

THE BATTLEPITS OF KRARTH BOOK 1

DAVE MORRIS & OLIVER JOHNSON

BLOOD SWORD



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multi-player adventures



About the authors:

Dave Morris was born in 1957 and educated at the Royal Grammar School, Guildford. He read Physics at Magdalen College, Oxford, and graduated in 1979.

He now lives with his fiancée in Wandsworth, and in their back garden is an ivy-covered pulpit from which he delights in holding forth on many subjects!

Oliver Johnson was also born in 1957, in Paris. He was educated at Haileybury College, and at Lincoln College, Oxford. After undertaking three years' research in English in Oxford, he worked as a buyer with Waterstones Bookshops. He is currently an editor at Corgi Books.

Dave and Oliver understand the game book market better than most authors, for they have both worked as fantasy game writers. They developed projects in Ian Livingstone's Games Workshop and became familiar names in its magazine *White Dwarf*. Dave is now a contributing editor.

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Illustrated by Russ Nicholson
Maps supplied by Geoff Wingate



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To Yve and Suzanne

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BLOOD SWORD

Your world is the magical land of Legend. In Legend there are many kinds of Adventurer, each with unique skills and techniques for dealing with creatures of the supernatural. Those who rely on a good sword and the strength of their right arm are called Warriors. The practitioners of the magical arts are called Enchanters, with many deadly spells always ready at their fingertips. Sages are a class of ascetic monks - wise in ancient lore, but also skilful in the use of quarterstaff, bow and the unarmed martial arts. Lastly there are the Tricksters; they are swift and dextrous swordsmen, but their true forte is the use of stealth, guile and cunning to achieve their ends.

These four classes are described from page 18.

For your adventure in the Krarthian Battlepits you may take a single hero or put together a group of Adventurers. If playing alone, you take a single hero of one of the four adventuring classes (Warrior, Enchanter, Sage or Trickster). You will be on your own, but with the advantage that you are of a higher rank - that is, individually more powerful - than you would be in a group of Adventurers. A solitary Adventurer undertaking this adventure will be of eighth rank.

If there are two players, each takes the persona of a fourth-rank Adventurer. These two must belong to different adventuring classes. Ideally, they will be chosen so that one of the Adventurers' strengths will make up for the other's weaknesses. An Enchanter is physically not very powerful, for example, while a Warrior has little resistance to sorcery, so a combination of these two classes makes a strong team.

If the adventure is undertaken by three players, each takes a third-rank character, while in a team of four players each has a second-rank character. Again, all characters *must* be of a different class.

These preconditions can be summarised as:

<i>Number of players</i>	<i>Composition of adventuring party</i>
one	a single eighth-rank character
two	two characters of fourth rank
three	three characters of third rank
four	four characters of second rank

After reading the sections on Combat, Magic and Teamwork, you should decide how many players will be taking part and to which of the four adventuring classes each player will belong. Each player should read *only* the special section for the class to which he or she belongs.

TERMINOLOGY

The usual role-playing abbreviation is used to indicate different Dice rolls. This uses the basic format of

X Dice+Y

meaning that X Dice are rolled and Y is added to the total.

As an example, 2 Dice+3 means 'roll two Dice and add three' - giving a number from five to fifteen. Taking another case, 1 Die—1 means 'roll one Die and subtract one' - *negative numbers count as zero unless otherwise stated*, so this would give a score from zero to five.

FIGHTING PROWESS, etc.

Each character is described by four *attributes*. These are:

Fighting Prowess a measure of how powerful a fighter the character is;

Psychic Ability an indicator of the character's resistance to attack spells and (in the case of an Enchanter) his or her aptitude for magic;

Awareness a difficult concept, as it encompasses quickness of thought, dexterity and general nous;

Endurance the attribute measuring the character's state of health; wounds are deducted from Endurance, and if it reaches zero then the character dies.

COMBAT

Combat takes place in *Rounds*, each of which represents about ten seconds of action. Each Round, everyone who is taking part in the combat gets the opportunity to perform one action if he or she wishes: to attack, cast a spell, or whatever. Actions are taken in sequence based on each combatant's Awareness score. The combatant with the highest Awareness acts first, then the combatant with the next highest Awareness, and so on. Combatants with equal Awareness scores act simultaneously. A combatant who is killed (reduced to zero Endurance) before his turn does not get to act!

These are the possible combat options and the circumstances in which they may be used. A character may choose any option for which he or she is eligible as his or her action for the Round:

MOVE

This action allows the character to close and *fight* an enemy, or to move to an exit (if any). If you take the *move* option while an opponent is fighting you, then (unless your Awareness is higher than the opponent's) you take an automatic wound. Once all surviving characters in the party have *moved* to an exit, the party may *flee* at the start of the next Round.

FIGHT

The character must have previously chosen the *move* option in order to be close enough to an opponent *to fight*. (But there are exceptions to this rule; sometimes the tactical maps in the text will show that your opponents are directly adjacent to you at the start of the combat, in which case an immediate attack is possible.)

DEFEND

You cannot attack in the Round in which you choose this option, but it has the advantage of making you harder to hit. This is explained more fully below.

SHOOT

This is an option for Sages and Tricksters only. You fire an arrow at any one opponent. Unlike *the fight* option you do not have to *move* first because (of course) arrows are long-range weapons. You cannot choose to *shoot* if an opponent is striking at you in the same Round - that is, you must dispose of any opponents who have closed to attack you before picking off others with your bow.

FLEE

Sometimes the text will give your party the option to *flee* from a fight. All surviving Adventurers must

have made a *move* before the party can *flee*. When this option is taken, the entire *party flees* at the start of the Round, so their opponents get no chance to hack at them or cast spells as they run off.

CALL A SPELL TO MIND/ CAST A SPELL IN MIND

These are options for Enchanters only. They are explained in the special section on Enchanters.

You can perform *one* of these actions in each Round. (Tricksters sometimes get the opportunity for two actions in a Round, though, as explained later in their special rules.)

The rules for combat are designed for ease of play but require a short explanation. When striking at an opponent (that is, when you take *the fight* option for a Round), you roll two Dice. A score of *equal to* or *lower than* your Fighting Prowess means that your blow has hit. If you hit, you roll a damage Die (or Dice, at higher ranks) to see how much of an Endurance loss you have inflicted. If your opponent has an Armour Rating, you must reduce your Die roll for damage by this amount, and the result (if greater than zero) is deducted from the opponent's Endurance.

Take an example. You have a Fighting Prowess of seven and a damage roll of one Die. You are attacking a Troll whose Fighting Prowess is six and which also rolls one Die for damage. You have the higher Awareness, so you get first blow. Rolling two Dice, you score a three; this is less than your Fighting Prowess score, so you have succeeded in hitting it. Next you roll one Die for the damage your blow inflicts. You get a six, but the Troll has an

Armour Rating of two so only four points are deducted from its Endurance. If still alive (that is, if it hasn't yet been reduced to zero Endurance) the Troll now gets to hack back at you. It rolls six on two Dice - equal to its Fighting Prowess, so good enough to hit you (though only just!). For its damage Die roll it scores a one; because you have an Armour Rating of two this means that you lose no Endurance. The Troll's claws hit you, but scrape harmlessly off your studded leather jerkin. The battle rages on for another Round . . .

Two other factors need to be considered. If you *defend*, then your opponent must roll equal to or less than his Fighting Prowess on *three* Dice in order to hit you. You do not get to strike a blow yourself in the Round you are *defending*.

The other point concerns the *move* option. If you have a high Awareness and can *move* away from an opponent before that opponent gets his or her action for that Round, all well and good. If you try to *move* away from an opponent who has already attacked you earlier in the Round, however, then he or she immediately gets a second strike at you - *and this is an automatic hit*. For this reason it is usually best to dispose of one opponent before you *move* to engage another.

ARMOUR

You will start your adventure with a suit of armour. This gives an *Armour Rating* of three if you are a Warrior or of two if you belong to one of the other adventuring types.

Your armour protects you in combat by absorbing its Armour Rating from any damage you would otherwise take. For instance, if a monster rolls 2 Dice+1 for damage and gets a total of thirteen,

that is the number of Endurance points you would lose if you were not armoured. If you are wearing armour with an Armour Rating of two, you would take only eleven (that is, thirteen minus two) points of damage.

You *cannot* wear two suits of armour in combination. Thus, if you were to lose your armour and later come across two breastplates of Armour Rating one, say, then you could put on one breastplate - but you could *not* put on both and claim a total Armour Rating of two.

WEAPONS

If you lose your weapon, you must reduce your Fighting Prowess and damage Dice rolls by two until you find a replacement. An eighth-rank Warrior normally has a Fighting Prowess of nine and rolls 3 Dice+1 for damage when he or she hits an opponent. If he or she were to lose his or her sword and be forced to fight bare handed, he or she would have a Fighting Prowess of seven, and 3 Dice—1 for damage rolls.

SPECIAL CHARACTER OPTIONS

With only one player, the adventure works just like a standard gamebook. With parties of two or more players, one player is the 'reader', and he or she reads aloud the sections from the book as the adventure progresses.

Sometimes there will be the option for a character of a given class to act - for example, 'If there is a Trickster in the party, turn to ...'. If such an option is taken, *only* the player concerned looks at the appropriate section. He or she will usually read out the section to the other players, but sometimes part

of a section will be 'restricted' and printed in *[bracketed italics]*. This means that the player can, if he or she wishes, keep that part of the information withheld from the other players. For instance, there might be the option for a Sage to read an ancient piece of parchment. The book passes to the Sage player, who reads in his 'restricted' section:

'(SAGE) You decipher the faded runes on the parchment. *[It tells you that the safe route to the Emblem of Victory lies beyond the gold door.]* Turn to **559**.'

The player must tell his or her companions that he or she is reading the parchment, but he or she is not obliged to tell them what it says.

In a situation where two or more players are both given the chance for individual action (say, the Sage could speak to a demon or the Trickster could shoot it with an arrow), the players roll Dice and the highest score decides who acts.

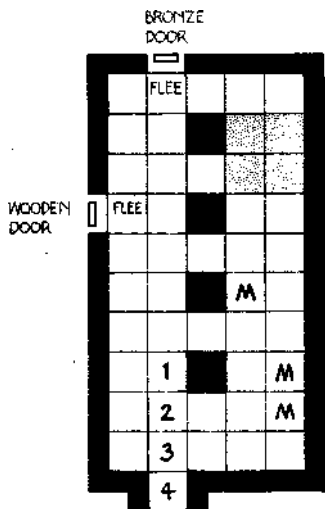
ENCOUNTERS

At all times players must specify their battle order. The best way is to prepare two, three or four card counters labelled 'first player', 'second player', etc. Each player then holds the counter referring to him or her. Battle order may be changed, that is, the counters exchanged, at any time except when in combat.

Obviously, battle order makes no difference when only one person is playing (he or she *must* be the 'first player'), but in parties of two or more it may be crucial. Generally (but not always!) the first player, being at the front, will be the one to get hit by surprise attacks and so on. If players cannot agree on a battle order then they must adopt the

following standard arrangement: first Warrior, then Sage, then Enchanter, then Trickster.

Encounters (fights, that is) are almost always played out on a tactical display of the room, corridor or what-have-you. An example is shown here:

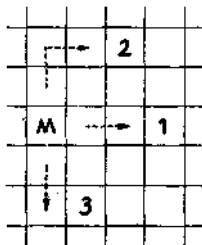


The numbers on this tactical map show where the Adventurers are standing when the combat starts. The Ms refer to the monsters' starting locations.

It is possible *to fight* a monster only in an adjacent square, *not* across a diagonal, and it is not possible to *move* on to a square already occupied by a monster or another player. When a monster or character is slain, remove the counter from the map; in other words, you can step over or even stand on a fallen foe. You cannot *move* where there are no squares, nor on to a blacked-out square, which represents an obstacle such as (in the map above) a pillar or a large statue. Shaded squares can be *moved*

through by monsters but not by players. In the map above, for instance, the shaded squares indicate a bed of coals which the monsters are immune to.

Unless otherwise stated, a monster will always *move* to attack the nearest Adventurer. To find out who the nearest Adventurer is, count the number of squares the monster would have to pass through (using straight-line moves, not diagonals) to reach a position where it could *fight*. In the diagram below, Adventurer 1 is closer to the monster than Adventurer 2 and the same distance as Adventurer 3. If several Adventurers are equidistant from the monster, roll Dice to see which player the monster will go for - the lowest roll is the unfortunate target of its attention! A similar roll must also be made when a monster is adjacent to more than one Adventurer to *see* which of them it will *fight*.



Before starting the adventure, prepare a few card counters to represent Adventurers and monsters. You don't need many, as you will rarely encounter more than three or four monsters at a time.

Always make a note of a monster's remaining Endurance if you *flee* from it. Monsters sometimes give chase, and if they catch up with you then you'll need to know how many wounds you've already inflicted.

ENCUMBRANCE

There is a limit to how much you can carry. As shown on the Character Sheets, you can usually have *ten* items at a time. If you are fully encumbered and find another item you want, you must discard one of the items you're already carrying (or give it to another player) in order to make space for it in your backpack.

Two special points need to be made. A quiver (available to Sages and Tricksters) will hold up to six arrows. The quiver counts as one item for encumbrance purposes *regardless* of the number of arrows it contains. That is, if you have a quiver containing six arrows then it still counts as only one item and not as seven items.

Your money-pouch counts as one item, too. As with the quiver, the contents are not relevant. The money-pouch will hold a maximum of a hundred coins (of any type), but whether it is full or empty it counts as only one item.

MAGIC

Magic is the special province of Enchanters and, to a much lesser extent, Sages. The way in which magic functions for these classes is fully set out in their special sections (see pages 23 and 27), but there is one thing that *every* Adventurer must know about magic.

There are two types of magic. **BLASTING** spells simply inflict damage when they are cast, and if you happen to be the target there is not much you can do about it! You deduct the damage the spell does (less your Armour Rating) from your Endurance score. The other sort of spells are **PSYCHIC** spells, and these

you can try to resist. To resist a PSYCHIC spell you must roll two Dice and obtain a score equal to or less than your Psychic Ability score. If you make this roll, the spell fails to work against you.

You will always be told whether a spell is of the Psychic or Blasting variety.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Experience points are a measure of a character's skill and power. If you complete *The Battlepits of Krarth* successfully, you will be awarded a number of experience points to be divided among all surviving characters. At the same time you add up any special bonus awards (or penalties) you were given during the adventure. The total experience points a character accumulates will enable him or her to rise in rank.

The overall experience points needed for each rank are set out below.

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Experience points</i>
first	less than 250
second	250-499
third	500-749
fourth	750-999
fifth	1000-1249
sixth	1250-1499
seventh	1500-1749
eighth	1750-1999
ninth	2000-2249
tenth	2250-2499
eleventh	2500-2749
twelfth	2750-2999
thirteenth	3000-3249

You start the adventure with the base level experience points required for your rank - 250 if you are second rank, 500 if you are third, etc. If you play through the adventure with a single (eighth-rank) character and receive an award of 1000 experience points, for example, then you will advance to twelfth rank. If you had the same award as a party of four second-rank characters, each character would advance to third rank.

After successfully completing the adventure and totting up your experience points, keep the Character Sheet. Characters who emerge alive from the Battlepits are eligible for *Blood Sword 2: The Kingdom of Wyrd*.

GETTING KILLED

If you are playing the adventure solo and your character gets killed (reduced to zero Endurance), you do the same thing you would with any other gamebook - get a new character and start again at the beginning.

But if you are playing as a team and one person gets killed, the other players go on with the adventure. Their party is now at reduced strength because of the loss of a character, but they still have a chance to win. The player whose character was killed does not have to sit on the sidelines, however - *he now gets to roll the Dice for the monsters*. He can also change a monster's strategy if he wishes (though he cannot invent powers for it that are not listed in the description). Getting 'killed' can thus be quite fun - you lose your character, but at least you get to give your former companions a hard time!

THE SOLO-TEAM OPTION

Normally, the number of characters in the part will be equal to the number of players, the idea being that most people will have their hands full just running one Adventurer with all his various special skills.

However, once you have gained some experience with the Blood Sword system, you may like to try using the solo-team option. Under this alternative system one reader takes not a single character but an entire team of four characters. In other words, it is just the same as if there were four players, but all the characters are run by the same person. (They are still just second rank, of course - you can't take a team of four eighth-rank heroes!)

SPECIAL SECTIONS

The following sections contain the detailed rules for each adventuring type. You should ideally read only the section that applies to your character - though, of course, if you are using the solo-team option then you will need to know the powers of several different character types.

For convenience during play - that is, so you do not need to keep flipping back here - feel free to make photocopies of these special sections and the Character Sheets.

THE WARRIOR

You are the master of the fighting arts. You have better Fighting Prowess than any other adventuring type at the same rank, and when you strike a blow you inflict more damage. You also have chainmail armour which provides an Armour Rating of three -

better than the armour available to other characters.

These advantages give you a real edge in any fight, but you do not get things all your own way. You have none of the other characters' special skills - the Sage's ESP, for instance, or the Trickster's low, devious cunning. Also, because you are of noble birth and follow the honourable traditions of your ancestors, you must be careful to stay true to the code of chivalry. You may take an experience point penalty if you behave in a dishonourable, cowardly or uncouth manner.

Your attributes at various ranks are these:

Second rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 12	Damage: 1 Die+1 Awareness: 6
Third rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 18	Damage: 1 Die+2 Awareness: 6
Fourth rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 24	Damage: 2 Dice Awareness: 7
Fifth rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 30	Damage: 2 Dice+1 Awareness: 7
Sixth rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 36	Damage: 2 Dice+2 Awareness: 7
Seventh rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 42	Damage: 3 Dice Awareness: 7
Eighth rank	Fighting Prowess: 9 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 48	Damage: 3 Dice+1 Awareness: 7

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

You begin with three items that you should also note down. These are:

- sword
- chainmail armour (Armour Rating three)
- money-pouch

The money-pouch contains ten gold pieces if you are second rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are third rank, twenty gold pieces if you are fourth rank, and so on, up to forty gold pieces if you are eighth rank. Regardless of its contents, the pouch still counts as *one item* for encumbrance purposes.

WARRIOR Character Sheet

NAME

RANK

Fighting Prowess _____ Damage _____

Psychic Ability _____ Awareness _____

Endurance _____

ITEMS

THE TRICKSTER

Some Adventurers are honest, chivalrous and honourable. Not you. You are basically a rogue - a likeable rogue, perhaps, but a rogue nonetheless. You live by your wits. If you can win a fight by trickery or by shooting someone in the back, you will. Cunning is your main weapon.

But when you *have* to face someone in a straight fight, you are no pushover. After the Warrior, you are perhaps the best fighter in any party.

Your attributes at various ranks are these:

Second rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 12	Damage: 1 Die Awareness: 8
Third rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 6 Endurance: 18	Damage: 1 Die+1 Awareness: 8
Fourth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 24	Damage: 1 Die+2 Awareness: 8
Fifth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 30	Damage: 2 Dice Awareness: 8
Sixth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 36	Damage: 2 Dice+1 Awareness: 8
Seventh rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 42	Damage: 2 Dice+2 Awareness: 8
Eighth rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 48	Damage: 3 Dice Awareness: 9

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

You begin with five items that you should also note down. These are:

- sword
- studded leather armour (Armour Rating two)
- money-pouch
- bow
- quiver

The money-pouch contains ten gold pieces if you are second rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are third rank, twenty gold pieces if you are fourth rank, and so on, up to forty gold pieces if you are eighth rank. Regardless of its contents, the pouch still counts as *one item* for encumbrance purposes. The quiver contains six arrows at the start of the adventure. Cross these off as you use them.

Three special rules apply to you:

Dodging technique

You are very adept at evading attacks. When an opponent makes a *fight* roll against you, he or she (or it) must roll 2 Dice+1 instead of the usual 2 Dice.

Archery

As long as you have your bow and arrows, you can use the *shoot* option in combat. You do not have to be in an adjacent square to your opponent in order to *shoot*. A *shoot* roll is just like a *fight* roll - that is, to hit you must roll equal to or under your Fighting Prowess on two Dice.

Regardless of your rank, arrows inflict only one Die Endurance damage (less Armour Rating) on the target.

Quick thinking

Once in each combat you can use this ability to take two actions in the same Round. The first action happens at the point in the Round when you would normally get to act, that is, as governed by your Awareness. The second action comes at the end of the Round when everyone else has had a chance to do something.

TRICKSTER Character Sheet

NAME

RANK

Fighting Prowess _____ Damage _____

Psychic Ability _____ Awareness _____

Endurance _____

ITEMS

THE SAGE

Your upbringing has been in the spartan Monastery

of Illumination on the barren island of Kaxos. There you studied the Mystic Way- a series of demanding psionic disciplines and rigorous physical training.

Your attributes at various ranks are these:

Second rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 10	Damage: 1 Die Awareness: 6
Third rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 15	Damage: 1 Die+1 Awareness: 6
Fourth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 20	Damage: 1 Die+2 Awareness: 7
Fifth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 25	Damage: 2 Dice Awareness: 7
Sixth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 30	Damage: 2 Dice+1 Awareness: 7
Seventh rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 35	Damage: 2 Dice+2 Awareness: 7
Eighth rank	Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 40	Damage: 3 Dice Awareness: 7

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

You begin with five items that you should also note down. These are:

- quarterstaff
- ringmail armour (Armour Rating two)

- money-pouch
- bow
- quiver

The money-pouch contains ten gold pieces if you are second rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are third rank, twenty gold pieces if you are fourth rank, and so on, up to forty gold pieces if you are eighth rank. Regardless of its contents, the pouch still counts as *one item* for encumbrance purposes. The quiver contains six arrows at the start of the adventure. Cross these off as you use them.

Several special rules apply to you:

Archery

As long as you have your bow and arrows, you can use the *shoot* option in combat. You do not have to be in an adjacent square to your opponent in order to *shoot*. A *shoot* roll is just like a *fight* roll - that is, to hit you must roll equal to or under your Fighting Prowess on two Dice.

Regardless of your rank, arrows inflict only one Die Endurance damage (less Armour Rating) on the target.

Quarterstaff technique

Your expertise in quarterstaff fighting includes a knowledge of critical nerve points. When attacking with the staff, you can elect to make *your fight* roll on three Dice instead of two. This is obviously more difficult, but it means that if you *do* hit you inflict an extra one Die damage *and* knock your foe off-balance, causing him to take his action at the end of the following Round (that is, as if he had an Awareness score of one).

Healing

You can use this psionic ability at any time except

during a combat. When you attempt to Heal, you decide how many points of Endurance you are going to use. You deduct these from your Endurance, then roll 1 Die-2 and multiply this by the number of points you expended. The result is the Healing energy (in the form of Endurance points) that you are able to draw from the Cosmic Flux. These points may be distributed as you wish among the players (including yourself). No player can increase his or her Endurance above its initial score, of course.

An example will show how this works. Alfric is a Sage who decides to expend five Endurance in a Healing attempt. He thus rolls 1 Die-2 and multiplies the figure by five - rolling four on the Die, say, and thus getting a total of ten Endurance points. He could restore his own Endurance to what it was before he tried the Healing, and this would still leave him with five points to distribute to himself or his companions as he wishes.

Negative results on the 1 Die—2 roll are counted as zero, as mentioned earlier. Your power of Healing is always a gamble, though, because you might roll one or two on the Die and thus get back no points from the Cosmic Flux.

Other psionic powers

Your other psionic powers will be explained in situations where you might need them. They include:

ESP the ability to detect thoughts;

Paranormal Sight the ability to see through soft materials such as curtains, fog or water (not stone or metal);

Levitation the ability to negate the force of gravity

on your body, allowing you to rise vertically into the air;

Exorcism the ability to dispel ghosts and other wraiths by stifling the paranormal energies that sustain them.

SAGE Character Sheet

NAME _____

RANK _____

Fighting Prowess _____ Damage _____

Psychic Ability _____ Awareness _____

Endurance _____

ITEMS

THE ENCHANTER

Forget the mundane arts of swordplay. You can use a sword if you have to, but your true forte is in the manipulation of occult powers of Sorcery.

Your attributes at various ranks are these:

Second rank	Fighting Prowess: 6 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 10	Damage: 1 Die-1 Awareness: 6
Third rank	Fighting Prowess: 6 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 15	Damage: 1 Die Awareness: 6
Fourth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 20	Damage: 1 Die+1 Awareness: 6
Fifth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 25	Damage: 1 Die+2 Awareness: 7
Sixth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 30	Damage: 1 Die+3 Awareness: 7
Seventh rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 35	Damage: 2 Dice+1 Awareness: 7
Eighth rank	Fighting Prowess: 7 Psychic Ability: 9 Endurance: 40	Damage: 2 Dice+2 Awareness: 7

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

You begin with three items that you should also note down. These are:

- sword
- silver armour (Armour Rating two)
- money-pouch

The money-pouch contains ten gold pieces if you

are second rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are third rank, twenty pieces if you are fourth rank, and so on, up to forty pieces if you are eighth rank. Regardless of its contents, the pouch still counts as *one item* for encumbrance purposes.

Your special skills are more involved than those available to any other character because you have a host of useful and deadly spells at your command. The procedure for spellcasting is quite involved, so read the following stages carefully.

1 Before you can cast a spell, you must call it to mind. If done during a combat, this takes one Round. You can call spells to mind at any time - and keep them in mind without effort - so you may wish to have a few ready before encountering an enemy - rather like having a cocked and loaded crossbow.

However, each spell that you have in mind temporarily reduces your Psychic Ability by one until it is cast. If you keep several spells in mind at all times, you will therefore be adventuring with quite a low current Psychic Ability, and this makes you vulnerable to psychic attacks.

2 The attempt to cast a spell takes one Round. It does not happen automatically. In order to cast a spell successfully, you must roll equal to or less than your Psychic Ability on two Dice. You must *add* the Complexity Level of the spell to the Dice roll. If you fail to cast it, you can try again the next Round; this time the roll is easier, as you *subtract* one from the two-Dice-plus-Complexity roll. If you fail again, you subtract two from your roll on the next Round. If the spellcasting process is interrupted (for example, you take a Round out to *dodge or fight*) then you have to go back to stage one.

An example will show how this works. Ragnarok

is an Enchanter with a Psychic Ability of nine. He has called two spells into mind in case of trouble, so he currently has a reduced Psychic Ability score of seven. In an encounter with three hobgoblins he decides to use his Sheet Lightning spell. This is a Complexity Level four spell, so the first Round he tries to *cast* it he must roll seven or less on 2 Dice+4. He fails this difficult roll but continues trying on the next Round, this time making 2 Dice+3. He fails again, so on the third Round he needs to make his roll of seven or less on 2 Dice+2. This time he succeeds, and a crackling bolt scatters the hobgoblins. If Ragnarok had stopped trying to *cast* the spell in order to *fight*, and then started trying again the Round after that, he would have had to start with a 2 Dice+4 roll again.

The combat spells available to you are as follows:

Volcano Spray Complexity Level one

Causes *all* enemies in the vicinity to lose one Die Endurance. This is a Blasting spell, so it cannot be resisted. The enemies' Armour Rating, if any, is deducted from the damage Die roll.

Nighthowl Complexity Level one

A Psychic spell that affects a single opponent. If the opponent fails to resist, he/she/it must make *fight* or *shoot* rolls using one Die more than usual (that is, on three Dice rather than two Dice) for the next four Rounds.

White Fire Complexity Level one

This Blasting spell strikes one opponent, causing the loss of 2 Dice+2 Endurance (less Armour Rating).

Swordthrust Complexity Level two

A Blasting spell affecting one enemy, who loses 3 Dice+3 Endurance; armour reduces the damage in the usual way.

Eye of the Tiger Complexity Level two

When this spell is cast, you can *either* add two to your Fighting Prowess and damage rolls *or* add one to the Fighting Prowess and damage rolls of everyone in the party including yourself. This lasts for four Rounds of combat.

Immediate Deliverance Complexity Level two

Used during a combat from which you wish to *flee*, this spell Teleports everyone in the party to the exit (if there is one). You are then ready to beat a retreat in the next Round.

Mists of Death Complexity Level three

All enemies in the vicinity lose two Dice Endurance if they fail to resist this Psychic spell. Armour gives no protection.

The Vampire Spell Complexity Level three

This Psychic spell can be directed against a single foe, who loses four Dice Endurance if he fails to resist it. Some of the vital energy he loses is channelled into you: your own Endurance is *increased* by half the amount he loses (rounded down). Of course, your Endurance still cannot exceed its initial score.

Sheet Lightning Complexity Level four

A powerful Blasting spell that inflicts 2 Dice+2 damage to all opponents in the vicinity. Armour protects from this as usual.

Ghastly Touch Complexity Level four

This is the *only* spell that requires you to be in an adjacent square to your intended victim. It is a Psychic spell that affects one opponent, who loses seven Dice Endurance if he fails to resist it - and two Dice even if he *does* resist it. Armour gives no protection.

Nemesis Bolt Complexity Level five

This highly focused bolt of energy strikes one foe, who loses 7 Dice+7 Endurance. It is a Blasting spell, so armour will reduce the damage.

Servile Enthralment Complexity Level five

This Psychic spell affects one enemy. If not resisted, it brings the enemy under your control. He/she/it simply stops moving and in non-combat situations may respond to your questions. If you order an Enthralled foe to fight for you (that is, against his own former companions), you must roll one Die: on a six he recovers his wits and attacks you. Enthralment lasts long enough for you to leave the vicinity, so you proceed as though you had slain the opponent . in question.

You also have a number of non-combat spells. These include *Summon Faltyn*, which calls a sly, faerie creature to serve you for a time; *Prediction*, which grants a glimpse into possible futures; and *Detect Spells*, which informs you when magic is operating nearby. There is no need to make Dice rolls to *cast* such spells because it will not usually matter whether it takes several attempts to get them to work.

ENCHANTER Character Sheet

NAME _____

RANK _____

Fighting Prowess _____ Damage _____

Psychic Ability _____ Awareness _____

Endurance _____

ITEMS

1

For the whole day now you have been approaching the smoke columns rising up vertically hundreds of metres from the flat plains of Krarth. The sky above is blue, cloudless and cold. A bitter wind blows across the dry, sere grass of the marshes and sends sluggish ripples through the puddles of mire which occupy the low ground. The monotony of the landscape is broken only by the occasional stunted willow growing by black, muddy pools and meres.

Kalugen's Keep is a monolithic black citadel looming ahead of you. Hoping to reach its gates before nightfall, you curse the throng of peasants and merchants milling towards it. You jostle through them towards the citadel - this morning just an imperceptible speck across the bleak wastes, but now a monstrous edifice that seems to fill the horizon.

You know you have only until tomorrow to find a sponsor among the magi of Krarth, for tomorrow battle will be unleashed in the pits beneath the citadel. Fame and fortune will go to the Adventurers - and their sponsor - who return from the labyrinthine Battlepits with the Emblem of Victory. If you find no magus who is prepared to sponsor you this time, you will have to wait another long year for the next contest. A year through which the marsh waters will rise, drowning the land and the causeways leading to the citadel, rendering Kalugen's Keep impregnable. No one enters or leaves in that time except the magi on their flying carpets, and only in mid-year can the citizens emerge to sow their fields with corn and rice before the harsh winter months begin again.

At last you manage to break through the gabbling crowds of the baggage train and ride under the grey



blocks of the massive gate, its portcullis open like the maw of a hungry god. The dour streets are festooned with the flags of the magi - the one week of the year when this grim place is ablaze with colour, you reflect wryly - and street criers call out the glories of their lords. In the central square you see a booth where the magi's stewards are registering the combatants whom their masters have employed for tomorrow's contest. Each hero, or group of heroes, must take their sponsor's pennant with them into the Battlepits, but as you scan the racks outside the booth you see that only three pennants remain. Three stewards stand by the pennants. Three magi seek champions.

The stewards grin sourly as they see you eyeing the pennants. Over the years they must have engaged dozens of brave Adventurers on their respective masters' behalf - and how many of those Adventurers went down into the Battlepits never to emerge? You scowl back at them grimly, but they only smile the broader. They know you must choose one of the pennants. As you debate the choice, an old merchant wrapped in greasy furs and obviously the worse for drink sees you contemplating the booth.

If you ignore the drunken merchant and go over to the booth, turn to **452**. If you talk to the merchant, turn to **69**. If there is a Trickster in your group and he or she wishes to act, turn to **58**. If a Sage wishes to try something, turn to **18**. If an Enchanter wishes to try something, turn to **398**.

2

You look down with disgust on the bloated grey bodies of the corpses, now oozing a vile pus which stains the carpet hideously. On one of the dead

hands you notice a ruby ring, which you may take if you wish. (In a party of Adventurers, make sure that only *one* player records the ring on his or her Character Sheet.)

One of the mirrors remains unbroken. There was no corpse behind this one, and when you go closer to inspect it you realise that it is actually a disguised secret door.

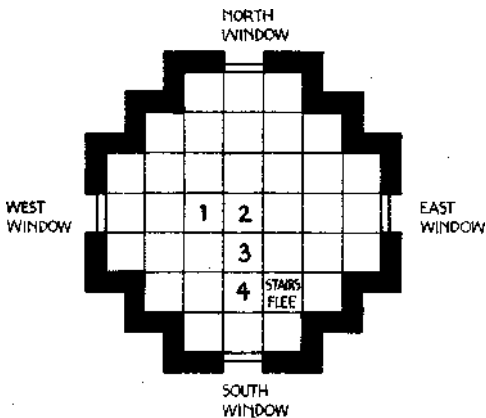
If you wish to slide back the mirror and see what lies beyond, turn to **379**. If you wish to continue to the end of the corridor and try the bronze double doors, turn to **456**.



3

You ascend to the topmost chamber of the Blue Tower. Cold wind whistles in through the gothic windows. Suddenly a black-gloved hand appears on the window-sill and the masked face of an Assassin rises into view.

The Assassins you fled from have climbed the outer wall of the Tower in their determination to slay you. Any that you did not slay in the fight at the bottom of the Tower will now attempt again to murder you. By means of the arcane herbal drugs of their secret society, those that survived the earlier encounter have healed themselves back up to five Endurance. Position them at the windows, starting with one at the north window, then one (if another survived) at the west window, and so on.



Assassins

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 1 Die
 Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
 Endurance: 5

In any Round in which an Assassin is not adjacent to an opponent, he will throw a Shuriken. This is like the *shoot* option of a Sage or Trickster, and requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. A Shuriken that hits inflicts 1 Die—1 damage (less Armour Rating, of course). An Assassin's order of preference for Shuriken targets is: Enchanter - Sage - Trickster - Warrior.

If you *flee* down the stairs, turn to **513**. If you kill all the Assassins this time, turn to **226**.

4

You unleash the power of the sceptre at the wall. Cross off one charge from it. This sends chips of stone flying in all directions, but it is not enough to blast a passage through. In fact, it will take a total of *three* charges to blast all the way through the wall. If

you do not have two charges left, cross the sword off your Character Sheet, as you can proceed along the corridor only if you leave it here.

Once you have disposed of the wall either by discarding the sword or expending a further two charges of the sceptre, turn to **503**.

5

You slip down through the rock like a ghost, feeling the solid surroundings only as a faint chill against your skin. It is rather like sinking through thick, cold tar.

At last Kief's spell brings you to the lower levels of the Battlepits. You emerge from a rough stone ceiling and drift gently down to solidify on a set of crude steps. An up-draught from below brings a stifling dank heat.

Turn to **356**.

6

You wrench up the grating and drop lithely to the floor in the midst of the astonished Barbarians. They reach for their axes, but they are taken by surprise, and this means you get one free action before the normal sequence of combat begins.

FLEE

	B	
	1	B
2	3	4
	B	B

Barbarians

Fighting Prowess: 8

Psychic Ability: 5

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: *first* 12

second 12

Damage per blow: 1 Die+2

Awareness: 7

third 12

fourth 12

If you *flee* along the corridor, turn to **43**. If you defeat the Barbarians, turn to **191**.

7

(TRICKSTER) A commanding voice rings out over the clash of swords and the screams of the crowd. A majestic, scarlet-robed figure sweeps forwards through the mob, which parts and shrinks away. The wounded guard lowers his sword. 'My lord,' he says, 'I was about to apprehend this common thief.'

'Be silent,' commands the robed man. 'You were about to lose your life, you clumsy wretch. If you were in my service, I'd feed you to the nightgaunts. Begone!'



The red-robed man turns to you as the guard blanches, bows stiffly and is gone. He smiles coldly at you. 'Your fencing technique is passable, and may be more rewarding to you than your thievery.'

Turn to **397**.

8

You glance around. Far across the cavern you can see the end of a tunnel that leads further into the Battlepits. A faint, winking light can be seen at the end of it. The shore of the lake is covered with several large mounds made of piled stones. These look suspiciously like graves to you. You can also see in your torchlight a large block of opaque, murky ice, and beyond that there is the dull glow of red ritual candles that cast a dull glow on a bronze shrine that has been set up against one of the cavern walls. Fiercely burning braziers stand to either side of the shrine.

You now have a number of options. You may explore one of the mounds by clearing away some of the rocks; if you are in a party of Adventurers, specify who is doing this and then turn to **42**.

You may approach the shrine (turn to **71**). You may investigate the ice block (turn to **334**). You may leave the cavern by the tunnel (turn to **279**).

9

(SAGE) [*The green potion is a healing draught. The black potion is chimera spittle, a delayed-action poison. The effervescent liquid is an antidote to chimera spittle. The slimy green potion is deadly. You cannot identify the colourless liquid.*]

Now turn back to **103**.

10

He is outraged. He half rises from his chair, a tall reed-like figure that seems to unfold rather than stand. His hard thin fingers grip the edge of the table.

'I am *astonished*!' he says at last through clenched teeth. Fangs, really. 'You have had the benefit of

tuition from no less than Grandmaster Kief. I am the acknowledged authority on the Spiral of Gold game. I beat Magus Tor - the true, original Magus Tor - in a ten-game championship. Yet *you* cannot understand my explanation! Sickened though I am, I shall not slay you - merely consign you to the lower depths.' He lifts a hand from which tendrils of icy flame spread like a net, entangling you. You gasp in sudden pain, losing two Dice Endurance (armour gives no protection) as the net of cold fire tightens. Then, if still alive, you begin to sink into the floor...

Turn to **5**.

11

You call the spell to mind. As soon as he sees you starting to concentrate, the Dirge-Man gives a distorted frown of distrust. 'Oh now, what's this?' With a mad croak, he launches to the attack.

			4		
	D	1			
	2	3			

Dirge-Man

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Psychic Ability: 6

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

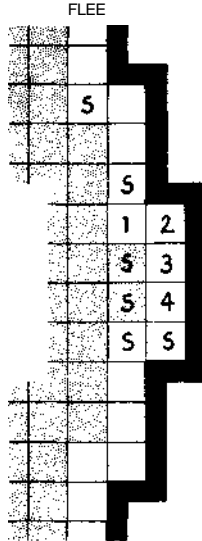
Endurance: 13

If you succeed in getting him under command turn to **57**. If you kill him, turn to **22**.

12

You hurl the ice jewel down into the bubbling pool of magma. The Skiapyps utter unhuman cries as they see it fall, glittering like frost with the magic it contains. As it strikes the magma, black slabs of cooled rock immediately form around it. The Skiapyps tremble, their flames visibly dimming. They are the elemental spirits of the crater, and by draining its furnace-heat you have sapped much of their vitality. Nonetheless, they are not prepared to retreat. With cries of stormy vengeance, they bear down upon you.

Note that the Skiapyps, being ethereal creatures of flame, are able to walk across near-vertical surfaces. They can thus move on the shaded squares, but you are limited to the narrow ledge along the crater rim.



Skiapys

Fighting Prowess: 5

Psychic Ability: 7

Endurance: *first* 10

second 10

third 10

Damage per blow: 1 Die*

Awareness: 8

fourth 10

fifth 10

sixth 10

*Armour makes *no difference* to the damage inflicted when a Skiapyr strikes. The fiery claws of these creatures are not impeded even by strong steel plate.



If you manage *to flee* past or destroy them, turn to **223**.

13

The alcove is not very deep and is covered with a beautiful array of gold and blue mosaics that sparkle in the torchlight. You step into it, hoping to find a hidden door or niche. Instead you are momentarily blinded as the mosaics let out a blinding flash of light. You feel the room spinning uncontrollably. Lights dance and whirl across the walls, and there is an instant of confusion. You realise, too late, that you have walked into a Teleportation spell.

In an instant the spinning ceases and you are now in an ornate garden under a roof of coloured gems. Sitting on the edge of a gently bubbling fountain is an elfin-featured girl wrapped in a toga of green silk.

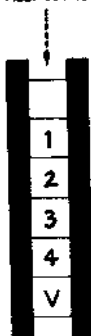
If you wish to attack her, turn to **524**. If you try talking to her, turn to **274**.

14

You are nearing the top of the steps leading up the inside of the Blue Tower. A guttural cry like the stalking growl of a great cat breaks through the sombre silence. A black-clad Assassin creeps down the stairs towards you - he must have scaled the outside of the Tower when you barred the outside door.

