ship can withstand before becoming useless. Damage to structure points represents the weakening of the main structural members of a ship; consequently a ship's structure points will be difficult and perhaps impossible to reasonably repair, for the damage is to the relation of a host of timbers and structural ties. A ship lacking structure points is useless by definition; it can not make way under sail or oar, nor can it carry cargo. It may still float in part or whole, but the cost of restoration will be greater than building a new comparable craft.

## Hull Construction

All ship hulls are built of wood—of pine for merchants and of fir for warships. Cyprus and cedar are also commonly used. Keels of merchantmen are generally of pine. If the ship is meant to be hauled ashore frequently (as are warships), then the keel is made of oak. Masts, oars, and yards are of fir or pine. Ships are usually sided with wood, though leather is used occasionally.

Wooden pegs and metal nails join the timbers of a ship. Bronze nails are favored over iron because they better resist salt-water corrosion.

Seams are caulked and fixed with wax and/or tar. Waterproofing, often mixed with paint, is melted and brushed onto the outer planking. The Greeks commonly used seven paint colors: purple, violet, blue, two shades of white, yellow, green, and later a color that matched the waves (for reconnoitering and piracy).

## Ship Types

Originally ships were not built for specific uses—a ship carried whatever was required (troops or cargo). Eventually the lords and nobles required specific duties of their sea vessels. Thus were born warship, merchantman, and barge.



**Barge:** A wide, flat-bottomed craft of very sturdy construction, a barge moves goods to and fro along rivers and across quiet waters. At best, a barge is slow and cumbersome to maneuver. At sea, even moderate waves or swells will swamp it. A barge can be built square, or to almost any ratio of length and width.

**Merchant:** The basic transport craft, emphasizing hold-capacity and seaworthiness, carried few crewmen. Merchant ships are generally too bulky to be efficiently moved by oar, but they carry them nonetheless for navigating in narrow harbors, for use when becalmed, or for fending-off. The largest merchantman of ancient times measured about 27 meters long.

**Warships:** A war craft is built sleekly (up to a 10:1 length-width ratio). It has speed with or without a favorable wind. Its cargo capacity is limited. Although equipped with a removable mast for long-distance travel, a warship is intended to be rowed. With a skilled crew, a warship may vary speed even on calm days. In comparison to barges and merchants, a warship is the last word in mobility, but in heavy seas it suffers from low freeboard and therefore is of limited Seaworthiness.

Sometimes a warship can be used as a transport at rather drastic cost (a 200-oar Athenian galley was reduced to 30 oars when used to transport 30 horses, for instance). A warship also can be built to be later disassembled into 30-40 sections and carried over land.

Head-sized oar-holes honeycomb the sides of warships. The holes for the lowest bank of oars sit only 15-30cm above the waterline. A leather gasket at each oar-hole keeps out the seawater and holds the oar in place.

## Crew

The crew numbers given in the ship description reflects the standard crew complement carried by that ship type. A minimum number of sailors or rowers is needed to operate the ship at all normally: one-third the normal complement of sailors or one-fifth that of rowers (of course to a minimum of one man). Under-crewed warships are limited to cruising speeds at triple the normal rowing fatigue cost to the rowers.

Each crewman fewer than the minimum number required reduces the captain's Shiphandling skill by 20 percentiles to a minimum of 1%. This can be deadly during storms.

## Sample Vessels

The following are typical vessels drawn from history. Gamemasters should feel free to devise more vessel types.

**Achaean War Galley:** one of the earliest rowed warships of the Mediterranean. Light and fast, one bank of 25 oars on a side propels it, Such galleys often carried warriors to land battle, or boarding onto merchant vessels and other warships. Later war galleys may have rams.

Hull Type: warship                      Hull Quality: 1D6+4  
Seaworthiness Max: 12                  Structure Points: 40

Length: 27m                      Beam: 6m                      Capacity: 2 tons  
Freeboard: 1m                      Draft: .5m  
Crew: 50 rowers; 10 officers and sailors

**Bireme:** Layering rowers in two banks per ship side, the bireme presents a shorter profile to would-be rammers and has greater maneuverability than the lengthy monoreme (single-bank). Biremes were used to transport troops to land battles, and to ram, shear, and board during naval engagements.

Hull Type: warship                      Hull Quality: 1D6+8  
Seaworthiness Max: 12                  Structure Points: 60  
Length: 20m                      Beam: 3m                      Capacity: 1 ton  
Freeboard: 1m                      Draft: 1m  
Crew: 60 rowers; 10 officers and sailors; 10 marines/archers

**Small Rowboat:** This craft is often carried as a utility vessel on a larger merchantman or warship; in that role, its tiny draft allows access to waters and shores impossible to the mother ship.

Hull Type: merchant                      Hull Quality: 1D3+3  
Seaworthiness Max: 15                  Structure Points: 15  
Length: 3m                      Beam: 1.5m                      Capacity: .5 ton  
Freeboard: .6m                      Draft: .3m  
Crew: 1 rower

**Large Raft:** This is a quickly-constructed craft made of logs bound by rope. It does not require great skill to build or to sail, but it is guaranteed to get the users' feet wet. Once a roped craft starts to break up, it may break up rather quickly.

Hull Type: barge                      Hull Quality: 1D3+12  
Seaworthiness Max: 10                  Structure Points: 50  
Length: 6m                      Beam: 2m                      Capacity: 4 tons  
Freeboard: .1m                      Draft: 3m  
Crew: 2 polemen

**Ptolemy IV Polyreme:** a tremendous warship with four rams that was used mainly for show. In fantasy battles, though, it may well be a workable and seaworthy craft. The hull is fashioned from two immense warships; each bears three banks of fifty oars.

Hull Type: warship                      Hull Q.: 2D6+8 (ea. hull)  
Seaworthiness Max: 12                  Structure Points: 140  
Length: 128m                      Beam: 44m                      Capacity: 50tons  
Freeboard: 7m                      Draft: 2m  
Crew: 4000 rowers; 3000 warriors and archers

**Trireme (Phoenician, Greek):** the largest warship of which many were produced. It carries three banks of oars and requires skilled rowers to operate at peak efficiency. With good crews, this is a swift and deadly vessel. Trireme tactics include ramming, shearing oars, and boarding. Later improvements in the trireme involved wider and longer designs which added more rowers per oar.

Hull Type: warship                      Hull Quality: 1D6+12  
Seaworthiness Max: 18                  Structure Points: 80

Length: 37m      Beam: 4m      Capacity: 1 ton  
Freeboard: 3m      Draft: 2.5m

Crew: 170 rowers; 30 officers and sailors; 14 spearmen and 4 archers

**Large Cog:** a steady, reliable ship capable of withstanding most of the rigors of the sea. A big enough ship to make the owner rich.

Hull Type: merchant      Hull Quality: 2D6+4  
Seaworthiness Max: 28      Structure Points: 80  
Length: 24m      Beam: 7m      Capacity: 75 tons  
Freeboard: 4m      Draft: 3.5m  
Crew: 25 officers and sailors

**Canoe:** the basic personal rivercraft: easily constructed cheaply-maintained. The canoe described in the statistics below is hide-covered. A dugout (formed by burning-out and then re-working the interior of a tree trunk) will have higher Hull Quality and more structure points.

Hull Type: warship      Hull Quality: 1D3+1  
Seaworthiness Max: 7      Structure Points: 5  
Length: 3m      Beam: .6m      Capacity: .25 ton  
Freeboard: .3m      Draft: .3m  
Crew: 1-2 rowers

**Large Viking Longship:** often used for expeditions and explorations; it transported both goods and warriors. Carried sixteen oars per side. Flexible and efficient design, but not for the faint-hearted or the luxury-loving.

Hull Type: warship      Hull Quality: 1D6+4  
Seaworthiness Max: 15      Structure points: 50  
Length: 28m      Beam: 6m      Capacity: up to  
Freeboard: 1m      Draft: 1m      20 tons  
Crew: 50 rowers; up to 200 warriors total.

**Greek Trading Vessel:** an excellent small merchant vessel—perfect for erstwhile adventurer-traders.

Hull Type: merchant      Hull Quality: 2D6  
Seaworthiness Max: 18      Structure Points: 30  
Length: 14m      Beam: 4m      Capacity: 7 tons  
Freeboard: .5m      Draft: 2.5m  
Crew: 2 sailors

**Knorr (Norse merchantman):** Clinker-built relative of the Viking longship, well-suited for large cargoes and deep water.

Hull Type: merchant      Hull Quality: 1D6+4  
Seaworthiness Max: 22      Structure Points: 40  
Length: 21m      Beam: 5m      Capacity: 15 tons  
Freeboard: 2m      Draft: 1m  
Crew: 15 officers and sailors

## Some Functions of Ship's Officers and Men

Because of their fragility and dependence upon maneuver, warships in particular require efficient discipline of effort.

