

THE KINGDOM OF WYRD BOOK 2

DAVE MORRIS & OLIVER JOHNSON

BLOOD SWORD

The first game book
series for both solo and
multi-player adventures

General

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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.

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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.

BLOOD SWORD

THE KINGDOM OF WYRD BOOK2

DAVE MORRIS & OLIVER JOHNSON

Illustrated by Russ Nicholson
Maps supplied by Geoff Wingate



KNIGHT BOOKS
Hodder and Stoughton

To Steve

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BLOODSWORD

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.

If you completed the first book in the series, *The Battlepits of Krarth*, you will carry over the same adventuring team for this book. Your character(s) will have the abilities, rank and equipment with which they ended their first adventure. You can restore the characters' Endurance back up to its normal level if they left the battlepits wounded - assume you have had a week or two of restful recuperation.

If this is your first adventure in the Blood Sword series, read on. 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 a higher rank - ie, individually more powerful - than you would be in a group of Adventurers. A solitary Adventurer created for this adventure will be twelfth rank.

If there are two players, each takes the persona of a sixth-rank Adventurer. These two must belong to different adventuring classes. Ideally, these 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 fourth-rank character, while in a team of four players each has a third-rank character. Again, all characters *must* be of a different class.

These preconditions are summarised below:

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

To reiterate, that applies to a team generated specifically for this book. Player-characters who got through the battlepits may or may not meet these requirements, depending on how well they did.

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 *only* read the special section for the class that he or she belongs to.

TERMINOLOGY

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

$$X\text{Dice}+Y$$

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 in their special rules section later.)

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 1Die+1. 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 and add one for the damage your blow inflicts. You roll a six (+1=7), but the Troll has an Armour Rating of two so only five 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.

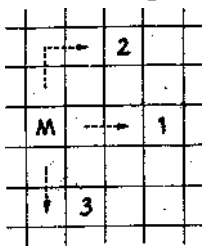
In a situation where two or more players are both given the chance for individual action (say, the Sage could speak to a demon or the Trickster could shoot it with an arrow), the players roll Dice and the highest score decides who acts.

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:

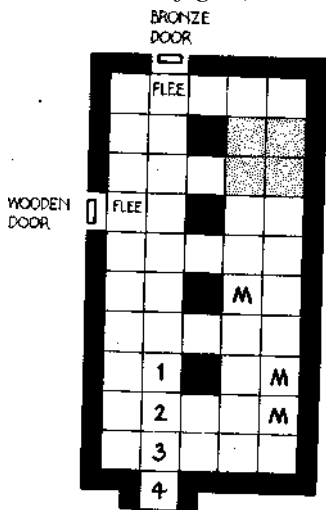


The numbers on this tactical map show where the Adventurers are standing when the combat starts. The Ms refer to the monsters' starting locations.

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 29 and 25), 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 Kingdom of Wyrd* 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 |
| fourteenth | 3250-3499 |
| fifteenth | 3500-3749 |
| sixteenth | 3750-3999 |
| seventeenth | 4000-4249 |

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 (twelfth-rank) character and receive an award of 1000 experience points, for example, then you will advance to sixteenth rank. If you had got the same award as a party of four third-rank characters, each character would advance to fourth rank.

After successfully completing the adventure and totting up your experience points, keep the Character Sheet. Characters who emerge alive from the Palace of Eternal Dusk are eligible for Blood Sword 3: *The Demon's Claw*.

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 through. 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 third rank, of course - you can't take a team of four twelfth-rank superheroes!)

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 (see

below) 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 - please 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 | Damage: 1 Die+1 |
| | Psychic Ability: 6 | Awareness: 6 |
| | Endurance: 12 | |
| Third rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 | Damage: 1 Die+2 |
| | Psychic Ability: 6 | Awareness: 6 |
| | Endurance: 18 | |
| Fourth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 | Damage: 2 Dice |
| | Psychic Ability: 6 | Awareness: 7 |
| | Endurance: 24 | |

| | | |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 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 |
| Ninth rank | Fighting Prowess: 9 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 54 | Damage 3 Dice+2 Awareness: 7 |
| Tenth rank | Fighting Prowess: 9 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 60 | Damage: 4 Dice Awareness: 7 |
| Eleventh rank | Fighting Prowess: 9 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 66 | Damage: 4 Dice+1 Awareness: 7 |
| Twelfth rank | Fighting Prowess: 9 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 72 | Damage: 4 Dice+2 Awareness: 8 |
| Thirteenth rank | Fighting Prowess: 9 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 78 | Damage: 5 Dice Awareness: 8 |

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

If you are playing with a character from Book One, you already know what equipment you have.

You can also add sixty gold pieces to the money you already have.