Place any Assassins that you did not kill from the original six in front of you on the stairs. They have restored their Endurance by the use of herbal potions. Even worse, you hear a movement and see that Magus Vyl has risen from the dead once more and is right behind you! The situation looks bad.

ASSASSINS



FLEE



Assassins

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 1 Die
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
Endurance: 5

In every Round, the Assassins (if any) who are not adjacent to an opponent will throw Shurikens at the player at the front of the party. This is like the *shoot* option of a Sage or Trickster, and requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. A Shuriken that hits inflicts 1 Die-1 damage (less Armour Rating, of course).

. . . and their undead master:

Magus Vyl

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 3 Dice
Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 9
Armour Rating: 2
Endurance: 35

Note: Because he is a vampire, Vyl has the special ability to paralyse with his touch. Anyone (except a Sage) wounded by him must immediately roll equal to or less than his or her Psychic Ability; if this roll fails, the paralysed player falls to the floor and can take no further part in the combat. Sages are immune because of their mind-over-body disciplines.

If you kill Vyl (again) you can *flee* down the stairs (turn to **513**). If you defeat Vyl and the Assassin(s), turn to **226**.

15

'Excellent.' He conceals his Die behind a slender hand and smiles across the table at you as he considers his opening gambit.

In a multi-player party, decide who is playing against him. This player must choose the numbers without conferring with the rest of the party.

Choose your opening number, which must be between 1 and 6 inclusive. Grandmaster Kief is ready. When you have decided, turn to **20**.

16

The tunnel is long and sinuous. At last it opens out into a cave where black water laps a shore of pebbles. Skirting this lake, you pass several mounds of large rocks which look distinctly like graves. Passing further across the cave, you discover a large block of murky ice, and beyond that you can see a kind of primitive shrine where ritual braziers burn fiercely. There are no other exits from the cave.

What do you want to do now? Dig up a mound (turn to **42**), look at the shrine (turn to **71**), investigate the ice block (turn to **334**) or leave the way you've just come (turn to **279**)?

17.

'A sensible decision,' replies Icon. 'I see no reason to divide our forces when victory is so close at hand. Let our motto, then, be: Trust Shall Prevail!'

If any player in the party is wounded, turn to **51**. If no one is wounded at the moment, turn to **27**.

18

(SAGE) You have spent years studying a hundred tomes and crumbling parchments full of ancient knowledge. Surely somewhere you must have read something concerning the magi of Krarth? You dear your mind of all distractions, and gradually the din

of the crowds fades away. You see countless old documents with your inner eye, and mentally sift them until you have found what you seek. *[The olive-green pennant represents Magus Kalugen, who is overlord of this citadel. A man of notorious cruelty, he has already won so many concessions this year from his fellow magi that he stands to gain very little from winning the contest. Magus Balhazar, whose pennant is a brilliant scarlet, is in quite the opposite position. He desperately needs to win the contest or he will have to cede much of his land - including thousands of acres of valuable pine forest - to his rivals. Magus Vyl is perhaps rather appropriately represented by a pennant of sombre black and purple. He is widely reputed to be one of the undead - a vampire who shuns the day and stalks the night in search of blood.]*

Now return to 1 and select another choice.

19

(SAGE) You take a close look at the insignia behind the altar. The three interlocking triangles form the crest of the House of Vyl, which is hardly surprising in view of where you are. Below them there is a smaller engraving, and you almost gasp aloud when you see it. *[It is the five-pronged symbol of the Unholy Company of the Eternally Damned, a secret organisation of vampires!]*

If you wish to search for a secret panel behind the altar, turn to **444**. If you would prefer to get out of here right now, turn to **3**.

20

Kief opens his hand to display a 5.

If your chosen number was 1, turn to **50**. If your number was 2, turn to **45**. If you chose a 3, turn to **40**. If you chose a 4, turn to **35**. If your number was the same as his, turn to **30**.

If you put down a 6, turn to **25**.

21

The right-hand corridor goes only a short distance and then opens out into a large chamber. The double doors at the far end of the chamber glimmer with a dull blue sheen. To either side of you, steps lead up to a balcony.

The most amazing feature of this room is a giant chessboard that has been constructed in the middle of the floor. The chessboard is eight metres along each side, and the pieces are as tall as you are. A glowing sphere hanging from the ceiling casts a flood of light on this playing-area.

If you want to go back and take the left-hand passage instead, turn to **249**. If you want to go up the steps, turn to **82**. If you would rather go and look at the chesspieces, turn to **422**.

22

There is no way for you to cross the chasm. Though the Emblem of Victory stands in sight, it is unattainable. You espy a black-cloaked figure with a golden sword in hand climbing the atoll towards it. Icon the Ungodly. He will win the contest on behalf of Magus Uru, and reap the rewards of wealth and fame, while you will languish here forever in the stifling mists that fill the Battlepits of Krarth.

Your quest ends in failure.

23

You hurl the Dagger. Roll to see if it hits Nebularon. If it does, he loses 1 Die—2 Endurance (that is, including his Armour Rating reduction). However, whether it hits him or not it doesn't return to you. While close to Nebularon, the spell that returns it to

your hand is stifled by his anti-magical protection. You can retrieve it after the fight - assuming you defeat him.

Turn back to **484**.

24

You unstopper the small bottle and drain its contents. Immediately you feel a wave of agony course through your body, accompanied by a buzzing sensation inside your head. Suddenly your vision seems very sharply defined - the colours of everything around you become almost painfully vivid. You can hear the slightest noise. Your senses and agility have become cat-like. You have the strength of three men. And you may be dying.

Roll one Die. If you get a 1 or 2, your heart bursts under the strain of the drug you have imbibed. If you roll 3 or more, you can increase your Fighting Prowess and Awareness both by one point - but you must reduce your Psychic Ability and Endurance by the same amount. (If you had only one Endurance left, you die.) The effect lasts several days, and thus your scores remain as altered for the rest of this adventure.

Return to the last entry you were reading and continue from there.



25

After *recovering* at the start of the second Spiral, you have two heads and five tails. Grandmaster Kief has six coins, all heads.

'Allow me to point out something that cannot have escaped your notice,' he says as you study the coins. 'You can display only a 1 now. That means that if I display anything more than 2 on my Die, you must lose. I hardly think we need play on, do you?' He sweeps the coins off the table.

Turn to **55**.

26

The being spreads his hands over the surface of the table. As he draws them back, fourteen gleaming gold coins are revealed - seven in a line in front of him, seven on your side of the table. Beside each line of coins rests a six-sided Die. All the coins are showing heads.

'I am called Kief,' says the mysterious being. 'I am Grandmaster of this game, which the True Magi called the Spiral of Gold. Pay close attention as I explain it to you.'

'We play in Rounds, called Spirals. In the first Spiral I shall secretly select a number on my Die, placing it under my hand with the number I have chosen uppermost. You do the same. Then we reveal and compare our chosen numbers. Suppose that I have the higher number. In this case you would lose some of your coins - equal to the difference between our two chosen numbers. I do not get the coins you lose; they just vanish. All right, so in our example you've lost some of your coins. I wouldn't lose any, but the number I displayed on my Die is the number of coins I have to flip over from heads to tails. So if I displayed a 4 and

you displayed a 3, you'd lose one coin and I'd have to flip over four of my coins from heads to tails.

'We then start the next Spiral by *recovering* - that is, if either player has any coins showing tails, he can flip one of them over to heads again. Then we select numbers as before, and play proceeds until one player has no heads showing at the end of a Spiral. Then he's lost.

'There are three other rules you must remember. You cannot choose a number on your Die that is equal to or greater than the number of heads you have showing. That means that we can each put any number from 1 to 6 on the first Spiral, since we start with seven coins, all heads up. But if at some later point in the game I had only five heads showing, I'd have to choose a number from 1 to 4. Secondly, if we both choose the *same* number then that Spiral is a draw and neither player loses anything. Lastly, when you have to lose a number of coins you must take them from the heads, not the tails, among the coins you have left.

'Okay, do you understand how to play?' If you reply that you're ready for a game, turn to **15**. If you tell him that you've no idea what this game is about, turn to **10**.

27

Icon suddenly draws his sword and cuts powerfully - a treacherous blow that inflicts eight Endurance points damage on the first player in the battle order. If still alive, you turn with a shout of rage to attack him.

Icon only laughs: 'Surely you did not expect me to show honour to scum such as you?' He crouches ready to meet your attack, hastily casting a spell that covers his black armour in a tracery of red sparks.

		1	1	
		3	2	
	4			

Icon the Ungodly

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 2 Dice+2

Psychic Ability: 8

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 28

Note: Icon is immune to the Enthralment spell.

He has cloaked himself in a spell of Retributive Fire. Anyone who strikes him in close combat - with, a sword, for example, but not with an arrow - is burned by this, losing one Endurance point regardless of armour.

If you win, turn to **377**.

28

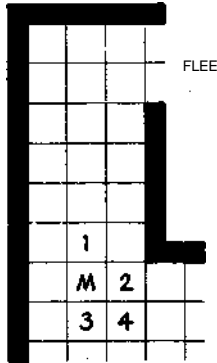
You snatch up the red pennant and hold it aloft. Two of the stewards look at each other barely concealing their frustration, and stomp off to the booth. The third rushes up to you excitedly. 'You have chosen the pennant of the esteemed and generous Magus Balhazar!' he cries.

Just at this moment a tall man dressed in scarlet robes sweeps majestically across the square towards you. The steward bows abjectly to him.

Turn to **397**.

29

You saunter over while the man is selecting a pastry from a tray. Position yourself beside him as shown. You get one free Round before he can act because he was not expecting your attack.



Man in Blue

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 1 Die+1

Psychic Ability: 7

Awareness: 7

Endurance: 15

For some reason, no one else at the party comes to your aid. If you *flee* from the mansion, turn to **119**. If you kill the man, turn to **184**.

30

'A draw,' says Kief flatly. 'Neither player loses. The next Spiral begins . . .'

Choose your number - again, anything from 1 to 6 - and turn to **310**.

31

The door opens and you enter a small cavern. A man lies dead on the stone floor nearby. Another of Kalugen's guards, by the look of it, probably sent on

some mad suicide mission through the underworld by his evil master. *Your* evil master, too, come to that ...

He has something clutched in his hand. It is an octagonal prism of coloured glass. You may take this if you wish. There are no other exits from the cavern. Nearby there is a marble dais.

If you step on to the dais, turn to **386**. If you return and take the tunnel beyond the grille (you must pass six swipes from the creatures again if you do, remember), then turn to **279**.

32

You loot all the bodies in the room, quickly finding:

four axes

twenty gold pieces

four breastplates (Armour Rating one)

three daggers

thirteen Shuriken (useless to you)

a vial of black liquid

If you have a Sage in your party, he or she can identify the last of these (turn to **463**). If not, you can drink it at any time by turning to **317**; remember to note where you are before doing this, because **317** will not guide you back there. (Write on your Character Sheet: 'Vial of black liquid - see **317** for effect' if you take it.)

Now turn to **236**.

33

You strain to manoeuvre the huge bones into place within the frame. Gradually the body of the long-dead giant is reconstructed. When all the sections of the skeleton are in place, a cold dry wind whips up around the atoll, keening hungrily. Skrymir's soul is returning from the dead.

Patches of flesh-mould appear on the sere bones. A spark of life-light gleams inside the sockets of the skull. Veins and sinews spread, glistening tendrils, as the body re-forms from dust.

Skrymir rises to stand before you, the iron frame now forming a suit of armour around his powerfully muscled body. He looks upon you as a man watches a fly. 'I have no heart!' he bellows. 'You have neglected the heart of Skrymir! I must take yours instead!'

Turn to **342**.

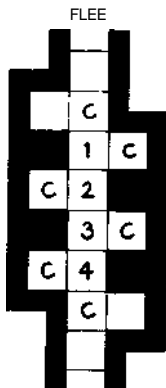
34

You search for a concealed spring that might open the mirror. Finding none, you wrap your forearm in your cloak and smash hard at the mirror. It shatters at once, showering broken glass on the red carpet. Immediately a hulking shape launches itself from a secret alcove behind where the mirror hung. Almost before you can react, a slaving corpse is battling with you, swinging its great iron mace madly from side to side.

The map shows the disposition of your party as the corpses attack. Position 1 is where your first character is standing, position 2 where the second character is (if there is more than one), and so on. The corpses are at the positions marked C, and will *attack* every Round (or *move* if they have no one to *attack*).

Before you can *flee* you must *move* to the bronze doors and, as the map shows, this will involve destroying at least one corpse. The corpses in the side alcoves will *move* out into the corridor to block characters' escape if they are given an empty square to *move* into. Remember that you cannot *move* into a

square that is already occupied by a character or a monster.



Corpses

Fighting Prowess: 5	Damage per blow: 1 Die+1
Psychic Ability: 4	Awareness: 2
Endurance: <i>first</i> 4	<i>fourth</i> 4
<i>second</i> 4	<i>fifth</i> 4
<i>third</i> 4	<i>sixth</i> 4

If you *flee* through the bronze doors, turn to **456**. If you fight the corpses and win, turn to **2**.

35

You have him, and he knows it. After *recovering* at the start of the next Spiral, he has three heads and four tails. You have only six coins, but they are all heads. The best he can do is play a 2 now, and if you play a 5 that would still knock him out of the game.

Turn to **85**.

36

The door creaks open, admitting you to what seems to be a shrine to one of the strange demonic gods of Krarth. A gore-drenched pelt is draped over the

obsidian block of the altar. Leaping red flames crackle in iron basins on either side. A pall of grey vapour hangs in the air. Just off to one side of the altar, you see a wrought-iron gate leading to another chamber.

If you wish to back out of here and continue up the stairs, turn to **3**. If you wish to search the altar, turn to **243**. If you decide to try the wrought-iron gate, turn to **526**.

37

The moment you pick up the sword, a wall appears, blocking the corridor. By experimenting, you find that the wall appears when you pick up the sword and disappears when you put it down. You cannot go on, and the thought of retracing your steps is not inviting.

If you have the steel sceptre (and it still has at least one charge), you could use it here to break through the wall. If you decide to use the steel sceptre, turn to **4**. If not, you will have to leave the sword (cross it off your Character Sheet) and head on (turn to **503**).

38

In a multi-player party, if no one specified he or she was touching the skull, then it is the first player in the battle order who has done so. The following applies to him or her.

The moment you lift the skull, its empty eye-sockets seem to glare at you, and the outlines of the room wash away like a watercolour in the rain. Suddenly you find yourself standing alone in a room filled with scrolls. The skull is no longer in your hands, but rests on an oak table beside you. You may take as many scrolls as you wish, up to your normal encumbrance limit. In order to rejoin

your comrades, however, you will need to pick up the skull again, so remember to leave one space on your encumbrance limit for this item.

The available scrolls are:

INVISIBILITY - When read during a combat, this allows all players to take the *flee* option (if there is one) on the next Round, without first having to *move*.

HEALING - This can be read at any time. It restores two Dice Endurance points to the player who reads it (up to his or her initial Endurance maximum).

ADJUST - The player who reads this can take one point from one of his or her attributes (Endurance, Fighting Prowess, Awareness or Psychic Ability) and transfer it to another attribute. The effect is permanent.

TIME BLINK - This can be read in combat, when it has the effect of returning time to the point when the combat started. The Endurance of both player(s) and opponent(s) are restored to what they were at the start of the combat.

PRECOGNITION - This scroll, which can be read at any time, gives you a glimpse into the past or future - or one possible past or future. When you read it, you can turn to an entry at random and see what it says, then return to the entry you were at before. To find out which entry you may look at, roll a Die three times: a roll of 3, then 6, then 4 would mean you could look at entry **364**. If you roll a number for which there is no entry (**666**, for instance) then the scroll is used up but you see nothing in the past or future.

There are several copies of each scroll, so if you were able to carry three items, for example, then

you could take three INVISIBILITY scrolls, or two INVISIBILITY and one TIME BLINK, or whatever. You may like to note down this entry number in case you need to refer back later to remind yourself what the scrolls do.

Each scroll can be used only once, because once read it will crumble to dust. Also, none of the scrolls can be read in *this* room, so you cannot get endless PRECOGNITIONS before leaving.

When you are ready to leave with the scrolls you have chosen, you take up the scorched skull once more.

Turn to **97**.

39

You take a sip from the bottle before handing it to him. 'What an excellent vintage!' you say, making a great show of smacking your lips. Reassured, the Dirge-Man takes a long drink himself. As he does, you surreptitiously drink a dose of the antidote. Taking back the chimera spittle, you suggest that the Dirge-Man carries you across the chasm and in return you will give him the rest of this fine 'liquor'. Suspecting nothing, he agrees and allows you to clamber up on to his broad leathery back before launching out into space ...

Turn to **118**.

40

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has three heads and four tails. You have five coins, all heads. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **60**.

41

(TRICKSTER) You are now out of breath and your

sword arm aches from parrying the crude blows of the guard. You begin to feel you were overconfident in taking him on. He has delayed you long enough for his companions to arrive. A spear prods into your back and a voice rings out: 'Drop your sword or I'll stick you like a pig.' You don't wait to be told twice, but drop your sword on to the cobblestones at your feet. You are frogmarched to the bleak dungeon of Magus Kalugen. Your companions (if you have any) are rounded up and taken there as well.

Turn to **469**.

42

You roll the heavy stones off the mound. The stones make an eerie clattering echo in the stillness of the cave as they roll away. Suddenly a dead white hand smashes through the rubble and grabs you by the wrist in a vice-like grip. If there is more than one player around the mound clearing it, then those players should each roll two Dice. The lowest score is the player who has been grabbed; this applies to him or her:

You are under a psychic attack, and must roll equal to or under your Psychic Ability on two Dice to resist it. If you succeed, turn to **447**. If you fail, turn to **138**.

43

The Barbarians jeer as you run for dear life. You reach a junction and skid to a halt on the marble floor. You must make a snap decision which way to go.

Will you go left, along a corridor of black marble (turn to **354**), or right, along a white marble corridor (turn to **54**)?

44

The following applies to whoever was drinking the liquid.

You pour the liquid down your throat. It burns as it flows into your stomach, doubling you up in agony. You writhe for a few seconds on the marble terrace, then die with the crazed laughter of the Hags ringing in your ears.

If there are any players still alive, they can sample another potion (turn to **103**) or continue on their way (turn to **481**).

45

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has three heads and four tails. You have only four coins - all heads. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **90**.

46

You take out the sparkling emerald gem that Larisha gave you. According to her, it is the last deadly breath of Astarandel the Dragonlord - contained, she said, within a crystalline spell of confinement. You hurl the gem at Nebularon, diving back to take cover behind a pillar. The gem lands at his dusky feet and begins to shimmer, fading as his protective anti-magical power cancels out the Confinement spell.

'You fool,' roars Nebularon, glancing down at it. 'How is this pebble meant to harm . . . ?'

There is a blinding flash of white light. Even sheltered by the pillar, you nearly black out in the wave of intense heat. Astarandel's last breath sounds like the eruption of a volcano. It is very much louder than Nebularon's dying screams . . .

Turn to **457**.

47

(SAGE) You are very careful not to splash any of the liquid on to your lips, knowing that Assassins usually carry the most virulent poisons with them. In fact, you recognise it as a preparation of the drug *vatravish*, a powerful stimulant that increases the user's speed and strength. Assassins sometimes use it because of their single-minded dedication to their cause, but you know that it can have unpleasant side-effects. You throw the bottle away.

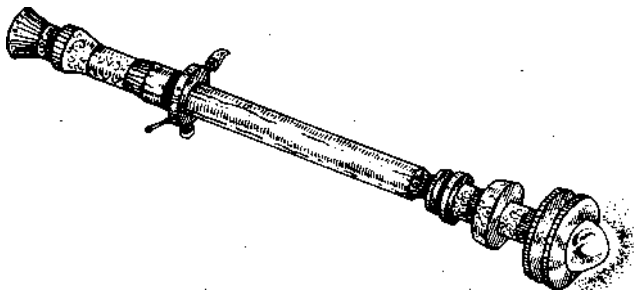
You decide it is time to return to the main square and see about getting one of the other magi as a patron.

Turn to **443**.

48

You return to the gothic-arched vestibule. Looking again at the shining countenance on the wall, you wonder if it is indicating that you should take the left-hand passage. If so, you intend to do as it suggests. You advance down the passage.

Turn to **249**.



49

(ENCHANTER) 'There was the Warlock known as Icon the Ungodly,' she replies. 'And two scurvy knaves who resisted all our blandishments. Lastly,

there was a single Sage who survived the bridge crossing where all his comrades died. He helped us with our cooking . . . 'She glances at one of the cauldrons.

Your Enthralment is slipping. On a whim you snatch the ladle out of a nearby cauldron and pour its noxious contents over her. There is a hissing as it dissolves the wretched Hag into a pool of greyish slime. The others scream and spit, but do nothing out of fear of your powers.

Turn to **67**.

50

'Probably you see that you now cannot win by any strategy,' he says smugly. Your three coins are all heads. He, after *recovering* for the next Spiral, has three heads and four tails. Before you can say anything, he reaches out and sweeps the remaining coins off the table.

Turn to **55**.

51

Icon steps forwards and shakes hands. 'First, let me attend to those wounds,' he suggests. 'We shall need to be at full strength for the dangers we must yet face, and a small application of healing sorcery is what is needed here . . . '

He raises his hands and begins to chant in Harada, the language of his native land of Yamato. Seconds later, he gives a grin of feral mirth as noxious vapours trail across the ground towards you. He has cast the Mists of Death, and every player must try to resist this Psychic spell. Anyone who fails loses 2 Dice Endurance points - a loss from which armour gives no protection.

If you survive, turn to **27**.

52

You lift the olive-green pennant. 'You have chosen the standard of Magus Kalugen, overlord of this city,' declares Kalugen's steward grandly. 'I am to escort you to his palace, the House of the Fivefold Torments. There you will be received with the honour due to you.' As he speaks, a number of soldiers draw up around you and you find that they are leading you off through the winding dark alleyways of the city. The jostling crowds miraculously melt away when they see the olive-green livery of the soldiers, and you soon find yourself walking through the main gate of Kalugen's palace, a massive, fire-blackened mansion-house with heavily barred windows and a high ordure-stained tower rising in one of its corners. The great gate of the mansion is swung shut behind you and you find yourself in a courtyard crowded with a group of raggedly dressed people waiting in line, clutching the petitions they hope to present to Kalugen. You are ushered through this mob into a dark hall whose ceiling is lost in the sooty gloom. You are led to the far end of it, where you can dimly make out a seated figure on a throne. You instinctively recognise him as Kalugen.

Turn to **471**.

53

(TRICKSTER) The usher looks shocked. 'I assure you,' he says, spluttering with indignation, 'my loyalty to my master is beyond price!'

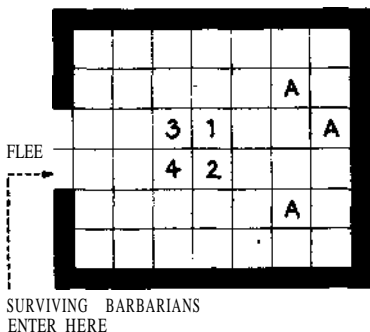
Well - perhaps beyond the price *you* can afford, you think wryly.

Turn to **458**.

54

You come to a door and shoulder it open. Three wiry

men dressed all in black look up from the body they've just slain with their daggers. A group of Assassins! To make matter worse, you can hear the Barbarians charging in pursuit of you. A moment later they burst into the room just behind you.



Assassins

Fighting Prowess: 7	Damage per blow: 1 Die
Psychic Ability: 6	Awareness: 7
Endurance: <i>first</i> 6	<i>third</i> 6
<i>second</i> 6	

In any Round in which an Assassin is not adjacent to an opponent, he will throw a Shuriken. This is like the *shoot* option of a Sage or Trickster, and requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. A Shuriken that hits inflicts 1 Die-1 damage (less Armour Rating, of course). An Assassin's order of preference for Shuriken targets (if not attacking the Barbarians that Round) is: Enchanter - Sage - Trickster - Warrior.

The Assassins and the Barbarians are mutually hostile. That is, they will treat one another as equivalent to one of your party when it comes to selecting opponents. Any Assassin who is not



actually in melee has a 50 - 50 chance of throwing his Shuriken at a Barbarian or at one of your party.

Remember to adjust the Barbarians' Endurance scores to take account of any wounds you have inflicted already.

Barbarians

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 1 Die+2
Psychic Ability: 5 Awareness: 7
Armour Rating: 1
Endurance: originally 12

If you *flee* and run back to take the black corridor, turn to **354**. If you defeat both Assassins and Barbarians, turn to **32**.

55

Grandmaster Kief stands, unfolding himself from his chair like a great robed stick-insect. 'Our game is at an end,' he declares. 'It is time for your transition to the lower levels . . .'

His hands come up, showering a web of sparks around you. You feel an acrid taste in your mouth, but no pain. For a moment you wonder what he has done to you, then you see. You are sinking into the floor of the amphitheatre!

Turn to **5**.

56

You look out from the side terrace of the temple. A flight of unsupported marble stairs descends from here to a low table of rock. You can just make out two shimmering ovals of energy that hang in the air there.

If you wish to go down the stairway, turn to **427**. If you wish to go around to the other side of the temple, turn to **357**.

57

The Dirge-Man waits passively to be given his instructions. You climb up on to his wide leathery back and, clinging on for dear life, spur him into flight. He swoops out across the chasm, and you catch a dizzying glimpse of vertical precipices stretching right down into the bowels of the under-earth. Wind currents buffet you to and fro, but the Dirge-Man rides them expertly. In a few moments he sets you gently down on the far side. You hastily order him to fly off before the spell can fade.

Turn to **359**.

58

(TRICKSTER) Under the merchant's beer-stained furjacket you notice a bulging money-pouch. Being a Trickster, your thoughts naturally turn to theft.

If you wish to try to rob the merchant, roll two Dice. Your attempt at robbery succeeds if you roll less than or equal to your Awareness (turn to **121**). If you roll more than your Awareness, then your attempt fails (turn to **181**). If you don't want to try robbing the merchant, return to 1 and choose again.

59

You heave the cage into view. The emerald scarab still hangs around the skeleton's neck: a thick green slime seems to be congealing on it from some deposit in the water. You quickly wrench the scarab off the neck and wipe away the hideous muck before the eidolon reconstitutes itself. Then you let the cage and its bones splash back into the lake, where they sink out of sight.

If there is a Sage present, he or she can identify the scarab (turn to **352**). If there is no Sage in the party but someone is still prepared to risk putting it

on, decide who will do so and then turn to **187**. If you decide to leave the scarab and to go on your way, turn to **247**.

60

This time he opens his hand to reveal a 2.

If you chose a 1, turn to **65**. If your number was 2, turn to **70**. If you chose a 3, turn to **75**. If you chose a 4, turn to **80**. If you put down 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

61

You enter a room at the end of the corridor. Three Assassins in blood-drenched black robes and face masks lie in a heap at the centre of the room. Presumably they were another magus's champions, but fell foul of the Barbarian party. Searching the bodies, you find many of the Assassin's favoured missile weapon, the deadly throwing spike. Unfortunately you cannot use this type of weapon as you have not been trained to do so. There is also a smashed black vial that one of the Barbarians would seem to have ground underfoot.

Turn to **236**.

62

The following applies to whoever was drinking the liquid.

You feel a wave of energy coursing through your body. Increase your Endurance score to one point above its current maximum and, if you are wounded, restore your Endurance to this new maximum. (For example, if you are a second-rank Warrior you now have Endurance of thirteen.)

You are about to take a second draught, but the Hag squatting by the cauldron snatches the ladle from your hand. 'Only one draught per person,' she

cackles. 'Otherwise it's poisonous, you see . . .'

You cannot drink the same potion again. If there are any other players who would like to drink it and gain the same benefit, they can do so. Otherwise, turn back to **103** and try a potion you have not yet sampled. If you don't want to try any more potions, turn to **481**.

63

The following applies to the player wearing the ring.

As you point the ring at Nebularon, it bursts into flame. Lose one Endurance as a searing pain shoots up your arm. If you are still alive, you watch the ring burn away to ashes. Cross it off your Character Sheet. Nebularon laughs - a harsh, hollow roar - and mocks you: 'Come, mortal! Such tawdry baubles are of no use to you now.'

Return to **484** to do battle with him - but deduct one from your Fighting Prowess, for this combat only, because of the burn on your hand.

64

You arrive at Balhazar's mansion as the temple gongs of the citadel sound out the hour of midnight. A long avenue flanked by cedar trees and decorated with gaily covered lanterns and embroidered banners on poles stretches to the white marble portico of the main entrance. Guards patrol up and down the avenue, but they seem to ignore most of the guests. However, they stare long and hard at you and are just about to step up and challenge you when Balhazar's usher rushes from the doorway of the house to greet you. He gestures you towards the doorway, behind which you can see a party in full swing. All the revellers wear masks concealing their

identities. They are entertained by jugglers and musicians.

The usher offers you a tray with drinks and sweetmeats laid out on it. 'My master will speak to you of employment,' he says. 'That is' - he gestures at the dozens of revellers - 'if you have the ability to find him . . . !'

You stare in bewilderment at the masked party-goers. How are you to locate your prospective employer among them?

If there is a Trickster who wishes to bribe the usher, turn to **53**. If there is a Sage who intends using ESP, turn to **309**. If there is an Enchanter who thinks it is worth summoning a Faltyn, turn to **232**. If you just want to use your powers of deduction to work out which of the revellers is Balhazar, turn to **458**.

65

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and five tails. You have only four coins left, but all are heads. He can play only a 1 now, so you automatically win.

Turn to **85**.

66

(SAGE) The Elf called upon the spirit-gods of his ancestors as he died. These are the eerie beings that now surround you in the fog, and they have come to wreak vengeance on you for slaying their blood-kin. You lose no time focusing your energy on Exorcising them, and fortunately it works. The spirits draw back and the fog disappears.

You can now loot the Elves' bodies if you wish. They had the following equipment:

six swords

one bow (for Sages and Tricksters only)

eight arrows

six leather jerkins (Armour Rating one)

After taking anything you want, you start to walk along the corridor.

Turn to **503**.

67

You can now investigate the temple (turn to **298**), take the left-hand path around it (turn to **357**), take the right-hand path (turn to **56**) or try a potion (turn to **103**).

68

You approach a remarkable sight. A large basalt platform hangs suspended in the air, apparently unsupported, fifty metres above the cavern floor. On the ground directly underneath it stands a bronze gong.

If you took the bronze mallet that Icon was carrying and wish to use it now, turn to **508**. If you would rather head straight for the Emblem of Victory, turn to **238**.

69

He lurches from side to side, struggling to focus on you. Giving vent to an enormous belch, he says, 'Lookin' fer employ with a magus, you'll be, I don' wonder. There's three still wantin' champions fer the contest - that's their pennants over by that booth ...

'Magus Vyl is the worst o' the lot, but then 'e's a vampire an' I shouldn't speak ill o' the dead. Kalugen - lord o' this city, as you'll know - well, 'e ain't much better, an' he's not in the contest to win, I've 'eard. But the third - Magus Balhazar - is the

best of a bad bunch, 'cause 'e's got most to lose in the contest, an' 'e'll be rewardin' 'is champions the best on account o' that.'

Any hopes you might have of questioning the merchant further are soon dashed. Exhausted by the effort of speaking, he favours you with a broad grin and then falls like a plank on the cobblestones. A boot in the ribs does nothing to rouse him from his drunken stupor, so you decide to approach the booth.

Turn to **452**.

70

'A draw,' says Kief. You proceed to the next Spiral, and after *recovering* he has four heads and three tails. He thus gains a little ground against your five heads, and you must choose your next number carefully. Do so, then turn to **185**.

71

It is a simple shrine to Freya, the Mercanian fertility goddess.

If there is a Sage in the party who would like to say the appropriate words of reverence, turn to **153**. Otherwise, if you have not already done so, you can investigate the block of ice (turn to **334**) or one of the grave mounds (turn to **42**), or you can leave via the tunnel by turning to **279**.

72

You reason" that the Fetishists' lair cannot be far away. Sure enough, you soon spy a narrow cave entrance in the pebble-strewn slope. It is only about five metres off the path, so you feel no risk in edging down to investigate. Volcanic fumes seep out of the cave and drift down the slope, slowly adding to the

swirling fog of mist far below. Holding your breath, you reach in a little way. Your hand encounters a corroded copper scroll-case containing an aged yellow parchment.

If there is a Sage present who wishes to read the scroll, turn to **254**. If not, you continue along the path to the shrine (turn to **339**).

73

After some time they come back. They are slightly wounded, but seem to be in good spirits. That's better,' says the red-bearded one. 'Now I've worked up a sweat.'

'A sweat?' guffaws one. 'Why, Torsvald, you must be getting old, by golly, if fighting little Assassins gets you winded!'

'Ho,' laughs Torsvald, 'maybe I am, but maybe it's not sweat at all but the grease off those slippery little runts, eh?'

This looks like a good moment to ambush them. You dislodge the grille and it falls on Torsvald's head. Too bad it didn't hit a vital spot. You drop in their midst and get one free strike before they can collect their wits to fight.

FLEE

	B	
	1	B
2	3	4
	B	B

Barbarians

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 1 Die+2

Psychic Ability: 5	Awareness: 7
Armour Rating: 1	
Endurance: <i>first</i> 11	<i>third</i> 10
<i>second</i> 11	<i>fourth</i> 8

If you defeat them, turn to **251**. If you *flee* along the corridor, turn to **506**.

74

You search their bodies and find twenty gold pieces. You can also take their four axes and four bronze breastplates if you wish. The latter have an Armour Rating of only one, so if you are already wearing armour they are of no use to you.

Reasoning that they will have already cleared out any treasure hoards to the left, you decide to head right. The corridor takes several sharp turns. You come to an object that sparkles in the light of the wall-lanterns. It is a sword, encrusted with gems of fabulous value. But as you are about to pick it up, your natural suspicion gets the better of you. Why should anyone leave a magnificent weapon like this just lying in the middle of a corridor?

If you decide to leave it and continue on your way, turn to **503**. If there is an Enchanter in the party who wishes to investigate it with Detect spells, turn to **387**. If you just pick it up regardless of the consequences, turn to **37**.

75

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has three heads and three tails. Your five coins now show three heads and two tails. 'Our positions are rather close, are they not?' says Kief with a broad smile.

Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **225**.

76

You look at the four nearest mirrors. There might be a secret passage behind at least one of them, and you decide which one to try first. Choose one of the four below - and if you are in a party, decide which player is going to examine the mirror *before* turning to the appropriate paragraph.

If you look behind the first mirror, turn to **231**. If you look behind the second mirror, turn to **304**. If you look behind the third mirror, turn to **202**. If you look behind the fourth mirror, turn to **34**.

77

The corridor brings you to a T-junction. From here you can go straight on along the corridor or you can turn right down the narrow tunnel that joins it.

If you continue heading straight on, turn to **338**. If you take the tunnel to your right, turn to **16**.

78

You materialise within the broken walls of an old shrine. You can see the temple where the Hags live, about two hundred metres away atop another pinnacle.

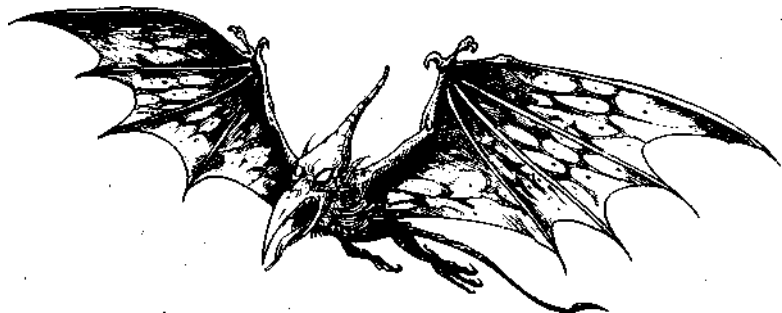
Examining your surroundings, you notice a golden dish that glimmers in the sporadic light of the volcanic geysers outside. Grey stone gargoyles cling to the walls, the dancing shadows making them seem to grin. Beyond an exit at the rear of the shrine, a narrow path leads along the top of a knife-edge precipice.

If you wish to leave the shrine, turn to **92**. If you would rather examine the gold dish first, turn to **507**.

79

The Dirge-Man settles on the steps above you,

flexing his enormous leathery wings as if glad of the rest. You notice that he does not have the spiked talons of a normal Dirge-Man, but human hands. 'I could fly you across,' he declares in his cracked voice. 'But a question has arisen. Essentially, what's in it for me?'



If you wish to use a gilded bridle, turn to **301**. If you wish to use some chimera spittle, turn to **321**. If an Enchanter is willing to Enthral him, turn to **11**. If you cannot do any of these, turn to **22**.

80

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and three tails. You have the same. This position only allows you both to play a 1 on the next Spiral, so you then each have three heads and two tails.

Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **320**.

81

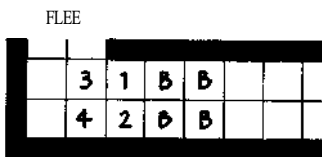
You lean breathless against the wall and count the cost of this desperate battle. The body of the vampire Magus lies on the cold flagstones at your feet.

If there is a Sage in your party, turn to **416**.

Otherwise you leave and make your way up the stairs to the top of the Tower (turn to **14**).

82

You ascend the steps to the balcony and run straight into four bowmen crouching there in ambush. They wear red livery - the champions of Magus Horg you think. The two nearest jump up with swords in their hands, while the other two notch arrows on to their bowstrings.



Bowmen

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 1 Die

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7

Endurance: *first* 6 *third* 6

second 6 *fourth* 6

The bowmen who are not adjacent to a player will *shoot* each Round. This requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. An arrow that hits inflicts one Die damage (less Armour Rating, of course). Their priority when choosing targets is to put down anyone who is actively engaged in the combat. A player who stands around doing nothing will not be shot at until all others are down, but if he or she fights, shoots or starts to cast a spell then he or she is a suitable target for an arrow. Shots will be concentrated on a single player each Round, starting with the most seriously wounded player.

If you *flee*, take two arrow shots in the back and (if still alive) turn to **48**. If you kill the bowmen, turn to **281**.

83

(TRICKSTER) You are too long in the tooth to be caught out here. Obviously the 'statues' *are* previous Adventurers. But they must have thought there was something of interest in the alcoves to take the risk... Peering into an alcove, you notice a secret door at the back. Possibly you could open it and step through without touching the floor of the dais - perhaps evading the petrifying spell. Then again, you may be wrong. And who wants to spend eternity as a lump of stone . . . ?

If you are prepared to run the risk, turn to **533**. If you'd rather return and take the other corridor, turn to **354**.

84

'So you did.' He grins, but does not seem grateful. 'Death would doubtless appreciate a sacrifice in return for the loss of my great soul, so prepare to die in my place. This is the gratitude of Skrymir!'

Turn to **342**.

85

Kief looks at you with a wry smile. '*Very* few people have ever beaten me at the game,' he says. 'No reward I can offer truly expresses my admiration. Nonetheless, I have a couple of items that might interest you.'

He places two objects on the table. One is an octagonal prism of coloured glass. The other is a sparkling blue ice jewel. 'Take both,' says Kief. 'I feel magnanimous. And now, prepare to enter the nether caverns . . .'

Flickering beams of light shoot from his fingertips, swiftly weaving a web of energy around you. You flinch momentarily before realising that the

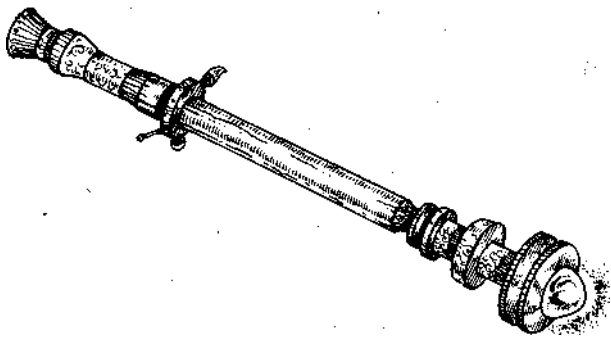
beams are not hurting you. What, then, are they for? You have your answer when you look down: you are sinking into the floor!

Turn to **5**.

86

(ENCHANTER) You call the spell to mind and then cast it. There is no need to roll for this because you are not in a combat situation and do not need to hurry the enchantment. You are able to see any spells fluorescing with a bright aura under this spell. *[You see no sign of magic from the sarcophagi, though this does not necessarily mean they don't contain something magical. The dais of grey stone, however, flickers with powerful sorcery. As to whether that sorcery is benign or hostile - you cannot tell.]*

Return to **246** and select another option.



87

The last of them falls to the floor. As he dies, he reaches out towards the fire-burnt skull. His fingers twitch in front of its sightless sockets and he grunts something in the guttural Mercanian tongue. Then he dies. Examining their bodies, you find four

battleaxes, four breastplates (not much use to you; only Armour Raring one) and twenty gold pieces. Take what you will from these spoils.

If you also want to take the skull, turn to **38**. If you decide to leave this room and continue on your way, turn to **249**.