That discipline depends on a hierarchy of authority and responsibility; similar (though more flexible) relationships might be true for larger merchantmen; some such arrangements will be true for any craft bigger than a canoe.

**Sponsor:** Essentially the owner of the vessel, or his representative. Usually the sponsor of a warship is a government or ruler. This financial guarantor usually does not sail on the craft; though he pays expenses for ship and crew, he might actually see the ship only a few times.

**Captain:** The officer who commands the vessel in the absence of the sponsor. He takes the tiller in emergencies. Though a salaried captain would not function so for a great house of commerce, an independent owner-captain may need to be a trader of some sagacity and wit.

**Executive:** responsible for training and morale, and the commander of any marines aboard the vessel. Smaller ships will have no such position; the largest vessels may have several.

**Oarsmaster:** in charge of the oar banks; and is also the paymaster, purchaser, and recruiter.

**Lookout:** he watches especially for shifts of wind that could easily swamp a warship.

**Rating:** the following positions held more esteem than being a common rower but less than an officer: carpenter, flutist or drummer, steersman, side-chiefs (rowers nearest the stern on each side).

**Rower:** the average oarsman; almost always a free man. Warships depend on disciplined rowers to perform their battle maneuvers. One imprecise rower can entangle a whole bank of oars, dooming the vessel. When moving from ship to ship, a rower always takes along his cushion.

## Movement Speeds

The speed of a ship is expressed in knots (nautical miles per hour). One nautical mile equals approximately 1.15 (8/7) statute miles or 1.85 kilometers.

## Sailing

Sailing vessels use sails—large areas of linen, skin, papyrus, or rushes—to catch the wind and thereby force it to propel the ship. The sails are strengthened with edges of hide. Some superstitious sailors believe that seal or hyena hides ward off lightning.

The speed of a sailing ship depends on the angle of the wind in relation to the sails of the ship. These rules acknowledge four such relationships: before the wind, quarter wind, half wind, and head wind.

**Before the Wind:** the wind blows directly from the stern of the craft to its bow, an attitude best for ships boasting only one sail.



**Quarter Wind:** the most efficient position if the ship uses multiple sails; the wind must come from one of the two rear quarters.

**Half Wind:** the wind blows broadside to the ship. A strong half wind may cause top-heavy ships to keel over.

	Before/		
	Quarter	Half	Head
Calm	1	0	0
Light Air	3	1	0
Moderate Wind	5	3	1
Strong Wind	7	5	2
Fresh Gale	x	x	x
Whole Gale	x	x	x
Hurricane	x	x	x

x--the speed depends on the strength of the storm and how well the crew handles the challenge. This should vary widely.

**Head Wind:** the wind blows from the front of the ship, from the bow sternward. To make headway in such wind, a ship must be able to tack or wear.

A ship certainly can change directions to take advantage of the wind, but it is hard to get further north by sailing further south.

Use the sailing speed table to calculate tactical speed for an adventurer ship during play. (The table supposes that the ship carries one sail.) If the adventure requires merely an innocuous journey along a coast, etc., then use the average speeds noted under that heading below.

### Average Sailing Distances

An average full-day's sailing is considered to be 10 hrs. A sailing ship that is coasting with a good wind can cover about 120 km (75 mi). A sailing ship in the open sea can average 240 km (150 mi) per full day (24 hrs). An exceptional day's sailing can cover 350 km (210 mi).

## Rowing

Rowing speeds are determined by the ratio of the number of oars per ton of ship's capacity. If crew has been lost, then the

	Warship	Merchant	Barge
Back Oars	3	1	1
Cruise	4	1	1
Race	7	2	--

speeds must be pro-rated downward (see the Crew section, above).

# Vessel Damage

A ship can be sunk by losing seaworthiness points and the concurrent taking on of water, or be destroyed through the loss of all structure or hull quality points.

## Loss of Seaworthiness

All ships in *Basic Roleplaying* continually take on water—bailing excess water from a ship is a normal crewman function. As long as the ship has a seaworthiness rating greater than zero then the amount of water taken on has not seriously affected the handling of the ship and can be counteracted by the ship's carpenter and bailers. Loss of all seaworthiness points means that the affected ship is taking on water at too great a rate to be counteracted by bailing or the efforts of the carpenter. The vessel is swamped (and will soon sink) either if it carries no cargo or if the majority of the cargo it carries will float. Otherwise the ship sinks immediately.

Each month that a merchant ship rests in or sails in water automatically reduces by one point its seaworthiness. Seaworthiness of properly maintained warships (those which are removed from the water each night) automatically lowers by one point per month; a warship anchoring or sailing full time in water loses one point of seaworthiness per week. Barges lose one point of seaworthiness per season that they rest in or sail in water.

## Loss of Structure Points

Extreme stresses, such as the pounding of the winds and the waves of a storm or the angry ram of a warship, can damage a ship. Hull quality can protect a vessel from this damage. The different ways that a ship can be damaged can be found below in the Menaces section.

Whenever a ship takes damage that may affect its structure points, that damage is first compared to the ship's current hull quality rating. If the damage is less than the hull quality then there is no effect on the ship. If the damage is greater than the ship's hull quality then the structure point total of the ship is reduced by the amount of damage in excess of hull quality.

A ship becomes useless if either its structure points or hull quality ever reaches zero. This means that while there may be sizable pieces of the vessel left, it cannot carry cargo or sail. Crewmembers may hang on to ship pieces to avoid drowning, and the portions of the ship hulk can be rowed at a speed of .5 knots.

## Loss of Hull Quality

The hull quality rating of a ship is reduced by one point every time that it is exceeded by damage. Hull quality points that are lost can never be replaced or regained.



## Normal Daily Sailing Procedure

Most craft never venture far from sight of land and plan on beaching every night. Deep-water travel prevents night-beaching and increases exposure to storms.

Each day of sailing the gamemaster must determine the day's average wind strength. The player of the ship captain or the sailing master (whomever issues the commands to the sailors) must attempt a Shiphandling skill roll for that day's sailing.

If the Shiphandling roll is successful then the captain's skill brought the ship through the day without mishap, and the ship covered the average distance given in the Sailing Speed Table for the day's wind condition and attitude to the ship. A critical Shiphandling roll results in 20% more distance gained that day of sailing.

If the captain's player fails the Shiphandling roll the ship made poor progress that particular day and the seaworthiness of the ship must resist the wind strength using the resistance table. If the ship's seaworthiness does successfully resist the wind's strength then the integrity of the ship protected the cargo and crew despite the captain's incompetence and the ship suffers a loss of only one point of seaworthiness. If the seaworthiness resistance roll fails reduce seaworthiness a number of points equal to the wind strength.

If the captain's player fumbles the Shiphandling roll he ran the ship aground, capsized it, or some other horrible mishap occurred. The ship made little or no progress that day. Automatically reduce seaworthiness by the wind strength and total a roll of 1D10 six-sided dice to determine the structural damage inflicted to the ship. The structure point total is reduced by the amount of damage in excess of the ship's hull quality, and hull quality is reduced one point for each die rolled.

## Special Menaces

A number of unique terrors can menace the safety of a ship and its passengers.

### Storms

Storms are the greatest single menace to ships and boats. Ships encounter storms as part of the gamemaster's plot for the evening's *Basic Roleplaying* game. In a storm the action of the wind and sea combine to threaten a ship. The captain and crew must continually position the ship to keep the proper attitude toward heavy waves or the tremendous force of water breaking upon the ship can crush her. Capricious shifts of wind direction must be watched for, lest they cause the ship to roll dangerously or place excessive strain upon the sails and mast or drive the ship upon hidden shoals. Cargo can shake loose in the hold to smash into the ship side and cause water to pour aboard.

If the captain's player succeeds in a Shiphandling roll then the ship weathered two hours of the storm, taking one point of seaworthiness damage.

If the Shiphandling roll is failed the ship's seaworthiness must resist the wind strength using the resistance table; taking 1D6 points of damage if successful. Also, consult the Wind/Sea Damage Table. Roll the damage dice indicated for the wind strength and compare the result to the hull quality of the ship. If the damage total exceeds hull quality deduct the excess damage from the ship's structure points and reduce hull quality by one.

If the captain's player fumbles the Shiphandling roll the ship was driven aground on rocks, took a tremendous wave across the bow at the worst possible angle, or some other disaster. Automatically reduce seaworthiness by the wind strength and roll the damage dice indicated on the Wind/Sea Damage Table. The total damage inflicted reduces structure points regardless of hull quality. Reduce hull quality by one point for each die of damage rolled.