If you are taking a new character, you begin with three items which you should now note down. These are:

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

The money-pouch contains ten gold pieces if you are third rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are fourth rank, twenty gold pieces if you are sixth rank, and forty gold pieces if you are twelfth 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

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
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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 |

| | | |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Ninth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 54 | Damage: 3 Dice+1 Awareness: 9 |
| Tenth Rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 60 | Damage: 3 Dice+2 Awareness: 9 |
| Eleventh rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 7 Endurance: 66 | Damage: 4 Dice Awareness: 9 |
| Twelfth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 72 | Damage: 4 Dice+1 Awareness: 9 |
| Thirteenth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance: 78 | Damage: 4 Dice+2 Awareness: 9 |

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

If you are playing with a character from Book One, you already know what equipment you have. You can also add sixty gold pieces to the money you already have.

If you are taking a new character, you begin with five items which you should now 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 third rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are fourth rank, twenty gold pieces if you are sixth

rank, and forty gold pieces if you are twelfth 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. (If you used up your arrows in Book One, you may assume you have replaced them in the interval before this adventure begins.)

Two 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 less than your Fighting Prowess on two Dice.

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

TRICKSTER Character Sheet

NAME _____

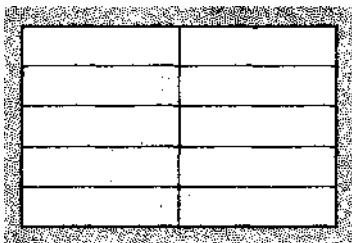
RANK _____

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

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Eighth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance:40 | Damage: 3 Dice Awareness: 7 |
| Ninth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance:45 | Damage:3Dice+1 Awareness: 7 |
| Tenth Rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance:50 | Damage:3Dice+2 Awareness: 7 . |
| Eleventh rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 8 Endurance:55 | Damage: 4 Dice Awareness: 7 |
| Twelfth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 9 Endurance:60 | Damage:4Dice+1 Awareness: 8 |
| Thirteenth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 9 Endurance:65 | Damage:4Dice+2 Awareness: 8 |

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

If you are playing with a character from Book One, you already know what equipment you have. You can also add sixty gold pieces to the money you already have.

If you are taking a new character, you begin with five items which you should now note down. These are:

- quarterstaff
- ringmail armour (Armour Rating two)
- money-pouch
- bow
- quiver

The money-pouch contains ten gold pieces if you are third rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are fourth rank, twenty gold pieces if you are sixth rank, and forty gold pieces if you are twelfth 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. (If you used up your arrows in Book One, you may assume you have replaced them in the interval before this adventure begins.)

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 less than 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 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 5x (1 Die-2) - 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

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THE ENCHANTER

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

Your attributes at various ranks are these:

Second rank Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage: 1 Die-1
 Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 6
 Endurance: 10

| | | |
|---------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 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 |
| Ninth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 9 Endurance: 45 | Damage: 2 Dice+3 Awareness: 7 |
| Tenth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 9 Endurance: 50 | Damage: 3 Dice Awareness: 7 |
| Eleventh rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 9 Endurance: 55 | Damage: 3 Dice+1 Awareness: 7 |
| Twelfth rank | Fighting Prowess: 8 Psychic Ability: 9 Endurance: 60 | Damage: 3 Dice+2 Awareness: 8 |

Thirteenth rank Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage: 3 Dice+3
 Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 8
 Endurance: 65

Fill in your rank and attributes on a Character Sheet.

If you are playing with a character from Book One, you already know what equipment you have. You can also add sixty gold pieces to the money you already have.

If you are taking a new character, you begin with three items which you should now note down. These are:

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

The money-pouch contains ten gold pieces if you are third rank, fifteen gold pieces if you are fourth rank, twenty pieces if you are sixth rank, and forty pieces if you are twelfth 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 tem-

porarily 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.

All your spells except for *Ghastly Touch* are 'ranged' - that is to say, you do not have to be in an

adjacent square to your opponent in order to cast the spell at him.