88

You reach the other side of the bridge and step on to the terrace. The Hags glare at you but keep their distance. If any other players are still on the other side of the gorge, they must decide who will cross next and turn to the appropriate entry.

If no one remains on the other side, turn to **98**. If you have been travelling with Imragarn and he is now alone on the other side, turn to **519**.

89

Which item will you use? An ice jewel (turn to **99**), a vellum scroll (turn to **312**), an octagonal prism (turn to **391**) or a ruby ring (turn to **237**)? If you do not have any of these, or choose not to use them, turn to **112**.

90

He chose a 2.

If your number was 1, turn to **95**. If your number was 2, turn to **100**. If you chose a 3, turn to **105**. If you chose anything else, turn to **286**.

91

You throw yourself back down the corridor and snatch up the sword. In the same instant that you pick up the sword, a wall of solid stone appears behind you, blocking the corridor. The sword was a magical trap and you are now penned in at the end

of a cul-de-sac. The Barbarians are now almost on top of you.

Do you want to drop the sword? If so, turn to **264**. If you prefer to keep the sword and fight it out with them, turn to **314**.



92

You wend your way along a narrow ridge rising like a sharp backbone out of the cavern floor. A murky sea of mist sits in the hollows below, illuminated now and then by the red lightning gouts of fire. The path brings you to a high-walled crater with a tall stone pylon built in the centre. The pylon has an entrance that is clearly visible, and there may be many treasure-laden chambers within. But you have to put aside such thoughts, because the pylon is entirely cut off by a moat of boiling lava and there is no way you could hope to reach it.

The path divides and snakes along the crater rim. You skirt the bubbling lava pit, slowly making your way towards an incline that leads off to the far end of the cavern.



Suddenly two shabby Adventurers appear from behind a boulder near the lip of the crater. They look eerie in the glowering light thrown up from the lava below, clutching their swords like fiends out of the Pit. One of them grins crookedly, displaying rotten teeth. 'Your money,' he says, '*and* your life.'

Turn to **198**.

93

Larisha stands up, trailing her silk toga like a shadow. 'Return now to the magi's labyrinth,' she says, lifting her hands to display dozens of jewelled rings. 'If I possessed a soul, perhaps I would wish you well . . . !'

Colours and sounds jangle and swirl about you. For a moment you are jerked off your feet, then you settle down on to a carpeted floor. The confusion of lights fades to reveal that you are now in a corridor lined with mirrors.

Turn to **326**.

94

There is a profusion of different costumes all around you. A man in a sequined mask capers about the room in jester's motley. A blond-wigged man dressed like a Mercanian reaver enters from the garden with a slim young lady on his arm. You notice two men standing beside a fountain in earnest conversation: one is dressed like a torturer, the other like a perfumed dandy. On a chaise-longue, you notice a fellow in a domino cape romancing a girl in black velvet.

Whom will you approach?

The jester (turn to **527**), the reaver (turn to **417**), the torturer (turn to **123**), the dandy (turn to **277**) or the domino (turn to **487**)?

95

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and five tails. You lost a coin, leaving you with three heads. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **110**.

96

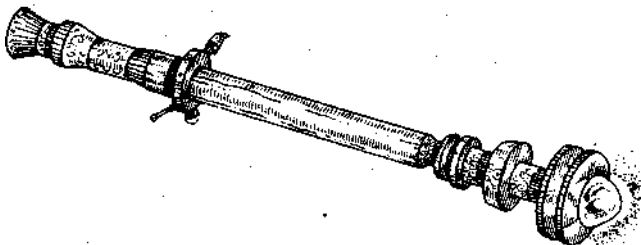
The sarcophagi are indeed built on a grand scale. You were not able to fully appreciate the size until you approached one close up. It is more than four metres long, big enough to hold the body of an Ogre or a Frost Giant. The carvings on the lids depict four old men in regal attire. Ancestors of the loathsome Magus Kalugen? There is little to suggest a family resemblance in the wise faces of these long-dead monarchs.

If you wish to pass on towards the beach, turn to **293**. If you wish to open a sarcophagus, will it be the first (turn to **351**), the second (turn to **186**), the third (turn to **403**) or the fourth (turn to **137**)?

97

You reappear in the first room. You no longer have the skull, so you cannot make a second visit to the scriptorium. You step out of the room and continue along the tunnel.

Turn to **249**.



98

Now that the show is over, the disgusting Hags lope back to their cauldrons. You move across the terrace, feeling their rheumy eyes on you. Their repulsive familiars rush about under your feet - rotting crows with eyes dangling from sockets, yellow-fanged rats, warty malformed toads with human faces, scuttling objects that suggest entrails on legs . . . They clutch at your heels as you walk past, and you feel you would prefer to be back on the bridge fighting than endure this horror. The Hags themselves crouch on the temple steps, gabbling to one another and shrieking with insane laughter.

If you want to talk to the Hags, turn to **212**. If you want to go up the steps into the temple, turn to **298**. If you want to take the path around to the right of the temple, turn to **56**. If you want to walk around it to the left, turn to **357**.

99

You fling the ice jewel out from the ledge, calling upon its power. It chills the warm air currents that enable the Dirges to stay aloft, and they spiral down out of control into the mist-shrouded river that courses along the gorge far below. Breathing a sigh of relief, you make your way down to the platform at the bottom of the ledge.

Turn to **142**.

100

A draw. The next Spiral sees him *recovering* to four heads and three tails. You have lost any advantage you may have had, because you have four heads - out of a total of four coins. You grit your teeth, determined to win back his gain in the next Spiral.

After choosing your number, turn to **125**.

101

There is no way across the simmering pool of magma. You slump to the floor in despair. You have failed in your quest, but that is now the least of your worries. Trapped in the isolated pylon, you face a slow agonising death by starvation.



102

(TRICKSTER) You flip the catch of the secret door and step over the dais carefully without setting foot on the floor of the alcove. The door leads to a narrow compartment where you find a gold ring. *[Slipping this on, you sense that it is a Ring of Warding. It has four charges, and each charge will increase your Armour Rating by one for the duration of one combat. Note it down on your Character Sheet, and remember to keep track of its charges as you expend them.]*

You step back into the room and return to try the passage of black marble.

Turn to **354**.

103

If there is a Sage present who would like to examine the potions, turn to **9**. If not, which potion will you

try? A bubbling green soup (turn to **62**), a tarry black substance (turn to **299**), an effervescent liquid (turn to **358**), a slimy green concoction (turn to **44**) or a colourless brew (turn to **409**)?

(In a multi-player party, don't forget that someone must specify that he or she is the one sampling the potion.) For each potion you try you must part with two gold pieces. If you cannot pay, turn to **481**.

104

(TRICKSTER) Unseen fingers grope at your backpack and belt as you pass through the waterfall. They are stealing from you - a fact you realise too late when you emerge on the other side stripped of all your possessions except for (if you still had them) your sword and armour. If you had nothing *but* your sword and armour, those are taken instead.

You turn and glare angrily into the waterfall. It is just a theatrical gesture - you can do nothing to recover your possessions, as they have been taken by thieving Fossgrims. These water spirits are invulnerable to any sort of physical or magical coercion.

Turn to **267**.

105

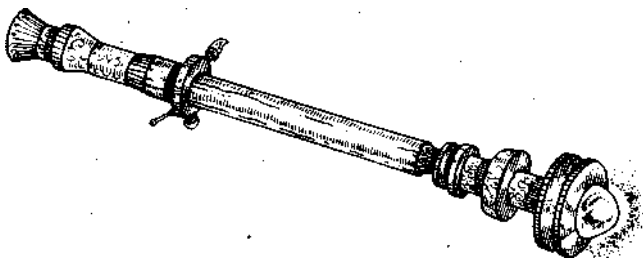
After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has three heads and three tails. You have only two heads and two tails - a situation that forces you to play a 1 this time. Smiling, Kief opens his hand to show a 2.

Turn to **120**.

106

If you have them, you could use the steel sceptre (turn to **219**) or the emerald scarab (turn to **517**). If

you have neither of these, or decide not to use them, turn to **369**.



107

At last you manage to pull the cage up again. As it breaks the surface, the eidolon gives a forlorn howl and begins to wring its hands. It seems to be imploring you to leave its skeleton untouched, but you know that a monstrous being such as this can be shown no mercy. You tear the scarab amulet from the skeleton's neck. It gives a brief pulse of light. There is a scream from the eidolon, then it dissipates into empty air.

You now have the emerald scarab.

If there is a Sage present, he or she can identify it (turn to **352**). If there is no Sage in the party but someone is still prepared to risk putting it on, decide who will do this and turn to **187**. If you decide to leave the scarab and go on your way, turn to **247**.

108

(SAGE) You must attempt to awaken the latent powers of your 'inner eye'. Calling on the teachings of your Adept Masters, you begin to clear your mind of all distractions, trying to see beyond the natural spectrum. To represent this attempt, choose

one of these options - one indicates failure and the other, perhaps, indicates success . . . Turn to either **313** or **263**.

109

(ENCHANTER) You are used to the wiles and evasive cunning of feckless Faltyns. 'No,' you correct it sharply. 'Not *any* magus - locate Magus Balhazar.'

The Faltyn flickers across the edge of your vision - a shimmering blue figure. A moment later it is back at your side. [*Balhazar has instructed me not to point him out,* it murmurs. *He prefers that you use your initiative for this test. Still, I will levy no charge under the circumstances . . .*]

'Get you gone, vile creature!' you snap at it, alarming it into dematerialising at once.

If there is a Sage who wishes to try ESP, turn to **309**.

If not, turn to **458**.

110

His number this time is a 1, of course.

If you also played 1, turn to **50**. If your number was 2, turn to **120**. If you put down a 3 or more, turn to **286**.

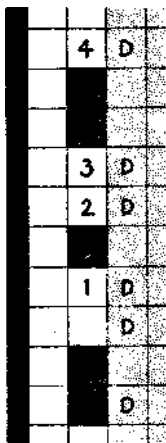
111

(TRICKSTER) Roll two Dice. If the score is equal to or less than your Awareness, turn to **329**. If it is greater, turn to **444**.

112

You wedge back against some rock outcroppings on the ledge to give you partial cover from the Dirges' attack. If the party includes a Sage and/or a Tricks-

ter, they can *shoot* twice at the Dirges (assuming they have arrows) before normal combat begins.



Dirges

Fighting Prowess: 6	Damage per bite: 1 Die+2
Psychic Ability: 5	Awareness: 6
Endurance: <i>first</i> 5	<i>fourth</i> 5
<i>second</i> 5	<i>fifth</i> 5
<i>third</i> 5	<i>sixth</i> 5

It is not worth trying to get away, as they would only swoop in pursuit. If you manage to kill them all, you can continue down the ledge to the platform (turn to **142**).

113

(TRICKSTER) You have to decide which of the two bridges to use. They appear identical, but in order to reach the further of the two you must first pass through the waterfall issuing from the gargoyle's mouth.

If you cross via the nearer bridge, turn to **267**. If

you go through the waterfall to the other bridge, turn to **464**.

114

The moment you enter the gate, you are under assault by some unknown psychic force. You spin in the air as though in a tunnel of glaring blue light. Ahead is an area of darkness - the destination of the gate. Behind, you can still see the distorted image of the area you have just come from: the table of rock, with the jangled edges of the stairway and temple beyond it.

Every player must try to roll Psychic Ability or less on two Dice. Anyone who fails must lose one item or one Endurance point (the player's choice).

If *everyone* in the party succeeds in the roll, you can proceed to the destination of the gate (turn to 428). If *any* player fails the roll, then the whole party cannot proceed. In this case, you can either keep trying to reach the far end of the gate (make the Psychic roll again) or turn back and take the other gate (turn to 307).

115

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, Kief has three heads and three tails. This contrasts rather strongly with your three heads - and *no* tails. He watches you for a moment, then says: 'Well, you have reached a no-win situation. A Converging Spiral, as we call it.' His hands snake out to sweep the coins from the table.

Turn to **55**.

116

'Ah, it is well,' says the ghost with a misty, emotionless smile. 'The loyal servants of Zyn shall

share in his glory, and I shall reward you above all others.' It passes its hands over the sarcophagus lid, which slowly rises into the air. You look upon a mouldered skeleton that clutches a lump of granite in its broken fingers.

'My mortal form...' says the ghost wistfully. 'So long since I could taste the musky wines of Asmuly or feel a scented breeze from off the meadows . . . Take the stone! Take it quickly! I wish to wallow no longer in the memory of things lost to me.'

You have no choice but to comply. Your agreement to aid the ghost has bereft you of any power to oppose him. You take the lump of granite from the skeleton's hands, and the sarcophagus slowly closes again.

You see that you hold a fossilised heart. 'It is the heart of the giant Skrymir,' explains the ghost. 'He was destroyed by the True Magi, but he shall be my instrument of vengeance against their heirs, these mewling modern magi who have usurped the ancient grandeur...' He flickers and seems to grow larger and more tenebrous for a moment, then settles down into a cold hard radiance. 'Go towards the atoll. I have no interest in this petty contest; it is of no concern to me whether you take the Emblem of Victory or not. Do so if you wish. However, on your way to the Emblem at the summit, you will pass through chambers where the sundered fragments of Skrymir's body lie - his massive legs, his rib-cage, his arms and fleshless skull. Take them with you. At the summit, assemble them and place the fossilised heart in his dusty chest. Then stand you back, for the magic of Zyn shall roar forth from the cosmic interstices once again, as it did in times of old. Flesh shall clothe his yellowed bones; his heart shall beat and warm blood shall course through his

veins; his eyes shall open and behold this travesty of ancient Krarth, and to the upstart magi he shall mete out a most fitting fate. Now, make ready to return below . . .'

He lifts diaphanous hands. A stream of grey-blue lights surrounds you. The scene shifts, and once more you find yourself on the plain below the floating platform. You can proceed as before - but remember that you have the heart of Skrymir now and - for the moment at least - you cannot discard it.

Turn to **238**.

117

Skrymir rises from the ground, seeming to tower up and up. His beard flows like rivulets from a glacier; his eyes burn like frost. He raises his arms towards the cavern roof and gives a great wordless bellow of exultation. The walls seem to shake. If the magi in the city above hear it, they must be trembling now.

'Life!' he thunders. 'To live again! To turn about the yoke of death and place it about the magi's necks! This is what I have dreamed of in my centuried sleep. And now, quake, you magi. Bolt the gates of your citadels. Marshal your armies and your puny magics. Skrymir strides the earth once more, and this time his iron-shod feet shall tread your mortal bodies into the mire!'

Skrymir is obviously getting ready to return to the surface to put some of his plans for vengeance into immediate effect. If you would like to point out that you have just restored him to life, turn to **84**. If you say nothing, turn to **257**.

118

On the Dirge-Man's back, you are carried far out

across the chasm. The roaring wind-currents seem to slam you to and fro at random, but the Dirge-Man is used to them and manoeuvres with a bizarre elegance. Halfway across, he brings up the matter of the chimera spittle: 'I think it is best to be quite candid. If you do not allow me to finish the liquor, I shall loop over and drop you into the chasm below.'

'Do not be too hasty,' you retort. 'The "liquor" was in fact a deadly poison for which I had already taken the antidote. If you expect to receive the antidote yourself, you had better ensure a safe and comfortable landing.'

Whimpering in fear for his life, the Dirge-Man flutters in to a landing on the opposite rim of the chasm. You hand him the rest of the chimera spittle - swearing that, although it *looks* like the poison, it is in fact the antidote. The Dirge-Man drinks eagerly, and you leave before he discovers the truth.

Turn to **359**.

119

Dejectedly you return to the square. The black and purple pennant has gone. You are relieved to see that one pennant remains, however: the olive-green banner of Magus Kalugen, who rules this city. The steward is huddled beside a brazier, trying to draw what warmth he can from the glimmering coals. As you stride over, he looks up. 'The hour is late and I am cold,' he says. Take this banner and let me go home.'

You are just about to do so when another hand, velvet-gloved and bearing many white-gold rings, reaches out to snatch it.

'I shall be Kalugen's champion,' states the newcomer. He appears to be an Enchanter. He turns to smile at you - a very cold and sinister smile. 'I am

Dominus Quel. And you - you are dust if you try to oppose me.'

Will you oppose him? If so, turn to **473**. If you let him take the pennant, turn to **164**.

120

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and four tails. Your coins now show two heads and one tail. You must both play 1, drawing.

Turn to **115**.

121

(TRICKSTER) You saunter casually past the merchant and, reaching deftly inside his jacket, remove his doubtless ill-gotten gains. He is so drunk that he does not notice a thing. [*Inspecting your haul, you find that you now have the grand sum of fifty gold pieces. Record this on your Character Sheet.*]

Turn to **344**.

122

(ENCHANTER) You cast the spell. You seem to stare into a vast endless void. Does this mean you have no future? Certainly that is one possible future - the dark oblivion of death. But there are other possibilities also.

If there is a Sage who wishes to try something, turn to **108**. If you wish to heave the iron chain out of the water, turn to **502**. If you tell the gondolier to carry on, turn to **247**.

123

You stride up to the man, saying, 'Balhazar, you are discovered!' He turns with a kind of half smile, then shimmers and fades away! You look around to see all the other guests disappearing as well. Only one

remains - a man in a domino cape. When he stands up you recognise the imposing height and imperious stance of Magus Balhazar.

'You have failed my test, I fear,' says Balhazar as he un.masks. 'Regrettable, as I had hoped you would do better. Now it is time for you to leave.'

Turn to **119**.

124

The scarab burns with a bright green light. Suddenly the man groans and sits up. Having restored him to life, the scarab crumbles away to dust.

The man looks around, astonished. 'What happened?' he says. The last thing I remember is my old chum Fashmar getting killed by that Frost-Wizard

You quickly fill him in. It seems he's been frozen in ice for almost a decade, since he entered the Battlepits with several companions as the champions of Magus Laglor. His name is Imragarn, and he is naturally grateful that you have restored him to life. In fact, he swears allegiance to you. You can add him to your party. Note his characteristics down now.

Imragarn

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: 1 Die—1

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 6

Endurance: 12

He has leather armour (Armour Rating one) unless you stripped him of it before revivifying him. He has no weapon, but if you give him one his Fighting Prowess increases to eight and his damage roll to 1 Die+1. He is a second-rank Warrior. At the start of a combat, you can place him in an adjacent square to any other player. It is possible to *flee* from a

combat without Imragarn, but if you do, any Warriors in the party must lose fifty experience points from their awards at the end of the adventure.

Turn to **369**.



125

Kief reveals his number: a 3.

If you chose a 1, turn to **130**. If you chose a 2, turn to **95**. If your number was the same as his, turn to **135**. If your number was higher, turn to **286**.

126

You rush on, blindly barging the doors open so as to get out of the hail of razor-pointed arrows.

You now stand in a circular chamber filled with coruscating blue light. A desperate, insane laugh seems to waver at the edge of your hearing. Your skin crawls with a terror you cannot define. If you are wearing any armour, the blue light is causing it to rot and slough away - reduce your Armour Rating by one.

You are not alone in the room. An indistinct, shimmering figure is now beside you. It is the creature known in Krarthian mythology as the

Prince of Desolation. He steps in front of you, leering like a madman.

If you fight him, turn to **371**. If you turn and run, turn to **154**.

127

You slay the Assassins. They have three daggers that you can take if you want. Their Shuriken throwing-spikes are useless to you. You also find a vial of black liquid which a Sage could perhaps identify; turn to **463** if your party includes a Sage. If you want to take the vial, you can drink it at any time (turn to **317** to see what it does, but remember to note the entry you're reading at the time because **317** will not take you back there).

Turn to **236**.

128

(ENCHANTER) You step out on to the bridge. As you do, the rumbling voice of the gargoyle's head echoes across the cave: 'Return from darkness.'

In answer to this summons, a figure appears at the far end of the bridge. The Hags mutter excitedly as he steps rapidly forwards to confront you. A wall of force arises behind you, cutting off your retreat. You must face this foe alone. As he draws near, you recognise the coat-of-arms on his shield: a three-homed dragon in gold on an azure field. It is the insignia of Sir Guillaume le Cauchemar, an evil knight who was your deadliest foe - until you slew him, months ago . . .

Guillaume speaks, his voice sounding cold and tinny within his black helm. 'We meet again for one final encounter, you spell-tossing churl. This time it is I, Guillaume le Cauchemar, who shall send *you* down into the icy embrace of Lady Death.' He gives

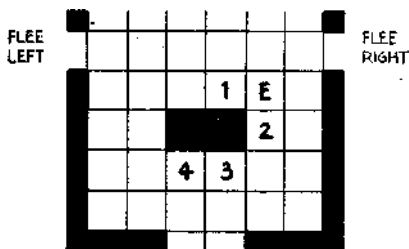
a curt, contemptuous salute and then doses for the kill.

Guillarme's Endurance and Awareness are the same as yours were at the start of the adventure. His Fighting Prowess is one point greater than your initial Fighting Prowess, while his Psychic Ability is two points lower. He inflicts the same damage as you do with each blow, and his Armour Rating is three.

You cannot *flee*, and your companions (if any) cannot intervene in any way. If you kill Guillarme, turn to **88**.

129

Echidna slithers forwards across the marble floor to attack you. Her bite contains a strong poison, and anyone wounded by her rolls one Die: on a roll of 1 to 5 the poison does not flow into the wound, but on a roll of 6 the player must lose 3 Dice Endurance.



Echidna

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 2 Dice+2

Psychic Ability: 9

Awareness: 8

Armour Rating: 2

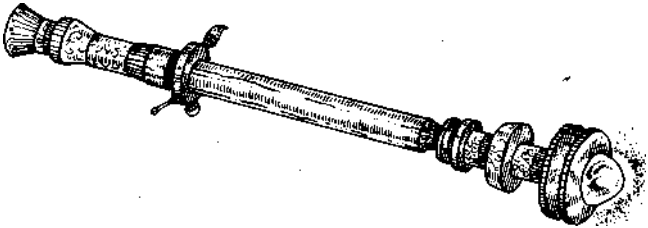
Endurance: 40

If you slay the demoness, turn to **253**. If you *flee*, you run to either the left exit (turn to **357**) or to the right (turn to **56**).

130

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and five tails. You have only two heads. You are wondering whether you have any chance of winning when Kief says: 'No, you don't. We have reached the Converging Spiral, where playing on would only prolong your inevitable defeat.' He gathers the coins.

Turn to **55**.



131

You brandish the talisman. The baleful lava-light causes it to sparkle like the heart of a flame. The Skiapys stop, wavering like guttering candles. The talisman,' says one, its voice a soft susurrantion of air. 'We await your wishes.'

'Slay the brigands that pursue us,' you command. Instantly the Skiapys turn upon the Adventurers you fought a few moments ago. As they do, their fiery faces change from expressions of serene obedience to masks of hate. 'Slay the interlopers!' they shriek, reaching out with white-hot claws. In moments, only charred bones and the stench of roasted flesh remain to show that the Adventurers ever existed.

No, not only that. A second glance tells you that the Adventurers dropped something - something that gleams like burnished gold in the light of the

clustering Skiapys. When you go to investigate you find a gilded bridle, which you can take if you want. The Skiapys watch wistfully as you depart.

Turn to **223**.

132

You set to work improvising a raft from the sections of wooden door. Another lump of wood - apparently the bolt that once held the doors shut - becomes your oar. When you are ready, you gently ease the raft out on to the moat. Globules of molten stone cling to the sides and hiss furiously, but the wood does not burn. Yet.

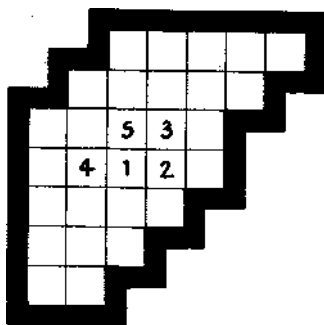
You have to row slowly across the magma, careful not to splash deadly streams of white-hot magma across your feet. So intent are you on this that you almost fail to notice a deadly battle that is being enacted on the ridge encircling the craters. Two unshaven Adventurers have encountered a horde of Skiapys - malicious flame-demons that dwell in the magma. Balanced precariously on the ridge, the Adventurers struggle desperately but without hope. One falls as a Skiapys's fiery claws rake his chest, plunging into the moat where the magma burns the flesh and bones away in seconds. The other, disarmed by a treacherous blow from behind, turns, clutching his wounded arm. Seeing you, he calls out a greeting and then jumps, preferring to take his own life rather than let the Skiapys steal his vital energies for themselves.

Your raft strikes the crater rim and you hastily scramble up towards the ridge. The Skiapys see you and give out unearthly screams of delight as they scamper along the ridge towards you. Behind you, more Skiapys are awakened by the cries of their fellows and now pursue you up the ridge.

If you have an ice jewel and wish to use it, turn to **12**. If not, turn to **376**.

133

'Reward?' He turns an icy stare upon you. 'Yes, you shall have your reward. You shall have the honour of being swatted by Skrymir's hand, you mortal vermin!'



Skrymir the Giant

Fighting Prowess: 9 Damage per blow: 4 Dice
Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 8
Armour Rating: 3
Endurance: 70

You face a truly awesome opponent this time. If, by the luck of the gods, you defeat him, turn to **432**.

134

'I need consider no more champions,' says Balhazar. 'Now it is time to equip you for the contest tomorrow.' He hands each player in the party an opal medallion; record it on your Character Sheet(s). Balhazar tells you that this will allow him

to monitor your progress through the Battlepits, and possibly intervene with magic or advice when you are in trouble. He also gives the first player in the battle order a strange item - an octagonal glass prism. He's not sure what it does, but thinks you will find a use for it. Then a servant shows you to bedchambers where you may get some rest.

You are up before the dawn, practising your combat techniques and preparing your mind for the ordeal to come. Balhazar and his guards take you out. The streets are full of bleary-eyed revellers - many of them have been up all night - jostling one another for a better view. You see the curtained litter of Magus Vyl, who obviously does not enjoy the dawn, accompanied by the three dark-robed Assassins who will champion him. Several other magi stand upon a dais in urgent consultation, making last-minute deals and alliances before the contest begins.

You are escorted across the cold tundra. Other groups are also filing away from the citadel. Among them you notice a group of bronze-armoured Barbarians employed by Magus Tor and the Master Warlock, Icon the Ungodly, who carries the pennant of Magus Uru. At last you reach a huge portal set into a hillside. Balhazar ushers you in, and you step through into the greatest adventure of your life ...

Turn to **201**.

135

You drew. After *recovering* for the next Spiral, this leaves him with five heads and two tails. You have no coins to *recover* from tails, so you still have four heads. Once you have chosen your next number, turn to **140**.

136

You descend into the torchlit gloom. The sound of dripping water reaches your ears and soon you are standing in a damp stairwell, with a single bricked archway in front of you and a tunnel leading off behind it. You follow the tunnel for a few steps then find another tunnel leading off to the right. As you peer down it you fancy you can make out a motionless figure standing in the gloom. Ahead, you can see that the passage ends in a huge ornamental doorway.

If you wish to approach the figure down the right-hand tunnel, turn to **278**. If you want to carry on up the corridor to the ornamental doorway, turn to **246**.

137

You wrench the huge stone lid of the sarcophagus aside. A slight breeze across the cavern stirs the old bones and mouldering grave-clothes, swiftly reducing them to ash. A small item gleams dully amid the decayed remnants of the mummy. It is a bronze key. Remember to note this on your Character Sheet if you take it.

If you have not already done so, you can now open another of the sarcophagi: the first (turn to **351**), the second (turn to **186**), or the third (turn to **403**). If you have had enough of grave-rifling, you can proceed to the beach (turn to **293**).

138

(SEIZED PLAYER) You stare in horror at the dead hand holding your arm. Suddenly you give a wail of utter despair and burst into night-black flames. Within seconds your body is consumed, shrivelled

away like a leaf burnt in a bonfire. (Any items you possessed are destroyed along with you.)

If you have any companions, they can only stare as you die. They rake the sand of the beach over your ashes and go on with their quest.

Turn to **447**.

139

(SAGE) This is a shrine to Vactris, the ravenous household god of Magus Tor. Possibly you recall the party Tor engaged as champions, as you saw them on your way from Balhazar's mansion. *[Certainly the shrine will be charged with accursed demon-magic and you should not stay here any longer than you have to.]*

Turn to **476**.

140

His number is 3.

If yours is 1, turn to **145**. If yours is 2, turn to **50**. If yours is 3, turn to **150**. If you chose 4, 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

141

The Barbarians swagger off down the corridor, discussing all the ale they'll be able to buy with their loot once they have won the contest. You smile wryly, muttering under your breath that this is a clear case of counting one's chickens . . .

If you have a Sage in the party, this might be a good time for him or her to try an ESP scan of the vicinity. If you want to do this, the Sage chooses to turn to either **297** or **448** to represent the ESP's chance of failure.

If there is no Sage in the party, you can dislodge the grille and drop down to follow the Barbarians

(turn to **477**), or wait where you are, watching through the grille (turn to **73**).

142

The platform is a wide shelf of rock jutting out from the cave wall. Across the deep gorge you jeer at the ugly Hags, now incensed that you have defeated their 'pets'. The only way to get across the gorge is via one of two bridges that span the distance to the temple terrace. A waterfall cascades over the middle of the platform, bisecting it and cutting you off from the further of the two bridges. Looking up, you see a huge gargoyle head carved into the cave wall near the roof. The water issues from its mouth, cascades down in a torrent across the middle of the platform, then pours down into the swirling river far beneath you.

As you consider the two bridges, a booming voice makes you look up once more. The mouth of the gargoyle is moving, and by listening hard you can make sense out of the deep rumbling words. Over and over, it intones: 'Face that which you fear most, or confront a lesser foe.'

Presumably it is referring to the two bridges. You could cross the nearer bridge with no apparent trouble, but to get to the further one you must step through the waterfall. The gargoyle's words are weighty with ambiguity. Which to choose?

All players must cross. This must be done one at a time. Each player should *now* write down the entry number that refers to him or her and, when he or she wishes to cross, he or she should turn to that entry. The order in which people cross is up to them . . .

When a Warrior crosses, he or she should turn to **478**. When a Trickster crosses, he or she should turn



to **113**. When a Sage crosses, he or she should turn to **426**. When an Enchanter crosses, he or she should turn to **252**.

143

(TRICKSTER) You feel a faint tug at your belt, and instantly realise that unseen fingers are trying to steal your possessions! 'Set a thief to catch a thief,' you whisper to yourself, suddenly whirling around under the waterfall and fending the invisible hands away. One of them clutches something - probably filched from another Adventurer who passed this way - and you grab this as you retreat out of the water. You examine the item you have gained. [*It is a phial of chimera spittle - a deadly, delayed-action poison.*]

Turn to **267**.

144

The following applies to whoever drank the black liquid.

Did you also drink the effervescent potion? If so, you are all right because that was the antidote to the chimera spittle you imbibed. If you did not drink the effervescent potion, you die in terrible agony.

If any players remain alive, they can now turn to the next paragraph they were directed to.

145

He reaches out to sweep away the coins. 'You have already lost,' he explains. The next Spiral you can only choose a 1 and, by putting a 2, I can force you to lose one of your two remaining coins. Once that happens, you cannot go. So we need not prolong the conflict . . .'

Turn to **55**.

You slip the great gauntlet on to the skeleton's right hand as the skin starts to draw across it. Moments later, the body begins to throb with life and the pink bloom of blood washes through its veins as the stone heart reverts to flesh. Slabs of muscle swell across the bones, sewn with gristle and skin. Skrymir rises from the dead.

He stands before you, towering towards the cave roof like the shadow of a great glacier. His beard sparkles with icicles; his eyes blaze with cold fury.

'Skrymir stands upon Middle-Earth once more!' he cries, shaking the rock walls with his voice of thunder. 'Legend reverberates to his battle-roar. Let the magi who crouch upon the old thrones of Krarth beware - they shall not see another dawn, for the sky then shall be washed with their blood!'

He turns and glares at the flickering beam of the Teleportation spell. He obviously intends to return to the surface, to the Great Hall where the magi are waiting for a champion to emerge.

If you wish to point out that you have just resurrected him, turn to **539**. If you keep quiet and let him depart, turn to **257**.

147

(TRICKSTER) 'Why, this is nonsense!' you cry, quickly turning on your charm. 'How can you describe yourself as soulless, you who are more lovely than any earthly woman? Regard your exquisite reflection in yonder fountain. Tell me whether it is not the face of a vibrant elemental persona, a passionate beauty who laughs in the face of the spiteful Fates!'

Larisha looks startled for a moment, then turns to regard herself in the crystal-clear water of the

fountain. 'Why, you speak true,' she murmurs. She uses her real voice now, not her power of telepathy, and her tones are so chillingly cold that you could well believe she has no soul. 'Let us spite the Fates then - those hideous crones! I'll give you another item as well, not because I must but because I choose to do so . . .'

You now have *two* of the following: the Dagger of Vislet, the Golden Snuff-Box and the Dragonlord Gem. When you have decided which additional item to take, turn to **203**.

148

Your reputation for daring adventure is not based on stupidity. You quickly back away from the room beyond the gate, then turn and scramble up the stairs towards the top of the Tower.

Turn to **3**.

149

Although he is a powerful and knowledgeable wizard, Balhazar is not used to using his magic in the thick of battle. He hesitates for a fatal split second too long, giving the Assassin time to throw his dagger. It spins in the air and impales Balhazar in the arm. Shocked, he pulls it free. You see that the dagger glistens with a coating of poison. Balhazar staggers and falls.

You turn to deal with the Assassin. To your amazement he has scaled a long drape and now stands at a window on the balcony above. You make for the stairs, but he hurls three spiked *sha-ken* in quick succession to delay you. Then he is gone into the night.

You go over to Balhazar. 'My magic will not cure this poison,' he says weakly. The Assassin must

have been sent by my rival, Magus Vyl. He employs an entire network of the scum.' Balhazar coughs, obviously near death. 'My death deprives you of an employer. I hear that only Kalugen is still looking for champions, so you must return and take his pennant. I can perform but one service for you - open the cabinet yonder and take what you find within . . .'

He dies.

If you open the cabinet, turn to **196**. If you simply return to the main square at once, turn to **119**.

150

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has six heads and one tail. You have only four coins left, but at least they are all heads. Behind his thin hand, Kief sets the Die to his chosen number. Choose your number and, when you are ready, turn to **155**.

151

The passage ends in a heavy door. Grasping the iron ring in the middle, you haul it open and step into a small room. There are no other exits. On a table of red granite you see a steel sceptre that seems to glimmer with magical energy. Taking this, you see an indicator on the side that shows it has four charges. You must cross off one charge now to test it and find out what it does, *unless* you have a Sage in the party. A Sage will recognise this device from various historical documents.

Each charge of the device releases a blast of destructive energy. You can use it in combat in place of the *fight* option. It affects one monster in an adjacent square to the user, inflicting five Dice damage. There is no need to make a roll against Fighting Prowess when using the sceptre, as its

blast always hits. Remember to cross off charges as they are used (including one charge now for testing it, if there is no Sage present). When it reaches zero charges it ceases to function.

You have no other way to go, so you make your way back to the ornamental doorway at the end of the main corridor.

Turn to **246**.

152

A tunnel of worked stone leads off ahead of you from the jetty. It soon opens out into a small circular room with two exits. One is directly ahead of you: a rough rectangular opening in the stonework barred by a heavy iron grille with an even heavier iron chain and padlock locking it. The other exit leads off to your right, where you can see an archway and a corridor lit with torches in brackets. The corridor leads to a door. There are deep alcoves all along the corridor on either side.

If you have a bronze key, turn to **221**.

If you do not have the key but do have the steel sceptre (with at least one charge), turn to **296**. If you have neither of these items, turn to **316**.

153

(SAGE) You know the proper words of the prayer to this goddess. You speak them now, and the goddess responds by suffusing your spirit with the energy to do great good. If you wish to use your power to Heal, double the amount of restored Endurance points indicated by your Dice roll. You can get this benefit only if you do the Healing right now, and it is a one-off benefit.

If you have not yet done so, you can have a look at the ice block (turn to **334**), or dig up one of the

mounds (turn to **42**), or you can continue on your way by turning to **279**.

154

Arrows cut through the air as you race the length of the room. Three arrows strike home, each inflicting one Die damage less Armour Rating. (In a multi-player group, roll Dice to see who is not hit.) If you are still alive, the chessmen provide you with momentary cover from which to consider your plan of action.

If you run up the steps to the balcony, turn to **82**. If you return the way you came in, turn to **48**.

155

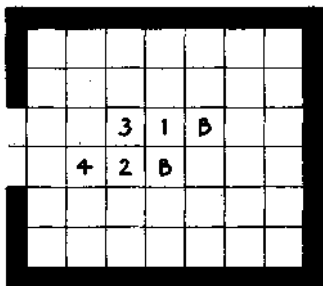
Kief's number this time is 3.

If your number is 1, turn to **160**. If your number is 2, turn to **165**. If you also chose 3, turn to **170**. If you chose 4 or more, turn to **286**.

156

You come to a door and open it on to a scene of carnage. Two Barbarians are just putting an end to a blood-splattered, black-robed Assassin. Two other black-robed figures lie dead on the floor. The Assassins presumably served another magus, but they don't seem to have been a match for the Barbarians. Just as you burst into the room, the last of them, reacting instinctively, throws a Shuriken at you (if you are in a multi-player group, then this will be the player at the front of the battle order). This throwing spike inflicts 1 Die-1 damage (less Armour Rating). Just as he does so, a bone-shattering axe-blow levels him to the ground, and the Barbarians turn around to deal with you. You see the berserk fanaticism in their eyes and know they

cannot be reasoned with. You also know that their two comrades will probably be racing down the corridor behind you even at this moment. . .



Barbarians

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 1 Die+2

Psychic Ability: 5 Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: *first* 8 *second* 10

You cannot *flee* at first because you know the other two Barbarians must be somewhere behind you. Sure enough, after six Rounds of combat (be sure to keep track) the other two burst in behind you:

Endurance: *third* 11 *fourth* 11

Once these two have joined in as well, you *could* *flee* (if you can fight your way past them). If you do this, going back to take the other corridor, turn to **354**. If you defeat them, turn to **32**.

157

(SAGE) You step out on to the bridge and begin to make your way along it. You look down to see a surging river of miasma gushing along the bottom of the gorge a hundred metres below. Just as you reach the mid-point of the bridge, the gargoyle's

head speaks again. 'Be mortal again,' it says.

As if in answer, a dark shape begins to form on the bridge in front of you. Within moments, it is a thin pale woman who stands there. She sweeps forwards, drawing a sharp steel sword from under her torn black robes. Her eyes glimmer with recognition at the same instant that yours do. She is Nemesis, whose mother was a demon and whose father was a mortal man. She was your bitterest foe - until the day you took her life, six years ago.

'Life and death are not immutable,' groans the gargoyle. 'Fight to decide who shall live.'

Nemesis gives a slight bow, which turns into a forward roll as she closes to strike. Her sword slashes your arm, inflicting four Endurance points damage (less Armour Rating). If still alive, you lose no time in counter-attacking.

She has the same Fighting Prowess, Awareness, Endurance and Psychic Ability as you *started* the adventure with. She inflicts one more point of damage than you do each time she hits, but she has no armour.

You cannot retreat, as an energy-barrier now blocks the bridge behind you. Your companions, if any, cannot help you by any means. The only way you could get out of this battle would be to try Levitating yourself off the bridge.

If you try to use your power of Levitation, turn to **282**. If you fight Nemesis and kill her, turn to **88**.

158

As they behold the talisman, its burnished surface glowing like the sun in the reflected light from the lava pit, the Skiapys waver in awe. 'It is the sacred talisman,' whispers one. 'Pass by in peace.'

You hurry on before they can change their minds.
Turn to **223**.

159

You pass on up the tunnel until you reach another chamber. You must be half way to the summit by now. Another tunnel leads up from the far side of the room, but to reach it you must pass a roughly carved throne of rock to which a giant skeletal pelvis and legs are shackled.

If you have the giant's skull, turn to **433**. If you do not have this item, turn to **538**.

160

Kief shakes his head and mutters something, then scoops up the remaining coins. 'Well,' he says as you give a grunt of surprise, 'surely you could see that you'd lose?'

Turn to **55**.

161

A harsh command issues from the skull, sounding like the tolling of a death-knell. The padlock opens and the rib-cage falls at the base of the petrified tree. You may take this if you wish. (If you have the fossilised heart, then you *must* take it, and you can discard neither it, the heart nor the skull.)

Turn to **159**.

162

'Yes,' says Kalugen, nodding. 'That's a good game. First of all we must decide how much we're going to stake. You first . . .'

Decide the total amount of money you are going to use to play the game. (In a multi-player group, only one person will actually be playing against

Kalugen on behalf of the whole party. The others can give him or her some or all of their money if they wish.)

Once you have decided how much money you are going to stake, write the sum down on a piece of paper. Even if you still have more money on you, you cannot use it if you do not declare it *now* as part of your stake.

Turn to **189**.