### Wind/Sea Damage Table

Wind Strength	Wind Description	Damage to Craft	Average Damage
0-2	Calm	--	--
3-6	Light Air	1	1
7-12	Breeze	1D3	2
13-18	Light Wind	1D6	3.5
19-24	Moderate Wind	2D6+3	10
25-30	Strong Wind	4D6+6	20
31-36	Fresh Gale	6D6+12	32
37-45	Whole Gale	8D6+24	66
46-50+	Hurricane	10D6+48	87

### Monsters

Exceptionally large creatures may also threaten a ship, though not by offhandedly crashing into it. For sea creatures to willingly attack a ship they must be sick, provoked, or magically controlled. Only creatures which possess damage modifiers greater than 1D6 can do serious damage to a ship and impair its seaworthiness or lessen its structure points.

The captain's player must successfully make a resistance roll of his ship's seaworthiness vs. the creatures damage. If successful only damage in excess of seaworthiness will reduce the ship's seaworthiness rating. If unsuccessful then seaworthiness is reduced by the total damage done.

Then compare the damage to the ship's hull quality. If the damage is greater than the current hull quality value, deduct that amount of damage in excess of hull quality from the ship's structure points. Reduce hull quality by one. If the damage done is not greater than the ship's hull quality then the ship suffers no structural damage.

### Fire

Fire threatens a ship only if it grows to be of some size—the equivalent of the large (2D6) fire described in the World chapter of the *Players Book*. Generally, the wood and canvas of the ship is too damp to catch fire easily. Tar and wax will burn hotly if raised to sufficient temperature. Carrying pots of

oil aboard ship may enhance the spread of flame if set afire or overturned into an existing fire. In these rules, Greek Fire has yet to be developed.

Hull quality will not protect the ship's structure point total against fire damage. Seaworthiness will not be affected by fire. When gauging fire damage, roll the damage dice normally and subtract the result directly from the ship's structure point total. Roll this damage once per full turn (25 melee rounds) or portion thereof. Unless extinguished, a fire will grow in size and will accumulate one additional die to the standard damage inflicted every full turn. Each time the damage dice are rolled reduce hull quality by one point as well.

## Naval Combat

Detailed ship-to-ship combat is beyond the scope of these rules. For action of such scale, have the players of opposed captains attempt Shiphandling rolls. If both the attacker and the defender are successful then neither gained an advantage. A successful pursuer vs. an unsuccessful victim will first close to long bow ranges; then to short bow ranges; then to ramming, shearing, or grappling range. Thus four successes vs. four failures indicates grappled ships and land-style combat between opposed sailors and marines.

Missiles fired from one ship to another, particularly by shipboard engines, should have an extremely small chance of hitting (up to a penalty of 100 percentiles).

## Engines

Engines are missile-firing machines defined and quantified in the combat chapter of the Players book. Large stones can damage ships if they hit; arrows will have no significant effect on ships. Impose many penalties on any adventurer using an engine to fire upon a distant ship—a minimum of at least 25 percentiles reduction under perfect conditions. If the missile does hit, the target's seaworthiness must resist the damage normally and structure points will be affected if the missile's damage is greater than the ship's Hull Quality.

# Ship Repairs

Repairs may be effected through physical reconstruction or by magical means.

## Cost of Repair

All repairs require repair materials: tar, wax, pitch, cured lumber, saws, planes, nails or other securing materials, etc. The materials to repair each point of seaworthiness costs 10 pennies. The materials to repair each structure point costs 50 pennies.

## Repair Crews

A standard repair crew consists of a journeyman shipwright and ten workers. Ship repair crew cost is 50p per day. Several

crews may work on a vessel, speeding repairs, but no more than three crews per 10 tons of ship capacity.

## Physical Repairs While At Sea

One-half of the total damage done to seaworthiness can be physically repaired at sea (but see the Magical Repairs section below). Physical repair of seaworthiness while a ship is at sea is possible only if a ship's carpenter and sufficient repair supplies are aboard. Every four hours (once for every two Shiphandling rolls made by the captain during a storm) the carpenter's player attempts a simple success roll for his adventurer's Craft Wood skill. Success means that the carpenter repaired 1D3 points of seaworthiness. An additional 1D3 points will be repaired if there are sufficient other hands available on-board to form a crew. Available hands cannot be engaged in other duties. If the Craft Wood roll is failed, the supplies are still consumed but no substantial repairs were made.

## Physical Repairs While Beached

Beaching a ship speeds seaworthiness repairs and allows structure points to be repaired. Hull quality damage can never be repaired.

**Seaworthiness:** The ship's carpenter will be able to repair 3 points of seaworthiness on a beached ship per four hours, provided that his player succeeded in a simple Craft Wood skill roll, plus 1D6 points per crew (10 workers) aiding him. Seaworthiness can be repaired up to the ship-type maximum.

**Structure Points:** The player of the ship's carpenter attempts his Craft Wood roll once per day (approximately 12 hours). If successful 1 structure point will be repaired that day plus 1D3 per crew.

**Hull Quality:** Hull quality can never be repaired. A ship becomes useless when its hull quality falls to zero.

## Magical Repairs

To magically repair a ship, the magician must either know Craft Wood to 50% himself or he must work in close consultation with a ship's carpenter who knows Craft Wood to 50%. Seaworthiness can be magically repaired up to the maximum for the ship-type while at sea.

**Seaworthiness Repair:** Each 10 meters of ship length or portion thereof requires a 1 intensity Form Wood, Form Tar, or Form Wax spell (sorcery), or 1 point of the spirit spell Repair to restore one point of seaworthiness.

**Structure Point Repair:** Each 5 meters of ship length requires a 1 intensity Form Wood spell (sorcery) or 1 point of the Repair spell (spirit) to restore 1 structure point.

## Dry Docks

Use of a dry dock costs 50p per day. It will reduce by 1 hour the time required for each seaworthiness repair roll, and reduce by three hours the time needed for each structure point repair roll. The effects of magical repairs are not affected by dry dock use.

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# The Money Tree

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This is a ready-to-play scenario for both beginning gamemasters and beginning players. The gamemaster should read the entire scenario through at least once, so that you know what will happen ahead of time.

This scenario is intended for beginning players who control a total of 4-6 adventurers of moderate ability.

The story begins in the village of Greenbrass. You are introduced to and given statistics for some of the residents which the adventurers are likely to meet, including an average militiaman intended to be reproduced a dozen or so times if needed.

Then the mission is outlined. The headman of Greenbrass asks the adventurers to go on a short quest to bring back a holy object. If agreeable, they will travel across-country, meet and (with luck) overcome several threats, and finally enter the cave where grows the fabled money tree. They may return the tree's fruit to the village headman and receive the promised reward.

## The Village of Greenbrass

Greenbrass is a hamlet somewhere in your campaign; it is so small you've never bothered to put it on any map. It is located on a frontier between a civilized region and barbarian lands beyond. Both civilized and barbarian folk are welcomed here, as are the occasionally-seen nomad horsemen and stone-age primitives from afar. A peaceful place, Greenbrass tolerates every being who behaves decently.

There are about a hundred residents, of whom 30 are adults. Once each season everyone (except for the headman) pilgrimages 18 kilometers west to spend the day worshipping at Munn, a larger village boasting a small temple to the Corn Mother, Esrola, the agricultural goddess for and patron deity of the region.

This scenario occurs in late fall, three days before the seasonal celebration of Esrola.

## The Bouncing Buffalo

The only inn in town, it serves ale, mead, wine, beef, bread, borscht, and lots of dairy products. In it are four or five tables and benches for perhaps 20 guests. The interior is dark, smoky, and of plain wood. Several fanciful buffalo are carved into the walls. (If asked, the proprietor says that long ago,

when he came to Greenbrass, he saw several cavorting buffalo calves, a vision he took as a prophesy of prosperity, since his former clan held buffalo sacred, and so he opened trade here.)

Three rooms are available upstairs. Two are of moderate size, each renting for 2 pennies a night. The other is large and roomy, with its own fireplace, and rents for 3 pennies a night.

Breakfast is included in the price of the room. A bountiful dinner costs a penny, unless the customer is a troll or other notoriously ravenous being, in which case the cost is 3 pennies. A drink costs 1/4 penny, yielding a gigantic brass mug overflowing with the chosen brew. If wine is ordered, the price is the same, but the mug is 1/3 the size.

The proprietor is Oxar Shatterson, a former barbarian tribesman. He long ago left his tribal prejudices behind, and became thoroughly civilized. Like a buffalo, he is calm and unruffled, massively built, and has small, dull eyes. Oxar keeps order and does some of the cooking. He is in his early forties. He has never killed a patron, despite severe provocation.

Oxar's wife, Sheree Fishwife, has the most piercing voice in town. Anyone but Oxar would have long ago murdered her or fled his lot. She cleans upstairs, handles the finances, and nags messy patrons. Notoriously, she insists on payment for an extra day if departing guests are not gone promptly after breakfast.

Sheree constantly wanders about the inn scrubbing up and sweeping down. She is a hard worker and a native of Greenbrass. She is nearly ten years younger than Oxar. Their marriage has been childless.

The inn's profits are kept in a locked box under Oxar's bed. Only Oxar and Sheree know about it.

Bathsheba Fullbubs is the inn's barmaid and waitress. She is in her late teens, buxom, and has a winning smile. She has-

**Oxar Shatterson:** proprietor of the Bouncing Buffalo inn and tavern; initiate of Esrola.

STR	16	__	Move	3	R Leg	1/6	__
CON	16	__	Hit points	16	L Leg	1/6	__
SIZ	16	__	Fatigue	32-3=29	Abdomen	1/6	__
INT	11	__	Magic points	12	Chest	1/8	__
POW	12	__	DEX SR	4	R Arm	0/5	__
DEX	8	__			L Arm	0/5	__
APP	10	__			Head	0/6	__

Weapon	SR	Att%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Cleaver	8	48%	1D4+4+1D4	29%	8
1H Spear	7	76%	1D8+1+1D4	49%	10
Target	8	10%	1D6+1D4	60%	12
Thrown Cleaver	4	52%	1D6+1D2	--	--

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 57%) Bladesharp 2, Detect Silver, Disrupt, Healing 2, Protection 5.

**Skills:** Craft/cooking 130%, Evaluate 87%, First Aid 50%, Listen 86%, Scan 90%.

**Notes:** Oxar normally carries his cleaver in a pocket of his apron when moving about in his inn. That heavy leather apron is the source of his armor.

**Sheree Fishwife:** co-proprietor of Bouncing Buffalo inn and tavern; initiate of Esrola.

STR	11	Move 3	R Leg	0/4	
CON	11	Hit points 11	L Leg	0/4	
SIZ	10	Fatigue 22	Abdomen	0/4	
INT	14	Magic points 12	Chest	0/5	
POW	12	DEX SR 3	R Arm	0/3	
DEX	12		L Arm	0/3	
APP	12		Head	0/4	

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Broom handle	6	82%	1D6	23%	8
Knife	8	41%	1D4+2	18%	6

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 60%), Detect Life, Detect Silver, Disrupt, Healing 1, Repair 2 (Divine Magic 100%; all one-use), Heal Wound.

**Skills:** Craft/housekeeping 89%, Evaluate 67%, Listen 82%, Orate 87%, Scan 47%, Search 99%.

**Bathsheba Fullbubs:** barmaid and waitress at Bouncing Buffalo inn and tavern; initiate of Esrola.

STR	9	Move 3	R Leg	0/4	
CON	14	Hit points 11	L Leg	0/4	
SIZ	8	Fatigue 23	Abdomen	0/4	
INT	13	Magic points 11	Chest	0/5	
POW	11	DEX SR 3	R Arm	0/3	
DEX	14		L Arm	0/3	
APP	15		Head	0/4	

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Fist	9	42%	1D3	31%	--
Kick	9	27%	1D6	--	--

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 55%) Befuddle, Healing 1.

**Skills:** Dodge 33%, Evaluate 35%, Listen 46%, Search 37%.

n't yet found the man she wants to marry, but is saving herself for him. (She thinks the village boys are hicks.) Bathsheba does most of the downstairs cleaning and serving.

**Note:** *The Fatigue statistics in this scenario include subtractions due to worn armor and carried weapons.*

## Henere Hannibal's House

This is the village headman's home. Henere is a farmer who also has the responsibility of notifying the village about problems facing it and for speaking for it. He resolves minor disputes and may punish rowdy youths, or see that their fathers do. If outsiders get rambunctious, he always asks for help from the other men of the village (the militia). If serious trouble brews, he may even send to Munn for aid. He takes his position seriously, and has served Greenbrass well for a dozen years.

Greenbrass has no jail, nor any concept of character reform. Custom-breakers are punished by public beating (or exile for serious matters). If a criminal or rowdy must be held for judgment, he is shackled to the beating-pole near the Bouncing Buffalo. After a cold, uncomfortable night chained

**Henere Hannibal:** Greenbrass town constable.

STR	12	Move 3	R Leg	7/5	
CON	15	Hit points 11	L Leg	7/5	
SIZ	14	Fatigue 27-16=11	Abdomen	6/5	
INT	16	Magic points 17	Chest	6/6	
POW	17	DEX SR 2	R Arm	6/4	
DEX	16		L Arm	6/4	
APP	12		Head	6/5	

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Shortsword	6	80%	1D6+1+1D4	38%	10
Buckler	7	41%	1D4+1D4	94%	8
Long Bow	2/7	63%	1D8+1	23%	6

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 69%) Binding 2, Bladesharp 1, Countermagic 3, Detect Life, Farsee, Healing 2, Protection 5, Speedart.

**Skills:** Fast Talk 102%, Listen 66%, Scan 81%, Search 42%.

**Notes:** Henere officially has armor, but normally only carries a bow and buckler and wears soft leather even when he expects trouble. His listed fatigue points include the bow and buckler.

His armor is ringmail everywhere except his legs, which are guarded by lamellar splints. He wears soft leather beneath.

to a hard post, most youngsters see the light. The post even mildly deters hardened ruffians and adventurers.

## Esrola Shrine

This small open booth always has a basket of fruits, vegetables, cereals, or herbs within it for the use of the poor or hungry. In practice, nobody eats from it except for occasional wandering beggars and mischievous children.

Usually the food sits in the shrine until it rots and is replaced. The Wise Woman of Munn sends an acolyte here to hold services on the weekly holy days of Esrola. On the seasonal holy day, this shrine is abandoned as the entire population of Greenbrass goes to Munn for a grand celebration, together with most of the folk of neighboring towns and farms.

This shrine is insufficient to restore or permit a sacrifice for any divine magic, even on those holy days when the acolyte is present.

## The Mill

Gregor Gougepoor owns the water-powered mill which grinds the district's grain. It is the reason that Greenbrass is as large as it is, and the oxidized brass fittings of the mill long ago gave the hamlet its name. Gregor's greed is notorious, but his mill is the only one within a reasonable distance. In this region, flour begins to mold after only a few days; it is of great convenience to keep cereal in grain form until actually needed for cooking. Gregor charges a percentage of the grain to be ground as his fee.

Several times a year, Gougepoor sells the hoarded grain to the traveling jobbers who control nominal cereal prices in the region. In return, they give him coins and gold which he buries a meter beneath the surface of the earth, in a secret

**Gregor Gougepoor:** town miller; initiate of Esrola.

STR	9	Move 3	R Leg	0/5
CON	16	Hit points 15	L Leg	0/5
SIZ	13	Fatigue 25	Abdomen	0/5
INT	15	Magic points 10	Chest	0/6
POW	10	DEX SR 3	R Arm	0/4
DEX	12		L Arm	0/4
APP	11		Head	0/5

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Grain Flail	7	80%	1D6	50%	6
1H Spear	7	43%	1D8+1	34%	10
Buckler	8	16%	1D4	36%	8

**Spells:** (Spirit Magic 50%) Binding 1, Detect Silver, Healing 1, Repair 4, Strength 3 (adds +4 percentiles to STR-affected skills and yields a damage modifier of +1D4).

**Skills:** Craft/miller 112%, Devise 82%, Evaluate 40%, Fast Talk 62%, Plant Lore 78%, Scan 45%, Search 82%, Sleight 68%, World Lore 56%.