163

(ENCHANTER) You easily weave the necessary enchantment. Images pour in, showing you parts of several possible futures. *[You start back as you see yourself in this very chamber, locked in mortal combat with a ravening vampire-lord! The image disintegrates to show another possibility - this time you are entering the room at the top of the Tower. An oppressive feeling of danger weighs upon you . . .]*

The spell fades, returning your spirit to the present. What do you wish to do now? If you decide to continue searching the altar, turn to **444**. If you would rather leave to go on up the stairs, turn to **3**.

164

Dominus Quel becomes Kalugen's champion on the morrow. As for you, there is nothing you can do but head south for other adventures. Perhaps you will return another year to take part in the contest of the Battlepits.

165

Kief spreads his hands in a smug gesture. "There you are," he says. "As usual, I have manoeuvred my opponent into a no-win situation. It would be meaningless to play on from this point. . ."

Turn to **55**.

166

(TRICKSTER) 'Five now, five then,' you tell him. You produce ten large gold coins and put five of them in his hand. You still keep your own hand closed around them.

He looks eagerly at the five coins in your other hand. 'The scarlet banner is the symbol of Magus Balhazar, who is noted for an almost human compassion at times. This quality sets him apart from the other magi, who have hearts of cold rock.'

'Thanks for the advice,' you say with a smile. You whip the first five coins out of his hand and give him the other five instead. 'Five before, and five after.'

'You scurvy scum! You sly wretch! You pustule of gangrenous venom!' he screams. 'Well, I lied, see. The scarlet banner's the worst one to take, in fact.' Flushed with anger, he slopes back to where the other two stewards sit chortling gleefully.

Turn to **332**.

167

The gondolier speaks from behind his mournful mask. 'The fee is forty gold coins,' he says, his voice thickly accented.

If you are able and willing to pay what he demands, cross it off your Character Sheet(s) and turn to **193**. If you cannot or will not pay him forty gold pieces, turn to **516**.

168

In a multi-player group the following applies to the player who is taking the knife. If no one has been specified, all players must roll Dice and the lowest score is the unfortunate one.

Your fingers close around the sacrificial knife. You feel a sharp stab of agony, but that soon passes.

Suddenly you see that all items in your possession have melted away into a murky vile-smelling slime. You try to drop the knife, but you cannot. In fact, it is the *only* item you can possess from now on. Any other item given to you will disintegrate unless used at once. For instance, you could drink a potion as soon as it was handed to you, but if you tried to keep it then it would just disintegrate.

But the knife is not all bad. Although cursed, it is a sacred weapon of the demon Vactris, and adds one to your Fighting Prowess and damage scores.

Now you have no choice but to return the way you came.

Turn to **77**.

169

(WARRIOR) You advance across the first bridge. A shimmering energy-barrier springs up behind you, preventing you from going back until whatever drama you must face has run its course. So be it - you stride on determinedly.

The gargoyle head speaks again: 'Arise from ashes.'

You look around, perplexed, but soon see that its words were not addressed to you. A figure gradually takes shape ahead of you on the bridge - a hulking Berserker in a rotting chainmail vest. He lifts his warhammer with arms that look bloodless and dead. A flicker of red fire from a spurting gey-illuminates his face, and you know him at once. It is Beorn Smith-hammer, your most hated foe.

But - you *slew* him three years past!

The winner shall have life,' groans the stone head.

Beorn grins and steps forwards. The skin of his face is just a tattered cobweb of decay. He says

thickly: '*Ja*, old foe. Here's where we change places.' And with that he swings his hammer in a bone-breaking arc towards you ...

Beorn has the same Fighting Prowess, Psychic Ability and Awareness that you *started* with. His Endurance is six less than your initial Endurance, but each blow of his inflicts 1 Die damage more than one of yours (so if you normally hit for 2 Dice+2, he hits for 3 Dice+2, and so on). His Armour Rating is one.

Your companions, if any, can do nothing to aid you in this fight. You cannot *flee*. If you win, turn to **88**.

170

The draw allows Grandmaster Kief to *recover* back up to seven heads, widening the gap considerably when compared to your own four heads. After choosing your number for the next Spiral, turn to **175**.

171

(TRICKSTER) Hurondus stalks forwards, sniffing the air and listening for your every movement. You find that an energy-barrier behind you cuts off any possibility of retreat, so you must face him in the death-duel he longs for.

His Fighting Prowess and Endurance are the same as yours were at the *start* of the adventure. His Psychic Ability is one point higher than your initial score, while his Awareness is one point lower. He wears no armour, and inflicts the same damage as you do whenever he hits.

He also has some magic. He has the Swordthrust spell in mind, which reduces his Psychic Ability by one (it's normally two points higher than yours). In

order to cast the spell, he has to roll equal to or less than his current Psychic Ability on 2 Dice+2, and he attempts this roll each Round in place of a *fight* option. When he succeeds in casting the spell, you take 2 Dice+2 Endurance damage (less Armour Rating). He will then continue the battle without further spellcasting.

If you kill him, turn to **88**.



172

(SAGE) You recognise the strange metal. [*It is a curious substance that alchemists call Kalium. If touched by moisture, it may explode. You must keep the casket tightly sealed if you decide to take it.*]

After deciding if you (or a companion) will take the casket, turn to **319**.

173

(SAGE) You have passed in to the proper transcendent state. Reality flows around you, but you are able to reach beyond it into Nirvana. You feel the sensation of gravity's tug fade away and, weightless, you drift into the air. In your serene state you are disinterestedly aware that your foe, having lunged just as you rose up into mid-air, has fallen from the bridge into the gorge. You feel this thought pulling you back to reality, and you slowly settle down on to the bridge once more. You glance down

into the gorge, but your opponent's body has been swept away by the crashing river. With a sigh, you continue over the bridge.

Turn to **88**.

174

You insert the prism into one of the indentations. As you expected, it fits snugly. As it clicks into place, a multi-coloured glow suffuses it. There is a soft whining noise throughout the room as the black lens, too, erupts into a reddish glow.

You feel a tingling across your skin. A moment of disorientation and weightlessness . . .

The scene changes. You are now standing at the top of a stone pylon that rises out of a lake of bubbling lava. You have been Teleported hundreds of metres across the cave. The pylon commands a spectacular view across the cavern, a view that shows you in one glance the immense size and frightening beauty of the Battlepits. Far off towards the back wall of the cave you can see a plain of swirling mists where standing stones poke up from the ground like serried fangs. Beyond this plain stands a squat atoll - and there, you sense, the Emblem of Victory awaits you.

Making your way down the stairway inside the pylon, you come to a chamber at the bottom. The huge wooden doors lie on the floor, their hinges having corroded long centuries ago in the sulphurous volcanic exhalations from the lava. You look out across the moat of magma surrounding the pylon. The edges of the crater that encloses this pool rise up on all sides. If you could reach the crater wall you could perhaps scale it and reach the path running along the top - but to do that you must first think of a way to cross the bubbling moat. . .

If you have an opal medallion, turn to **523**. If you have no medallion but there is a Sage in the party, turn to **256**. If you have neither medallion nor Sage, but an Enchanter is in the party, turn to **431**. If none of these apply, turn to **101**.

175

Kief opens his hand to reveal a 6. You start to reveal your number, then realise that it doesn't make any difference. He's beaten you.

Turn to **55**.

176

The voice of Magus Zyn speaks inside your head: 'The guardians of the magi seek to stop you with their magic. But the servants of Zyn may always look to their master for aid... Pay heed to the music of old Krarth.' You hear music in your mind - the atonal chanting of Cabbandari symphony. It is not to your tastes, but it certainly has the effect of driving away the phantasms that threaten your sanity. 'Now collect Skrymir's rib-cage,' says Zyn.

Turn to **272**.

177

Kalugen's soldiers clear the chamber of courtiers. 'What I have to say now is for your ears alone,' the Magus tells you. His jester lurks at the back of the throne, apparently unnoticed by the guards. He points at a large casket nearby, indicating that you should open it. Inside you find one opal medallion for each player in your party. (Each player should record this item on his or her Character Sheet.) There is also a vellum scroll fixed with Kalugen's seal in green wax. You may open the scroll and read it at any time after entering the Battlepits. If and

when you do this, make a note of the entry you are reading at the time and then turn to **312**. (One player writes on his or her Character Sheet: 'Vellum scroll - see **312** for effect.')

Kalugen gestures you into a cold stone cell. 'Rest until dawn,' he says disinterestedly. 'Gather your strength. You will have need of it.' He turns and, laughing, swaggers off to the warmth of his own bedchamber.

Turn to **402**.

178

You identify Balhazar and stride over to him. 'My lord Magus,' you say, giving a curt bow, 'you need look no further for champions.'

'Excellent,' says Balhazar, standing and removing the hood of his cape. 'You have found me among all these images...' With this he turns and, waving his hand, murmurs a spell. The partygoers fade from sight. 'They were all illusions,' explains Balhazar, 'except for the Assassin you cunningly rooted out and dealt with. I am impressed - and since he might have taken my life, I am even indebted to you. Such obligation is not seemly towards one's employees, so I shall discharge the debt at once by rewarding you . . .'

He claps his hands, and a servant scurries in at once carrying a silver sword studded with emeralds. This he hands to you (if there is a Warrior in the party, Balhazar will hand it to him or her). 'It is Blutgetranker - the "blood-drinker" - made out of a sliver from the legendary sword of the god Frey.'

You cut the air with this fabulous weapon. It seems light, but hums with deadly force. Add one to your fighting Prowess when fighting with it. In combat against any giant (that is, a creature, specific-

ally described in the text as a giant) you add one Die to the damage you inflict with a successful blow.

Turn to **134**.

179

(TRICKSTER) You manage to get within a few paces of the Ranger without his hearing you. His scabbarded sword hangs at his side. If you are dextrous, you might be able to unclip it from his belt, disarming him before he can react. Again, you must roll equal to or under your Awareness on two Dice to do so.

If you succeed, turn to **303**. If you fail, turn to **461**.

180

This time his number is 4.

If yours is 1, turn to **455**. If yours is 2, turn to **460**. If yours is 3, turn to **260**.

181

(TRICKSTER) You walk towards the merchant, intending to lift the money-pouch off his belt as you go past. Unfortunately you slip on a wet cobblestone and blunder right into him. 'Eh!' he yells, seeing your fingers clutching his pouch. 'Wha's this? Robbery! Call the guards, call the guards!' One of the city guards, dressed in the olive-green livery of the Keep, is drinking at a tavern nearby and leaps up at once, holding up one gauntleted hand for you to stop while drawing his sword with his other.

If you wish to fight him, turn to **241**. If you try to run for it, turn to **343**.

182

(SAGE) You concentrate your mind on stifling the cosmic energies that surround and sustain this

immaterial spirit. Its translucent image begins to dim, but then it senses what you are trying to do and starts to fight back.

Roll two Dice. If you score 11 or 12, turn to **239**. If you score 10 or less, turn to **497**.

183

(ENCHANTER) You call the spell to mind. Remember that this temporarily depresses your Psychic Ability by one point until you actually cast the spell. Next, make *one* attempt to cast the spell (just as though you were casting a spell in combat).

If you fail, you still have the spell in mind and must turn to **444**. If you succeed in casting the spell after just one attempt, turn to **163**.



184

Spurting blood, the man slides to the floor. Clawing at the tablecloth as he falls, he pulls dozens of china plates and goblets down on top of him with a crash. Strangely, no one in the room seems to take any notice except for a fellow in a black domino cape. You gaze around in astonishment. A hunched man in a gold tunic is pouring himself a glass of wine,

oblivious of the disturbance. A man in a green wig goes on laughing at a friend's joke as though he had not noticed the battle at all. A masquerade jester proceeds with his antics, and a man adorned in the laurel wreath of a Sage of Ancient Selentium has eyes only for the serving-girls.

One of these men is Balhazar. Which one?

The man wearing the domino cape (turn to **178**), the hunched man (turn to **527**), the man in the green wig (turn to **417**), the jester (turn to **123**) or the Selentine Sage (turn to **277**)?

185

Kief enters this Spiral with a 3. You reveal your number.

If it is 1, turn to **95**. If it is 2, turn to **65**. If you also chose a 3, turn to **190**. If you chose a 4, turn to **200**. If your number was 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

186

You pull at a brass handle that is set into the side of one of the walls. The whole wall suddenly crashes down towards you in a cloud of dust. The person who pulled the handle must roll equal to or under their Awareness on two Dice, or suffer four Endurance points damage from the falling masonry. Behind the gaping hole left in the wall, you see (if you are still alive) a number of ancient pots. On closer inspection each of these contains a fragment of a skeleton, but nothing else of any interest.

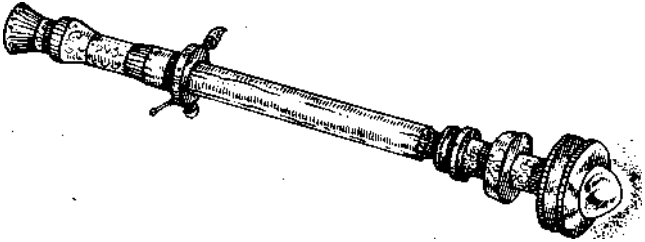
If you have not already done so, you can now open another of the sarcophagi: the first (turn to **351**), the third (turn to **403**) or the fourth (turn to **137**). If you have had enough of grave-rifling, you can proceed to the beach (turn to **293**.)

187

You put the scarab around your neck. It gives a momentary pulse of green light, but that is all. If you (that is, the player wearing it) are killed at any time during the adventure, turn at once to paragraph **294**. Make a note of the entry number you are at before doing this, as **294** will not direct you back there. Write on your Character Sheet: 'Emerald scarab - refer to **294** if slain.'

With nothing else of interest here, you signal the gondolier to row on across the lake.

Turn to **247**.



188

You emerge from the hall into a marble corridor. Directly ahead you see a bronze-bound door, but you soon discover that this is securely locked.

You must go left (turn to **404**) or right (turn to **77**).

189

Kalugen gestures to a servant, who hands him a money-pouch. He looks at the amount you will be wagering, then dips his fat fingers into the pouch and produces the same amount plus one additional gold piece. (If, for instance, you are wagering twelve gold pieces then Kalugen is wagering thirteen.) 'A little house advantage,' he says, tittering to himself.

'Now, here's how we play. One of us calls out a number - say it's you to go first, you call out a number from two to twelve. I shake two Dice. If the number I roll is *less* than the number you called, you have to pay me the amount called. If I roll higher, I pay the amount to you. If I roll exactly equal to the number called, we both lose the amount. When you have no coins left, you've lost. Okay, you can go first . . . !

If there is a Sage in the party, turn to **311**. If there is no Sage present, turn to **499**.

190

His position is strengthening, and you must try to deal a blow from which he cannot recover. After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has five heads and two tails - whereas you have five heads but no tails. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **205**.

191

You stoop over the bodies, searching them for items of interest. The scrap of parchment they were looking at is now soaked in blood and unreadable. You find twenty gold pieces, four axes and four bronze breastplates. As the latter have an Armour Rating of one, they are of no practical use to you. You head down the corridor and reach a point where it divides in two; on the left is a black-tiled corridor, and on the right is one floored in white marble.

Which way do you want to go? Left, down the black corridor (turn to **354**), or right, down the white corridor (turn to **424**)?

192

You break from the cover of the shadows and rush

towards the Ranger. He wastes only a split-second gaping as you approach, then recovers his wits and turns to run. You see him reach a door at the end of the passage and start to swing it open. As you run to catch him, you pass a rusty sword which is lying on the flagstones. You can snatch it up as you go past. If you do, note on your Character Sheet that it will break (and become useless) if you roll a 12 on two Dice when *fighting* with it.

The door leads into a small room with no other exits. The Ranger seems to have been cornered, but maybe that was his intention. He seizes a steel sceptre from a table of red stone and turns to face you. 'End of the line,' he mutters wryly.

Turn to **367**.

193

The silent ferryman conveys you across the water in his boat. Above, the roof of the cavern sweeps up to vast heights, where stalactites hang like the chandeliers in a great cathedral. You still cannot make out the limits of the lake, though you peer ahead into the gloom. The boat passes close to a buoy that bobs up and down, its wood chewed away by countless tides, and its iron fretwork deeply rusted.

If you wish the ferryman to stop beside the buoy, turn to **419**. If you prefer to pass by without inspecting it, turn to **247**.

194

(SAGE) You focus your mind. Others think this kind of thing is beyond the understanding of mortals, but you know that ghosts, wraiths and other spectral creatures are just manifestations of pure energy. If you can blanket out that energy, the creature will cease to exist. . .

You think you have the mind-set right. The eidolon flickers for a moment, but then reconstitutes itself! It must be sustained by some magical power-source.

If you wish to resume the fight, turn to **502**. If you want to try and think of some other way to beat it, turn to **439**.

195

He nods and sits back. '*Recovery* now will leave me with two heads and three tails to your four heads,' he says. 'I concede defeat.'

Turn to **55**.

196

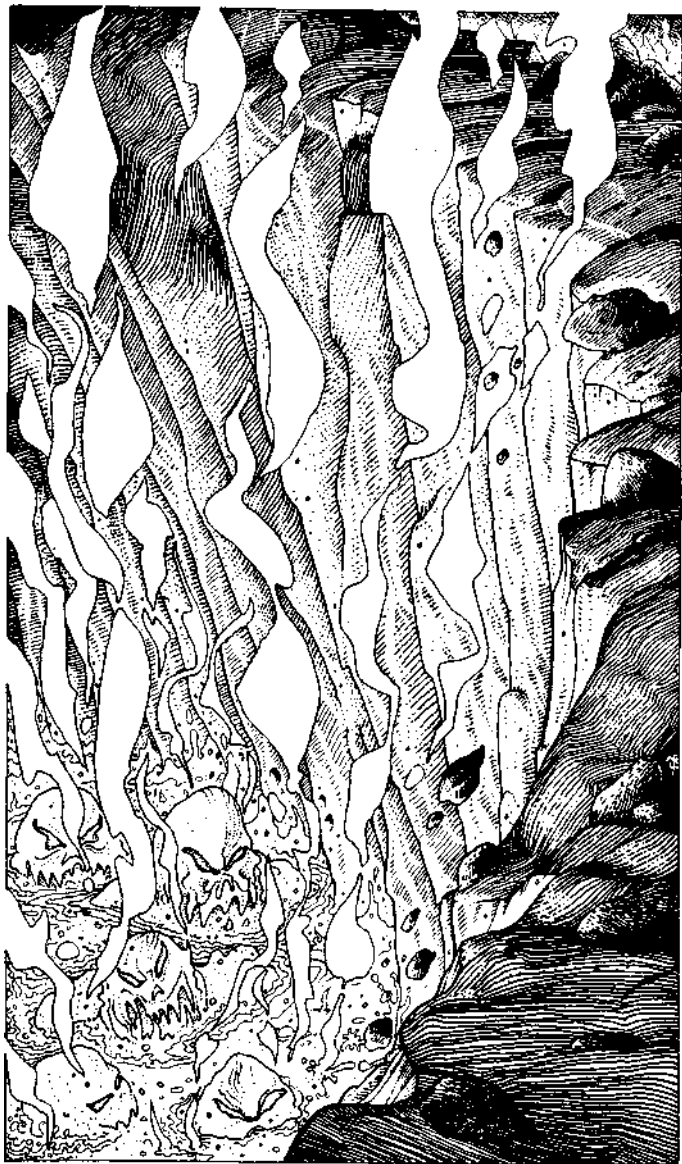
Inside, you find a magnificent translucent sword which appears to be made of blue crystal. As you take this (it goes to the first player in the battle order if you are in a multi-player group) and remove it from the cabinet, it fades into complete invisibility! You can still feel it, but you cannot see it. In fact it is the fabled sword of Loge Skyrunner. Your enemies will find it very difficult to parry an invisible blade, so add one to your Fighting Prowess when you are fighting with it.

After covering Balhazar's body with his cloak, you leave the mansion.

Turn to **119**.

197

As you race around the narrow ledge above the lava pit, your feet dislodge a few stones which go rattling down the crater slope and fall with dull plops in the molten rock below. Great bubbles of volcanic gas rise and break on the surface. Then you see heads like burning Hallowe'en effigies rising from the

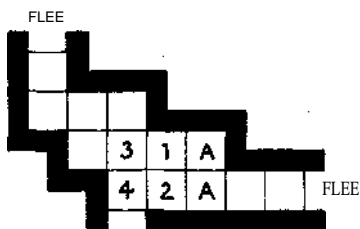


pool of lava. They are Skiapys, malevolent monsters of living flame whose claws melt through steel and rock as a knife passes through paper.

If you wish to use a talisman of flame, turn to **131**. If you wish to use an ice jewel, turn to **411**. If you have neither of these items, turn to **429**.

198

Balanced on the narrow circular ledge overlooking the lava pool, you are about to fight a deadly battle with two desperate Adventurers.



Adventurers

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Psychic Ability: 6

Awareness: 6

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: *first* 22

second 23

You *can flee* either by fighting your way past them or by running the other way around the crater rim. If you do this, turn to **197**. If you kill them, turn to **308**.

199

(SAGE) This being that calls himself Mebularon is in fact one of the lesser demon-gods of Krarthian mythology. His particular power - if the old legends are true - is his immunity to magic. Any spell cast at Nebularon is automatically nullified before it can

reach him. Essentially, he is surrounded by a 'zone' that cancels out magic.

Turn to **484**.

200

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has four heads and two tails. Your five coins show two heads and three tails.

He holds up a long finger and points at the coins. 'Notice the situation,' he says. 'You can play only a 1 now. If I play a 3 - which I can and shall - then you'll end this Spiral with no heads. I don't think we need continue, do you?' He sweeps the coins from the table.

Turn to **55**.

201

With Bafliazar's standard, you advance into the first chamber of the underworld. Torches flicker in brackets around the grime-encrusted walls. At the centre of the room, a vast marble table has been laid with a luscious array of sweetmeats and succulent viands. Balhazar watches you proceed through the heavy door as his servants swing it shut. 'Succeed in your quest to find the Emblem of Victory and I will reward you lavishly,' he says. 'But fail, and ...' His last words are drowned out by the deep clang as the door swings shut.

If there is a Sage in the party, he or she can inspect the food (turn to **413**). Otherwise you can eat (turn to **273**) or leave the room, either by a corridor at the far end (turn to **326**) or by entering an alcove to your left (turn to **13**).

202

Turn to **34**.

203

If you have the Dagger of Vislet, turn to **214**. If you have the Golden Snuff-Box, turn to **323**. If you have neither of these Items, turn to **93**.

204

You rake through the thick damp ashes that fill the trough. You soon discover some hard fragments of bone - and then a melted silver ring (which you may take if you wish). These appear to be the remains of several human sacrifices!

Turn to **515**.

205

He opens his hand to show a 4.

If your number is a 1, turn to **130**. If your number is a 2, turn to **95**. If you chose a 3, turn to **65**. If you chose a 4 also, turn to **210**. If you've put down 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

206

'I call a 2,' says Kalugen with a merciless cackle. Roll two Dice. If you score 2, both you and Kalugen lose two gold pieces. If you score anything else, you pay Kalugen what you have left and thus lose the game.

If both you *and* Kalugen are out of coins, turn to **244**. If Kalugen has beaten you, turn to **459**.

207

(SAGE) You scan the chamber for the thoughts of hostile beings. You sense none - but you cannot tell whether this is because there are no hostile beings within range of your psionic power, or merely because you did not activate your ESP properly.

Return to **246** and make another choice.

208

You have destroyed the eidolon: its green limbs dissolve into a thick mist that hangs for a moment on the surface of the lake before depositing a fine green sediment that sinks slowly through the blackness towards the bottom.

If you decide to pull the iron cage containing its bones back up out of the lake, turn to **59**. If you think it wiser just to hurry on your way, turn to **247**.

209

You had not noticed it at first, but each of the mysterious creatures is shackled by one leg to the back of an alcove. The chains are arranged so that they pay out, allowing the creatures to emerge into the corridor. Obviously the mechanism is linked to the grille you have just unlocked, though, because the chains have stopped extending now that you've opened it. The creatures stand half way out of the alcoves, wrenching madly at the chains around their ankles and gnashing their fanged gums.

If you want to walk along the corridor to the door at the far end, then you can do so. It would mean running the gauntlet of creatures, and some of them are far enough out of the alcoves to be able to snatch at you as you go past.

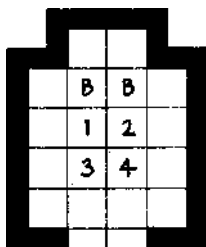
If you decide to risk it, turn to **388**. If you want to go through the now-open grille and along the tunnel beyond, turn to **279**.

210

The draw favours Kief - he *recovers* to six heads and one tail, which appears to be a rather stronger position than your five heads. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **215**.

211

The door swings open. You come face to face with two of the Barbarians. One of them is about to lift a fire-blackened skull as you enter. They whirl, hefting their axes for battle.



LEE
ONLY AFTER KILLING ALL
FOUR BARBARIANS

Barbarians

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 1 Die+2

Psychic Ability: 5

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: *first* 12 *second* 12

The other two Barbarians soon hear the noise of combat and come to aid their comrades. These two will enter the room behind you after eight Rounds (so keep track of Rounds as they pass):

Endurance: *third* 10 *fourth* 8

If you *flee* out of the room and along the black tunnel, turn to **249**. If you beat them, turn to **87**.

212

'Well now, weird sisters, what are you doing?' you ask, almost retching at the sight of their snaggle-toothed gums when they grin up at you.

'Just our cooking,' says one, clattering the stone lid of her pot aside. A bilious aroma wafts up,

stinging your eyes. The Hags all cackle madly at this.

Another of them scuttles over to accost you. 'Want a little taste?' She proffers a ladle dripping with steaming gruel.

'Wait a minute, the flavour's not quite right,' screeches another, dropping a decomposing hand into her bubbling cauldron.

If there is an Enchanter in the party, he or she could try to Enthral one of them in order to find out what they know about the dangers ahead. If so, turn to **283**. If not, you could agree to sample their potions (turn to **103**) or you could enter the temple (turn to **298**), walk around it to the left (turn to **357**), or to the right (turn to **56**).

213

An insubstantial figure appears - not even a ghost, but the spell-projected image of a ghost. Magus Zyn, undying and eternal enemy of the magi. The last of the True Magi.

'You have the means to resurrect Skrymir,' says the ghost. You start to reply before realising that it cannot hear you. It is just like a recorded message, a spell cast here to instruct any who should arrive with all the fragments of Skrymir's skeleton.

If you wish to assemble Skrymir's bones together, turn to **33**. If you do not want to do that, turn to **361**.

214

The Dagger of Vislet can be used in any combat. It can be thrown - an action like the *shoot* option available to Sages and Tricksters.

The player who wishes to *throw* the Dagger can do so at any opponent without having to be in an adjacent square to him (or her, or it). To hit, the

player must roll Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. The Dagger inflicts 1 Die damage if it hits, then returns to its owner's hand ready for *throwing* again next Round.

If the Dagger misses its target, it does *not* return to its owner. In this case it cannot be used again until the combat is over and you have a chance to retrieve it. (And if *you flee*, then you don't get to retrieve it, of course.)

Like the *shoot* option, the *throw* option is not open to a player who is under attack.

If you also have the Golden Snuff-Box, turn to **323**. If you don't have the Snuff-Box (or already know what it does), turn to **93**.

215

He chose a 4.

If your chosen number is 1, turn to **145**. If your number is 2, turn to **50**. If you chose a 3, turn to **45**. If you chose a 4, turn to **220**. If your number is 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

216

The corridor ahead terminates in vast bronze double doors. To either side, gilt-framed mirrors wink in your torchlight. Unless the mirrors conceal some hidden passageway, your only route lies through the bronze doors in front of you.

If there is a Trickster in the party who can examine the mirrors, turn to **511**. If not, you can try looking behind the mirrors anyway (turn to **76**) or advance to the end of the corridor and open the bronze doors (turn to **456**).

217

(ENCHANTER) [*Reluctantly you agree to the Falryn's*

price. The gold vanishes from your money-pouch (cross it off your Character Sheet) and the Faltyn says: 'Choose the scarlet pennant of Magus Balhazar. Of these three, he will equip you best for your ordeal. He will devise a test for you, however, and my advice is to watch for the flapping of a domino cape. But now, I have spoken more clearly than is my wont. I must ask you for further payment. . .']

'I have none,' you snap sourly, attracting some bemused glances from passers-by, who believe you to be talking to yourself. Silently you dismiss the fractious Faltyn. Armed with what it told you, return to 1 and make another choice.

218

As he realises you are not alone, the Ranger gives a grunt of surprise. 'Honourable duel?' he spits, turning to flee. 'You troll-spawned cur!' He runs to a door. By the time he flings it open you have nearly caught up with him. The door leads to a small room in which a steel sceptre rests on a table of red granite. The Ranger snatches up the sceptre and turns to face you as you enter the room. This little baby should equalise the odds,' he says, grinning.

Turn to **367**.

219

With a horrible splintering crash the ice block and the body inside it are blown to smithereens. You regard the end of the sceptre rather stupidly, not expecting it to have caused such wholesale destruction. Cross a charge off it and turn to **369**.

220

After the start of the next Spiral, no tails are showing. Kief has seven coins and you have five coins. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **470**.

221

You take out the key and try it in the padlock. Sure enough, it opens the grille. This is just as well, because there is an eerie cacophony of howling from the corridor, and you look around to see a horde of grey slouching creatures emerging from the alcoves.

What do you want to do?

Dive through the grille and hurry along the tunnel beyond (turn to **279**) or stand your ground (turn to **209**)?

222

(TRICKSTER) "Dearest foe?" you reply, feigning astonishment. This may be your understanding of our relationship, Hurondus, but it is not mine. Candidly, I slew you only by accident and have no recollection of our ever having met before that time . . . Certainly, Wenneba the Prophetess was a far deadlier enemy of mine than you were. Also Guthar Redbeard, and Laktan of Crescentium. And then there was

Hurondus has heard enough. He gives a furious bellow and charges down the bridge towards you, thrusting his sword forwards like a lance.

You must time your next action perfectly. Roll two Dice, trying to score less than or equal to your Awareness. If you succeed, turn to **337**. If you fail, turn to **449**.

223

You reach an incline leading off from the rim of the crater. It descends gently at first, then becomes a roughly hewn rock stairway. Ahead you can see a desolate plain of mounds and standing stones - and beyond that, a swart atoll that reaches nearly to the

roof of the cavern. At the very top of the atoll, bathed in a stark grey-white light, the Emblem of Victory stands proudly. You have almost reached your goal!

Your high spirits are dashed when, a moment later, you reach the end of the rock stairway. You had not seen it at first through the vapour filling the cavern floor, but there is a huge chasm stretching right across from one distant wall to the other. You must cross this gulf to reach the atoll where the Emblem awaits you - but there is no bridge in sight this time.

Turn to **482**.

224

(TRICKSTER) You hold up the bottle and make a great show of drinking deeply. At least, that is how it seems to the Dirge-Man. In fact, you contrive to pour the poison into your hand and take great care to see that not a drop passes your lips.

This allays the Dirge-Man's suspicions, and he accepts a long draught of the chimera spittle himself. 'Mmm, not bad,' he says, smacking his once-human lips. 'But perhaps another sip will enable me to appreciate the full flavour . . .'

You draw back the bottle in mock outrage. 'What? You have consumed most of it already, and this is the last bottle from my cellars! Come now, let us cross the chasm and then you may finish off what is left.'

Turn to **118**.



225

His number is 2.

If yours is 1, turn to 230. If yours is 2, turn to **235**. If yours is 3 or more, turn to **286**.

226

You quickly search the bodies. You find several Shuriken. You do not have the expertise to use them properly, but you can take them anyway if you want (the seven of them count as one item).

A more interesting item is a long thin sword of Crescentium steel. This is so flexible that it can be worn wrapped around the waist under a belt - which is why the dead Assassin thought it was useful, presumably.

You also find a small bottle of mauve liquid. If there is a Sage in the party, he or she can try to identify this (turn to 47). Even if there is no Sage to identify it, you could always find out what it is by drinking it. You may drink it at any time during your adventure except during a combat. If you do, turn to **24** to discover what effect it has - but remember to note your place in the book before doing so, as **24** will not redirect you to that entry!

If you wish to return to the main square and see if you have better luck finding a patron, turn to **443**.

227

They shrug and exchange amused glances. 'Regretably we can offer nothing in the way of advice,' says one, spreading his hands. 'It would be against the terms of the contest, and in any case we lowly servants are unworthy to criticise and compare the magi of Krarth! You understand, I am sure . . .' He smirks openly and indicates the three pennants. 'Perhaps the Fates will guide your choice.'

If there is a Warrior present who wishes to teach this churl a lesson, turn to **288**. If not, you must select a pennant - either the green (turn to **52**), the scarlet (turn to **28**) or the black and purple (turn to **381**).

228

'This is somewhat extraordinary. A fluke victory!' snaps Kalugen petulantly. 'Still, you've won and that's all there is to it, I suppose.'

Turn to **177**.

229

(TRICKSTER) You are trying to creep up on the Ranger and take him unawares. Try to roll equal to or under your Awareness oh two Dice.

If you succeed, turn to **179**. If you fail, turn to **423**.

230

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and four tails. You have three heads and one tail. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **240**.

231

You prise the mirror away from the wall. As its fastenings give, you see there is indeed a passage beyond. Suddenly the mirror cracks and shivers into a thousand fragments. A tinkling noise reverberates down the corridor. At this, the other mirrors burst outwards in a shower of broken glass, and hordes of shambling corpses pour out into the corridor. You waste no time in scrambling into the narrow passage you have discovered - it looks too low for the hulking corpses to enter - but the rearmost player in your party is struck a blow by the

nearest of the undead. This player (roll Dice to determine who it is, if none is specified) takes a five-point wound from his or her Endurance. Armour will reduce this wound, as normal. After deducting the lost Endurance, turn to **379**.

232

(ENCHANTER) As you casually pluck a few grapes from a bunch offered by one of Balhazar's slaves, you murmur the runes of the Summon Faltyn spell. The Faltyn imposes its voice tunefully over the music of the harps and flutes, but only you can hear what it is saying. [*'I arrive at a moment of merriment,' it sings. 'Have you invited me here to share the food and wine? Of course not, for I am ethereal and need no earthly sustenance. To entertain you with my rarefied and beautiful songs, then? No, for you are a loutish mortal with no appreciation of beauty. Ah, now I understand - you wish me to locate a magus among these masked revellers!'*]

If you tell the Faltyn that this is indeed what you require, turn to **436**. If you tell it that is *not* what you want, turn to **109**.

233

'We are equal, then,' says Kalugen. Suddenly he bursts out laughing and slaps the arm of his throne. 'Buffoon! Ah ha, I like that one, Starchwind. You have a clever tongue, you little bent twig!' Suddenly he stops laughing and glowers around him. 'Clear the court except for my elite guard. Not everyone may hear the dreadful secrets of the Battlepits

Turn to **177**.

234

You can take their armour (only bronze, Armour

Rating one) and battleaxes if you want. They also have twenty gold pieces between them. The wall still blocks your progress, and you do not want to have to turn back. Perhaps, if you have it, you could use the steel sceptre to blast through the wall?

If you have the sceptre and want to use it, turn to **4**. If not, you must drop the sword before going on, so cross it off and turn to **503**.

235

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has four heads and two tails. You are not far behind, with four heads and one tail. After choosing your number for the next Spiral, turn to **280**.

236

You look around the room, dazzled by its white marble walls and floors. There are no obvious exits that you can see, although there are several alcoves set into the marble walls. Strangely, most of the statues face *into* the alcoves rather than out into the room.

If you would like to examine the statues closely, turn to **493**. If you would like to step into an unoccupied alcove, turn to **372**. If you would like to return to the black corridor, turn to **354**.

237

The ring gives a momentary flare of red light, much to your amazement. The Dirges daw air for a moment, surprised and frightened of the power the ring might contain. Seeing no further glare of light, they soon recover and swoop in again towards you. Turn to **112**, but note that because of their hesitation, Sages and Tricksters (if any) get *three* shots against them rather than two as stated there.

At last you reach the base of the atoll. The plain was deceptively wide, and you feel as though you have walked almost three kilometres across the blasted waste. The mist falls back in forlorn wisps as you reach the higher ground climbing up to the atoll. High above, the tassels of the Emblem of Victory stream in the ghostly winds that shriek about this desolate place.

A slope leads up into a crevice in the side of the atoll, and passing through this you find a path winding up and around it like a helter-skelter. The way is steep, and you are glad when you reach a small chamber where you can rest your aching legs. Pausing to gather your strength for the climb, you become aware of a reddish glow suffusing the back of the chamber. It illuminates a skull - but *what* a skull! It must have belonged to a man nearly four metres tall. As you stare dumbfounded, a groan comes from out of its fleshless lips. Then it speaks...

'I was Skrymir the Giant, who dared to challenge the True Magi,' it tells you. 'This was in olden times, before the Blasting of Spyte which placed modern usurpers on the old thrones. The True Magi were wizards indeed! They blew spells that shrivelled my flesh into dust, turned my mighty heart to stone with their fierce glares, boiled my blood with their rage, cracked these old bones with shouted incantations . . . But with your aid I could rise again and sweep away these capricious prattlers who now call themselves magi. Collect my bones together - this skull through which I now speak to you, and the other sundered fragments you will find. At the summit, join them together. Give me life and your rewards will be beyond the dreams of avarice!'

You may take the skull if you wish. If you have the

fossilised heart then you *must* take the skull as well even if it means discarding some important item such as a sword.

Turn to **271**.

239

Amazingly, you have disbanded the spirit of Magus Zyn, a treacherous wizard of ages past who was confined here in the nether reaches of the Battlepits when his fellow magi found they could not destroy him. You have succeeded where they failed, and as his ghost fades with a shriek of damnation you may be justified in feeling a certain pride at your victory.

But it is a Pyrrhic victory. There is no way down from the hovering platform. You look down upon the seething volcanic mists and gushing geyser-fires of the cavern. It is like a scene out of hell, and it is the hell in which you shall languish forever.



240

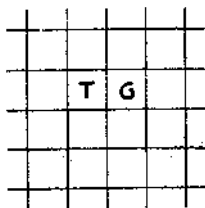
This time he put a 1.

If you also chose 1, turn to **245**. If you went for a 2, turn to **250**. If you chose 3 or more, turn to **286**.

241

(TRICKSTER) The guard is upon you as you draw your sword. 'Pah, so you fancy yourself in a fight, do you?' he says, sneering. The crowds gather

round, eager to see some blood spilt as the combat begins ...



Guard

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: 1 Die
Armour Rating: 1 Awareness: 6
Endurance: 8

You are on your own in this fight. Your companions (if any) can't enter the ring that has formed around you and the guard because of the pressing crowd. You will continue to fight until the end of any Round in which either you or the guard is down to five Endurance.

If the guard is down to five Endurance or less, turn to **7**. If you (or you *and* the guard) reach five Endurance or less, turn to **41**.

242

(ENCHANTER) You weave your spell with a few quick gestures and a muttered incantation. [*A voice that only you can hear comes from a barrel nearby. It is the high, piping voice of a Faltyn, an ethereal spirit summoned by your spell. Well, I'll tell you which pennant to go for,' snickers the Faltyn. 'but you'll have to give me all your gold. Is that a deal?'*]

If you wish to pay all your gold to the Faltyn, turn to **217**. If you won't part with your gold, turn back to 1 and select a different option.

243

You lift the gory pelt with a sword-point and let it drop to the dusty floor. The black altar stone is rust-red with the congealed blood of countless sacrifices. You notice a tracing of tarnished silver filigree behind the altar. It marks out a symbol - three interlocking triangles - and perhaps indicates a secret door. You bend closer to inspect it.

If there is a Sage in your group and he or she wishes to do something, turn to **19**. If there is an Enchanter who wishes to do something, turn to **347**. If there is a Trickster who wishes to do something, turn to **111**. Otherwise turn to **444**.

244

'A draw?' cries Kalugen, throwing up his hands. 'This is not really satisfactory. Somebody has to win, and somebody has to lose. We'll just have to play Prey's Roosters after all. . .'

Turn to **328**.

245

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves Kief with three heads and three tails. You have four heads, giving you a temporary advantage. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **255**.

246

You step through the ornamental door into a vast cavern whose walls sparkle with veins of quartz. Rock-cut steps lead down. At the bottom of the steps a slab of grey rock with a sculpted frieze running round it forms a low dais. Looking beyond this, you see four sarcophagi carved on a monumental scale. Further on, you can dimly make out a pebble beach washed by the dark waters of an

underground lake. Cautiously you make your way down the steps.

If there is a Sage who wishes to try ESP, turn to 207. If the party includes an Enchanter who wishes to cast Detect Spells, turn to **86**. If you wish to step on to the dais, turn to **386**. If you wish to examine the sarcophagi, turn to **96**. If you wish to cross the cavern to the beach, turn to **293**.

247

The boat glides past a low side tunnel. Far ahead you can see the winking lantern-lights of a jetty. The gondolier sculls to a halt and waits for you to indicate which route you want to take. Will it be left, along the side tunnel (turn to **489**), or right, and on towards the jetty (turn to **368**)?