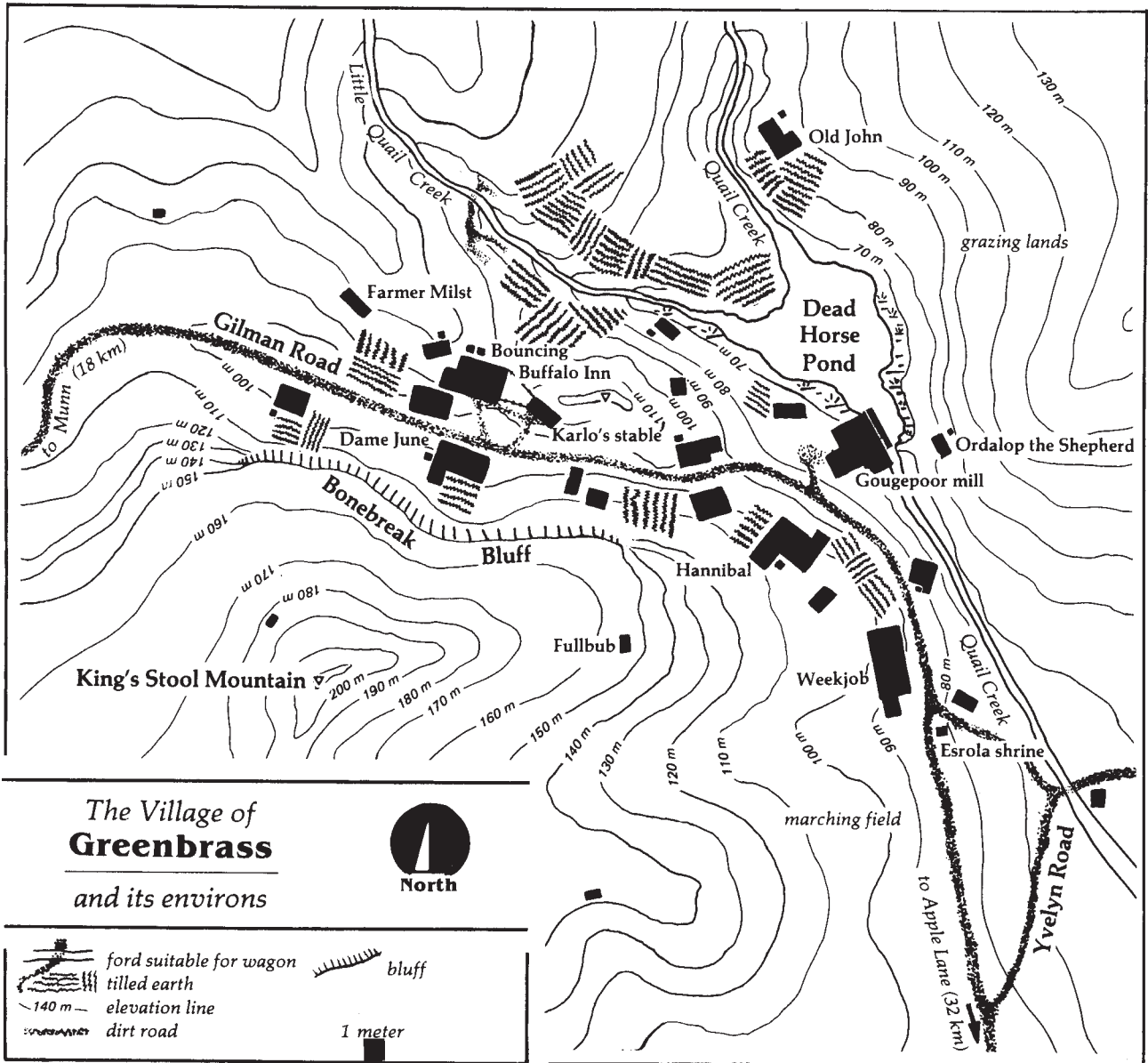
place. Gregor would rather die than to reveal its location. Everyone in Greenbrass knows where the loot is (they are all wrong). It is a summer pastime for youths to dig up plots around the mill, searching for the treasure.

### The District Militia

Twice a year, once after spring sowing and once after fall harvesting, most able fighting men assemble to drill with spear and shield. They look forward to these days as a glorious vacation from humdrum farming.

The level of training in the local militia is significantly better than that boasted by most other hamlets in the region—a condition due entirely to the efforts of Wort Weekjob, an ex-sergeant from the regional regulars. He has retired in Greenbrass to live the life of a minor country squire.

For 20 years, Weekjob served in the army. Wort is a bad farmer, but loot hoarded from his combat days and his mustering-out pay gave him enough to buy some excellent land.



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Renters do the work and pay him a modest yearly amount. He fills his days by studying the military approaches to Greenbrass and mentally defending Greenbrass from innu-

**Wort Weekjob:** elderly retired soldier, current landowner; initiate of War God.

STR	12	__	Move 3	R Leg	9/5	__
CON	15	__	Hit points 15	L Leg	9/5	__
SIZ	14	__	Fatigue 27-29=- (2)	Abdomen	7/5	__
INT	17	__	Magic points 19	Chest	7/6	__
POW	19	__	DEX SR 2	R Arm	9/4	__
DEX	17	__		L Arm	9/4	__
APP	9	__		Head	5/5	__

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
2H Spear	5	99%	1D10+1+1D4	94%	10
Scimitar	6	80%	1D6+2+1D4	60%	10
Heater	7	25%	1D6+1D4	48%	12

**Spells:** (spirit magic 66%) Bladesharp 3, Control Intellect Spirit, Countermagic 3, Demoralize, Healing 2, Protection 6; (in mind of bound intellect spirit) Detect Life, Mobility 3. (divine magic 71%, all one-use) Berserker 3, Heal Area 2, Shield 3, Truesword 2.

**Skills:** Conceal 52%, First Aid 80%, Listen 91%, Ride 45%, Scan 97%, Hide 55%.

**Magic Item:** Binding enchantment in scimitar hilt, which contains an intellect spirit with an INT of 4 and a POW of 8.

**Notes:** Weekjob normally wears no armor. When drilling the militia or when battle or scuffle seems imminent, he always carefully dons all of his armor. His skills have been adjusted to take his normal ENC into account: if he is not wearing his armor, add 2% to most skills, and 26% to his chances for success with magic.

His armor consists of a lamellar cuirass protecting his torso, of plate greaves and vambraces, and of a heavily-padded chainmail coif. He wears soft leather beneath his cuirass and limb armor.

merable invasions, by gossiping, by hunting, and by teaching individual weapons skills, at the rate of a penny an hour for any weapon he knows. He is a likable and respected member of the community, and is an excellent friend to Henere Hannibal.

**Typical Member of the Greenbrass Militia:** initiate of Esrola.

STR	12	__	Move 3	R Leg	3/5	__
CON	12	__	Hit points 13	L Leg	3/5	__
SIZ	13	__	Fatigue 24-15=9	Abdomen	3/5	__
INT	13	__	Magic points 10	Chest	3/6	__
POW	10	__	DEX SR 3	R Arm	3/4	__
DEX	10	__		L Arm	3/4	__
APP	10	__		Head	4/5	__

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
1H Spear	7	50%	1D8+1	35%	10
Target	8	15%	1D6	40%	12
Knife	8	35%	1D4+2	25%	6

**Spells:** (spirit magic 35%) Bladesharp 2, Detect Life, Healing 2.

**Skills:** First Aid 30%, Listen 40%, Scan 40%.

**Notes:** If not wearing armor, add 8 percentiles to chances for success with magic. If wearing armor, it consists of a thick leather jerkin, arm braces, and leggings, all laced on. Militia members wear a distinctive cuirbouilli helmet with a crest. All the armor is stuffed with wool padding for comfort and extra protection.

## The Greenbrass Militia

Twelve men officially make up the Greenbrass militia. In case of emergency, around 300 local and mostly untrained farmers could show up to fight, taking about a day to assemble. Of the

**Typical Local Militia Auxiliary:** farmer; initiate of Esrola.

STR	11	__	Move 3	R Leg	0/4	__
CON	12	__	Hit points 12	L Leg	0/4	__
SIZ	12	__	Fatigue 23-3=20	Abdomen	1/4	__
INT	12	__	Magic points 10	Chest	1/5	__
POW	10	__	DEX SR 3	R Arm	0/3	__
DEX	10	__		L Arm	0/3	__
APP	10	__		Head	0/4	__

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Scythe	6	20%	2D6	20%	8

**Spells:** (spirit magic 47%) Healing 1.

**Notes:** wears thick woolen jerkin.

official militia members, each has a spear, a light shield, hard leather armor, and a long knife. The local farmers have only scythes and sickles.

The dozen fighting-age men in Greenbrass are a fairly well-trained cadre. Given another week and the equipment, these men could teach the rest of the district enough defensive spearwork to put up stout opposition to any but regular soldiers.

## Other Buildings in Greenbrass

There are no other buildings of note. Other buildings shown on the map are the homes, barns, and outbuildings of farmers whose fields are adjacent to the village.

## Starting the Scenario

One evening a small band of travelers gathers in the Bounding Buffalo. Have the adventurers explain to each other how they came to be in Greenbrass. Let the players make up whatever reasons seem appropriate: the point is to introduce, describe, boast about, and otherwise make known the adventurers.

Once the adventurers have settled down to a hot meal and possibly a tankard of the inn's finest, the front door swings wide and the headman, Henere Hannibal, steps through. He is a plump, cheerful man, perhaps 45-50 years, with a fringe of blond whiskers and a red, round face. His manner is direct and honest. He glances about the room, sights the adventurers, and strides over, nodding and smiling to boisterous farmers in for their regular nightcap.

Reaching the adventurers' table, Henere asks, "Ah, may I sit with ye a while?" Without waiting for an answer, Henere plops himself down.

"'Tis infrequently we greet wayfarers such as ye. Be ye staying long?" If the adventurers say no, he replies, "A pity. And me having this rich reward, with no one to give it to."

If the adventurers say that they are planning to stay for a while, he says in effect, "Perhaps ye could be using money?" In either case, use an offer of money to pique the adventurers' interest; they will begin to question Henere about it.

Henere tells them that every nine years a special magic plant bears fruit. Normally the village sends several men to harvest the crop, but this year the prophesied harvest time falls in the middle of the fall pilgrimage to Esrola's temple in Munn. No one dares miss it but Henere, who does not go only because he has dispensation to guard Greenbrass in the absence of its other residents. He asks if the adventurers will hire themselves to harvest the crop.

The adventurers should ask questions about the trip and the reward. The negotiations can go in any order, but here Henere first explains about the plant and the trip.

The magic plant is a money tree (Henere's term for it is a 'fiscus'). It grows underground 100 kilometers to the east, across some hills and wasteland. Henere freely admits that there may well be robbers or worse on the way to it. "There's where thy reward comes in, eh?"

The money tree has pure silver leaves and enchanted fruit. The village requires only the tree's fruit. Henere says that there's never been more than one fruit before, and expects only one this year—a small, beautiful silver fruit. "Ye are free to pick as many leaves as ye wish. However, ye must be careful not to break any of the tree's branches, for fear of harming it. If the tree dies, my lads, there'll be no more fruit or silver leaves for anyone."

If the adventurers provisionally accept the job (if they don't, there's no adventure), Henere will offer them each the opportunity to learn a magic spell from the Wise Woman of Munn after they return. The Wise Woman will, for free, teach each adventurer one point of spirit magic. If any of the adventurers wish to join the cult of Esrola as initiates, success on this mission adds 20 percentiles to their chances of being accepted by the religion.

If the adventurers feel that the payment is not enough, Henere can be haggled up to a grant of three points of spirit magic each. He will also guarantee that at least 100 silver leaves will be on the tree. If they wish, he will promise them a weight in silver coins equal to that of the leaves upon return.

If the adventurers ask him what he plans to do with the magic fruit, he will be frank. He tells them that the seed is of no value to anyone not of Greenbrass. In all the world, he declares, only Greenbrass knows how to properly sprout, dung, and tend a growing money tree—a gift of holy secrets from the Goddess Herself. In return the villagers watch over the money tree saplings as best they may: when the saplings are of sturdy size, they are transplanted to various shrines and temples of Esrola in the region. None of the trees grown from a seed ever bear fruit themselves, so the adventurers should be told that the fruit is an important component of this religion. It is unnecessary to emphasize that not only the villagers but many of the folk of the entire region will be displeased if something goes wrong—that is for the adventurers to deduce or to discover.



This is the map that Henere Hannibal gives to the adventurers.

If the adventurers want to see a live money tree, Henere demurs. "I'd love to give ye a peek, but the nearest one is in Munn, in a special sanctum at the shrine, and ye must be at least an initiate even to get a wee peek at a dedicated money tree." Here he makes a reverent gesture.

Henere adds, though, that once a great freeze killed the money tree then growing in the village, and that the villagers melted down the branches and trunk, and made copper kettles of the results, and that he could show them some of those. If the adventurers accept the offer, Henere faithfully troops them around town, exhibiting as many battered, burnt, and completely unremarkable copper kettles as they want to see.

After the adventurers have agreed to do the job for a specified reward, Henere provides verbal directions and a written map. "There's a trail east through the hills. Follow it till ye can see the Ochre Mountains rising above the hills. Pick out the tall sharp peak and head for it. That's what be called Thin Peak, lads. When ye get to the foothills of the peak, ye'll see that the peak has different sorts of sides to it—the north is long, curved, and harsh; the south is smoother and seemingly easier to climb. But hitch thyself up the harsh side, all the way to where the snow lies and the trees no longer grow. Up there is a big pocket of a cave. Go in there, clear to the end and always to the right, and ye'll find the tree. Mind what I said about hurting the tree—take but the leaves and fruit."

A copy of the map accompanies this scenario; you can show the players that copy, or make them a photocopy. Be prepared to amplify Henere's instructions in small ways, but do not change any major idea shown on the map.

With that, Henere wishes them luck and leaves them to their preparations. Greenbrass gives them all the food they can carry, but has no equipment to offer. The route is too rough for animals; pack-mules and riding horses must be left behind. The villagers will stable and tend the adventurers' animals for free.



All the villagers—cheery, honest, hard-working folk—gather around the adventurers when they begin the trip, ply them with fresh bread and mulled cider and pray to Esrola for them. The cold morning wind carries snippets of their shouted thanks and good wishes for the first kilometer of the trip.

## The First Day

The rough hills east of town are uninhabited by humans. Wildlife includes mountain lions, small wild dogs, bobcats, rabbits, grouse, quail, pheasants, groundhogs, deer, beavers, elk, and an occasional black bear. The adventurers should see representatives of some or all of these species or all local fauna, but none of them are aggressive, and most will bound away if attacked or approached closely.

The first day's trek is uneventful. The party will bed down for the night. During the night, a black bear comes into camp and rummages through the food supply. If an adventurer is on watch, then he will hear the bear and can react. If no one is on watch, then the players may attempt Listen rolls for each of their adventurers. A successful Listen roll indicates that the adventurer for whom the roll succeeded wakes up and can react.

Adventurers who wake become aware of the bear. Players may attempt successful Animal Lore rolls for their

### The Bear

STR	20	Move	7
CON	15	Hit points	19
SIZ	23	Fatigue	25
INT	5	Magic points	10
POW	10	DEX SR	3
DEX	10		

location	melee	missile	points
RH Leg	01-02	01-02	3/7
LH Leg	03-04	03-04	3/7
Hind Q	05-07	05-09	3/9
Fore Q	08-10	10-14	3/9
RF Leg	11-13	15-16	3/7
LF Leg	14-16	17-18	3/7
Head	17-20	19-20	3/7

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Bite	6	30%	1D8+2D6
Claw	9	47%	1D6+2D6

**Note:** each round an attacking bear will first bite, then hit with a claw.

adventurers. Success means that the adventurer knows that frightening the bear may drive it away, whereas injuring it might make it attack. If the adventurer(s) simply shout, wave their arms, or run at the bear, it will turn tail and lumber into the woods, not to return. However, if it is struck or attacked, it will fight back.

## The Second Day

If the bear gulped down all the party's rations, the adventurers need to spend their day hunting or trapping more food. If one adventurer is or was a hunter, he will be able to obtain

enough food for everybody to continue. Otherwise, each player may attempt a Hide roll and a missile attack roll for each of his adventurers. If both rolls succeed, then that adventurer has shot himself a rabbit and otherwise gathered enough roots and herbs for a stew for the entire party. Admonish the party that time is important; these hardy adventurers can easily go without food for a day or two. Once they have made their rations safe, they should resume their journey.

Just after noon, they spot a short figure barring passage across the road. To one side is a deep-looking pool of water. The figure is Yozarian, a noted duck bandit.

Yozarian is a disreputable-looking character. He has a wooden leg and an old scar-crack across his beak. Half the feathers on one arm are missing, exposing pink flesh. A nicked short sword dangles from his waist, and he holds a light crossbow leveled at the chest of the biggest adventurer.

He will accost the group. "Hold! You cannot go on my road here without paying my toll. Such sturdy fellows as you should be able to afford at least 10 pennies each. Pay up or meet your ancestors!" Yozarian has a remarkably deep voice for a SIZ 5 duck, and he is swaggeringly confident.

Now have the players attempt Scan rolls for each of their adventurers. Those adventurers receiving successful rolls can see armed people hiding in the bushes and behind the rocks to either side of the trail. There are at least a dozen bushwhackers. If any player makes a critical Scan roll for an adventurer, that adventurer notices that the head of one of the hidden bandits looks remarkably like a pumpkin.

If the party does not immediately cough up the loot, Yozarian quacks out "Not speedy enough for me, lads! The price has gone up to 12 pennies each!" If the party seems to be preparing to attack him, Yozarian will hastily quack out orders to his gang: "Ready, now! Aim your crossbows! Shoot to maim if possible!" He'll glower threateningly at the adventurers.

In reality, Yozarian is working alone. He has built dummies of rags, squash, and straw, and equipped these troops with old battered weapons and a few battered pots to serve as shoulders or helmets. These dummies have been concealed cunningly-but not so cunningly that a group of victims would fail to see them once they began to look.

Yozarian's plot is simple. He asks only a mildly unreasonable toll, lets the party notice his gang, and sends the victims on their way after collecting his fee.

If the adventurers choose to attack, Yozarian will throw down his crossbow and dive into the pond next to him. He'll swim far underwater, to where he has weighted down a pair of large, open-bottomed barrels filled with air—similar to the effect obtained by turning over a glass and pushing its mouth below the surface of a fishbowl.

Yozarian will breathe from the barrels until their air goes stale (about a half hour), and then will swim to the surface. If the party is waiting for him, he'll surrender and offer to ransom his life for 200 pennies. He can pay up to 300, but will cry and wail if he has to do that. After receiving oaths of safety,



he'll lead the party a short way up a canyon. There his treasure is buried under a stone. It amounts to exactly 300 pennies.