248

You race along the corridor with the Barbarians close behind you screaming some Berserker battle-cry that chills you to the marrow. Suddenly you have to leap over a fine jewelled sword that lies glinting in the middle of the floor in front of you. You may either stop and try to pick it up (turn to **91**) or you may carry on running (turn to **531**).

249

The walls of the passage bear a decorative frieze showing gladiators locked in bloody battle. At the end you find a set of steps leading down into a monumental subterranean amphitheatre. Tiers of seats sweep up on all sides. A shaft in the ceiling admits a wan flicker of bleak grey daylight. On a low dais, a thin figure sits hunched over an onyx table. His robes seem like a pool of molten gold, and his skin is a rich ebony black. He looks up as you enter

and pauses for a moment like one who has just awakened from a very long sleep. Then he speaks: 'You have done well to come so far, though you are not the first. Now you must face a great challenge - not a test of wits or wisdom, nor of swords or spells. You must beat me at a game . . .'

Turn to **26**.

250

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves Kief with two heads and three tails, while you have two heads and two tails. You both have to put a 1 this time, and after the next *recovery* he thus has three heads and two tails to your three heads and one tail.

Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **465**.

251

You loot their bodies, finding twenty gold pieces, four axes, three daggers and four breastplates. The armour is of no value to you because you cannot wear two sets at once.

Note down on your Character Sheet any items that you wish to take. You now continue down the corridor, reaching a junction: on your left is a corridor lined with black marble, and on your right one of white marble.

If you wish to go left, turn to **354**. If you wish to go right, turn to **61**.

252

(ENCHANTER) You may cross the gorge by either of the two bridges. To reach the further bridge, however, you would have to step through the waterfall.

If you decide to use the nearer of the bridges, turn



to **128**. If you step through the waterfall to use the other bridge, turn to **494**.

253

You search the darkened temple for the demon-lady's treasure. All you find, under the altar-stone, is a small casket containing a sliver of grey-white metal.

Does anyone in the party have an opal medallion? If so, turn to **521**. If you do not have a medallion but there is a Sage in the party, turn to **172**. Failing either of these, you can take the casket if you wish and then turn to **319**.

254

(SAGE) It is written in the Dakkandi language, a debased offshoot of the magi's tongue. *[It consists of an elegiac lament to the giant Skrymir, ancient enemy of Krarth, who was slain and dismembered by the champions of the magi. According to the parchment, Magus Zyn was discovered to be Skrymir's accomplice and, in punishment, the other magi consigned him to eternal undeath in the fires of the Battlepits.]*

You put the parchment back in its case (remember to note it on your Character Sheet if you keep it) and then continue along the path leading to the shrine.

Turn to **339**.

255

He put down a 2.

If your number was 1, turn to **260**. If your number was 2, turn to **265**. If your number was 3, turn to **270**. If you chose a 4 or more, turn to **286**.

256

(SAGE) Your glance falls upon the collapsed doors,

and a sudden thought spurs you to action. Scrambling over, you inspect them. As you thought, they are of strong Krarthian hardwood. This dark wood burns reluctantly, but is quite light and may thus float on the lava!

Turn to **132**.

257

Skrymir climbs to the very top of the atoll, knocking the Emblem aside with a roar of hatred. He stands bathed in the light of the Teleportation spell for an instant, then shimmers and fades - to rematerialise in the Great Hall of the magi, no doubt. You can imagine the look of dumbfoundment on the faces of the assembled dignitaries when that maddened giant appears in their midst.

You reach for the fallen Emblem and carry it to the peak. The beam shines starkly around you, conveying you too up to the surface.

The scene that greets your eyes is one of carnage. Skrymir has charged to the end of the Hall, spreading destruction in his wake. Bodies lie crushed or moaning as their lifeblood ebbs away. A horde of dazed courtiers clogs the exits, screaming as the angry giant hurls blocks of masonry about in his lust for blood. Several magi have collected their wits enough to flee by sorcery, disappearing off to their distant citadels through inter-dimensional corridors that only they can use.

Others were not so quick to react. Among the bodies, you see the pulped corpses of Magus Uru and cruel Magus Kalugen. Magus Venzor lies not far off, groaning piteously in his death-throes. His body was crushed when the giant trod on him.

You will receive no grand reward now. Hurriedly you fight your way to the exit through the press of

shrieking attendants and ashen-faced guards. You gain a total of eight hundred experience points (divided between all surviving players), but of the promised riches there is no sign.

Emerging into the streets, you make your way out of Kalugen's Keep. Looking back, you see the inner towers beginning to blaze as Skrymir cuts a swathe of devastation within the walls. Not exactly the triumphant victory you had hoped for. But you shed no tears for the magi, and you still hold the Emblem of Victory which you may be able to sell for a few bags of gold. You are still alive, too. Not a triumphant victory, but a better fate than you might have suffered in the infernal Battlepits of Krarth ...

258

You struggle hard to focus your mind until beads of perspiration stand out on your forehead, but try as you might you cannot achieve the effort of will needed to activate your latent psionic power. Groaning with exasperation, you abandon the attempt.

Turn to **216**.

259

Which item will you use against the demon-god? The Dagger of Vislet (turn to **23**), the Dragonlord Gem (turn to **46**) or a ruby ring (turn to **63**)?

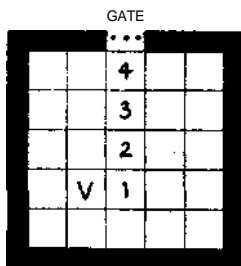
260

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and four tails. You have three coins left, all showing heads. You know he now has to put down a 1 - he does it openly, having no other alternative.

If you also put a 1, turn to **115**. If you counter with a 2, turn to **275**.

Players who have entered the room (either voluntarily or as a result of mesmerism) are standing as shown. They are about to be attacked by the vampiric Magus Vyl (indicated by V on the map).

The gate slams shut as soon as Vyl moves forwards. His sorcery holds it closed, and players inside cannot *flee*. Similarly, those who chose to remain outside cannot enter now even if they wish to. Sages and Tricksters can, however, *shoot* arrows through the gate, and Enchanters can cast spells through it.



Magus Vyl

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 3 Dice
 Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 9
 Armour Rating: 2
 Endurance: 35

Note: Because he is a vampire, Vyl has the special ability to paralyse with his touch. Anyone (except a Sage) wounded by him must immediately roll equal to or less than his or her Psychic Ability: if this roll fails, the paralysed player falls to the floor and can take no further part in the combat. Sages are immune because of their mind-over-body disciplines.

If Vyl is defeated (with his death, the magic that

holds the gate closed is dispelled), turn to **81**. If Vyl kills everyone who entered the room but there are still some players alive outside, they can escape up the stairs by turning to **3**.

262

(TRICKSTER) Essentially, there are two ways you could deal with this irksome guard. Little can go wrong with a straightforward attack, but then you risk injury if he is a practised fighter. He looks like a *very* practised fighter. The alternative approach would be to try duping him in some way. That might be more difficult, but you might be able to avoid bloodshed - your own, that is.

If you decide to charge and attack him, turn to **192**. If you are unarmed and wish to use your natural guile, turn to **501**.

263

(SAGE) Success! Now you can see the rhyme in its entirety:

'As you are now, so once was I;
Where I am now, so must you go.
Haul me up from where I lie,
And join me in the deeps below.'
A rather morbid invitation.

If you wish to pass by, turn to **247**. If you prefer to pull the iron chain up out of the water, turn to **502**.

264

You drop the sword and, as you do, the wall blocking your progress disappears. Hastily you rush onwards, away from the berserk Barbarians.

Turn to **531**.

265

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has four heads and two tails. You on the other hand, have just four heads. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **445**.

266

(SAGE) You can make some sense out of the sigils. [*They include glyphs representing Knowledge and Power in the High Cabbandari script of Krarth.*]

Now if you wish to go through the door, turn to **406**. If you pass by and continue down the tunnel, turn to **249**.

267

(TRICKSTER) You saunter out on to the bridge. It is a long drop to either side, but this doesn't prevent you from dancing a precarious jig to excite the ghoulish Hags. They expect to see you fall, and you give a mock-terrified whirl of your arms that has them clustering eagerly at the edge of the gorge. But then you recover your balance and stroll effortlessly on, laughing when you see them spit with disappointment.

Suddenly a rumbling voice lowers your high spirits. 'Come from death,' commands the gargoyle head. In answer to its summons, a shadowy figure materialises on the bridge ahead of you. It steps forwards, and the ruddy light of the volcanic jets shows you a man in a brocade gown. He has a jewelled patch over one eye, and the other is milky and sightless. It is Hurondus the Blind, a mad sorcerer whom you killed in a duel several years ago. You know that his lack of sight is deceptive - his other senses more than compensate for this disability.

'Hurondus,' booms the gargoyle head. 'Your dearest foe wishes to cross the bridge. Prevent this, and you shall be restored to life.'

'My dearest foe,' says Hurondus venomously. 'This is where we conclude our vendetta at last...'

If you want to fight him, turn to **171**. If you would prefer to rely on your wits, turn to **222**.



268

(ENCHANTER) 'The green brew prepared by Gronga, is thought to be a restorative to human folk, though it is a poison to us Hags. The black concoction you will find in Buldea's pot is an extremely virulent poison - chimera's spittle - but it has a delayed effect and does not kill at once. Wynda's fizzing potion is an antidote to chimera spittle. Lift the lid of fat Jeela's cauldron and you will see the purulent green slime that has spelled the death of many a poor dupe. My own tasty tipple is called the elixir of chaos, for the simple reason that it has random effects on those who drink. Now, if you will excuse me, I think I feel your spell wearing off and I am now ready to mete out revenge

She grabs a ladle protruding from a nearby pot and lobs an acrid venom into your face. You lose one Endurance as the acid burns you. Seeing you ready to retaliate with magic, the Hag scurries off behind the temple.

Turn to **67**.

269

You insert the prisms into the indentations. As you expected, they fit snugly. As they click into place, a multi-coloured glow suffuses them. There is a soft whining noise throughout the room as the black lens, too, erupts into a reddish glow.

You feel a tingling across your skin. A moment of disorientation and weightlessness . . .

The scene changes. You are now standing on the edge of a desolate plain. Ancient stone henges rear up all across the plain like cracked teeth. On the far side of the plain, against the back wall of the cave, you see an atoll. At its peak is planted the Emblem of Victory for which you have battled your way through all the dangers of the last few hours! Now you can almost feel it in your grasp!

Turn to **359**

270

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has three heads and two tails. You have two heads and two tails. Pondering your move, you are interrupted by Kief, who reaches out to gather up the coins. Seeing your expression, he says: 'You must see that you have lost, surely?'

Turn to **55**.

271

You follow the path up inside the atoll until you

reach another chamber. Here, a rib-cage of colossal proportions hangs from a petrified tree. A large padlock attaches it to one of the stone branches. From the other branches, grinning severed heads dangle by their matted scalps. A crack in the outer wall affords you a view across the Battlepits - of the floating basalt platform above the plain of standing stones, of the chasm where the Dirge-Men fly, of the pylon in the middle of bubbling lava pits and of the shrine and temple beyond it. You have come so far, but now you feel a terrible depression of the spirit. Your quest begins to seem almost pointless. How much better to slump here, to rest devoid of cares. To submit to defeat . . .

A whistling wind blows from the tree. A thousand grinning mouths appear across its stony bark, screaming and calling for you. A thousand fire-blackened fingers stretch out from the gulf beyond your imagination, beckoning for your company. You feel the lure of insanity . . .

Do you have the fossilised heart? If so, turn to **176**. If you do not have that item, you must rely on your own force of will to see you through this ordeal (turn to **468**).

272

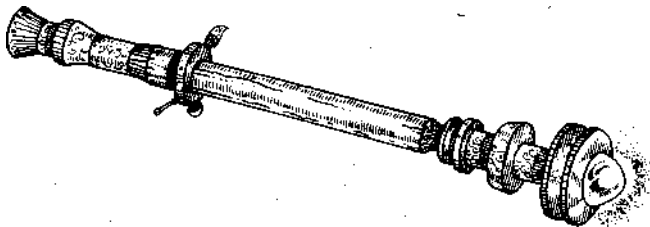
Do you have the giant's skull? If so, turn to **161**. If you do not have this item, turn to **159**.

273

Balazar has provided excellent fare for you to begin your journey. Any wounded character who eats his fill restores one Endurance point. You may gather up some of the food to take with you. The portions you take (each healing one Endurance) can be stored in a backpack, and each counts as one item

of encumbrance. You may eat *one* portion after any combat. Now you are ready to move on.

Will you enter the corridor leading from the far end of the room (turn to **326**) or the alcove in the side wall (turn to **13**)?



274

She does not open her mouth, but her musical voice rings inside your thoughts. She is speaking to you telepathically. 'I am Larisha - called, by the ancients of Krarth, the Gift-Giver. Now that you have stumbled into my little bower, I am obliged to render a single gift to you.'

She reaches into the sparkling waters of the fountain and holds up a silver poniard. 'This is the Dagger of Vislet, the Prince of Thieves.' She allows it to fall into the water and then pulls out another item. This is the Golden Snuff-Box used by the savant Shormiano, and this - ' she drops the snuff-box and takes a large gem from the water' - is the last breath of Astarandel the Dragonlord.' You notice a flicker of light in the green depths of the gem. 'The fiery energy of Astarandel's breath is contained by a mighty spell,' explains Larisha. 'The spell takes the form of this gem, and if you were able to find some way of negating the spell you would unleash the searing flames of the Dragonlord's last exhalation.'

Choose the item you will take - either the Dagger

of Vislet, the Golden Snuff-Box or the Dragonlord Gem - then turn to **453**.

275

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has two heads and three tails, while you have two heads and one tail. Not a strong position, but at least both of you must now put... Kief interrupts your thoughts by reaching out and sweeping up the coins. 'Plainly you have lost,' he declares, 'so we need not play on.'

Turn to **55**.

276

(TRICKSTER) Beyond the gateway you see a tall, robed man with a pale face: he reclines on a couch. At least you thought it was a couch, but when you draw closer you see it is actually a sarcophagus. The man stirs at the sound of your approach and looks up. To your horror you see his mouth open, revealing the fanged teeth of a vampire! If you are in a party, you gesture for the others to hide, then conceal yourself in the shadows by the gateway. You now realise that *this*, this undead creature, is Magus Vyl, and the Assassins were sent to kill you in order to satisfy his desperate craving for blood. You do some quick thinking:

'Master,' you say in a husky voice, 'we have despatched some more fools for your use. Shall we return the pennant to the recruiting booth?'

'I have enough for the time being,' murmurs the vampire as he sinks back on to the sarcophagus, having taken a drink of a suspicious-looking ruby-red liquid from a jewelled cup at his side. 'Return to your usual haunts until I summon you again,' he whispers as he sinks into a deathly reverie.

You bow hastily and depart, taking the stairs leading upwards.

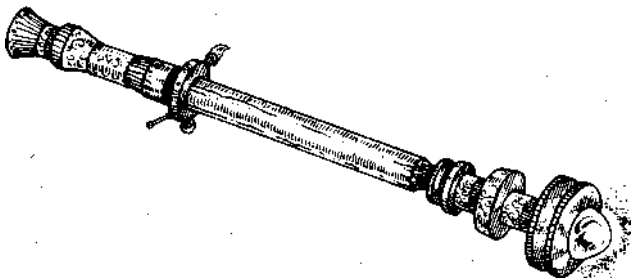
Turn to **3**.

277

You walk up to the man and touch his arm. 'Balhazar?' you say tentatively. He turns and watches you for a moment with a half smile. A man in a domino cape rises languorously from a couch and walks over to you. As he approaches, he waves his hand and all the partygoers disappear like bursting bubbles. The man you thought was Balhazar disappears with them, a mere illusion along with the rest.

'You have failed my test, I fear,' says the real Balhazar as he removes the hood of his domino cape. 'Regrettable, as I had hoped you would do better. Now, it is time for you to leave.'

Turn to **119**.



278

As you approach the figure in the gloom you see it's a soldier of Kalugen's Battalion of Torment - the militia of the dungeons. Often the soldiers of this company may spend months or years, without seeing the light of day, stalking the underworld. He wears jet-black ringmail armour with an ochre



tabard. Here and there spots of rust show through the iron links of his armour, and the stench of the grave clings to his clothing. He has no helmet, and the sight of his stubbled chin, badly cropped hair and crazed eyes tell you that he is one of the psychopathic Tomb Rangers assigned to suicidal missions in the underworld.

If you decide to creep back and try the ornamental doorway, turn to **246**. If there is a Warrior in the party who wishes to try something, turn to **514**. If there is a Trickster who wishes to try something, turn to **262**. If you just prefer to take him out in a headlong rush, turn to **192**.

279

You walk down the tunnel towards a light at the end. You find this to be a single lantern placed on the floor by some unknown hand. The light it sheds shows that you have reached a T-junction. From here you could go left or right. As you are making up your mind, you hear a great booming laugh coming from the left-hand branch of the corridor.

'Ho, Lars,' says one voice. 'We sure stuffed those little Assassins, huh?'

There is more laughter. 'That's true, Erek,' comes the reply. 'All their fancy jumps and kicks and little pointy stars didn't rate much against a good Mercanian axe in the belly!'

'This is a walkover,' says another bellowing voice. 'Not half as dangerous as Deathtr . . . Wait! Someone up ahead, lads!'

It seems a group of battle-crazy Barbarians is blundering along towards you. You can just make out their silhouettes in the gloom.

If you stand your ground and fight, turn to **491**. If you hurry in the opposite direction, turn to **248**.

280

His chosen number this time is 3.

If you chose a 1, turn to 260. If you chose a 2, turn to **285**. If you chose a 3, turn to **290**. If you chose anything else, turn to **286**.

281

The spoils of battle are as follows:

- four swords
- four bows
- thirteen arrows
- twelve gold pieces
- a scroll

Take what you will. Only Sages and Tricksters can use bows. The scroll can be read at any time, though if you read it in the middle of a combat one player must spend his or her action for the Round doing so. If you read the scroll, turn to **532** to find out what it says. Remember to note down the paragraph number you're at at the time, because **532** will not send you back there. Write on your Character Sheet: 'Scroll - for contents see **532**.'

You descend the steps.

Turn to **492**.

282

(SAGE) The power of Levitation is perhaps the most difficult of all your psionic disciplines. It requires you to realise the unreality of mass and weight, which is no easy thing when one is surrounded by the physical world. You clear your mind, reaching towards the perfect understanding of Enlightenment.

If you desire your foe's death above all else, turn

to **534**. If you feel that victory and defeat are in fact equivalent, turn to **173**.

283

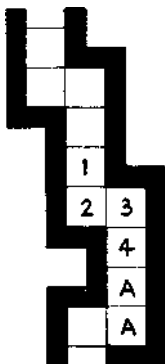
(ENCHANTER) You call the Enthralment spell to mind. Several of the Hags watch you suspiciously. When you cast the spell, check to see if the Hag you're trying to enchant manages to resist - she has a Psychic Ability of seven. If you successfully Enthral her, turn to 374. If you fail, the Hag realises what you're up to and flings a pot of acid over you, causing the loss of one Endurance point. You can keep trying, losing one Endurance each time you fail, if you wish.

If you give up (or die, and other players are still alive), turn to **67**.

284

'Pretty good fighting,' says a voice behind you as the last Skiapyr fades. 'I was wondering how we'd get past those fiery devils.'

It is one of the Adventurers you fled from before encountering the flame-demons. The delay gave them time to catch up with you. Now you must renew your battle.



Adventurers

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Psychic Ability: 6

Awareness: 6

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: *first* 22* *second* 23*

*Remember to adjust these scores if you have already fought and wounded them.

If you *flee*, turn to **223**. If you beat them, turn to **467**.

285

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves Kief with two heads and four tails. You have four heads. He shakes his head. 'Ah, dear me,' he says with a rueful smile. 'I have been outmanoeuvred, and now cannot win . . .'

Turn to **85**.



286

You played an invalid Spiral. You are not allowed to choose a number that is higher than *or equal to* the

number of heads your coins are showing at the time.

Turn to **10**.

287

(ENCHANTER) You pause for a moment and prepare to weave your Prediction spell. There is no need to roll for this; you are not in a combat situation, so it doesn't matter how long it takes you to cast. At last you feel the spell take effect and your seven senses flow forwards through the currents of future possibilities. *[A jumble of strange images imposes itself upon your mind, many images overlapping one another. But the most haunting image stays with you even when the effect of the spell has worn off: it is an image of your worst nightmare, a creature that cannot be harmed by magic, lurking ahead of you somewhere in the gloom. This is only one possible future, and having seen it you have a chance of averting it.]* As the spell fades, your glance falls on the mirrors. Could they conceal another route out of the corridor?

Turn to **216**.

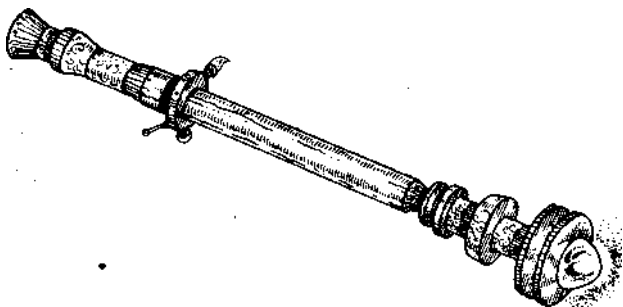
288

(WARRIOR) By the God of Storms! You have fought giants and hobgoblins, wrestled with monstrous serpents, and sunk your sword in the vile breast of many an evil sorcerer. Even demons have died for the curses they uttered against you, and your blood boils that this crowing peasant should dare to mock you! Your hand goes to your sword-hilt.

Roll two Dice. If the score is equal to or less than your Fighting Prowess, turn to **306**. If the Dice score is greater than your Fighting Prowess, turn to **434**.

(ENCHANTER) You quickly adopt the mind-set necessary to cast this simple spell. A voice speaks to you from the astral world where Faltyns dwell. [*'I prefer not to enter your mortal plane just at the moment,' says the Faltyn quaveringly. "There will be no charge for having called upon me, of course.'*]

If you wish to berate the Faltyn for its disobedience in not answering your summons, turn to **444**. If you think it prudent to leave this chamber at once, turn to **3**.



290

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves Kief with five heads and one tail. You are not far behind with five heads. After you have chosen your number for the next Spiral, turn to **295**.

291

You look around the room for distinctive mannerisms. You notice a portly man caressing his wine glass. In the frame of the doorway to the lawn, a thin fellow in a green wig is licking his lips as he talks to two servants. There is a man nearby who has the habit of tugging at his earlobe while holding

forth about the current political situation in Kurland. Another man, dressed in a long blue robe, rubs his hands silently while contemplating the many delicious snacks laid out on the table. On a chaise-longue in the corner, a man in a domino cape strokes his moustache as he talks quietly to a velvet-clad woman in a feline mask.

Whom will you approach?

The portly man (turn to **527**), the man in the green wig (turn to **417**), the politician (turn to **123**), the man in the blue robe (turn to **277**) or the man in the domino cape (turn to **487**)?

292

(TRICKSTER) 'By coincidence,' he says, biting each coin as he takes it, 'it is my own liege-lord, Magus Kalugen, who is the most generous to his champions. His is the olive-green banner. Now, turn away as though you have not spoken to me. A city guard is strutting past, and the penalties for giving and accepting bribes are harsh.'

Turn to **332**.

293

As you step on to the smooth pebbles marking the shore of the lake, ripples spread across its glistening surface and a gondola wrapped in dark-blue drapes slides into view across the water. As it draws nearer, a gondolier becomes visible at the back of the boat. Somehow you failed to notice him at first. He works his oar with thin but apparently tireless arms. He brings the gondola to a halt in front of you. Ripples lap the shore, producing an eerie echoing *shush-shush*, like a great creature breathing deeply in its sleep.

You watch the gondolier. His scrawny frame is wrapped in odd folds of cloth. His face is hidden by one of the despondent theatrical masks used in Ancient Emphidian tragedies. He waits in silence.

If there is a Sage in the party and he or she wishes to try something, turn to **474**. If there is an Enchanter who would like to cast a spell of Servile Enthralment on the gondolier, turn to **333**. If you simply pay him to ferry you across, turn to **167**.

294

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

The amulet restores you to life! Your Endurance score is now back to what it was at the start of the adventure. The amulet will not work for you ever again, so you must pass it to another player or else discard it. (If passed to another player, it will do the same for him if he is killed - but then *he* cannot use it again either, and must pass it to someone else.)

Now return to the previous entry.

295

He lifts his hand to show a 4.

If you put 1, turn to **300**. If you put 2, turn to **260**. If you put 3, turn to **285**. If you put 4, turn to **305**. If you put 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

296

You are examining the grille when an eerie cacophony of wails and shrieks attracts your attention. Looking around, you see a host of shambling grey beings emerging from the alcoves along the other corridor. Rather than face them all, you expend a charge of the sceptre, blowing the grille open. Without wasting time waiting around to see



what the monsters do, you scramble through the exit and along the tunnel beyond.

Turn to **279**.

297

(SAGE) [*You have failed to concentrate your mind sufficiently to make contact with the planes beyond, and you are none the wiser as to what lies ahead of you.*]

You now have two options.

If you want to wait here watching through the grille, turn to **73**. If you want to jump down and follow the Barbarians, turn to **477**.

298

'By the picking of my nose,' says one of the Hags in a stage-whisper as you walk past them, 'someone gallant that way goes . . .' To your disgust, they all break into peals of high-pitched laughter.

You climb the soot-smearred steps and enter the temple colonnade. The geyser-light does not penetrate in here, and for a few moments you are in stygian darkness. You are startled by blundering into a marble altar and, sweeping your hands along it, you find first a sharp knife (which you may take if you wish) and then a large stone urn. There is something warm and sticky filling the urn almost to the brim. With a shock you recognise it as blood.

As your eyes adjust to the gloom, a pale luminescent face appears before you. It is the face of a woman - not unhandsome, except for the greenish cast to her skin and the hissing serpents that are her hair. You need no Sage to tell you that this is Echidna, the Ophidian Lady, Mistress of Inescapable Coils, Lamia of the Venefical Kiss, Mother of Hydrae. She is without doubt one of the most deadly of all demonkind.

If you wish to speak to her, turn to **408**. If you attack without hesitation, turn to **129**.

299

The following applies to whoever was drinking the liquid.

You quaff the vile brew. There is no immediate effect. 'You have to wait for the benefit of that one! Why not buy a bottle for later? Only three gold coins,' says a Hag.

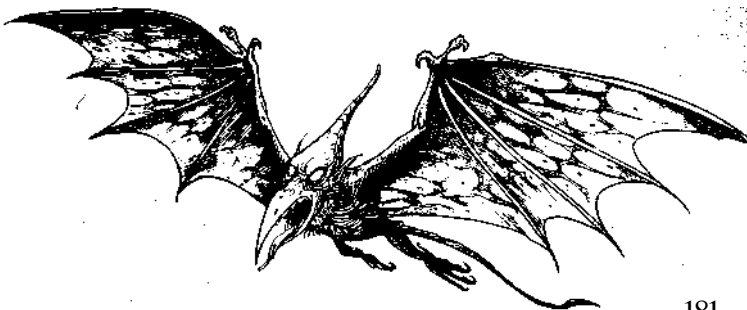
If any other players wish to drink this potion - or buy a bottle - they may do so. It will take effect after six paragraphs, so keep track of the entries you turn to. When you are about to go to the sixth paragraph after this one, turn first to **144**. Remember first to note down the paragraph number you are going to, as **144** will not direct you there.

If you want to try another potion, turn to **103**. If you are anxious to be on your way, turn to **481**.

300

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has two heads and four tails. You have but two heads. 'I'm sure you can see that you have lost,' he says quietly. Then his thin hands dart out and sweep the coins from the table.

Turn to **55**.



301

You produce the bridle. By luck, a geyser shoots up a glorious flare of molten rock nearby, and the gold chasing of the bridle scintillates magnificently. The Dirge-Man gasps in admiration. 'An extraordinary treasure!' he croaks, his avaricious nature swamp-ing all reason. 'Give it to me and I shall convey you across the chasm at once.'

'By all means,' you reply, tossing it over his neck and securing the buckles. Swinging on to his back, you pull tightly on the reins. The Dirge-Man gives a muffled cry, but soon stops resisting as the studs inside the bridle cut into his leathery skin. Reluc-tantly he stretches his great wings and clambers up into the steamy air with you clinging to his back.

The crossing is bumpy. You are continually buf-feted by roaring gusts of wind from the volcanic vents far below. The Dirge-Man makes one half-hearted attempt to throw you, then whimpers as you pull harshly on the bridle. At last he swoops down to land on the far side. You leave him tethered by the reins to a boulder, ignoring his bleats of protest.

Turn to **359**.

302

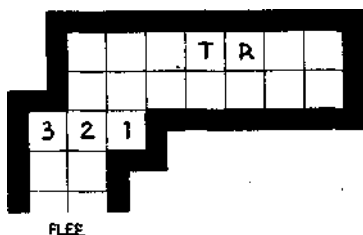
What will you add before the giant's flesh and sinew reknits on his ancient bones? A sliver of Kalium (turn to **441**), a spiked gauntlet (turn to **146**) or an ice jewel (turn to **483**)? If you do not have - or do not wish to use - any of these, turn to **117**.

303

He feels a slight tug and turns, reaching for his sword. You laugh at the look of mingled horror and astonishment as he sees that you now have it!

Looking around frantically, he seizes a rusty sword that was lying on the floor beside him.

You are at T, he is at R, and your companions (if any) are at points 1 to 3:



Ranger

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per How: 3 Dice

Psychic Ability: 7

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: 36

Note: The sword he is using is rusted through **and** could break at any time. This happens if he rolls a 12 on two Dice when trying to hit you. If the sword breaks, reduce his Fighting Prowess to six and his Damage score to 3 Dice-2. If you take the rusty sword after the fight, remember that it will break on a *fight* roll of 12.

It you flee back the way you came, turn to **246**. If you defeat him you can go on (turn to **151**).

304

Turn to **34**.

305

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has six heads. Your position, with, five heads, is only marginally weaker. 'I am glad you're not too easy an opponent,' remarks Grandmaster Kief. 'I like to be

given a run for my money, so to speak.'

Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **450**.

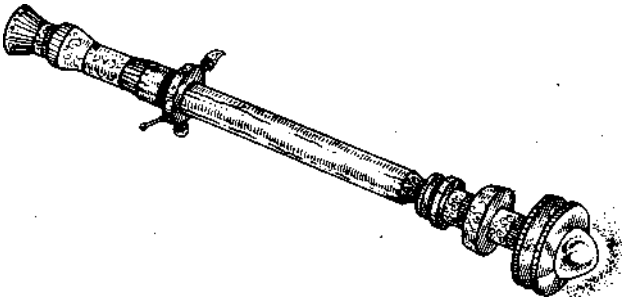
306

(WARRIOR) Your sword slices through the air, makes three deft cuts almost faster than the eye can see, then slides back into its scabbard with a metallic whisper. The three stewards say nothing for a moment. In fact they don't even draw breath. Then one clutches at his beard where you have shaved through it. Another grabs for his trousers, no longer supported by the belt your sword-blade sliced in two. The third - the one who was so loudly smirking a moment ago - is horrified to see that you have cut through his jerkin and inflicted a precise scratch in the skin over his heart.

'Be thankful you still live,' you tell him. 'And hopefully this will teach you to be more civil to your betters in future. Now - which of these magi do you recommend as an employer?'

Two of the stewards back off. 'That would be Magus Balhazar,' says the third, indicating the scarlet pennant. You reach out and take it.

Turn to **28**.



307

You step into the Astral Gateway. There is a moment of cold - not just a lack of warmth, but the chilling emptiness of an occult void in which your nerves scream. Seconds later, mercifully, the unbearable sensation passes. You are reaching the other end of the gate . . .

Turn to **78**.

308

One of the bodies topples over into the lava pool before you can grab it. Searching the other, you find a gilded bridle, a potion of healing (one person can drink it, restoring 2 Dice Endurance), a blue touchstone and a lead ring. There are also his armour (Armour Rating two) and sword, of course. Take whatever you want, then turn to **537**.

309

(SAGE) ESP is not always reliable or easy to use. You retire to a quiet corner of the room and meditate, clearing your mind of all distractions. The sublime strains of the flautist's music help you to focus and channel your thoughts into 'the space between thought' when all your psionic abilities become operational. You reach out with your mind, scanning the thoughts of those in the room. Obviously Balhazar has anticipated this strategy, because you discover he has placed a blanketing spell on all the guests. You detect no thoughts from anyone present (apart from those of your colleagues, if any).

But wait! You *do* pick up one set of thoughts - from a saturnine man dressed in a dark-blue cloak and a horned bull mask.

Turn to **348**.

310

Again he displays a 5.

If your chosen number was 1, turn to **50**. If your number was 2, turn to **45**. If you chose a 3, turn to **40**. If you chose a 4, turn to **35**. If your number was 5, turn to **315**. If you put down a 6, turn to **25**.

311

(SAGE) You have studied mathematics and know a little of statistical probabilities. You maximise your probable gain and Kalugen's probable loss by calling a four.

Turn to **499**.

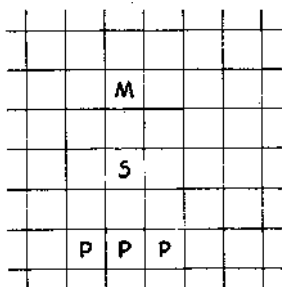
312

(Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.)

You unfurl the scroll. It is covered with glittering scratch-like runes that seem to scuttle to and fro across the page. Wisps of green-black vapour curl out like tentacles to enfold you, cutting off your view of your surroundings. You seem to stand in an endless sea of fog. Then a strong breeze whips up around you. Strangely it blows your hair and you can feel its chill on your skin, but your clothes do not billow up at all. The fog disperses, leaving you with a grim vista. You are on a plain of sticky olive-brown mire, broken at intervals by bones and skulls that protrude from the mud.

You are positioned as shown - the player who opened the scroll at point S, any other players at points P. A being clad in azure armour stands at M. He is four metres tall- manlike in form except for his head, which is the huge horned skull of a stag. Green eyes roll in the hollow sockets. He opens his fleshless mouth, sending a wave of foetid air rolling

towards you. 'Welcome to the realm of Smeaborg the Fleshless,' he says. 'Our relationship will be a brief and deadly one.' He hefts his giant halberd and stalks to the attack.



Smeaborg

Fighting Prowess: 9 Damage per blow: 5 Dice

Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 8

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 45

Note: Smeaborg is not only a powerful fighter, but also a wielder of fearsome demon-sorcery. At the start of every Round, roll one Die; on a roll of 1 Smeaborg unleashes a Slow Murder spell instead of striking with his halberd in that Round. When he does use a spell, every player must try to roll his or her Psychic Ability or less on two Dice. Failure means that the spell takes effect, causing the player to automatically lose one Endurance each Round until he or she is dead or the combat is over.

You cannot *flee*. If you destroy Smeaborg, the spell that holds you in his deathly kingdom is broken and you can return to the last paragraph you were reading.

313

You try desperately to concentrate your mind, but

your attempt fails. However, you felt yourself on the very edge of glimpsing the end of the message just before the vision broke up into a thousand fragments and was lost. . . When you come out of your trance you find yourself staring at the black waters of the underground lake and the mysterious buoy.

If you wish to heave the iron chain up out of the water, turn to **502**. If you signal for the gondolier to row on, turn to **247**.

314

In seconds they have caught up with you and you are fighting for survival among their swinging axe blades. Remember to cross off any Endurance losses you inflicted on them in any previous encounter with them in this adventure.

B	B	3		
B	B	4	2	1

Barbarians

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 1 Die+2

Psychic Ability: 5 Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: *first* 11 *third* 10

second 11 *fourth* 8

With the wall blocking your escape route, you cannot *flee*. This is a fight to the death. If you win, turn to **234**.

315

Grandmaster Kief watches you with an inscrutable smile. 'Well done,' he says at last. 'You are an

implacable opponent. I concede a draw, and this is not something I do lightly. A reward for your valiant efforts, then . . .'

He takes out a glittering blue gem and hands it to you. 'An ice jewel. I hope it will be of some use to you in the struggles that await you in the lower level.'

He gestures, flinging a cobweb of energy around you. You feel a strange sensation as you begin to sink into the floor.

Turn to **5**.

316

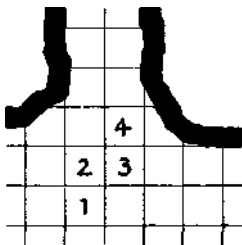
A horrible wailing and mewling comes from down the torchlit corridor. A host of grey beings shambling out of the alcoves and, seeing you, the creatures start falling over one another in their eagerness to get at you. Their deep-set, hollow eye-sockets and the red slits of their mouths suggest to you that you do not want to get too intimate with them and, besides, there are just too many of them to fight. You have no option but to run back to the jetty.

You stare across the black water. There is no sign of the ferryman, and you leap into the water (if you are wearing armour you must discard it now). You swim desperately towards the low tunnel that you saw leading off the cavern. The grey beings behind you reach the edge of the jetty and form a wall of wailing, shrieking matter through which no one could hope to pass.

You reach the mouth of the tunnel, and as you swim along it you realise that you can touch the bottom. Soon you are wading along it, but the freezing waters of the lake have taken their toll on you. Each player must reduce one of his or her characteristics (Fighting Prowess, Psychic Ability,

Awareness or Endurance) by one point *permanently*.

Exhausted by your ordeal, you reach the entrance to a rock-cut cave at the end of the tunnel. As you reach dry land, though, you see a flickering presence above you. Looking up, you see a number of giant spiders bobbing down towards you on their swiftly unravelling webs. Every player in the party is attacked by *one* spider. The spider(s) are not shown on the map because they are dangling directly above the player they are attacking.



Giant Spider(s)

Fighting Prowess: 5

Damage per blow: 1 Die+1

Psychic Ability: 4

Awareness: 7

Endurance: 6

You can't *flee* because their webs are entangling you. If you kill them, you can reach the shore.

Turn to 8.

317

(DRINKER) You drink the liquid eagerly. Suddenly a horrible burning sensation pierces your throat and your stomach as the liquid works its way down. The excruciating agony makes you black out before the acid burns its way right through you. You are dead. If there are any players left alive in your party, they must return to the last entry they were reading.

318

The Dirges are screeching hungrily as they soar in to attack you. These dingy creatures fly on the up-draughts of hot foetid air rising from the geyser pools far below. You spare a glance of hatred for the Hags who have gathered to watch your desperate battle. You see them cackling, but you cannot hear them over the noise of the river flooding down the gorge.

If you wish to use an item before the Dirges dose to attack, turn to **89**. If you race down the ledge to the platform to fight them there, turn to **407**. If you make your stand here on the ledge, turn to **112**.

319

What will you do now? Investigate the inner sanctum of the temple (turn to **392**), leave via the exit to the left (turn to **357**) or take the exit to the right (turn to **56**)?

320

He opens his hand to show his number - a 2.

If you chose a 1, turn to **325**. If you chose a 2, turn to **330**. If you chose a higher number, turn to **286**.

321

'What about a drink of this excellent liquor?' you suggest. 'It is a rare and pleasant beverage, and most conducive to drunken merriment . . .'

The Dirge-Man tilts his head this way and that, favouring you with a sidelong glance. He seems rather dubious about tasting the liquid.

If you have the chimera spittle antidote, turn to **39**. If you do not have the antidote but there is a Trickster in the party, turn to **224**. If you would rather try using the gilded bridle, turn to **301**. If

there is an Enchanter who wishes to cast a Command, turn to **11**. If none of these options is open to you, turn to **22**.

322

You emerge from the tunnel. Standing at the very summit of the atoll now, you are barely a dozen paces from the Emblem of Victory. You are high up, away from the glimmering fires and phosphor streams, but the Emblem is bathed in bright light - a grey-white Illumination spell cast by the magi. Perhaps more than just an Illumination spell - you see a pillar of light stretching up towards the ceiling of the cave and realise that is the Teleportation spell that will convey you to the surface. You have only to step up and take hold of the Emblem ...

Propped against the rock on which the Emblem stands is an iron frame. You hadn't noticed it at first, as it lies half in the shadows. Going over for a closer look, you see that it is a framework in which you could place the giant's bones if you have them.

If you have all the sections of Skrymir's skeleton *and* the fossilised heart, turn to **412**. If you have all the sections of skeleton but do *not* have the heart, turn to **213**. If you do not have all the skeleton, turn to **361**.

323

You can open the Snuff-Box at the end of any combat that you *won*. You cannot open it after *fleeing* from a combat, nor at any other time. When you open it, each player rolls one Die. On a roll of 1 or 2, the player loses one Die Endurance. On a roll of 3 to 6, the player gains one Die Endurance. The Snuff-Box then shuts itself and cannot be used again until you win another battle.

If you also have the Dagger of Vislet, turn to **214**.

If you do not have the Dagger (or if you already know what it does), turn to **93**.

324

A dip in the black lake is not an inviting prospect, but you have no choice. You shrug off all your armour (you now have an Armour Rating of zero) and wade out.