**Yozarian, Duck Bandit**

STR	9	Move	2
CON	12	Hit points	9
SIZ	5	Fatigue	21-10=11
INT	16	Magic points	14
POW	14	DEX SR	2
DEX	17		

location	melee	missile	points
R Leg	01-04	01-03	2/3
L Leg	05-08	04-06	2/3
Abdomen	09-11	07-10	4/3
Chest	12	11-15	4/4
R Arm	13-15	16-17	4/3
L Arm	16-18	18-19	4/3
Head	19-20	20	6/3

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Crossbow	2	75%	2D4+2	--	--
Shortsword	7	52%	1D6+1	47%	10

**Spells:** (spirit magic 59%) Disrupt, Healing 3, Mobility 2.

**Skills:** (Dodge and Swim reduced by ENC): Dodge 52, Listen 90%, Swim 88%.

**Armor:** stiff leather wrapped around good leg, cuirbouilli torso and arms with leather padding, lamellar metal helm. Yozarian's wooden leg has natural armor points (as per weapons).

If Yozarian ever must engage in hand-to-hand combat, he immediately will surrender instead.

Yozarian probably does con a few pennies from the adventurers. It is unlikely that the adventurers will out-think this quick-witted, resourceful bandit. The duck will try not to harm any adventurer unless the situation is desperate—if he did, he knows that the survivors would be much more inclined to hunt down and harm him.

## The Third Day

By the evening of the second day and for all of the third day, the Ochre Mountains have been clearly visible. The tall thin peak described by Henere has loomed ever closer. The trail leads directly into an arm of a sprawling forest. Going around the forest will take at least two days, perhaps more.

For hours the adventurers follow the meandering trail through the forest. Dense black trees tower at either side. At last, in the near-dark of the forest interior, the party rounds a bend in the trail and finds their path barred by a gigantic, perfectly woven, orb-shaped spider's web. The individual strands of the web are as thick as yarn. The entire web is at least 15 meters high. The webspinner is nowhere in sight. At one of the web's upper corners, hangs a silken bundle with antlers protruding from the top—a hapless deer, more than likely.

If the adventurers detour around the web, they find that gobbets of web lace the underbrush. A successful Search roll made before stepping off the trail, allows an adventurer to notice this. If they wade into the bush anyway, they become

gummed and entangled before going four steps. The web gobbets have STR 14. Each adventurer must overcome with his own strength the gluey web's STR. An adventurer may try once per melee round until he gets free. If, once freed, an adventurer pushes further into the brush, he'll become entangled again. The second time someone becomes entangled, the giant spider that has been hiding in the treetops will attack.

If the party tries to cut through the big web, 30 points of damage must be done to the web with weapons to break it. After each blow, the weapon becomes stuck to the web. The wielder must overcome a STR of 8 with his own to pull it away from the web. Purely thrusting weapons such as a spear or a dagger cannot damage the web, nor can any missile weapon—these latter will simply sail through the web and disappear into the blackness beyond. But flaming weapons will not stick in the web and will do rated damage. When the web has taken 30 points of damage, a hole big enough to permit a man to pass has been formed. But on the fourth blow, the web will begin to vibrate, and a giant spider will rush down it to attack the web's assailants.

If the party detours widely, to avoid the forest entirely, alas they will find that this remarkable forest completely surrounds Thin Peak. They must pass through the forest to get to their goal, and they will meet a spider (but only one) no matter which way they go.

About five minutes after the combat ends, anyone who took damage from the spider's bite will feel queasy, vomit, and turn green from the poison. Healing spells will not purge

### The Giant Spider

STR	16	Move	4/6 (on web)
CON	18	Hit points	21
SIZ	24	Fatigue	34
INT	3	Magic points	14
POW	14	DEX SR	2
DEX	19		

location	melee	missile	points
RR Leg	01	01	4/4
LR Leg	02	02	4/4
RH Leg	03	03	4/4
LH Leg	04	04	4/4
Abdomen	05-08	05-11	4/9
RC Leg	09-10	12	4/4
LC Leg	11-12	13	4/4
RF Leg	13-14	14	4/4
LF Leg	15-16	15	4/4
Head	17-20	16-20	4/7

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Bite	5	70%	1D6+1D6+poison

**Skill:** Climb Web 200%, Dodge 35%

**Note:** This spider will bite one opponent and dodge each round. It will not leave the area of its web. Damage to the spider's legs does not affect its total hit points.

the poison, though they may close and heal the wound through which it passed. The poison has a potency (POT) of 12, which is matched against the CON of the victim. If the CON is overcome, that victim takes 12 points of damage. If it fails to overcome CON, that victim takes 6 points of damage.

This poison damage may not be healed by normal healing spells, but will be naturally purged at the rate of 1 point per day.

Emerging from the forest just before dusk, the party clearly sees the tall mountain (Thin Peak) spoken of by Henere. All the other mountains in the range are distinctly lower and blunter than this one. This night the party will be camping in the foothills of Thin Peak.

## The Fourth Day

During this day, the adventurers will face a series of individual challenges. Each challenge is marked in this text by a sub-head.

### The Route

There are two routes up Thin Peak. One looks relatively easy, and the other difficult. A successful World Lore will permit the appropriate adventurer to understand that the easy-seeming route actually promises deadly avalanches. The adventurers should be able to remember that Henere told them to take the difficult route as the best way to find the cave. But let them decide.

### Climbing the Scarp

As the party begins to hike up the mountain, the first obstacle is a 5-meter rocky cliff running across the face near the base. All party members will need to make a successful Climb roll to get to the top. Anyone failing drops to the hillside below, taking 1D6 damage to a random hit location (ignore all armor), and must try again.

### The Stream

Once all have scaled the scarp, there are no problems till a stream cuts across their path, running rapidly down the side of the mountain. It is shallow enough to wade, but who needs to get his feet wet on a cold mountain? Players must roll CON X4 or less on D100 for each wading adventurer: adventurers taking failed rolls catch colds, making them miserable and reducing all perception rolls for them by 20 percentiles until they recover (in 1D2 days). The colds take effect three hours after the dunking.

Any adventurer may jump the stream instead upon a successful Jump roll. A failed one means that the adventurer fell in the stream instead. A successful CON X4 roll lets him avoid sickness.

### The Rockslide

Now an old rockslide offers the best way up. Sheer cliffs rise to either side of the slide. Successful Climb rolls must be made to climb through the talus. Failure means that the climber slipped and rolled back to the bottom of the slide, on the way taking 1D6 damage three times to three randomly-chosen hit locations (ignore armor). If the adventurers take precautions, such as tying themselves together, grant the players a temporary percentile increase to the Climb rolls,

but make it clear that several failed Climbs will drag the whole party down the mountainside.

### A Fork in the Path

At the next stage, there seem to be two good choices of route. A successful World Lore roll reveals that one of the routes is actually much easier to climb. If no World Lore roll succeeds, then have the adventurers determine which route is taken without other clues. If the party takes the hard route, each member will need to receive another successful Climb roll—failure does 2D6 damage to a random hit location (ignore armor). If the party takes the easy route, they reach the tree line without incident and can begin scouting for the cave.

### Disregarded Advice

If the adventurers chose the easy-seeming slope of the mountain, disregarding Henere's advice, then everything occurs just as written here, except that the fruitless search of the southern slopes of Thin Peak takes the rest of the day. The party spends the night huddled on the icy slopes; if you want to endow everyone with colds as reward for this stupidity, that is certainly within your rights. In this case, the succeeding incidents take place on the morning of the fifth day. Otherwise they occur on the fourth day.

### The Mighty Bird

As the party looks for the cave, call for Scan rolls for them all. All who get a successful Scan roll see a colossal bird cruise around the edge of the mountain and come sailing toward them. Everyone may try to Conceal and Hide (one try each) to escape this monster's sight. One adventurer's Conceal skill may be used on another, but only one Conceal roll for one adventurer is allowed. All Conceal rolls must be made before attempting any Hides. If any adventurer receives both a failing Hide and a failing Conceal, the bird swoops down and tries to grab him. If more than one adventurer waffles about in the open, roll randomly to see who is grabbed.

The bird is of terrific size—it is one of the fabled rocs of the Ochre Mountains, with a wingspan of well over 30 meters! This prowling avian is essentially invincible to the

#### The Roc

STR	70	__	Move	3/12 (fly)
CON	30	__	Hit points	50
SIZ	70	__	Fatigue	100
INT	8	__	Magic points	20
POW	20	__	DEX SR	3
DEX	13	__		

location	melee	missile	points
R Claw	01-02	01	12/13
L Claw	03-04	02	12/13
Body	05-09	03-08	12/21
R Wing	10-13	09-13	12/17
L Wing	14-17	14-18	12/17
Head	18-20	19-20	12/17

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Claw Grab	6	50%	none; grapple & carry off

powers of the adventurers; they should want to avoid it, not fight it. Call for a hasty Animal Lore roll if you want to emphasize the point.