The water is biting cold. You also get a taste of it as you swim across, and it is unpleasantly brackish. Ignoring one dank, eerie, side tunnel that looks a particularly dangerous route, you eventually reach the far side of the lake and scramble up on to a rough stone jetty. Immersion in the lake exposed you to its baneful properties: each player must reduce one of his or her attribute scores (Awareness, Psychic Ability, Endurance or Fighting Prowess) by one point *permanently*.

Turn to **152**.

325

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has two heads and three tails. You are in a slightly stronger position, perhaps, with three heads and one tail. At least, you know that he can only put down a 1 for this Spiral.

If you also choose a 1, turn to **335**. If you decide to play a 2, turn to **340**.

326

You are walking in what you judge to be a northerly direction along a red-carpeted corridor lined with gilt-edged mirrors that cast dim reflections from your torchlight. The carpet muffles the sound of your feet as you move along, sending up small puffs of the centuries-old dust that covers everything.

If the party includes an Enchanter, he or she may



wish to use a Prediction spell; if so, turn to **287**. If the party includes a Sage and he or she wishes to try ESP here, turn to **362**. Otherwise you continue along the corridor, a vague sense of unease growing with every footstep (turn to **216**).

327

(ENCHANTER) The Faltyn takes the item Larisha has just given to you. The player who wrote the item down on his or her Character Sheet must now cross it off. [*There is nothing anyone can do about this - you, the Enchanter, agreed to the Faltyn's fee.*] Having secured what it asked for, the Faltyn flits invisibly into the fountain. A moment later it hovers at your side once more. 'The other items are beyond my reach,' it whispers, 'but I tried to obtain them and that was what we agreed. I now depart. . .'

'Wait!' you snarl. 'Impudent imp! Malicious sprite!' But it is too late - the Faltyn has vanished, taking with it Larisha's gift.

Turn to **203**.

328

Kalugen beckons one of his servants, who hobbles over bearing a pack of ivory cards of the sort used in Krarth. 'Behold, an unmarked deck,' points out Kalugen. 'I remove five cards - the King of Serpents, the Ace of Stars, the Ace of Swords, the Ace of Rings, and the Buffoon. The King of Serpents, represents the god Frey. The three Aces are his prize roosters, which you intend to steal. The Buffoon may help you to do this.'

Kalugen places the cards face down on the table. 'You can take up to three cards. When you look at them, you see the results of your raid on Prey's farmyard. Three Aces means you've got all the roosters, which is obviously better than two Aces

and so on. If you have the King then that means Frey caught you in the act, and you lose your hand - *unless* you also picked up the Buffoon in the same hand, in which case he keeps the god busy until you get away with the Ace - assuming you took a third card. The Buffoon on his own, or with one or two Aces, has no effect.'

Kalugen mutters a spell and the cards float in the air with their back to you, then swirl about until you have no idea which is which. Designating the five cards as A, B, C, D and E, decide which you will take (up to a maximum of three) and then turn to **349**.

329

(TRICKSTER) It is getting very cold in this room. *[You glance around and see that the grey vapour is condensing into the shape of a tall, robed figure. Before it has completely materialised, you have time to act - but you must be quick. You could get out of here at once - along with your comrades, if you're in a group - in which case turn to 3. Or you could simply back over to the door and wait for the figure to materialise, in which case turn to 444 but position yourself in the square in front of the door rather than when the map shows you are standing. Note that it is entirely up to you to decide between these options: your comrades, if any, are at the mercy of your judgement!]*

330

The situation - after *recovering* - is that you both have four heads and one tail. 'Good, good,' says Kief, nodding vigorously. 'You are preventing me from gaining ground. Play on . . .'

Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **345**.

331

You stride up to the man in brown fustian. 'You are Magus Balhazar!' you exclaim. 'Your disguise is transparent, honoured sir.'

The man removes his mask. It is not Balhazar. 'Your wits, however, must be opaque,' he laughs. 'I am Magus Tor.'

'And it is I who am your host,' says a familiar voice behind you. You turn to see Balhazar removing the hood of his domino cape. 'Regrettably you have failed my test, and so I have no choice but to turn you down. To represent me properly in the Battlepits calls for more than nerve and raw daring. Return to the main square, where I wish you luck finding another patron.'

Turn to **119**.

332

There are three banners, and you must choose one. Will it be the scarlet banner (him to **28**), the olive-green banner (turn to **52**) or the black and purple banner (turn to **381**)?

333

(ENCHANTER) You begin to have second thoughts as soon as you call the Enthralment spell to mind. In the Round in which you do this, a defensive spell comes into operation and begins to assail you. Every Round, after rolling to see if you have cast the Enthralment, you must roll two Dice to see if this defensive spell saps a little more of your strength. A score of greater than your current Psychic Ability means that you must lose 1 Die+3 Endurance - and armour will not protect you from this.

The boatman's Psychic Ability is eight. If you bring him under Enthralment, you can make him

ferry you across the lake (turn to **193**). If you give up trying to cast the Enthralment spell at any time, then the magic attack on you also stops and you can offer to pay for your passage (turn to **167**). If you (the Enchanter) are reduced to zero Endurance but there are still other players left alive in your party, they should turn to **529**.

334

You can just make out the figure of a warrior clad in leather armour frozen into the ice block. A gauntleted hand protrudes from the side of the block where it looks as if someone has chipped away the ice and stolen his sword.

If you want to try melting the ice, turn to **421**. If you want to use an item, turn to **106**. If you have something else you want to do, turn to **369**.

335

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves Kief with three heads and two tails, while you have four heads. You must try to knock out some of his coins before he can gain an edge over you. After deciding what your next number will be, turn to **375**.

336

(WARRIOR) You step through the waterfall. As you do, an eerie magic takes effect. You look down to see that you have been stripped of all your equipment except for (if you had them) your armour and sword! Cursing, you step out on to the slender bridge.

A figure pushes past the excited Hags and steps on to the bridge at the far end. It is a slim youth carrying a broadsword. He walks quickly towards you, and when he draws close he says: 'If I defeat

you, I shall become a Warrior to be respected and feared. Have at thee!' With that, he lunges forwards in a spirited but clumsy attack.

Youth

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: one Die
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 6
Endurance: 6

You could not possibly back off from a foe such as this. If you defeat him (your friends, if any, cannot help), turn to **88**.

337

(TRICKSTER) You twist to one side at the last moment, deftly evading the point of Hurondus' sword. Even before he has time to realise what you are doing, you've put your hand on his shoulder and vaulted over his head. He gives a wail of despair as you race to the end of the bridge and, staggering blindly, he topples over into the gorge.

'So much for Hurondus,' you say to one of the goggling Hags.

Turn to **88**.

338

You hear loud voices coming from the distance behind you. You are straining to hear what they are saying when suddenly they lapse into silence. Hey!' says one of them distinctly. 'I can see someone up ahead.' Obviously their eyes are keener than yours, because you can't see them yet.

Another voice cuts through the gloom. 'I see 'em too! Come on . . . Hey, sucker, just you wait right there, huh?'

They are running madly down the corridor towards you, whooping and shrieking in their delight at the thought of battle. You can see now that they are Barbarians, probably high on adrenalin. You

won't be able to reason with them.

If you stand your ground, turn to **491**. If you run for it, turn to **248**.

339

You stand within the ruined walls. Grey stone gargoyles hang off the sides of the shrine at various odd angles. Through an exit at the rear you can see another narrow path above a near-vertical precipice. In the centre of the broken floor, a golden dish gleams in the occasional spurts of volcano-fire from outside.

If you wish to take a look in the dish, turn to **507**. If you wish to leave, turn to **92**.

340

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves both Kief and you with two heads and two tails. 'We must both put 1 this Spiral,' he says, flipping over another coin. You do the same. Now you each have three heads and one tail. After deciding on your next number, turn to **360**.

341

His face contorts in rage. 'So be it, then!' he snarls. 'Your stubborn stupidity will cost you dearly.. .' He speaks a word of power, surrounding his body with crackling energy, then races forwards to attack.

		I	1		
		3	2		
	4				

Icon the Warlock

Fighting Prowess: 8

Psychic Ability: 8

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 28

Damage per blow: 2 Dice+2

Awareness: 7

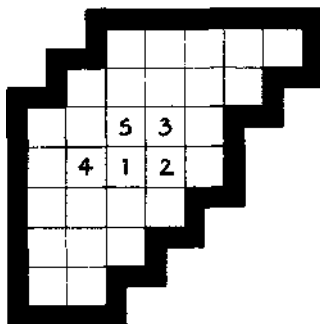
Note: Icon is immune to the Command spell.

He has cloaked himself in a spell of Retributive Fire. Anyone who strikes him in close combat- with a sword, for example, but not with an arrow - is burned by this, losing one Endurance point regardless of armour.

If you win, turn to **377**.

342

Skrymir reaches towards you. You realise that he is very probably the most awesome opponent you have ever faced. This is no longer just a contest, a game played for mere riches, You are fighting to stay alive.



Skrymir the Giant

Fighting Prowess: 9

Psychic Ability: 9

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: 55

Damage per blow: 4 Dice

Awareness: 8

If by some miracle you defeat him, turn to **432**.

(TRICKSTER) *[You are not one to panic easily. Rather than fleeing like a scoundrel, you simply step quickly behind a stall and pull a piece of sackcloth from a carton of fruit. Wrapping yourself in the sackcloth, you lie down in the gutter and begin to snore. The guard, rushing in pursuit, steps right over you - mistaking you for one of the many beggars and drunkards that infest the alleys of Kalugen's Keep. He looks to and fro, baffled at your disappearance, then plods off down the street calling for his comrades to join the hunt.]*

As you return to the square, a tall man in scarlet robes steps from the booth. You notice that one of the pennants of the magi has the same scarlet hue. The man beckons you over. 'An artful ruse,' he says with a faint smile. 'I am impressed by one who uses luck and cunning as you do . . .'

Turn to **397**.

(TRICKSTER) You saunter over to the booth. The three stewards sitting on the bench in front of it view your approach with contempt. 'Come to try your luck, have you?' one of them says archly.

You detach your money-pouch from your belt and heft it in your hand. The chink of gold changes the attitude of the stewards dramatically; they now look at you with undisguised interest. Your gaze wanders over the three pennants as if you were uncertain which of them represented the best proposition.

'Allow me to advise you,' declares one of the stewards, jumping to his feet.

'Or me,' says another, tripping him so he blunders past you, falling into the gutter. This fellow is somewhat bigger than the other two

stewards, who allow him to approach you without any further argument.

'Such advice will be well worth the five gold pieces I am prepared to pay, I hope,' you say.

'Doubtless its value lies not far off the ten gold pieces I am prepared to accept for it,' he replies.

If you agree to pay him ten gold pieces, cross them off your Character Sheet and turn to **292**. If you insist that you will pay only five gold pieces, cross them off your Character Sheet and turn to **454**. If you say you'll pay him five gold pieces now and five after he's advised you, cross five off your Character Sheet and turn to **166**.

345

His number this Spiral is 3.

If you countered with a 1, turn to **350**. If you chose a 2, turn to **195**. If you also put a 3, turn to **355**. If you put 4 or more, turn to **286**.

346

(SAGE) A strange, pungent smell wafts up from the stone trough, and you immediately recognise it to be the stench of charred bones. The bed of ash in the trough contains the remains of some kind of burnt offering.

'You take a closer look and begin to suspect that the remnants of bone you can see amid the ashes are human.'

Turn to **515**.

347

(ENCHANTER) You consider casting one of your non-combat spells.

If you wish to cast Prediction, turn to **183**. If you think Summon Faltyn would be more useful, turn to **472**. If you don't want to cast either spell, turn to **444**.

ESP indicates thoughts from only one of the revealers.

If you wish to approach this man and declare him to be Balhazar, turn to **382**. If you wish to attack the man, turn to **29**. If you don't trust ESP and would rather rely on your ingenuity, turn to **458**.

349

The cards were as follows. A, B and E were the Aces: C was the King: D was the Buffoon. If you picked up the King but not the Buffoon, you get no score. Otherwise, you score one for each Ace.

Now it is Kalugen's turn. 'My jester Starchwind will shuffle the cards,' he says. Starchwind is a crook-backed dwarf dressed back-to-front in shabby finery. He hobbles to Kalugen's throne. 'Shuffle the cards well,' Kalugen says sternly. 'Show me no favouritism!'

'You are truly the greatest of buffoons, sire,' says Starchwind loudly.

There is silence in the chamber. 'Eh?' demands Kalugen, face white and taut.

'Why, the Buffoon!' cries Starchwind, holding up the Buffoon from the five cards he is shuffling. 'Tor only the Buffoon can outwit even the very gods! So is our master Kalugen the lord of all!'

Laughter rings around the throne-room from the courtiers. The guards smile faintly. Kalugen relaxes back on his throne, placated if not exactly amused. Starchwind glances at him and then holds out the cards. Kalugen stifles a yawn and draws three at random, then throws them face up on the floor with a triumphant flourish. 'The three roosters!'

If you also got three Aces, turn to **233**. If Kalugen has beaten your score, turn to **459**.

350

He shakes his head. You glance at the coins. After *recovering* for the next *Spiral*, you have three heads. Kief has two heads and three tails. 'This is a losing position for you,' he says, triumphantly gathering the coins.

Turn to **55**.

351

With much effort, you slide the lid back. Inside you find a pile of mouldered bones swathed in tissue-fine linen. Exposure to the air after so many centuries has a startling effect on these remains. In front of your eyes they crumble away into a fine sere ash, which is soon scattered on a faint breeze that wafts through the cavern.

If you have not already done so, you can now open another of the sarcophagi: the second (turn to **186**), the third (turn to **403**) or the fourth (turn to **137**). If you have had enough of grave-rifling, you can proceed to the beach (turn to **293**).

352

(SAGE) You recognise a small glyph etched into the back. *[It is the symbol of Osiris, the Kaikuhuran god who returned from the dead. If this amulet is worn, it will restore the player who wears it to life the moment he is killed. Effectively his or her Endurance will be restored to its normal maximum score the moment it is reduced to zero. The scarab works only once for any given person, so when a player is restored to life in this way he must pass the item to someone else or discard it. If the scarab is put on to an already dead body it will restore that person to life - but in this case it loses all its power permanently. Also, you must not put it on a decayed corpse or it will simply bring the deceased back as a horrible undead wraith!]*

Note this paragraph number on your Character Sheet in case you need to remind yourself of the scarab's effects. Now continue on your way by turning to **247**.

353

You peer into the golden liquid. The surface of the pool seems to trap all light in the room and focus it at a point of almost blinding brilliance. Shielding your eyes, you watch the spot of light swell until it shines like the sun, then it begins to swim and alter until you are gazing on the shining face of a man. He smiles - a strong, comradely smile - and then slowly turns to look to his right. Two spots of darkness spread beneath him, finally blotting out his profile altogether. Then the surface of the pool is back to normal and you look away, dazzled, wondering whether you really saw anything in it at all. Silently you continue on your way.

Turn to **188**.

354

After a short distance you pass a door engraved with red sigils.

Is there a Sage in your party? If so, turn to **266**. If not, you can either open the door (turn to **406**) or continue onwards (turn to **249**).

355

'Excellent!' cries Kief. 'You are a determined opponent, forcing me to lose ground even as you do. Admirable.' After flipping over the coins for *recovery*, you both have five heads. He considers the position.

Turn to **315**.

You start to make the descent. The steps soon emerge on to a perilous ledge that snakes down the back wall of a vast underground cave. You look out for a moment, awestruck, at the unearthly panorama before you. The cavern stretches away for two kilometres or more, and the ceiling is a hundred metres high in places. The basin below is the crater of a dormant volcano, and a deep-red glow illuminates the cave from volcanic geysers that splutter and gurgle lava through cracks in the cave floor.

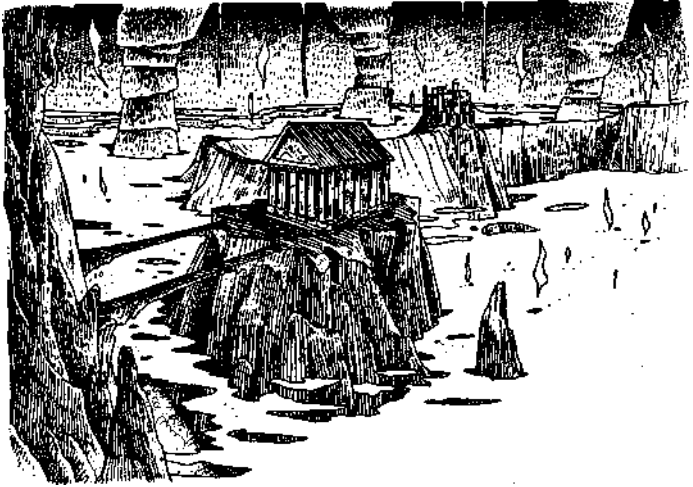
The ceiling is supported by gigantic basalt pillars that reach up into the dizzying gloom. You feel that you are below the very foundations of Kalugen's Keep, and the thought of the sorcery that keeps the ravenous volcano in check takes your breath away. Here and there from rents in the rock ceiling, trickles of noxious liquid spray down. These are the outlets of the Keep's sewers, and the volcanic fires burn with a resentful green light when one of these streams hits them.

The bottom of the crater, far below the ledge on which you cling, rolls with a greenish white mist that makes it difficult to see anything but the splutter of red fires. Three pinnacles rise out of this sea of fog. The first of these is joined to a platform at the bottom of your ledge by two narrow bridges. The crossing looks perilous, as you have only to miss a step and you would plummet into a gorge where there flows a roaring torrent of evil-smelling water.

Across the bridges you see a soot-blackened temple atop the first pinnacle. Foul Hags caper out on to a terrace in front of the temple as you wend your way down the ledge. A welcoming party? No, they are pointing up at a host of winged Dirges that

are swooping down through the unwholesome air. They've come out to watch the show, then! You wryly reflect that perhaps you'll give them a spectacle they'll enjoy . . .

Turn to **318**.



357

A narrow arete ridge leads to another pinnacle, where you can just make out the shape of a ruined shrine. Beyond, pits of lava sputter like the fires of hell.

If you want to walk along the arete to the shrine, turn to **479**. If you want to go around to the other side of the temple, turn to **56**.

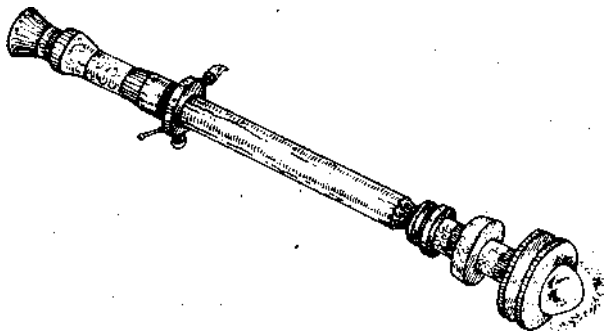
358

The following applies to whoever was drinking the liquid.

The potion fizzes as it passes over your tongue. You notice no effect other than a chalky aftertaste.

'Don't you worry,' mutters the Hag. "That's what it's meant to taste like. I can't always get the bat's entrails, you know. If you want to buy a bottle to drink later, that'll be two gold coins.' She cackles so hideously that you almost cover your ears.

If there are any other players who wish to drink the effervescent potion - or buy a bottle of it - they may do so. If you want to try another potion, turn to **103**. If you don't want any more potions, turn to **481**.



359

You trudge across the mist-shrouded plain. Small creatures scuttle away as you approach, but you cannot make out their exact shape under the blanket of ground fog. Passing one of the stone monoliths, you make a quick detour to investigate it. The ancient sigils that cover its cracked surface seem alive with mystical power, but it is power that is dosed to you. Even the modern magi cannot read these immemorial runes, carved two centuries ago by the True Magi, who were slain in the eruption that destroyed the unholy city of Spyte.

'What do they say, I wonder?' A voice behind you makes you start. You turn to see the black-armoured

Warlock who champions Magus Uru. He makes no aggressive move but bows, saying, 'Icon, sometimes called the Ungodly, at your service. I have seen what is ahead, and I believe that if we unite together we stand a chance of reaching the Emblem of Victory. Separately we shall surely fail. I suggest an alliance, which is permitted by the rules of the contest, as you know. We shall have to share the prize, but even a shared prize is more than enough to make us rich . . .'

If you agree to join forces with Icon, turn to **17**. If you reject his offer of an alliance, turn to **341**.

360

Kief's number this time is 2.

If you put down a 1, turn to **365**. If you put down a 2, turn to **370**. If you put a 3 or more, turn to **286**.

361

You step up to where the Emblem stands. Lifting it above you in triumph, you allow the Teleportation beam to bathe you in its grey-white glare. You are dazzled, and when your eyes clear you stand in the Great Hall of the city, where the magi have gathered to award the victor.

Applause rings in your ears. You approach the dais where Magus Tor, presiding over the contest this year, stands ready to greet you. Your patron hurries down from the tiers of seats. A few of the assembled magi congratulate him, but you notice scowls on the faces of most. For every winner there are always a dozen losers.

Turn to **540**.

362

(SAGE) You are attempting to use your psionic

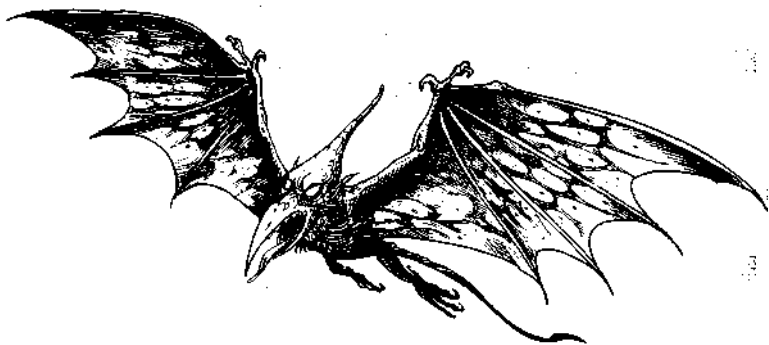


power of ESP. Like many of your powers it is unreliable. It depends upon a number of abstract symbols and mind-sets that you must meditate upon. To determine the success of your attempt, turn either to **498** or to **258**.

363

(ENCHANTER) Spells are useless against Nebularon. He is cloaked in an 'anti-magic field' that automatically negates sorcery, so you cast the spell but it simply fizzles out.

Return to **484** and continue the fight.



364

Mesmerised players *must* open the gate and enter the next room. Others have a choice of following their comrade(s) or of staying here and watching what happens. Everyone in the party must decide this now.

Turn to **261**.

365

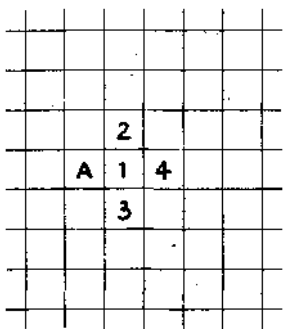
You survey the situation after *recovering* at the start of the next Spiral. He has two heads and two tails. You have three heads. Further *recovery* can only strengthen his position, so you must try to knock

him out of the game quickly. You know that he has to choose 1 for his number this time.

If you also choose 1, turn to **500**. If you counter him with a 2, turn to **495**.

366

Deploy yourself (or selves) as shown. The Assassin curses; he cannot hurl his poisoned knife now that you are attacking him.



Assassin

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 1 Die+1

Psychic Ability: 7

Awareness: 7

Endurance: 15

Note: His dagger is poisoned. If he wounds a character, that character will die at once. Nothing can prevent this.

Fight him for two Rounds. If you have not slain him by then, Balhazar manages to prepare and hurl a Nemesis Bolt spell that strikes him dead.

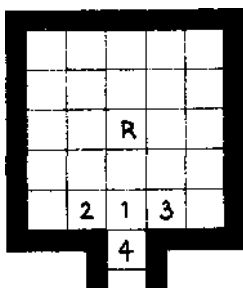
Turn to **134**.

367

The grizzled Tomb Ranger stands in front of you wielding the steel sceptre, which is now beginning

to glow at the tip. The sceptre is capable of projecting blasts of focused energy. It has four charges (keep track of these), and each blast costs one charge. The blasts have only a short range - that is, the Ranger can use a blast only against a player standing in an adjacent square. He does not need to roll under his Fighting Prowess, as the blast will automatically strike the player he is aiming at. Each blast inflicts five Dice damage (from which the player in question can subtract his Armour Rating).

Remember to knock off a charge each time he uses the sceptre. If the sceptre runs out of charges, he will switch to using his sword.



FLEE

Ranger

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 3 Dice (sword)

Psychic Ability: 7 Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: 36

If you *flee* back to the ornamental doorway, turn to **246**. If you defeat him, turn to **438**.

368

The gondolier rows you towards the rough stone jetty at the end of the lake. Paper lanterns have been set on it, and the reflection of their light in the water

casts an ever-shifting pattern of light on the cavern ceiling. You step out of the gondola. Looking back, you see that both the gondola and its grim helmsman have vanished without a trace.

Turn to **152**.

369

If you have not done so already, you can either excavate one of the mounds of stones (turn to **42**) or have a look at the shrine (turn to **71**). If you do not want to investigate these, or have already done so, you decide to leave (turn to **279**).

370

You and the Grandmaster are again equal, each with four heads. He looks up at you with sparkling eyes. 'Certainly you are an admirable opponent. I feel this game has been a true contest of wills.'

Turn to **315**.

371

The Prince of Desolation cannot be harmed, as he exists within the subconscious mind of his victims. Your attack is futile. He laughs, and with each peal of laughter you see him fade away- and at the same time his horrible presence infects your mind like an illness.

Each time you turn to a new entry, roll one Die. Only one roll is made regardless of how many players there are. If you roll 1 to 5, the Prince of Desolation tears away at your soul a little more; each player in the party must lose one point from either Fighting Prowess, Psychic Ability, Awareness or Endurance. The choice of which characteristic is reduced is up to the player. The loss is *permanent*.

If you manage to roll a 6 when turning to a new

entry, the Prince tires of his insidious 'sport' at last and departs from your mind forever.

This is a dead end. You have no choice but to go back the way you came.

Turn to **154**.

372

Who was stepping in? If no one was specified in a multi-player group, it's the first player in the battle order. The moment he or she enters the alcove, this player turns to stone! Any items carried are petrified also, so the other players (if any) cannot take them. You come to a stark realisation as to why the statues are so lifelike - and why most of them are facing the wall.

If any players are still alive, they return to take the other corridor.

Turn to **354**.

373

(SAGE) You make up your mind to risk passing under the waterfall. It is cold, but refreshingly so. However, it is obviously imbued with baneful sorcery because when you emerge on the far side you find you have lost *all* your possessions except for your staff and armour (if you still had them).

At the same time that you advance on to the bridge, a portly figure steps on to it at the far end and, hitching up his long tunic, plods quickly along the slender walkway to confront you. 'Greetings,' he says breathlessly. 'I am Theodoric, an Initiate of the Mystic Way of the Eye Unveiled. I am here to establish the superiority and innate truth of my own mystic order above all others by defeating you.'

'Nothing is true, everything is permitted,' you tell him, quoting the southern Ta'ashim texts. 'There-

fore, if you will permit me to pass, nothing will happen that you might truly regret . . .'

'Why, this is heresy!' blusters the portly Initiate. 'Blasphemy! Sacrilege! Your words offend my inner soul, and thus - prepare yourself for death.'

'I am prepared for death,' you reply softly. 'But I do not think she will come for me just yet. . .'. You easily evade his first clumsy blow.

If you wish, you could try using your power of Levitation, to avoid this crazy foe. If you do that, turn to **282**. If not, you must give him the fight he desires:

Initiate

Fighting Prowess: 6	Damage per blow: 1Die+1
Psychic Ability: 6	Awareness: 6
Endurance: 5	

If you defeat him, turn to **88**.

374

(ENCHANTER) The Hag is enslaved by your magic. 'Speak,' she says. 'Demand. I'll answer.'

You feel her natural stubbornness fighting your spell. You have time for only one question. What will you ask?

'What other adventurers have passed this way?' (turn to **49**). 'What lies within the temple?' (turn to **536**). 'Which of these potions are beneficial?' (turn to **268**). 'What is the worst danger that awaits?' (turn to **466**).

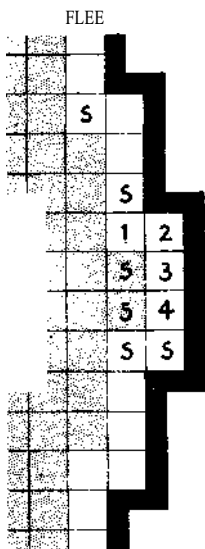
375

This time he shows a 2.

If you have a 1, turn to **350**. If you also put a 2, turn to **380**. If you have a 3, turn to **385**. If you have 4 or more, turn to **286**.

Issuing shrieks of unholy delight, they flit up the sheer walls of the crater towards you. For a moment you are almost petrified in terror, knowing the ghastly destructive power of these supernatural beings. But then your battle training reasserts itself, and you fall back into a combat stance. If the Skiapyrs are indeed destined to slay you, at least they will not find you an easy prey . . .

Note that the Skiapyrs, being ethereal creatures of flame, are able to walk across near-vertical surfaces. They can thus move on the shaded squares, but you are limited to the narrow ledge along the crater rim.



Skiapyrs

Fighting Prowess: 7

Psychic Ability: 8

Damage per blow: 6 Dice+2*

Awareness: 8

Endurance:	<i>first</i>	12	<i>fourth</i>	12
	<i>second</i>	12	<i>fifth</i>	12
	<i>third</i>	12	<i>sixth</i>	12

*Armour makes *no difference* to the damage inflicted when a Skiapyr strikes. The fiery claws of these creatures are not impeded even by strong steel plate.

If you manage to *flee* past or defeat them, turn to **223**.

377

You deal the death-stroke, but amazingly Icon does not fall! He reaches down, ashen face contorted in pain, and pulls the weapon out of the wound. 'My magic shall sustain me until I have time to heal,' he groans, forcing each word through a snarl of pain. 'But I must retreat to lick my wounds, and so you have prevented me from reaching the Emblem of Victory. Be warned that Icon remembers his foes...'

Glaring coldly at you as blood trickles from his mouth, he spits the words of power of a spell and transforms himself into a red mist, quickly seeping away across the cave floor. No doubt you will be meeting him again, you think ruefully.

One item he was carrying was not transformed by the Vaporisation spell: a bronze mallet. If you want this, remember to note it down. Glancing towards the atoll, you see no sign of any other parties. Nothing now can stop you winning the contest!

Turn to **68**.

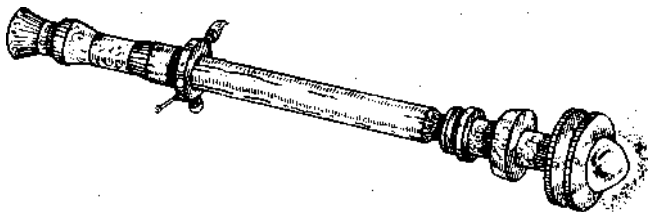
378

Then you shall remain here forever!' shrieks the ghost.

Only a Sage could hope to dispel the ghost, using his or her power to Exorcise. If you have a Sage in

the party who wishes to try this, turn to **182**.

If there is no Sage present, you must either agree to help the ghost (turn to **116**) or else reaffirm that you will not aid it under any circumstances (turn to **451**).



379

You scramble along a low tunnel that leads off the red-carpeted corridor. The tunnel seems very old, as if hewn from the bedrock of the Keep above many hundreds of years before. After a while it enlarges a little, but you still have to crouch slightly as you advance up a twisting flight of rock-cut steps and then begin to descend a long pebble-strewn ramp. At last you reach the end. A grille is set into the floor. Looking down, you see a corridor of grey marble which ends in a bronze-bound door. The grille you're looking through is set in the ceiling.

There is the sound of a key being turned, then the bronze door slowly swings open. Four burly Barbarians stride forwards, slamming the door behind them. Apparently not noticing the grille in the ceiling, they stop directly beneath you and consult a scrap of parchment.

'What's it say, Ereka?' mutters one.

'Well, I'm not sure, Snorri,' says the fellow with the parchment, scratching fleas out of his hair. 'I can't read, can I?'

'By Muninn and Huginn!' bellows a red-bearded

ox of a man. 'Have you no learning, Ereka?' He snatches the parchment and peers at it. 'Well, it says . . . it says . . . I reckon it says one of the passages up ahead is a dead end. But what do you want to listen to a bit of parchment for? The only way to find out for sure is to see for ourselves . . .'

They are about to move on. If you want to dislodge the grating and jump down to attack them, turn to 6. If you stay where you are and watch what they do next, turn to **141**.

380

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has four heads and one tail. You are not far behind with all four of your remaining coins showing heads. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **415**.

381

As soon as you choose the pennant, two of the stewards give a grunt of disinterest and retreat beyond the curtain of the booth. The third scuttles forwards almost rubbing his hands in glee. 'Oh, an excellent choice!' he cries. Your patron - if he deems you worthy - will be the great Magus Vyl. Go now to meet him at the Blue Tower by the River Delicti. Take the pennant and wait by the gargoyle trough.'

Following the steward's directions, you make your way through the bustling streets. It is now dark, and lantern-bearers scurry to and fro lighting the way for shoppers and merry-makers. Turning off the main street, you walk along a quiet alley. The sounds of festivities gradually fade into the distance. You pass over a narrow bridge spanning the river and approach the darkened spire of the Blue Tower. A stone trough carved with capering gargoyles stands by the Tower door, and you decide

that this is where you are meant to wait.

If the party includes a Sage, he or she should turn to **346**. If there is no Sage in the party, you can either investigate the trough (turn to **204**) or wait as instructed (turn to **399**).

382

You step towards the man dressed in dark blue. As you start to address him, he gives a cry of mingled surprise and rage. He flings down his goblet and runs for the door, drawing a long knife from a concealed pocket in his cloak as he does so.

'Stop that man,' yells an imposing figure in a black domino cape. Immediately, guards pour in from the colonnade outside and corner him. The man in the black domino cape comes over to you.

'You have flushed out an Assassin who was doubtless sent by one of my rival magi,' he says. You recognise Balhazar by his voice even before he unmask. 'Unfortunately, you only did so inadvertently - you obviously thought you had identified me. For possibly saving my life, I give you this amulet of Osiris.' He hands you the item; it will restore the wearer to life (at full initial Endurance) when he or she is killed. It will work only *once*, and then crumbles to ashes. If you are playing in a group, roll Dice to see who gets the amulet.

'For failing to identify me,' continues Balhazar, 'I must reject your application to champion me in tomorrow's contest. I wish you luck finding a sponsor elsewhere. My usher will show you out.'

Turn to **119**.

383

'I call a 4,' says Kalugen silkily.

Roll two Dice. If you score 2 or 3, Kalugen must

pay you four gold pieces. If you score 5 or more, you must pay Kalugen four gold pieces. If you score exactly 4, both of you lose four gold pieces.

If both you *and* Kalugen are out of coins, turn to **244**. If Kalugen has no coins but you do, turn to **228**. If you have no coins but Kalugen does, turn to **459**. If you are both still able to play, turn to **499**.

384

(WARRIOR) Running from a ritual death-duel is not exactly in accordance with the Warrior ethic. You must deduct a hundred victory points from your total award at the end of this adventure. Rejoining your companions (if you are in a multi-player party), you retrace your steps and approach the ornamental doorway.

Turn to **246**.

385

The situation after *recovering* is that he has three heads and one tail as opposed to your two heads and two tails. You can only play a 1, which he counters with a 2. Another *recovery* thus leaves him with two heads and two tails, while you now have two heads and one tail. Now neither of you has a choice; you both play 1, a draw that allows him to *recover* to three heads and one tail. You now have three heads showing. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **390**.

386

You mount the dais. A sensation of dizziness overwhelms you. The cavern spins away into darkness, and for a moment you are hurtling- or drifting - through a place of unreal colours and unheard-of melodies.

You are relieved a moment later to find your feet on solid ground again. The swirling lights fade away, revealing that you have been Teleported to one end of a very long corridor. You have no idea where in the Battlepits you now stand, but that is the least of your worries. You are surrounded by four Night Elves - tall, slim beings with eerie sorcery at their fingertips. They are ready to fight you.

████████████████████					
E	4	1	E		
E	3	2	E		
████████████████████					

FLEE

Night Elves

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow 1 Die+1

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: *first* 6 *third*

second 6 *fourth*

All have the Nighthowl spell in mind. This reduces their Psychic Ability to six (usually it is seven). Each Round, one of the Elves will attempt to cast Nighthowl while the others fight. Once he has succeeded in casting his Nighthowl, that Elf will start fighting and one of the others will start trying to cast his spell.

An Elf attempting to cast Nighthowl must roll 2 to 5 on two Dice to do so. It is a Psychic spell affecting one player (roll to see who the Elf casts it on). If that player fails to resist the spell, he or she must make his *fight* rolls on three Dice (rather than the usual two) for the next four Rounds.

If you *flee* along the corridor (which will require you first to put down at least one of the Elves

blocking your escape route, of course), turn to **503**. If you kill them, turn to **518**.

387

(ENCHANTER) You cast your spell. *[There is indeed a very powerful spell on the sword, and a residual enchantment flickers between the hilt and the corridor ahead of you.]*

What will you do now? Pick up the sword (turn to **37**) or continue along the corridor (turn to **503**)?

388

You dash along the corridor. The grey beings shriek and gibber, stretching out to try to seize you. Six of them pull far enough out of their alcoves before the chain mechanism locks to be able to swipe at you as you go past. For each player, make six rolls to see if he or she is hit. The creatures' Fighting Prowess is seven, but the rolls are made on three Dice rather than two because you can dodge as you run. Each hit inflicts 3 Dice Endurance damage (less Armour Rating).

Each player makes one roll in turn. If you decide to turn back, remember that each creature you passed before get another swipe at you - so if you give up after passing four, you have to make another four rolls to see if you're hit on the way back.

If you turn back and take the tunnel beyond the open grille instead, turn to **279**. If you reach the door at the end of the corridor, turn to **31**.

389

You make your way along the black corridor. Eventually you come to a door in the left wall.

If you go in, turn to **211**. If you go on, turn to **249**.

390

He put a 2 this time.

If you put a 1, turn to **400**. If you put a 2, turn to **395**. If you put a 3 or more, turn to **286**.

391

You wave the prism at the on-rushing Dirges. Perhaps you hope it will produce some burst of destructive magic, but nothing happens. The scabrous beak of the first Dirge knocks the prism from your hand and sends it bouncing down on the stone ledge. It shatters into a dozen shards, but you have no time now to worry about its loss. The squawking monsters are upon you.

Turn to **112**.

392

You enter the inner sanctum. Flickering candles cast a swaying light across the walls. Opposite the entrance, a large circular lens of black glass has been set into the wall like a window. You peer through it, but see only a dark and twisted image of your own face.

Beside the black lens there are two octagonal indentations in the wall.

If you have an octagonal glass prism and would like to use it now, turn to **174**. If you have *two* such prisms and wish to use them, turn to **269**. If you either don't have or don't want to use the prisms, you can take the exit to the left (turn to **357**) or the exit to the right (turn to **56**).

393

(SAGE) *[This is not a normal Dirge, but an occult hybrid. Probably it was once a human who transgressed in some way against the magi of Krarth, and as punishment was*

translated into this monstrous form. From what you have heard, so dire a fate would be meted out only to the most treacherous of Krarthian wrongdoers. Krarthian justice is far from just, but at least most criminals are given the mercy of a quick death.]

You call the Dirge-Man over.

Turn to **79**.

394

You may take the skeletal arms if you wish. They count as *two* items of encumbrance. The iron gauntlet counts as a third item. (If you have the fossilised heart, you *must* take the arms, of course - and you still cannot discard the heart, arms, ribcage or skull. You may take the gauntlet or not, as you wish.)

The salt-encrusted, sad faces of the dead worshippers make you uneasy. You hurry up the steps that lead from this chamber to the summit.

Turn to **322**.



395

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves Kief with four heads and you with three heads. 'Only a slight edge,' he says with a smile, 'but it makes more difference as our lines of coins diminish.' You must choose another number. When you have done so, turn to **405**.

396

Voices are whispering to you from a great distance. 'Leave this place,' they are saying. 'Would you suffer the same fate as we? Hurry. Begone . . .'

You need no urging. Their words of warning echo around an empty chamber as you rapidly climb the steps to the summit.

Turn to **322**.

397

'I am Balhazar,' says the man in red, stroking his moustache. 'I will be pleased to engage you to represent me in tomorrow's contest. First, however, I must test your worthiness. Regardless of your strength and courage, you will require great cunning if you are to win for me tomorrow, and several promising candidates have already been rejected because they lacked the necessary intelligence. Therefore, come to my mansion tonight. When you arrive there, you will know the nature of the test...'

Turn to **64**.

398

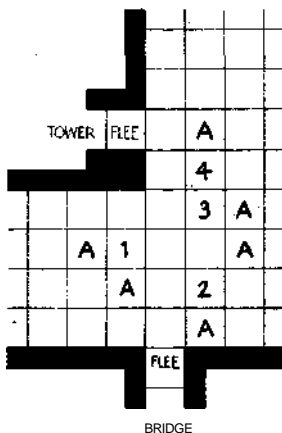
(ENCHANTER) You consider your various spells. Two non-combat spells might be of use to you now. But which? Make your choice (you will not need to roll Dice to cast the spell, because you are not in a combat situation). If you cast the Prediction spell, turn to **442**. If you opt for the Summon Faltyn spell, turn to **242**.