When the roc swoops, the victim can attempt a Dodge roll to avoid the grab. If the roc does succeed in snatching an adventurer, it will carry him off and that person never will be seen again. If the roc misses its grab, it will not return for a second swipe: proud bird that it is, it will fly off, pretending that it wasn't really trying.

## The Cave

Soon after the roc attack, the party finds the large entrance to the cave. It is the only cave on the whole north slope of the mountain. Its mouth is over 4m high. As the party approaches the cave, each member may try a Track roll to discern specific footprints in the slush and snow before the cave. A successful Animal Lore identifies these prints as belonging to an ice or cave troll; everyone can tell they were made by some large humanoid.

### The Mountain Troll

STR	23	__	Move	3
CON	15	__	Hit points	22
SIZ	28	__	Fatigue	38
INT	5	__	Magic points	11
POW	11	__	DEX SR	4
DEX	9	__		
APP	2	__		

location	melee	missile	points
R Leg	01-04	01-03	3/8
L Leg	05-08	04-06	3/8
Abdomen	09-11	07-10	6/8
Chest	12	11-15	6/10
R Arm	13-15	16-17	3/6
L Arm	16-18	18-19	3/6
Head	19-20	20	3/8

Weapon	SR	Atk%	Damage	Parr%	Pts
Club	6	40%	3D6+2D6	30%	13
Claw	9	50%	1D6+2D6	--	--

**Note:** The troll hits first with club, and then with claw each round. If he is facing two opponents in the cave, he will target one attack against each foe. He will only parry if his arm is injured, preventing him from using his claw. If his club is broken, he will attack with two claws each round, on strike ranks 7 and 10.

Injuries suffered by the troll heal at the rate of 1 point per round. If the troll is actually killed, then he cannot regenerate.

**Armor:** Bare limbs and head, with a bearskin strapped around his torso.

Once in the cave, if all party members receive successful Sneak rolls, then they can move quietly past the niche in which a troll loudly snores. If anyone wishes to attack the sleeping troll, the troll will smell him and hear him, and leap up ready for battle.

If the party wishes to move peacefully past, they may. If the players fail only one Sneak roll, the troll will just grunt and turn over in his sleep (it is the middle of the day—favorite sleeping time for trolls). If two or more Sneak rolls are failed, the troll will snort, get up, and come out ravaging for battle.

## The Money Tree

Past the troll, the tunnel leads on to a small chamber where the money tree grows. The money tree looks like a miniature oak, about a meter high, with deeply-corrugated copper bark and dozens of perfectly-formed little silver leaves. At the end of one long branch is a single round silver fruit, shaped something like an orange (but much smaller). If the adventurers saw through or break a branch, it proves to be copper clear through. Any portion of the Tree bends to almost double before breaking.

The leaves and fruit are easy to twist off. There are 111 leaves on the plant, each worth 15 pennies. A successful Evaluate reveals that the fruit is worth about 1000 pennies to a collector,

### The Trip Back

The trip back is uneventful, it takes three days. As they pass the pond where Yozarian accosted them, several of his dummies are found strewn across the road. Yozarian is nowhere is sight. If you wish, you might have a pack of wild dogs or a mountain lion attack the party. But do this only if the players obviously itch for more action.

## Return to Greenbrass

When the adventurers get back, everyone will be pleased and treat them all to a feast and innumerable rounds of drinks at the Bouncing Buffalo. For several weeks, in fact, Oxar will let them loll about the inn as they please for free; if they remain for over three weeks, it becomes obvious that they have overstayed their welcome. Even Oxar has his limits.

The promised spells from the Wise Woman are forthcoming, and a usurer from Munn is willing to give the adventurers fair price for the silver leaves, converting these curiosities into coins.

The village holds a harvest feast and celebration which happens to coincide with the return of the adventurers. Remarkably for a hamlet the size of Greenbrass, suitable dance partners are available for all the adventurers who want one.

Forever after, the adventurers are known in Greenbrass and have friends there (perhaps sweethearts as well).

The adventurers may ask Henere why the trip was much more dangerous than he claimed. If they do, he admits that perhaps he glossed over some of the hardships, but says in his defense that since the trip is only made once every nine years, he could hardly be expected to know exactly what was to lie ahead—there was certainly no troll or duck bandit last time! And, of course, no one in town was qualified to fight their way through dangerous wilderness—outsiders had to be hired.

Then Henere will chortle and slap the adventurers on the back, ordering another round of drinks and promising that if they show up again in nine more years, he'll be glad to give them the job again.

## Cheating Henere Hannibal

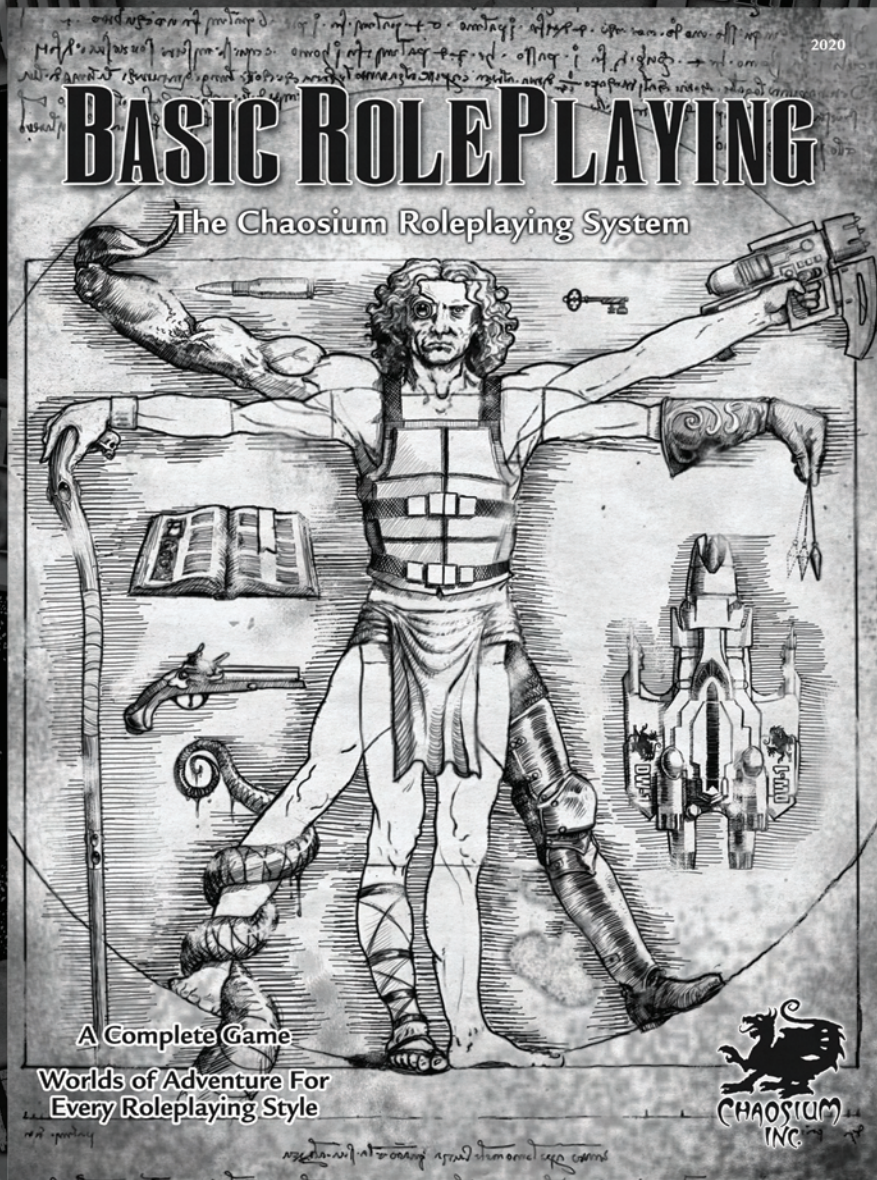
If the adventurers do not wish to give Henere the fruit, there is not much he can openly do about it. In such a case, he will remind them of the promised spells from the Wise Woman, and he will curse them as traitors if they don't hand the fruit over. The adventurers will never again be welcome in Greenbrass or Munn, and they will be known as common thieves by anyone from the entire region.

If one of the party ever wants to join the religion of the agricultural goddess (Esrola in these parts), the board of priests will be informed by the goddess that the adventurer has cheated the deity in the past (by cheating Esrola's priestess, the Wise Woman, who was supposed to get the fruit). That adventurer will not be allowed to join the religion unless and until he has somehow made good the loss.

If the party does not return through Greenbrass, Henere will not be able to revile them to their faces, but all the other above penalties apply.

If they keep the fruit, they find (just as Henere told them), that they are unable to grow a money tree; no matter what they do, the seed remains barren. Perhaps a magus could discover the necessary procedures and rituals, but this possibility entails at least a whole new scenario.

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