399

Suddenly the bushes nearby rustle. Before you have a chance to react, six black-clad Assassins somersault through the air. You are surrounded. Each raises his hand and hurls a razor-edged Shuriken.

Roll 2 Dice for each Shuriken, and on a 7 or less it hits. Damage for a Shuriken is 1 Die-1. (The Assassins select targets equally among all players. The remainder then select their targets according to the lowest roll of a Die; see page 14, Encounters.)

Then normal combat begins.



Assassins

Fighting Prowess: 7	Damage per blow: 1 Die
Psychic Ability: 6	Awareness: 7
Endurance: <i>first</i> 5	<i>fourth</i> 5
<i>second</i> 5	<i>fifth</i> 5
<i>third</i> 5	<i>sixth</i> 5

Any Round in which an Assassin is not adjacent to an opponent, he will throw a Shuriken. This is like the *shoot* option of a Sage or Trickster, and requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. A Shuriken that hits inflicts 1 Die-1 damage (less Armour Rating, of course). An Assassin's order of preference for Shuriken targets is: Enchanter - Sage - Trickster - Warrior.

If *you flee* across the bridge, turn to **443**. If *you flee*

into the Blue Tower, turn to **535**. If you defeat the Assassins, turn to **226**.

400

He sits back and gestures at the coins. 'You have lost, my friend,' he drawls. 'To play on from this position would be unnecessary . . .'

Turn to **55**.

401

A man standing on the patio is wearing a bright green wig. Just passing him as you look is a burly bare-chested fellow dressed in bright scarlet pantaloons. A gaunt man disguised by violet face-paint sweeps his purple robe past you as he walks to the window. Hearing a bray of laughter, you turn to see a fat man in brown fustian telling jokes to several young women.

Whom will you approach?

The man in the green wig (turn to **417**), the bare-chested man (turn to **527**), the man in violet (turn to **123**) or the fat man (turn to **331**)?

402

Kalugen comes to fetch you. It is still an hour or so before dawn. 'Let's make an early start to avoid the crowds,' he says. You are escorted downstairs by his guards. Kalugen's retinue - a yawning haggard of foppish courtiers and rouged harlots - assembles in the frosty courtyard of the palace. Kalugen climbs into his palanquin and you follow him through the grey streets. Quite a crowd has gathered already. The people line the roadside and watch in sullen silence until prodded into an ecstasy of cheering by the green-cloaked soldiers.

At the gate you see a tall figure with two gleaming

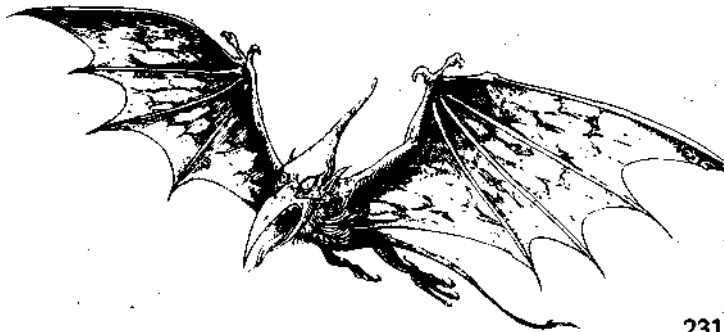
swords speaking to someone inside a curtained palanquin. That is Icon the Ungodly,' one of the guards tells you. 'He is a Master Warlock from Yamato who has travelled from beyond the Silent Sea to champion Magus Uru.' Icon turns his cold gaze on you as you pass.

You leave the city and trudge out across the bleak countryside. Groups of peasants already at work in the fields look up from their back-breaking tasks to watch you go. Further away, you see a party of bronze-armoured Barbarians limbering up in the cold morning air. They swing their huge battleaxes lustily and bellow out huge gusts of frosty breath. Shivering, you run to keep up with Kalugen's palanquin. At last you come to a squat building of black stone. Beyond the pillared entrance, steps wind down into the bowels of the frozen earth.

'You have my standard,' declares Kalugen (remember to note it down on one player's Character Sheet). 'Be worthy of it. Do not flinch from any danger; do not run from any battle. Be brave. Be resolute. Begone!'

He watches you descend the steps into the deadly Battlepits. Somewhere below lies the Emblem of Victory. You must return with it to the surface - or die.

Turn to **136**.



403

You haul the lid of the sarcophagus aside. The body within long ago returned to dust. All you find is a grey pearl, which you can take if you wish.

If you have not already done so, you can now open another of the sarcophagi: the first (turn to **351**), the second (turn to **186**), or the fourth (turn to **137**). If you have had enough of grave-rifling, you can proceed to the beach (turn to **293**).

404

You tread quietly along the corridor. It soon ends in a bronze portal which is barred from the other side. In an alcove next to the portal you notice an altar of orange-red marble on which a dark shape lies motionless. There is a sweet stench in the air, and when you take a closer look at the shape on the altar your suspicions are confirmed: it is a disembowelled human corpse. Its viscera have been placed in the maw of a giant bronze idol that adorns the back wall of the alcove.

If there is a Sage in the party, turn to 139. If the party does not include a Sage, turn to 476.

405

He put a 3 this time.

If you put a 1, turn to **410**. If you put a 2, turn to **400**. If you put a 3 or more, turn to **286**.

406

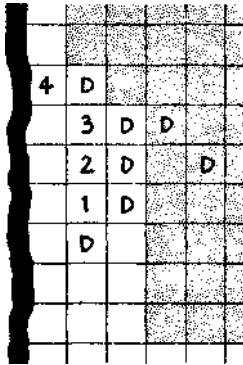
You push open the door and peer inside. In a glimmer of soft candlelight you see a fire-blackened skull resting on a plinth. The dust of the floor has been recently disturbed by footprints. You see no other exits.

If you wish to enter the room and pick up the

skull, turn to **38**. If you prefer to close the door and continue along the tunnel, turn to **249**.

407

You rush down the narrow path that leads to the platform. The Dirges caw angrily and veer to intercept you. You just reach the ledge as they close to attack.



Dirges

Fighting Prowess: 6	Damage per bite: 1 Die+2
Psychic Ability: 5	Awareness: 6
Endurance: <i>first</i> 5	<i>fifth</i> 5
<i>second</i> 5	<i>sixth</i> 5
<i>third</i> 5	<i>seventh</i> 5
<i>fourth</i> 5	

If you win, turn to **142**.

408

Her narrow slits of eyes glow with green-gold light. Shadows seem to dance around you as she whispers: 'Take the knife. Sacrifice your blood.'

Every player must attempt to roll equal to or



under his or her Awareness on two Dice in order to resist her command.

If anyone fails to (or chooses not to!) resist, turn to **496**. If all players resist, you can fight her- but you will have to keep your eyes averted from her gaze now, so reduce your Fighting Prowess by one for the duration of this combat (turn to **129**).

409

The following applies to whoever was drinking the liquid.

The elixir of chaos is a potent little tippie, is it not, sisters?' cries out one of the Hags as you drink. Certainly it tastes quite pleasant - remarkably so in view of the eyes floating in it. But its effects are quite unpredictable; roll one Die to see what happens to you:

- 1 Nothing.
- 2 You gain one point of Fighting Prowess.
- 3 You acquire temporary invulnerability - the next blow that hits you will not inflict any damage.
- 4 You become weakened - add one to *all* wounds scored against you for the rest of the adventure.
- 5 You lose one point of Awareness.
- 6 You become stronger - add one to your damage scores throughout your next combat.

You may drink again, and any other players in the party can also drink. Roll the Die each time, and if you get a result that you had previously then ignore it and reroll.

After this you may try another potion (turn to **103**) or continue on your way (turn to **481**).

410

'Too bad,' he says. *Recovery* for the new Spiral leaves

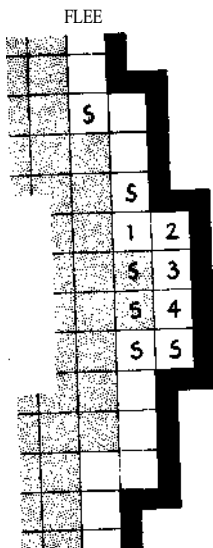
him with two heads and two tails, but that is irrelevant. What bothers you is that you have only one coin left, so you now cannot go. You slam your hands down on the table in frustration.

Turn to **55**.

411

You fling the ice jewel into the simmering lava pool. You see the burning red liquid blacken where the jewel falls, and the cooling effect stifles the continuous bubble of sulphurous gas from below. The Skiapys give vent to anguished shrieks that sound like the keening of someone being burnt alive. They are linked to the lava pit that is their home, and by robbing it of heat the ice jewel is sapping their strength.

Note that the Skiapys, being ethereal creatures of flame, are able to walk across near-vertical surfaces. They can thus move on the shaded squares, but you are limited to the narrow ledge along the crater rim.



Skiapys

Fighting Prowess: 5	Damage per blow: 1 Die*
Psychic Ability: 7	Awareness: 8
Endurance: <i>first</i> 10	<i>fourth</i> 10
<i>second</i> 10	<i>fifth</i> 10
<i>third</i> 10	<i>sixth</i> 10

*Armour makes *no difference* to the damage inflicted when a Skiapyr strikes. The fiery claws of these creatures are not impeded even by strong steel plate.

If you manage *to flee*, turn to **223**. If you defeat the Skiapys, turn to **284**.

412

You have no choice. Almost without volition, you stoop and begin to place the huge bones into the iron frame. Your thoughts are still your own, but Zyn's magic has implanted a subconscious command that you are powerless to resist. You watch as your hands reconstruct the long-dead giant. When all the sections of the skeleton are in place, you fetch the stone heart and lower it into the massive rib-cage. A cold dry wind whips up around the atoll, keening hungrily. Skrymir's soul is returning from the dead.

Already you can see small patches of skin appearing like fungus on the sere bones. A spark of life-light gleams inside the sockets of the skull.

Is there anything else you would like to add to the frame now? If so, turn to **302**. If not, you have only to stand back and watch Skrymir return to life (turn to **117**).

413

(SAGE) You stoop to inspect the food, first crumbling it between your fingers to examine the texture,

then sniffing at it, then finally tasting it gingerly. Detecting no trace of the poison you feared, you decide to eat.

Turn to **273**.

414

(ENCHANTER) On a whim, you summon a Faltyn. It appears as a flickering image on the edge of your vision. [*Larisha still has two objects concealed in her fountain, you tell it. 'Bring them to me.'*

The Faltyn hesitates for a moment. 'Larisha is a powerful entity - no, let us not prevaricate, she is a demon. I would require a generous payment for the risk I should be running. I will try to obtain the other two items, but you must let me have the item you have already been given.'

If you agree to this (the other party members, if any, have no say in it), turn to **327**. If you won't pay the Faltyn what it asks, it vanishes in a petulant flash of light (turn to **203**).

415

He put a 3 this time.

If you put 1, turn to **420**. If you put 2, turn to **425**. If you put 3, turn to **430**. If you put 4, 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

416

(SAGE) The body of the vampire must be properly dealt with or he will rise again. You raise your staff and drive it down on the corpse's chest, impaling the heart. This destroys the corpse's power to regenerate. Reasoning that Vyl is a vampire of the traditional Krarthian variety, you next put out his eyes with the heated point of an arrow. This prevents his spirit from finding its way back to its

body from the Afterlife. Lastly you collect ashes from the altar braziers and scatter them over the corpse, to symbolise the triumph of death over undeath. Nothing more can be done; if Vyl returns from the dead now he must be a miracle-worker as well as a magus!

You leave the room and continue up the stairs.
Turn to **3**.

417

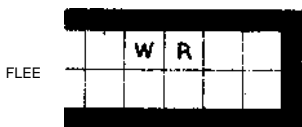
You approach the man. He turns to regard you with a half smile, then fades away into thin air! You look around to see all the other guests disappearing as well. Only one remains - a man in a domino cape. When he stands up you recognise the imposing height and imperious stance of Magus Balhazar.

'You have failed my test, I fear,' says Balhazar as he unmask. 'You could not identify me among my retinue of illusions. This is regrettable, as I had hoped you would do better. Now, it is time for you to leave.'

Turn to **119**.

418

WARRIOR) You are about to dash with a veteran Tomb Ranger of the dreaded Battalion of Torments in a ritual death-duel.



Ranger

fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 3 Dice

Psychic Ability: 7

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: 36

If you beat him, turn to **488**. If you *flee*, turn to **384**.

419

You can just about make out three lines of a rhyme carved into the weathered wood of the buoy. They read:

'As you are now, so once was I;
Where I am now, so must you go.
Haul me up from where I lie . . .'

There is a heavy iron chain attached through a link to the side of the buoy. It trails down deep into the lake. The gondolier seems disinclined to tarry here. You see his lean fingers twitching as he grips the oar.

If you tell him to go on, turn to **247**. If you would like to haul the iron chain up, turn to **502**. If there is an Enchanter who wishes to try casting a Prediction spell, turn to **122**. If there is a Sage who wishes to use his or her Paranormal Sight, turn to **108**.

420

He looks at you and shrugs. 'Why play on?' he says. 'You can see I've won now, can't you?'

Turn to **55**.

421

Using the fiercely burning braziers from either side of the shrine, it does not take you long to melt away the ice encasing the body. The body is perfectly preserved; the warrior looks as though he may have been sleeping all the time he has been encased in the ice. You may take his leather armour (Armour Rating one) if you want it. He has no weapon. If you have the emerald scarab, you could put it around his neck. If you have the scarab and decide to use it, turn to **124**. If not, turn to **369**.

422

Each chesspiece is sculpted with remarkable accur-

acy. The Levies are posturing dwarves with spears and over-large helmets. The Housecarls are depicted as stolid infantrymen with pikes. The Thegns are dashing figures in elegant armour - an odd contrast to the sombre, sour-faced old Sacerdotes who stand beside them. The graven faces of the Lord and Lady almost shine with regal dignity.

You are not given much chance to admire the craftsmanship. A hail of arrows suddenly zings down all around you. Two find their target (in a multi-player group, roll to see who is hit), each inflicting 1 Die Endurance damage. The damage rolls are reduced by armour as usual, of course.

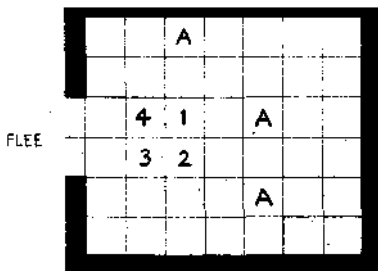
If still alive, you realise someone on the balcony above is sniping at you. You must act quickly before they can reload. Will you run for the double doors at the end of the room (turn to **126**), run up the steps to the balcony (turn to **82**) or retreat out of the room the way you entered (turn to **48**)?



423

TRICKSTER) He hears you and turns, drawing his sword at once. You press yourself into the concealing shadows, and he peers down the passage trying to see where the sound came from. He is alerted now, and you must either rush him (turn to **192**) or back off and go the other way (turn to **246**).

You reach a door and fling it open, only to find that you are now standing right in front of three wiry Assassins dressed in jet-black tunics and face masks. They are standing over the blood-drenched body of a Warrior that it would appear they have just slain.



Assassins

Fighting Prowess: 7	Damage per blow: 1 Die
Psychic Ability; 6	Awareness: 7
Endurance: <i>first</i> 6	<i>third</i> 6
<i>second</i> 6	

In any Round in which an Assassin is not adjacent to an opponent, he will throw a Shuriken. This is like the *shoot* option of a Sage or Trickster, and requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. A Shuriken that hits inflicts 1 Die-1 damage (less Armour Rating, of course). An Assassin's order of preference for Shuriken targets is: Enchanter - Sage - Trickster - Warrior.

If you *flee* back to the junction to take the black corridor instead, turn to **354**. If you kill the Assassins turn to **127**.

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has two

heads and three tails. You have three heads. This situation doesn't look too bad on the face of it, but Kief studies the table for a few seconds and then shakes his head regretfully. 'Well, there you go,' he mutters. 'A fine battle, but you're manoeuvred into a position where you cannot win . . .'

Turn to **55**.

426

(SAGE) To reach the further of the two bridges you must first pass through the waterfall.

If you wish to do this, turn to **373**. If you would rather cross via the nearer bridge, turn to **157**.

427

You slowly make your way down the long flight of stairs. It is an eerie feeling to stand on steps of solid marble which are seemingly held up only by sorcery.

As you reach the midpoint, the stairs suddenly tilt to form a ramp. You tumble down uncontrollably towards the table of rock, ending your descent - shaken but unhurt- in front of the two shimmering ovals. Now that you can see them close up, you recognise them as Astral Gateways. If you step through them, you will be Teleported somewhere - but there is no way of finding out *where* an Astral Gateway leads except by using it.

You glance back at the temple. There is no way back up the steep marble ramp that now sweeps down from the terrace. You must choose one of the Astral Gateways.

If you take the metallic blue gate, turn to **114**. If you take the pulsing green gate, turn to **307**.

428

At last you break through the psychic barrier that

blocks your way through the Astral Gateway. The darkness ahead begins to flicker with shapes and colours as you swim towards it. You breathe a sigh of relief as you emerge at the far end of the gate...

You are now standing at the top of a stone pylon that rises out of a lake of bubbling lava. You have been teleported hundreds of metres across the cave. The pylon commands a spectacular view across the cavern, a view that shows you in one glance the immense size and frightening beauty of the Battlepits. Far off towards the back wall of the cave you can see a plain of swirling mists where standing stones poke up from the ground like serried fangs. Beyond this plain stands a squat atoll - and there, you sense, the Emblem of Victory awaits you.

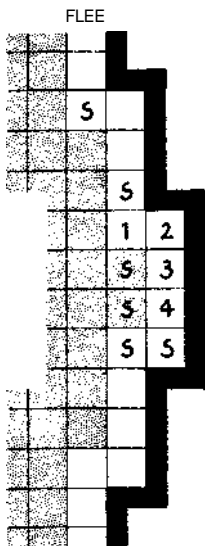
Making your way down the stairway inside the pylon, you come to a chamber at the bottom. The huge wooden doors lie on the floor, their hinges having corroded long centuries ago in the sulphurous volcanic exhalations from the lava. You look out across the moat of magma surrounding the pylon. The edges of the crater that encloses this pool rise up on all sides. If you could reach the crater wall you could perhaps scale it and reach the path running along the top - but to do that you must first think of a way to cross the bubbling moat...

If you have an opal medallion, turn to **523**. If you have no medallion but there is a Sage in the party, turn to **256**. If you have neither medallion nor Sage but an Enchanter is in the party, turn to **431**. If none of these apply, turn to **101**.

429

You have no choice but to fight the flickering Skiapys. They are eager to boil your blood with their clutch of flame.

Note that the Skiapys, being ethereal creatures of flame, are able to walk across near-vertical surfaces. They can thus move on the shaded squares, but you are limited to the narrow ledge along the crater rim.



Skiapys

Fighting Prowess: 7	Damage per blow: 1 Die+2*
Psychic Ability: 8	Awareness: 8
Endurance: <i>first</i> 12	<i>fourth</i> 12
<i>second</i> 12	<i>fifth</i> 12
<i>third</i> 12	<i>sixth</i> 12

*Armour makes *no difference* to the damage inflicted when a Skiapys strikes. The fiery daws of these creatures are not impeded even by strong steel plate.

If you *flee* past them, turn to **223**. If you defeat them all, turn to **284**.

430

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has five heads compared to your four. Although he has a slight advantage, you are determined to whittle it away. Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **435**.

431

(ENCHANTER) You murmur the spell that summons a Faltyn. If it cannot help you, there is really no hope. It appears in the shadows at the back of the room, away from the light thrown up by the boiling lava.

['I can aid you,' it says, 'but the payment must be in proportion to your needs. Since you will fail in your quest - and probably die - if you cannot cross the lava moat, I require every item you possess except for weapons.' In a multi-player party this refers to the other players as well as you. You have no choice; you tell the Faltyn to take what it wants. When it has done so - and remember to cross the items off your Character Sheet(s) - it speaks again: 'Use the collapsed doors as rafts. They float on lava, but will probably not catch alight until you have crossed.'] Then it departs.

Turn to **132**.

432

You have slain Skrymir the Frost Giant, a mighty enemy who vexed even the True Magi of Krarth. For this monumental victory you receive a bonus of two hundred experience points (divided equally among all surviving players).

Climbing to the top of the atoll, you take hold of the Emblem of Victory. The column of light streams around you, and you feel the Teleportation spell taking effect. You are conveyed to the Great Hall where the magi have assembled to applaud your victory.

You are approached first by Magus Tor. *I speak on behalf of all the magi,* he declares. 'You have achieved far more than the winning of the annual contest. You have overcome our ancestral foe, dread Skrymir. For this you shall be rewarded most lavishly . . .' He claps his hands and slaves scurry forwards bearing gifts on trays of jade.

If there is a Warrior in the party, he or she may take an enchanted sword. This adds one to the wielder's Fighting Prowess.

If there is a Sage, he or she is given a shielding charm that adds one to Armour Rating.

For a Trickster there is a magic bow, which adds one to Fighting Prowess when he or she takes the *shoot* option in a combat. Arrows shot from this bow inflict 1 Die+1 damage.

For an Enchanter, if there is one, the magi provide a ring of sorcery which confers a bonus of one to Psychic Ability.

When all surviving players have taken the item appropriate to their adventuring class, turn to **540**.

433

The skull speaks again, and the shackles open and slither away, rustling their rusted links on the stone floor as they retreat into the shadows. If you have the fossilised heart, you *must* take the skeletal legs, even if it means dropping something else. (You may not drop the heart, skull or rib-cage.) Otherwise you have a free choice whether to take them or not. Note, however, that the legs count as *two* items for encumbrance.

Turn to **538**.

434

(WARRIOR) You rather botch your attempt at a grand display of swordsmanship. The hilt slips

slightly in your grasp, sending you lurching off-balance against one of the poles supporting the booth. 'The magi rarely employ drunkards, in any case,' murmurs the insolent steward. Disgruntled, you sheathe the sword.

You turn your attention to the three pennants once more. Will you take the olive-green pennant (turn to **52**), the red pennant (turn to **28**) or the black and purple pennant (turn to **381**)?

435

He adjusts the Die, then lifts his hand to reveal a 4.

If you put down a 1, turn to **440**. If you put down a 2, turn to **420**. If you put down a 3, turn to **425**. If you put 4 or more, turn to **286**.

436

(ENCHANTER) The Faltyn titters oddly and then flits across the ceiling of the ballroom. It is just visible as a faint, flickering shadow against the white marble. [*Here is a magus, dressed in brown fustian!*] it calls out to you, pointing down. *I have enjoyed the sweet music of Balhazar's orchestra, so I shall waive the usual fee. Farewell!*]

The Faltyn departs. If you wish to approach the man in brown fustian and declare that he is Balhazar, turn to 331.

If you prefer to ignore the Faltyn and try to identify Balhazar in another way, turn to **458**.

437

It is Kalugen's turn to call a number. He considers the situation carefully.

If you are down to only one or two gold pieces, turn to **206**. If you still have three gold pieces or more, turn to **383**.

438

You can take his sword (and the sceptre, if it still has any charges) before retracing your steps to the ornamental doorway.

Turn to **246**.

439

A desperate ploy occurs to you. Perhaps if you recover the creature's mortal remains you will be able to destroy it. This means hauling the iron cage containing its bones back out of the water - and that will require four Rounds if attempted by one player or two Rounds if two players pull together. No more than two players can try at once, and obviously they cannot *fight* (or take any other combat option) while doing this. While you are pulling the cage up, the eidolon will concentrate its attacks on the player(s) doing this.

Return to **502** and go on with the combat. After the relevant number of Rounds have passed and you've pulled the cage up, turn from **502** to **107**.

440

He has knocked you down to only one coin. He still has five left - two heads, three tails. Since you now cannot go, he wins the game.

Turn to **55**.

441

You remove the sliver from its casket and insert it into a ventricle of the stone heart. Moments later it begins to pulse with life, and the pink bloom of fresh blood washes over it as the stone reverts to flesh. Slabs of muscle swell across the bones, sewn with gristle and skin. Skrymir rises from the dead.

He stands before you, towering towards the cave roof like the shadow of a great glacier. His beard

sparkles with icicles; his eyes blaze with cold fury.

'Skrymir stands upon Middle-Earth once more!' he cries, shaking the rock walls with his voice of thunder. 'Legend reverberates to his battle-roar. Let the magi who crouch upon the old thrones of Krarth beware - they shall not see another dawn, for the sky then shall be washed with their blood!'

Suddenly he notices you. You feel his dark eyes on you like the first frost of winter. 'Skrymir was raised from his grave by mortal hand,' he murmurs menacingly. 'Is this meet? Should the proud Lord of Jotunheim endure such shameful obligation? Not so! You shall be the first to die, then, by my resurrected hand . . . !'

He reaches down towards you. You can sense his power, and know that this is no blundering colossus who stands before you. Skrymir is truly the Lord of Giant-Home, a being who could challenge the very gods. Grimly you make ready to battle him.

Suddenly he clutches at his chest and gives vent to a scream of agony that shakes the atoll under you and dislodges stalactites from the roof above. 'My heart! Oh, my mighty heart, burned by the spiteful sting of fire. Loge, is this your d . . . !' He falls, crashing into the ground with such force that you are thrown off your feet. Through the clouds of rock-dust thrown up, you see him give a short convulsive spasm as the burning Kalium consumes his heart and explodes within his chest. A Frost Giant cannot endure the power of heat and flame. Even as you watch, the fire spreads throughout his huge body and within minutes he returns to ashes. This time, not even his bones remain.

Turn to **432**.

442

(ENCHANTER) You use your magic power to peer

into the future - or rather, one of the many possible futures that await you depending on your decisions and actions. [For an instant you see yourself holding aloft the Emblem of Victory, cheered by the crowds as you emerge triumphant from the Battlepits. But no - you are looking too far forward into the future, to a fate that depends upon countless variables. You attune your perception, concentrating on the next few hours. You glimpse a pallid man in black and purple standing over you with blood on his lips. The scene flickers and you glimpse another possible future. You now see yourself at a masquerade, searching for someone among the disguised guests: you approach a figure in a domino cape, and he removes his mask and claps you on the shoulder. You strive to see yet another version of events, but you cannot maintain the spell any longer.] Drained by your massive effort, you cannot attempt another spell immediately. Return to 1 and make another choice.

443

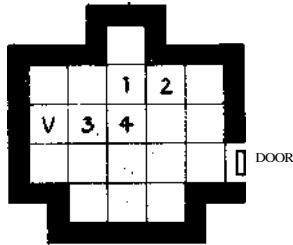
You return to the main square, now almost deserted apart from a few whores and a bored militia patrol. A torn scrap of paper flutters past and you tread on it: a poster proclaiming the contest.

You hurry to the booth, hoping that Vyl's steward will still be there. You have a few things you'd like to say to him, but your thoughts of vengeance are dashed. He has gone, and so has the scarlet pennant. You now have no choice but to take the olive-green pennant, that remains.

The last steward is snoozing on the bench in front of the booth. He wakes with a start when you prod him. 'At last,' he sighs sleepily, watching you take the pennant. 'Now I can go home and get some rest

Turn to **52**.

You are standing in the shrine room of the Blue Tower. Suddenly you hear a ghastly voice ring out: 'Ah, my would-be champion in the contest!' You whirl around to see the tall figure of Magus Vyl, clad in purple and black robes over tarnished silver chainmail. He extends pallid, long-taloned fingers towards you. His mouth curls up in a cruel sneer, displaying sharp fangs. Then he lunges for you.



Magus Vyl

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 3 Dice
 Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 9
 Armour Rating: 2
 Endurance: 35

Note: Because he is a vampire, Vyl has the special ability to paralyse with his touch. Anyone (except a Sage) wounded by him must immediately roll equal to or less than his or her Psychic Ability; if this roll fails, the paralysed player falls to the floor and can take no further part in the combat. Sages are immune because of their mind-over-body disciplines.

You cannot *flee* - Vyl would doubtless only pursue you in the form of a wolf. If you manage to defeat him, turn to **81**.

445

He displays a 2 this time.

If you put a 1, turn to **480**. If you put a 2, turn to **485**. If you put a 3, turn to **490**. If you chose 4 or more, turn to **286**.

446

You look around for guests of distinctive height. There is a very short man wearing a feathered cap. Nearby, pouring wine into his mouth from a long-stemmed glass, there is a short fat man in grey furs. You notice one fellow in a green wig who seems to be tall, but this may be because he's very thin. A large man dressed in a bear costume sweeps past swinging a bell, and he seems to be the tallest person present.

Whom will you approach? The man with the feathered cap (turn to **527**), the man in the green wig (turn to **417**), the man wearing grey furs (turn to **123**) or the man dressed as a bear (turn to **277**)?

447

The hand goes limp as soon as it has made its magical attack. You warily prod it aside and then fling off the remaining stones to rifle the grave. You find a meagre treasure - a single gold coin of a sort you've never seen. It is quite large, and stamped with a spiral design on one side and five striations on the other. You decide that rifling another mound would not be worth the risk.

If you have not done so already, you can check out the altar (turn to **71**), have a look at the ice block (turn to **334**) or you can leave via the tunnel (turn to **279**).

448

(SAGE) The ESP works. [*Your senses effortlessly escape their usual confining bonds and spread in front of you,*

sniffing out the thought-patterns of others. Although it is difficult to pick them up, you eventually register the limited thoughts of the Barbarians as they progress down the corridor. There is a brief surge of mental energy as they appear to reach a branch in the corridor and have to decide what to do next. They then divide into two groups. The right-hand group of thoughts seem to be approaching another set of thought-processes somewhat more powerful than their own. The Barbarians are apparently not aware that this other group lies in front of them.]

Do you wish to remain here? If so, turn to **73**. If you now wish to lower yourself through the grille and follow the Barbarians, turn to **477**.

449

(TRICKSTER) You evade Hurondus' sword-thrust and place your hand on his shoulder, intending to vault over his head and run to the end of the bridge. He realises what you're doing, however, and suddenly grabs your hand, shifting his weight heavily against you as he does so.

'Nice to live again,' he hisses, his face pressed close to yours, 'but that isn't as important as killing you . . .'

Holding tightly to your arm, Hurondus leaps out into space, and the two of you fall to your dooms together in the gorge below.

If no players are left alive, this is of course the end of the adventure.

If any players are left alive and still have to cross, they should now decide who will go next.

If there are still some players alive but they have all already crossed, they should turn to **519** if Imragarn is with them or to **98** if he is not.

450

He decides on 5 this time.

If you chose a 1, turn to 455. If you chose a 2, turn to 460. If you chose a 3, turn to 260. If you chose a 4, turn to 285. If you chose a 5 or a 6, turn to 286.

451

'Behold the fires of the Battlepits,' says the ghost, sweeping its translucent arm to indicate the mist-shrouded volcanic vista below. 'Cold rock lies like a coffin lid, draped with a grave-cloth of mist. But underneath, the very fires of the Inferno rage and seethe. So it is with me. I am dead, my mortal shell but ashes, but my spirit burns with the accumulated hatred and ferocity of a millennial vengeance. You have thwarted me temporarily, for an instant in the eternity of my existence, but I shall see to it that your suffering screams endure throughout all time.'

As it summons fiends from the darkest hell to torture and torment you, you know that your quest is at an end. But the agony is just beginning . . .

452

You saunter up to the booth. The three pennants flutter forlornly in the evening breeze. You return the cold stares of the magi's stewards with a scowl.

If you want to take the olive-green pennant, turn to **52**. If you want to take the scarlet pennant, turn to **28**. If you select the black and purple pennant, turn to **381**. If you try talking to the stewards first, turn to **227**.

453

You tell the strange woman which gift you have decided to accept and she hands it to you. Your words of thanks are cut short by a dismissive wave

of her slender hand. 'Do not trouble to thank me, for I am a creature without a soul and I merely perform the duty that the Fates have assigned . . . Now, I must return you to the Battlepits.'

If there is a Trickster in the party and he or she wishes to do something, turn to **147**. If there is an Enchanter who wishes to act, turn to **414**. Otherwise turn to **203**.

454

(TRICKSTER) 'Bah,' he says, taking what you hand to him with bad grace. 'Still, while not enriching me, you have at-least paid for a night's drinking in The Goblin's Gullet. Take the black and purple banner, that is my advice. Say nothing further of this, because the city militia would likely impale you for bribing an official of the contest

Turn to **332**.

455

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has two heads and many tails. You, on the other hand, have only one coin. This means that you can no longer go. 'Let us forgo the inevitable *coup de grace*,' he says, gathering up the remaining coins.

Turn to **55**.

456

The bronze doors swing back and admit you to a long hall lit by glowing censers in which a thick incense burns with the sullen red glow of hot coals. Suddenly the doors slam shut behind you with a resounding clang. From the shadows at the far end of the hall a huge figure strides forwards bearing a scimitar of black metal in each of his four hands. He is jet black, a figure of solid shadow apart from the



gleaming blue slits of his eyes.

'You have strayed into the Hall of Nebularon, Drinker of Souls, Swallower of Sorcery.' The four scimitars flash darkly in the light of the embers. 'Prepare to die.'

If your party includes a Sage, turn to **199**. If there is no Sage present, turn to **484**.

457

You have overcome the might of one of the demon-gods of Krarth. Though he was only a lesser god-thing, Nebularon was still a foe to be reckoned with. Killing him is worth an additional 140 experience points divided between all players alive at the moment.

Now you are able to carry on from this chamber. You swing open the doors at the far end and advance along a wide gallery. At one point you pass a skeleton - perhaps a long-dead Adventurer who somehow escaped Nebularon's clutches only to die of his wounds after reaching safety? There is no way to tell, and though you search the musty bones thoroughly you find nothing of interest. Passing on, you reach a hall where a golden pool throws flickering patterns of torchlight across the walls and ceiling.

If you want to look into the pool, turn to **353**. If you ignore the pool and press on further, turn to **188**.

458

How will you identify Balhazar? By his height (turn to **446**), by his mannerisms (turn to **291**), by the colour he is wearing (turn to **401**) or by his clothing (turn to **94**)?

459

'Oh dear, you seem to have lost!' sniggers Kalugen.

His guards and courtiers fall about in fits of laughter. Suddenly you hear swords being drawn. You whirl around, but several soldiers of the Battalion of the Emerald Hydra, Kalugen's elite bodyguard, are already surrounding you grimly. Their swords gleam with frosty green light. You have no choice but to surrender.

'There is a forfeit for losing,' declaims the mad magus. 'Captain Praetorius will disarm you. It should be interesting to see how you fare in the Battlepits without your weapons, eh?'

The hard-faced captain strides over and strips you of your weapons. Cross off all weapons from your Character Sheet (except the Assassin's Crescentium steel sword or the invisible sword of Loge Skyrunner, if you have them).

Turn to **177**.

460

'I think,' declares Kief, 'that you can see I've won. Playing on from this hopeless position would hardly be worthwhile.' He scoops up the coins.

Turn to **55**.

461

He turns as you reach out towards his scabbard! You freeze as his hand flies to his sword and he swipes at you in a reflex action, slicing you badly. You lose seven Endurance. If you are still alive, you recover from the pain in time to see him running towards a door at the end of the passage and pull it open. A rusty sword lies on the flagstones at your feet. You can take it if you wish, but note that it will break if you roll a 12 on two Dice *when fighting* with it. Once it has broken, the rusty sword is useless.

The Tomb Ranger has now disappeared inside

the door, and a second later reappears carrying a steel sceptre in his hands: he is pointing the end of it towards you.

If you want to rush forwards and attack him, turn to **367**. If you want to flee to the ornamental door, turn to **246**.

462

If there is a Sage in the party, he or she could attempt to Exorcise the creature (turn to 194). Otherwise, you could go on with the battle (turn to **502**) or you could try and think of another strategy (turn to **439**).

463

(SAGE) You identify the liquid inside the phial as a deadly poison. Anyone drinking it will be automatically killed, and there is no antidote to it. You quickly throw the phial to the floor, smashing it.

Turn to **236**.

464

(TRICKSTER) You flip a coin, then decide to take the further bridge. Stepping into the waterfall, you feel a strange tingling across your skin as some fay sorcery seeps out of the cold water.

Roll two Dice, trying to score equal to or less than your Awareness. If you succeed, turn to **143**. If you fail, turn to **104**.

465

Kief selected a 2 for his number this time.

If you went for a 1, turn to **425**. If you went for a 2, turn to **380**. If you chose any other number, turn to **286**.

466

(ENCHANTER) 'Doubtless this would be the giant Skrymir, whom Magus Zyn will ask you to resurrect.'

She seems to have nothing more to say on the

subject. Sensing that your spell is about to wear off, you pull the hideous Hag over to the edge of the terrace and shove her into the gorge. The Enthralment spell wears off in time for her to give vent to a terrified scream as she realises what has happened ...

Turn to **67**.

467

One of the Adventurers falls over into the crater before you can catch him. The other's body slides a little way, but you manage to haul him back on to the ridge so that you can search his body. His sword clatters down and sinks in the molten pool below, but you can strip his armour off him if you wish. It is Armour Rating two. You can also take a lead ring, a blue touchstone, a potion of healing (restores 2 Dice Endurance to the person who drinks it) and a gilded bridle.

After taking what you want, turn to **223**.

468

The maddening shrieks of the phantasms present you with a mighty psychic challenge. Each player rolls two Dice and compares the score to his or her Psychic Ability. (Sages may subtract two from the Dice roll - their ascetic serenity is more difficult to break). Players who roll *over* their Psychic Ability are driven into permanent madness and simply squat on the floor gibbering, but those who roll equal to or under their Psychic Ability manage to drive the chattering demons from their thoughts.

If any players survive the mental assault with their sanity intact, they can turn to **272**.

469

Things have come to a pretty pass! You are now

languishing in a slimy vault below the citadel with only rats for company. Not for nothing is Magus Kalugen called The Jailer - many of his subjects rot away their lives in dungeons such as this, often for the pettiest of offences, while he and his wealthy courtiers commit any injustice or crime they like without fear of reprisal.

While you reflect angrily on this turn of events, you hear footsteps echoing down the passage outside. Keys jangle in the lock and the door creaks open. Six tall guards in green cloaks stand there.

'Your lucky day,' grunts one. 'Magus Kalugen has decided you can represent him in the Battlepits tomorrow - On your feet - he doesn't like to be kept waiting.'

You are taken upstairs and through a maze of vast corridors until you reach Kalugen's audience chamber.

Turn to **471**.

470

Kief chose a 6.

If your number is 1, you lose all your coins (turn to 80). If your number is 2, turn to **455**. If your number is 3, turn to **130**. If your number is 4, turn to **95**. If your number is 5 or 6, turn to **286**.

471

Kalugen sits upon his throne wearing elaborate robes of olive-green satin-silk bordered in gold. Emeralds hang from his ears and fingers like dewdrops. He has a small, cruel, thick-lipped mouth. 'Let us speak frankly,' he says in a cold voice. 'I am not much interested in the contest tomorrow. I have made arrangements with several other magi and thus gained numerous concessions. I do not *need* to win tomorrow, so I have decided to

have a little sport...' Suddenly he sits bolt upright and claps his hands down on the arms of the throne. 'Let's have a game! I like playing games. What do you want to play? How about Old Man of the Mountain? Or there's Prey's Roosters, but that's not really as much fun . . . !'

If you suggest playing Old Man of the Mountain, turn to **162**. If you ask to play Prey's Roosters, turn to **328**.

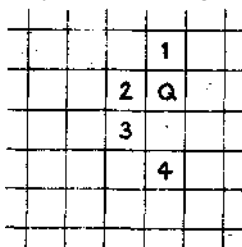
472

(ENCHANTER) You call the spell to mind. Remember that this temporarily depresses your Psychic Ability by one point until you actually cast the spell. Next, make *one* attempt to cast the spell (just as though you were casting a spell in combat).

If you fail, you still have the spell in mind and must turn to **444**. If you succeed in casting the spell after just one attempt, turn to **289**.

473

As you square off for battle, the steward dives into the booth for safety. You are grouped as shown.



LEE BY EXITING BATTLE
AREA AT ANY POINT

Quel

Fighting Prowess: 6

Psychic Ability: 8*

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: 35

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Awareness: 6

*Note: Quel has the Mists of Death spell currently in mind, so his Psychic Ability is temporarily depressed to seven. In order to cast his spell he must roll 4 or less on two Dice, and he can attempt to do this once each Round. Once he casts it, everyone in your party must roll Psychic Ability or less on two Dice or lose two Dice Endurance. Armour makes no difference.

After casting Mists of Death, Quel will call the same spell to mind for a second use (if he is fighting three or four players) or else use the Vampire Spell, (if he is fighting one or two players). He needs the same roll (2 to 4 on two Dice) to cast either. The Vampire Spell affects only one victim, who must roll Psychic Ability or less on two Dice or else lose four Dice Endurance; Quel gains half as much Endurance as his victim loses to the Vampire Spell.

If you *flee* from the fight, turn to **164**. If you defeat Quel, you can take the pennant (turn to **52**).

474

(SAGE) This strange gondolier is the one whom the peasants of Krarth call Stug the Careworn- a minor spirit of folklore now, but once the dark ferryman Keron of Emphidian mythology. You address him in the Ancient Emphidian language [*saying: 'Most revered Keron, you who alone ride the ebb and flow of the two worlds, who alone remained untouched by the parting of life and death - I charge you by the Fifty and Three Paradoxes of Kerberos to provide passage to the far bank of this river!'*].

Keron cannot refuse your demand, phrased as it is in the arcane formulae prescribed in the ancient texts. He indicates for you to step into his boat, then sculls out across the dark lake ...

Turn to **193**.

475

Kief's number is revealed: a 2.

If you put 1, turn to **420**. If you put 2, turn to **505**. If you put 3 or more, turn to **286**.

476

A sharp bronze knife lies on the altar. It looks like the instrument that was used to disembowel the corpse lying on the altar.

If you wish to take the knife, turn to **168**. If you leave it and retrace your steps to take the other route, turn to **77**.

477

You pull the grille free easily and drop quietly to the passage floor. You creep along the way the Barbarians went, though they're now not in sight. You come to a point where the corridor splits in two. You can go left, down a black marble passage (turn to **389**), or right, down a white marble passage (turn to **156**).

478

(WARRIOR) You are about to cross one of the bridges spanning the gorge. What you must now decide is whether to cross the bridge nearer to you (turn to **169**) or whether to step through the waterfall to take the other bridge (turn to **336**). The bridges seem identical.

479

You have to move slowly along the knife-edge path, as steep rock slopes lead down into sulphurous mist to either side. Ahead, the ruined shrine looms in the darkness.

A scrabbling noise causes your pulse to quicken.



You fancy you saw the flutter of a white robe up ahead. Suddenly you see hunched shapes clambering on to the path behind and ahead of you. Your attackers are Death Fetishists, bodies daubed with grey corpse-paint and with horrific death-masks hiding their faces. They wield their bone-handled falchions with a skill and deadly speed born of fanaticism.

	D	3	1	D	
	D	4	2	D	

FLEE

Death Fetishists

Fighting Prowess: 5 Damage per blow: 6 Dice+1

Psychic Ability: 5 Awareness: 6

Endurance: *first* 4 *third* 4

second 4 *fourth* 4

If you *flee* from them along the path, turn to **522**. If you fight and win, turn to **72**.

480

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has three heads and two tails. You also have three heads, but those are all the coins you've got left.

Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **475**.

481

You can now enter the temple (turn to **298**), walk around the temple along the left-hand path (turn to **357**) or go around to the right (turn to **56**).

482

All along the gaping chasm you can see the huge

winged Dirges sweeping to and fro on the air currents. One drifts close, but unlike the ones you encountered earlier it seems disinclined to attack. Also, it has an almost human face - again, quite unlike the other Dirges. Espying you, it claws the air and drops lower, calling out in a hollow croaking voice: 'Ho, this chasm is an impasse if one lacks wings, is it not?'

If there is a Sage in your party, turn to **393**. If there is no Sage present, you can reply either: 'Take back your taunts and be off, you whey-faced loon' (turn to **22**), or: 'Perhaps you can help?' (turn to **79**).

483

You take out the sparkling jewel and place it on the regenerating corpse. There is a rush of icy wind, and crackling blue sparks surround the body. Within moments it begins to pulse with life. The pink bloom of fresh blood suffuses the re-formed flesh as the stone heart within its chest reverts to life. Slabs of muscle swell across the bones, sewn with gristle and skin. Skrymir rises from the dead.

He stands before you, towering towards the cave roof like the shadow of a great glacier. His beard sparkles with icicles; his eyes blaze with cold fury.

'Skrymir stands upon Middle-Earth once more!' he cries, shaking the rock walls with his voice of thunder. 'Legend reverberates to his battle-roar. The strength of the cracking rime of the Northland fills his thews. Let the magi who crouch upon the old thrones of Krarth beware - they shall not see another dawn, for the sky then shall be washed with their blood!'

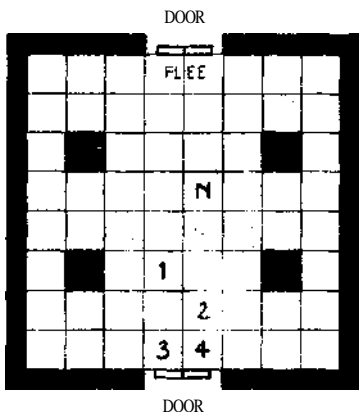
He begins to turn towards the glowing beam above the atoll. He intends to use the Teleportation spell to return to the surface. He seems not to have

noticed you at all.

If you wish to call out that you have restored him in Zyn's name and are ready to collect your reward, turn to **133**. If you think it's better just to let him go, turn to **257**.

484

You are about to fight Nebularon, a mighty demon-god of the underworld.



Nebularon

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 4 Dice+4

Armour Rating: 2

Awareness: 8

Endurance: 50

Important: If you use any spell against Nebularon, turn at once to **363**.

If you wish to use any item against him, turn to **259**. If you try to *flee* through the door at the end of the hall, turn to **512**. If you beat Nebularon, turn to **457**.

485

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has five

heads and one tail. You have only four coins, all showing heads. Obviously he is in a better position than you - and further *recovery* stands to make him stronger.

Choose your number for the next Spiral, then turn to **180**.

486

You approach the wrought-iron gate. The chamber beyond is in darkness except for a few flickering candles. Suddenly a cold commanding voice rings out: 'Enter.'

Each player must roll two Dice and compare the score to his or her Psychic Ability. If the Dice roll is higher, the player has been mesmerised. If the Dice roll is equal to or under the player's Psychic Ability, he or she is unaffected by the command.

If no one has been mesmerised, turn to **148**. If at least one player is under command, turn to **364**.

487

Balhazar is unmistakable. You approach him and bow. 'My lord Magus,' you say confidently, 'you should devise a more difficult test in future.'

He looks up, smiling. 'Few have passed this one as you have. Now, let us dispense with the charade . . . !' With a wave of his hand he dispels the illusion of party goers. You stand beside him in an empty ballroom.

Balhazar is about to accept you formally to champion him in the Battlepits. Suddenly he looks around, startled. A figure in a dark blue cloak lurks in the shadows behind a pillar. He is creeping towards you with a long steel dagger in his hand.

'An Assassin!' bellows Balhazar as the mysterious figure jumps towards him.

The Assassin sees that you are blocking his route to Balhazar. He stops short and raises the dagger as though he is about to throw it. Balhazar is frantically preparing a spell.

What about you? If you charge to attack the Assassin, turn to **366**. If you hang back and see what Balhazar does, turn to **149**.

488

As he dies, the Ranger lifts himself up on one elbow. 'Take my sword,' he splutters, coughing blood. 'No use to me now, but I'd like to think someone else will be putting it to good use once I've gone down the last chute. Also, listen to me - where you see the god's face above two passages, go the way he's facing. The other's just a dead end with nothing to g . . .' He tries to draw breath, emits a choked cry and sinks lifeless to the floor.

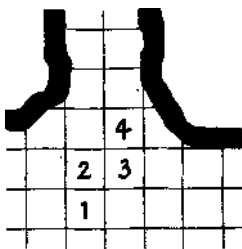
Remember to write his sword down on your Character Sheet if you take it.

Where will you go now? On, to the end of this passage (turn to **151**), or back, to try the ornamental doorway (turn to **246**)?

489

The tunnel rises and the water quickly becomes too shallow for the gondola. You can now see the shingle of the lake bed. The gondolier lays down his oar and with an imperious gesture flings his cloak around his shoulders. As he does so both he and the boat vanish and you find yourself standing waist deep in the cold water. You now have no option but to wade up the tunnel. Soon you see it opening out into a cavern, and you begin to wade faster as you glimpse dry land inside it. Just as you reach the shore, though, you sense movement above you.

Giant spiders are dropping out of their webs by the cavern entrance on top of you. Every player in the party is attacked by *one* spider. The spider(s) are not shown on the map because they are dangling directly above the player they are attacking.



Giant Spider(s)

Fighting Prowess: 5

Damage per blow: 1 Die+1

Psychic Ability: 4

Awareness: 7

Endurance: 6

You can't *flee* because you are temporarily entangled in their webs. If you kill them you may investigate the cavern mouth.

Turn to **8**.

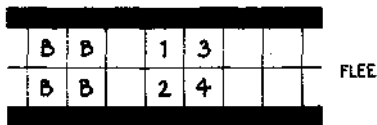
490

The situation - after *recovering* - is that he has four heads and one tail. You have two heads and two tails. You notice him watching you and look up quizzically. 'Well?' he says after a moment. 'You know you've lost, don't you?'

Turn to **55**.

491

They rush in towards you. There are four of them.



Barbarians

Fighting Prowess: 8	Damage per blow: 1 Die+2
Psychic Ability: 5	Awareness: 7
Armour Rating: 1	
Endurance: <i>first</i> 11	<i>third</i> 10
<i>second</i> 11	<i>fourth</i> 8

If you *flee* along the corridor, turn to **248**. If you kill them, turn to **74**.

492

As you return to the floor of the hall, the blue steel doors at the end burst open as if blasted aside by a tremendous force. A dense black cloud of roiling black smoke shot through with livid blue lightning-bolts sweeps into the room.

You have no option but to flee the cloud of smoke before it reaches you. You must retrace your steps and try another route.

Turn to **48**.

493

The statues look *too* lifelike: in fact, they look like petrified humans more than works of art carved from stone. Is there a Trickster in the party? If there is, turn to **83**. If there isn't, turn back and take the other corridor (turn to **354**).

494

(ENCHANTER) As you step through the waterfall, you feel a strange tingling. Emerging on the other side, you find that all your equipment has gone except for (if you still had them) your armour and sword. Not a good start, you think, stepping out on to the bridge.

A young woman moves forwards to the far end of the bridge, haughtily ignoring the Hags, who play

with her long tresses and chortle over her fine robes. 'I must slay you to prove the strength of my magic!' she declares as she strides forwards.

'Do not be foolish, girl,' you say as you advance to face her. 'I am no mumbling hedge-wizard, but one of the greatest Enchanters of Legend. Now, stand you back and let me pass.'

'No.' She grits her teeth and swings her staff forwards. You really have no choice but to fight her. Your companions, if any, can do nothing.

Girl

Fighting Prowess: 6	Damage per blow: 1 Die—2
Psychic Ability: 7	Awareness: 6
Endurance: 5	

Note: She uses White Fire against you, but does not have this spell in mind when the combat starts.

If you defeat her, turn to **88**.

495

'This is most impressive,' says Kief suddenly. 'You struggle against me with dogged determination. If I may say so, you have the quality of a true hero - never to submit in the face of any adversity. The Spiral of Gold often reveals such things . . .'

Turn to **315**.

496

The following applies to the player (or players) who failed to resist Echidna's mesmeric gaze.

You feel an irresistible urge to put the sacrificial knife to your own wrist. You tremble with the effort of trying to prevent yourself, but you have no choice. Her power is overwhelming. A few drops of your blood spill into the urn on the altar. Lose one Endurance point. If you are still alive, you suddenly

snap out of the mesmeric trance. Wisps of red vapour are snaking up around you. For a moment Echidna's face shines like a paper lantern through the haze. 'Nothing is entirely evil,' she murmurs to you. 'Nor entirely good . . . !'

The image of the temple dissolves around you. You (and your companions, if you are not alone) are being Teleported - to where . . . ?

Turn to **78**.

497

The ghost seems slow to react at first, as though it has difficulty adjusting from the reference-frame of eternity to one where rapid action is required. Its long-dead features acquire a look of astonishment, then black rage. It easily resists the power of the Exorcism, drawing energy from the cosmic flux into itself until it blazes like a human torch.

'You dare to assail the spirit of Zyn?' it hisses. 'Begone!' It gestures, and a crackling web of mystical lightning envelops you. You scream at an instant of blinding agony. Each player loses two Endurance.

If still alive, you dematerialise and reappear on the cave floor underneath the floating platform. Glancing up, you see no sign of Zyn's ghost. An unpleasant and pointless encounter. You turn towards the atoll where the Emblem awaits.

Turn to **238**.

498

(SAGE) You try to free your mind from the effort of concentrating, to 'let go from trying', as your Adept Masters taught you. Suddenly you enter a state of serene calm in which all things are clear, and in this instant of Nirvana you sense the thoughts of others around you. [*Drifting outwards with this expanded*

sense, you feel the presence of an immensely powerful creature at the end of the corridor. Then, examining the side walls of the corridor, you detect brief flickers of thoughts, as though several beings of very low mentality lurk beyond the mirrors.] You return reluctantly to normal.

Turn to **216**.

499

Choose the number (X, say) that you are calling.

Kalugen throws two Dice. Roll to see what he gets. If he scores less than X, you must pay him X gold pieces which he adds to his own stake. If his roll is more than X, he pays you X gold pieces. If he rolls exactly X, both you and he lose X gold pieces from your stakes.

If Kalugen now has no gold pieces left with which to play the game, turn to **228**. If you now have no gold pieces left with which to play, turn to **459**. If both you *and* Kalugen are out of the game, turn to **244**. If both you and Kalugen still have coins to wager, turn to **437**.

500

Recovery for the next Spiral leaves Kief with three heads and one tail. You have only three coins, all heads. After choosing your next number, turn to **390**.

501

(TRICKSTER) You smile to yourself as you remember a simple conjuror's trick taught to you by Stileppo the Weasel, a noted thief of Breylak Port. You unwind the silk scarf from around your neck and begin stroking it lengthways. Soon the latent static in the silk has made it stand out straight, and when you play the light of your torch on it it looks like the silver blade of a sword. You sneak closer to

the Ranger, but he still doesn't seem to have noticed you.

Do you want to try and get even closer and take him by surprise? If so, turn to **229**. If you want to brandish your contrived sword and call out to him, turn to **528**.

502

You heave the chain up. It is quite heavy. At last you haul the end into view and see that it is attached to an iron cage containing a mire-coated human skeleton. The skeleton wears an emerald scarab around its fleshless neck, but when you reach out to snatch this amulet you get an unpleasant shock. The skull's eye-sockets suddenly blaze with green light, startling you into releasing your grip on the chain. As your grisly haul slips back below the water, a flickering green eidolon arises from the bones and hovers beside the boat.

'Free,' it roars in a hollow voice. A hideous rictus spreads across its ghastly face. Tread by mortal hand, as was prophesied. Now I shall complete the prophesy.' Spectral talons reach out to clutch you.

It is attacking the player who actually hauled its body up (the first player in the battle order, if nobody was specified).

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Eidolon

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 2 Dice+2

Psychic Ability: 9

Awareness: 9

Endurance: 40

Note: If the eidolon scores a *fight* roll of 2, it sinks its chill talons directly into its opponent's brain. He or she must then roll Psychic Ability or less on two Dice - or die. Such a blow does *not* inflict the usual 2 Dice+2 damage.

The eidolon is *not* affected by the steel sceptre (if you have that item). It can move freely on the shaded squares (water)> but you are restricted to the four boat squares not occupied by the gondolier. The gondolier takes no part in the battle.

The only way you *can flee* is by diving into the lake. If you do this, turn to **324**. If you destroy the eidolon, turn to **208**. If you want to try something else, turn to **462**.

503

You trudge on along the corridor for what seems like kilometres. At one point you see a grille, which has been dislodged, high up in the ceiling. Another party may have come that way, but the grille is too high for you to reach.

Further on you pass an iron door studded with opals. One of the opals has been prised out, and there is a pool of sticky stuff on the floor nearby in which the stolen opal rests ominously. You cannot open this door, so you continue to make your way along the corridor.

At last you come to a gothic-arched vestibule where the corridor splits in two. Above the junction of the two branches a carving decorates the wall. It shows a man's head in simple outline, a profile view with him looking to your left. A series of lines radiates from the head like spokes from the hub of a wheel.

If you take the left-hand corridor, turn to **249**. If you would rather go right, turn to **21**.

504

Mist-wraiths surround you, clawing wildly in their hatred of all living things. Each player must attempt to roll equal to or under his or her Psychic Ability. Anybody who fails is slain instantly by the wraiths. Anyone still alive as the fog disperses will find that the dead bodies of the Elves have been taken by the wraiths they called upon.

You make your way along the corridor.

Turn to **503**.

505

After *recovering* for the next Spiral, he has four heads and one tail. With only three coins - all heads - you are in a considerably weaker position. After choosing your next number, turn to **510**.

506

Balazar's voice speaks through your opal medalion as you run. Take the left-hand passage,' he says. 'The other is a dead end . . .'

You see what he means a moment later as you come to a point where the corridor branches in two. You take your patron's advice and choose the left-hand passage - a long corridor faced in black marble.

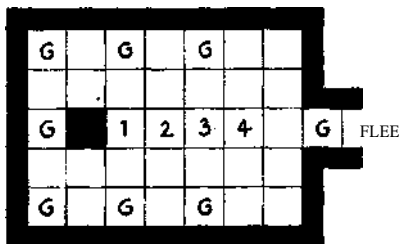
Turn to **354**.

507

Picking your way between the shattered and tilted flagstones, you reach into the dish and bring out a large gold talisman shaped like a stylised flame and with a large fire opal at its centre. (Record this talisman of flame on your Character Sheet if you wish to take it.)

Pebbles fall down the slopes outside, sending a

skittering echo through the hollow shell of the shrine. You look about, noticing at once that one of the gargoyles is no longer where it was. It now stands blocking the exit, and its rock talons flex like scythes. The other gargoyles are also slowly coming to life and slipping down from the walls. Fortunately they move only one square per Round, so you have a chance to fight your way past the one blocking the exit before you are overwhelmed.



Gargoyles

Fighting Prowess: 5

Damage per blow: 1 Die+2

Psychic Ability: 5

Awareness: 4

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: *first* 7 *fifth* 7

second 7 *sixth* 7

third 7 *seventh* 7

fourth 7 *eighth* 7

If you manage to fight your way out, turn to **92**.

508

You strike the gong with the mallet. It produces a deep note whose resonance is cut short by a Teleportation spell that conveys you to the basalt platform. A large jewelled sarcophagus occupies the middle of the platform, and in the gloom you can see an old man walking towards you from it. The flickering streams of phosphorescent sewage

which leak through the cavern roof show clearly through his ethereal body. Not a living man at all, then. It lifts its ghostly hands - but in a gesture of greeting or of attack . . . ?

If there is a Sage in the party who wishes to try to Exorcise it, turn to **182**. If you want to talk to it, turn to **509**.

509

The ghost speaks to you with a voice reaching across a thousand years of history. In life I was Magus Zyn,' it says. I was mightiest of the True Magi, and would have ruled over all, but petty jealousies among my peers brought about my downfall. The fools slew my servant, the giant Skrymir, and though they had not the power to destroy me utterly they yet imprisoned me here. And here I have lain for ten centuries. Ten centuries! They have passed like the slow tread of Leviathan, like the measured rumble of the gods as they snore beneath Spyte . . . Ten centuries to plot and scheme. Now my plans for vengeance come to fruition - but I need your help to execute my plan. What say you?'

If you agree to help Zyn's ghost, turn to **116**. If you refuse, turn to **378**.

510

He lifts his hand from the Die to show you his number: 3.

If you put down 1, turn to **440**. If you put down 2, turn to **420**. If you put anything else, turn to **286**.

511

(TRICKSTER) You bend dose to each of the mirrors in turn, listening intently for any sound beyond.

Gently tapping one with your fingers, you hear a slight movement as if something was lurking behind it, perhaps even waiting in the darkness to ambush you. You tap each of the other mirrors in turn and hear the same rustling sound behind each of them except one. Examining the gilt frame of this mirror, you find a concealed catch which, when flicked down, allows the mirror to swing away from the wall. Behind it, a low tunnel leads off at an oblique angle to the corridor in which you stand.

Turn to **379**.

512

The door is sealed fast, held shut by the immense power of the demon-god's will. You will have to fight Nebularon if you have any hope of getting out of here alive! Return to **484** and continue the battle from where you left off.

513

You race down the winding stairway of the Blue Tower, heave the door-bolt up and rush out into the night. The Assassins give up the chase when you reach the main avenues of the city.

Turn to **443**.

514

(WARRIOR) You stride boldly forwards. The Tomb Ranger turns a mad stare on you, but does not unfold his arms. He seems almost contemptuous of you.

'I have swum the Mergeld Sea through the ice-floes of winter,' you declare. 'The Hydra has lost seven of her nine heads to my sword. I lifted the frost-giant Urksben Treeneck a full metre clear of the ground in a wrestling contest. When the Mas-

ters of Death spat their poisoned fangs at me, I swept them aside in mid-air.' You go on declaiming some of your more outstanding victories (real or imagined), then issue the formal challenge to combat of the Warrior caste.

'Well, me,' says the Tomb Ranger lazily, 'I've done nothing grand or heroic. All I do is *kill*.' As he responds with the ritual answer to your challenge, he plucks up a rusty sword that lies beside him on the ground and tosses it to you. You catch it. 'I don't suppose it'll do you any more good than the last sucker,' sneers the Ranger, 'but there's no fun gutting a toothless pig . . .'

The rusty sword will break if you roll a 12 on two Dice when using the *fight* option. Note on your Character Sheet: 'Rusty sword - breaks *onfight* roll of 12' if you intend to keep it.

You square off for your battle with the veteran Ranger.

If you have any comrades and they step in to aid you (their choice, not yours), turn to **218**. If you fight him alone, turn to **418**.

515

The moon glimmers behind dark clouds, and the echoes of revelry in the far-off main streets sound like mournful ghosts. You are becoming increasingly uneasy about this rendezvous.

If there is a Trickster in the party and he or she wants to try something, turn to **520**. If you wish to wait here for Magus Vyl to arrive, turn to **399**. If you think it would be wiser just to leave, turn to **443**.

516

Without money to pay your way, you have reached a dead end. You try negotiating the gondolier down

to a more reasonable fee, but he remains deaf to your every plea. All he will say, in his rich old accent, is: 'The fee is forty gold coins.'

If at last you relent and decide to pay him, turn to **193**. If you really cannot do this (or doggedly refuse to!) then turn to **324**.

517

You place the scarab into the man's parchment-dry fingers. Suddenly it bursts into a greenish glow, then it fades. The scarab crumples to dust (cross it off your Character Sheet), drained of its power by your attempt to restore the man to life. His hand jerks convulsively once and then goes limp. You realise now that you would have had to release him from the block of ice before you used the amulet if you wanted to restore him. He died nearly instantaneously from either the cold or suffocation.

Turn to **369**.

518

You dispose of the last Night Elf. As he falls, he murmurs something in the lilting Faerie tongue. A dank mist rises around you, and hideous shapes glide to and fro.

If there is a Sage in the party, turn to **66**. If there is no Sage, turn to **504**.

519

Imragarn looks around in confusion, trying to decide between the two bridges. You call out across the gorge to advise him, but he cannot hear you over the dull, reverberating roar of the river below. The Hags bray with laughter, sputtering phlegm over their cyanic lips as they rub their hands in vicious merriment. They anticipate a tragedy.

They are not disappointed this time. Imragarn chooses the first bridge and edges nervously along it. He is a stocky man, not light on his feet. As he nears the middle of the bridge, the gargoyle head booms its summons: 'Relinquish the grave.' In answer to the summons, tendrils of fire appear in a dazzling blossom below the bridge and lick upwards, gradually dying down to reveal a dark-cowled woman of majestic stature. She steps towards the trembling figure of Imragarn, and by her gait the gruesome goddess is revealed: Hela, Queen of the Dead.

'Imragarn,' she says in a voice to chill the blood. 'I am the greatest foe you have ever bested, for I am Death and you belong to me . . .'

Imragarn starts to raise his hands, but it is a futile gesture, a gesture not of defiance but of resignation. 'This is true,' he groans. 'I have no right to oppose you, even if I could, because I have had a second lease of life and this is more than any man may claim.'

Hela reaches for him with lean white hands. The look on Imragarn's face is one of adoration, which is strange because the dread queen appears to you only as a grinning monstrosity of bone and gristle. Perhaps he sees her other aspect, which some claim is beautiful beyond description. They fade away, leaving the bridge stark and empty.

Turn to **98**.

520

(TRICKSTER) You spot a group of bargemen making their way home along the towpath on the opposite bank. You call them over, saying, If you wish to earn a bag of silver for very little effort, come here. I have been told to guard the pennant of Magus Vyl

but now remember an urgent errand. Hold the pennant until I return, and I will reward you lavishly. This I swear, or I am not the Grand Treasurer of the House of Vyl!

You walk a little distance off into the shadows, then double back. While you (and your comrades, if any) hide in cover, you hear the bargemen chatting about how they'll spend the money you have promised them.

Turn to **525**.

521

The voice of your patron speaks from the medallion. He sounds faint, distant. 'Contact is difficult now you have reached the lower level,' he says. 'You have found a sliver of Kalium. If you take it, keep the casket sealed rightly - Kalium is a volatile metal that reacts explosively when moistened,'

Turn to **319**.

522

You run towards the ruined shrine, heedless of the precarious drop to either side. The yawning entrance to the shrine looked sinister a few moments ago, but now it offers a most welcome haven from the insane Fetishists.

They obviously do not care to pursue you into the shrine, as you hear them moaning with superstitious dread as you reach it. Their shaman, however, is not finished with you yet. He points his bone wand at the last player in the battle order (the only player, if you are adventuring solo) and incants a dreadful spell of Osteal Weakening. The player concerned must roll two Dice trying to score Psychic Ability or less. Failure means that he or she loses one point from Fighting Prowess and Awareness for the rest of the adventure.

Reaching the safety of the shrine, you turn to watch the Fetishists scramble back down the slope and vanish into the enveloping mists.

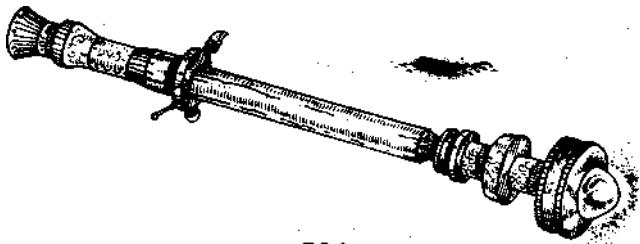
Turn to **339**.

523

The opal medallion crackles into life. "This may be our last communication," says your patron's voice. 'You can use the doors behind you as a kind of raft to cross the moat. The Krarthian hardwood is resistant to heat and will float on molten stone, though not on water. Make haste, for even now Icon the Ungodly approaches the . . . !'

The power of the medallion fades, leaving your patron's advice echoing in your mind.

Turn to **132**.



524

'Arrant foolishness!' she snarls as you step forwards to attack her. The folds of the toga part to reveal two slender hands covered with glowing rings. 'I am Larisha the Gift-Giver, and only with the aid that I had to offer might your quest have been successful. Now you have forfeited the right to that aid by reason of your rank stupidity. Return to the Battle-pits - and die.' She swings the myriad rings to and fro, casting a spell before you can stop her. You are whisked off your feet by a sudden rush of air - not a natural gale, you know, but the terrifying power of

an elemental. The elemental carries you through a maze of rooms and tunnels faster than you can blink, finally hurling you to the floor of a red-carpeted corridor and departing in a roar of wind. Each player must lose one Endurance point. Slowly, bruised and shaken, you stand and try to get your bearings.

Turn to **216**.

525

The bargemen's jubilation is short-lived. After a few minutes you hear a rustling in the bushes around the Blue Tower. Suddenly six Assassins swathed in black launch themselves from the shadows. Steel swords flash momentarily in the moonlight, cutting the unfortunate bargemen down. The one with the banner starts to cry out, but an Assassin silences him with a deadly finger-strike to the throat. All are dead in seconds, except for one whom you see fleeing for the bridge. A Shuriken slices through the air and strikes him in the back, and you hear a dull splash as his body hits the murky water.

You have the opportunity to ambush the Assassins now. If you decide to do this, turn to **530**. If you prefer to creep away unnoticed, turn to **443**.

526

Is the first person in your battle order a Trickster? If so, turn to **276**. If not, turn to **486**.

527

'You are Balhazar,' you announce as you approach the man. He turns with a half smile, then fades away into thin air! You look around to see all the other guests disappearing as well. Only one re-

mains - a man in a domino cape. When he stands up you recognise the imposing height and imperious stance of Magus Balhazar.

'You have failed my test, I fear,' says Balhazar as he un.masks. 'Regrettable, as I had hoped you would do better. Now, it is time for you to leave.'

Turn to **119**.

528

(TRICKSTER) The Ranger turns to look at you. For a split second he is transfixed by the gleaming silver of your 'sword'. There is a rusty sword lying at his feet. He sees you glance at it, and his hand starts towards his sword-hilt. You dive forwards, somersaulting nimbly and snatching up the rusty sword as you do. His own sword is half way out of its scabbard. You hurl your new-found weapon at his throat. His sword is drawn at the instant he is impaled. He falls in a rain of blood.

You can take his own sword and also the rusty sword if you wish. The latter may break when used in combat. If you roll a 12 on two Dice when taking *the fight* option with this weapon, its rusted blade snaps and it becomes useless. Note this on your Character Sheet.

If you now wish to continue on to the end of the passage, turn to **151**. If you wish to retrace your steps to try the ornamental doorway, turn to **246**.

529

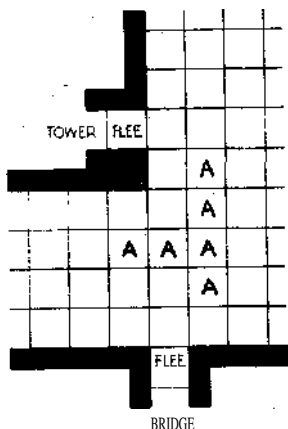
You see the Enchanter's face contort in terrible agony. There is a hideous scream that seems to echo from a great distance, and then the image of your comrade blackens and begins to fade away to nothingness. (Note that any items the Enchanter was carrying are *lost*.) Stunned by the horror of this

terrible death, you see that further attacks on the gondolier would be futile. You must attempt to bargain with him.

Turn to **167**.

530

The Assassins are grouped as shown below, hunched like vultures over the bodies of their victims. Your sudden attack takes them completely unawares, so you may position yourself (or selves) anywhere you like on the map *and* take one 'free' Round of combat before the Assassins think to act.



Assassins

Fighting Prowess: 7	Damage per blow: 1 Die
Psychic Ability: 6	Awareness: 7
Endurance: <i>first</i> 5	<i>fourth</i> 5
<i>second</i> 5	<i>fifth</i> 5
<i>third</i> 5	<i>sixth</i> 5

In any Round in which an Assassin is not adjacent to an opponent, he will throw a Shuriken. This is

like the *shoot* option of a Sage or Trickster, and requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. A Shuriken that hits inflicts 1 Die-1 damage (less Armour Rating, of course). An Assassin will throw Shuriken at targets according to the following order of preference: Enchanter - Sage - Trickster - Warrior.

If you *flee* across the bridge, turn to **443**. If you *flee* into the Blue Tower, turn to **535**. If you defeat the Assassins, turn to **226**.

531

You lost your momentum when you saw the sword, and although you try to set off again you realise that the Barbarians are going to be on top of you within seconds. You stop and face them, expecting the worst. Seeing you stop, they slow themselves and with sly grins advance towards you- hefting their battleaxes while they look you up and down much as a butcher would scrutinise a consignment of meat. Suddenly one of them spots the jewelled sword lying in the middle of the corridor. Without taking his eyes off you, he stoops to pick it up. As he does so a wall instantaneously appears in front of you, blocking off the Barbarians. Listening, you hear their bellows of rage. You realise that the sword must have had some kind of a spell on it which has created this magical barrier. You haven't got the sword, but at least you are still alive. You continue down the corridor.

Turn to **503**.

532

Have you taken a note of the last entry you were reading? Make sure of that, then read on ...

You open the scroll. It contains a spell of Dreadful Punishment - an arcane enchantment that is much too powerful for you to control. *Everyone*- friend or foe - in the vicinity is affected by the spell, and this includes you. Two Dice should be rolled for each player/monster; if the score exceeds the player's (or monster's) Psychic Ability then the spell inflicts eight Endurance points damage. Otherwise, it is resisted successfully.

After the resistance roll has been attempted by every player, monster or other character here, return to the last entry you were reading.

533

(TRICKSTER) Roll two Dice and try to score equal to or under your Awareness.

If you succeed, turn to **102**. If you fail, you accidentally tread on the floor of the alcove (turn to **372**).

534

(SAGE) You strive too hard, and for that reason fail. You are still too firmly rooted in the physical reality of your surroundings when, a moment later, your foe takes advantage of your passive stance to shove you off the bridge. You plummet to your death in the torrent below.

If any players are left alive, they now continue their adventure. Any who have still to cross now decide who will try next and turn to the appropriate entry.

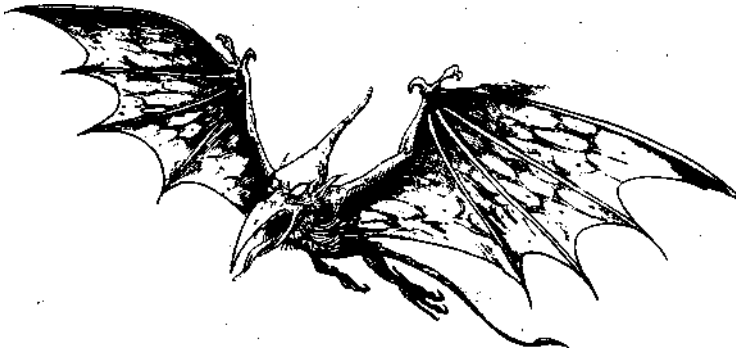
If all players have crossed and Imragarn is with you, turn to **519**. If all players have crossed and you are not accompanied by Imragarn, turn to **98**.

535

You scramble through the portico and bar the door behind you. There is a soft *thunk-thunk* as two lethal Shuriken embed themselves in the stout oak door. You listen, but there is no sound from outside.

Looking around, you see a bare vestibule with a spiral staircase winding up towards the parapets. You cautiously edge up the stairs, alert to the possibility that more of the Assassins may be concealed here. You are beginning to suspect that the mysterious Magus Vyl is not all that interested in employing you.

You come to a doorway. If you wish to go through, turn to **36**. If you wish to cany on up the stairs, turn to **3**.



536

(ENCHANTER) 'Our mistress, Echidna, is the main occupant. She may prevail upon you to part with some of your lifeblood. This is not wholly bad, but if you have any octagonal glass prisms then you'd be better off fighting her.'

You sense the Enthralment weakening. The Hag is coming round, and will doubtless give high

priority to some scheme for revenge against you. To forestall this, you strike her senseless with an iron ladle taken out of her own cauldron. Doubtless she has visited far worse fates on others in her time.

Turn to **67**.

537

You tread warily along the slender ridge that encircles the lava pool. In the crater, rock flows like mud from the intense heat of the volcanic fires below. You stop to watch as globules of volcanic gas sluggishly belch up out of the magma. A glimmer of blue flame catches your watchful eyes. The ethereal forms of fire-demons are rising up from the crater towards you. They are Skiapys - raging entities of fiery bloodlust whose talons melt steel and carve through flesh and sinew like butter.

If you wish to use a talisman of flame, turn to **158**. If you wish to use an ice jewel, turn to **12**. If you have neither of these items, turn to **376**.

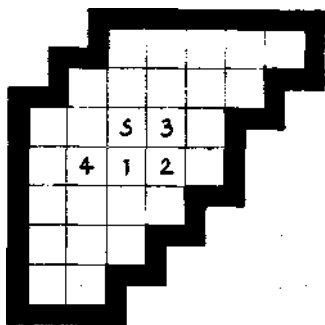
538

You know what to expect before you reach the next chamber. It is malformed and fused, like an ancient fane blasted by tremendous heat. Worshippers stand frozen into pillars of salt, locked forever in the stances of dismay and panic they adopted at the moment of disaster. Beyond them are the items you knew you would find: two massive skeletal arms affixed to shoulder-blades like plates of armour. One fleshless hand still wears a spiked gauntlet of iron.

If you have the skull, turn to **394**. If you do not have the skull, turn to **396**.

He turns to regard you. Momentarily he seems utterly baffled. As he comes to his senses, a wave of black rage twists his mouth into a scowl. 'You dare interrupt Skrymir's millennial plans with your petty mortal concerns? I, who am Jarl of the Frost Giants, Brother to Glaciers, who have swept whole armies aside with my savage might? Truly, the folly of mortals is beyond belief!'

He raises his right hand and makes a fist. You've seen smaller battering-rams than that spiked fist. 'Very well, then,' he says with a nasty smile. 'As you have restored Skrymir to life, and returned his gauntlet Doomgrip, he shall return the favour by granting you a swift death!'



Skrymir the Giant

Fighting Prowess: 9

Psychic Ability: 9

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: 55

Damage per blow: 5 Dice+6

Awareness: 8

You cannot *flee* from Skrymir's wrath. If you slay him, turn to **432**.

Victory is yours. You are among the few to have emerged from the Battlepits, for the magi's contest is a deadly one and often there are no survivors. All surviving players get one thousand experience points to share equally between them, and can now determine if they have advanced in rank.

The quiet condescending applause of the magi is one thing but the rapturous cheers of the crowds outside the Hall is quite another. You stand proudly as they shower garlands upon you - the one day of the year when they can show admiration for someone other than their despot rulers.

Your patron is flushed with success - your victory means many concessions of land from his peers. He finds a few moments amid the tumult of congratulation to come over and speak to you. 'It is time for you to leave Krarth now,' he says. 'Having once entered the Battlepits, you are ineligible for the contest in future years. Doubtless this will not bother you, for you have fought your way to resounding triumph. But there is one who is left with bitter hatred for you in his heart. I need not peer into my scrying-sphere to tell you that you will meet him again. Be on your guard.'

For a moment, when you turn to look out at the cheering crowds, you seem to catch a glimpse of a black-cloaked figure watching you with an expression of cold fury. But when you look again, he is gone.

Glossary

- the Battlepits The name of a large underground complex of tunnels and chambers, located beneath the plains of Krarth. Also used as the name of the contest staged by the Magi of Krarth every thirteen lunar months, wherein a group of champions are sent down into the Battlepits to vie with each other. The aim of the contest is to get through a succession of magical opponents and problems to the Emblem of Victory. The magi bet among themselves on the outcome, of course, and sometimes a Magus will intervene covertly to assist his champions or hinder the progress of those sponsored by a rival.
- the Blasting The demon-spawned disaster in which Spyte (qv) was laid to ruin and the True Magi were killed. After this holocaust, which lasted for three days and nights, Spyte was left isolated by a deep chasm which many believe goes right down to the fires of Hell.
- the Cauldron The name by which peasants and travellers know the deep gorge surrounding the ruins of Spyte. Steam rises in sulphurous clouds from this, thickening in the chill air so that the ruins are rarely visible. The

	only way across is by flying, as the Cauldron is too wide even for spells such as <i>Immediate Deliverance</i> .
the Coradian	The sea around whose shores are located the richest ports and cities of the world. Also used as a collective adjective for the countries of the True Faith - Algandy, Chaubrette, Kurland, the New Selentine Empire, Asmuly and Emphidor - surrounding this sea.
Krarth	A large country in the far north of Legend, divided into several dozen separate states each of which is ruled over by a Magus. It is divided from the civilised lands around the Coradian Sea by a deep rift valley which cuts through the Coradian continent from eastern to western shore. A cold, inhospitable country full of ancient and xenophobic traditions, Krarth is avoided by most merchants from the southern lands.
Legend	The mortal world; Midgard, or Middle-Earth.
the Magi	The lords of Krarth. There are some thirty magi, each essentially a local despot with absolute dominion over his territories. Since the country cannot support a standing army of any size, disputes are settled by means of the Battlepits contest (qv) - and sometimes by assassination.
Selentium	The capital of the Old Selentine Empire which once took in most of the western world. After the fall of

the Old Empire seven hundred years ago, Selentium has risen to a new importance as the centre of the True Faith.

Spyte

The "holy city" of the True Magi, who convened there every seven years in order to commune with the gods of Krarth. Today it stands in ruin, atop a pinnacle of rock in the middle of a vast rift in the earth ("the Cauldron").

the True Faith The principal religion of modern Legend.

the True Magi The original rulers of Krarth, wizards of unimaginable power, who were all slain in the Blasting of Spyte centuries ago. The present magi are for the most part the descendants of seneschals or apprentices who seized power in the ensuing confusion.



BLOOD SWORD

Every thirteen lunar months the Magi of Krarth hold a deadly contest to see which of them will rule that bleak and icy land. Teams of daring adventurers are sent down into the labyrinths that lie beneath the tundra, each searching for the Emblem of Victory that will win power for their patron.

Only one team can survive. The others must die.

Blood Sword can be played either solo or in a team of up to four people, providing the most exciting challenge yet in role-playing adventures, combining the best of role-playing, game books and boardgames.



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