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 every-

one 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 _____

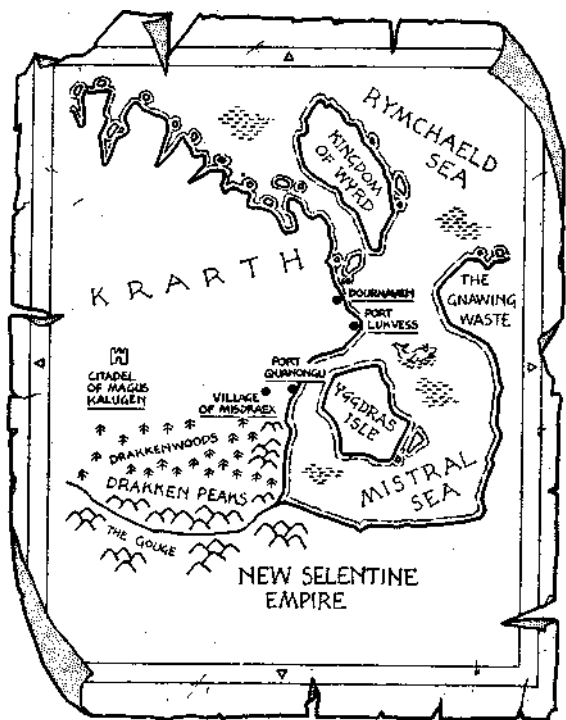
Psychic Ability _____ Awareness _____

Endurance _____

ITEMS

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Turn to **1** to begin your adventure



1

'This is an irresistible fate,' says the old woman, peering at the cards in the firelight. 'A Weird. You will undertake some great task, a quest of tremendous importance.'

She glances up to see how you receive her prophecy. Then, touching a card with her brown old hand, she continues: 'From the first card, which is the focus of the reading, the quest will involve a restoration - the setting to right of some ill, or the repair of a thing that has been broken. The card here suggest that a long journey lies ahead of you, and the surrounding influence suggests great hardships along the way. This next card indicates the obstacles, and as it is the Hosts of Yeth these would seem to be both many and dangerous. Powerful agencies will oppose you. Turning to the next card, we see your immediate goal . . . The Archon, icy of gaze and stern of countenance. This man is harsh and implacable. A ruler, or one who expects to be obeyed. If your quest is not in his interests, he can be counted on to oppose you. Note that beside him is the card we call the Wise Mother. She is the feminine principle - the dreams of firelight, the comforting word. A stark contrast indeed to the Archon, and her face on the card is turned away from him. If a man opposes you, the cards seem to say, you may find a woman who is your friend...'

She shuffles the cards and stares at you for a moment, then gives a deep sigh. The reading is at an end. You start to rise, but she extends a withered hand. 'Two pieces of gold was the price we agreed,' she says.

You did say you'd give her two gold pieces. But her prophecy seems somewhat vague ...

If you pay her two gold pieces, cross them off and

turn to **355**. If you pay her only one gold piece, turn to **343**. If you refuse to pay her at all, turn to **259**.

2

(TRICKSTER) You rack your brains trying to think of a solution to the problem. Nothing occurs to you immediately, apart from the most foolhardy and risky of schemes, so perhaps if you have any comrades you would prefer to leave the solution to them?

If you wish to make another choice, return to **133** and choose another option. If you want to go on with one of the ideas you have had, turn to **379**.

3

As you step forwards, the cowed figures stop. You see that there are five of them in all. You rush in towards the first one to deliver the death-blow, but as you do it lifts its candle to illuminate the face within the cowl. It is a sight out of the darkest nightmare, and a terrible chill grips your heart. Roll equal to or under your rank on 1 Die+1 in order to survive the shock; if you fail the roll you die of fright.

You will have to repeat this roll for each one you kill. The pallbearers make no attempt to defend themselves, and a single blow kills each one. If you kill all five, turn to **102**. If you *flee*, turn to **547**.

4

You get up from your bed in the pre-dawn twilight, and after some preparation you trudge down to the quayside where the *Magdalen* is already a hive of activity. The captain greets you warmly and introduces you to the oarsmaster. Soon you are sitting at a rowing-bench experimenting with your grip on

the wooden oar. 'Luckily,' the oarsmaster tells you, 'a fair wind is blowing from the south, so the *Magdalen* will be able to use her sails once she has been rowed out of the harbour.'

Straining to put all your weight into your strokes, you ease the *Magdalen* out from the quay and soon your shipmates are singing one of the Old Krarthian sea shanties in time to the stroke of the oars. The ship is rocked by the waves of the ocean as she leaves the shelter of the harbour, and your own contribution to the singing dies suddenly as you feel an unfamiliar churning in your stomach caused by the motion of the waves . . .

Some players may be seasick - but not Sages, who can control any nausea they might feel. All other adventuring classes must roll two Dice. Add one to the result if you had breakfast. If your score is 10 or more you are soon violently ill and you lose two Endurance points (unless you had only two Endurance left: if this was the case you will not die of seasickness, although you may think you will at the time! Reduce your Endurance to one in this case).

The rest of the day passes uneventfully, and towards dusk Captain Derzu points the ship in towards the shoreline. Soon you are in a small cove where you beach and set up camp for the night.

Turn to **507**.

5

(SAGE) You go over and gently move the anxious women aside so that you can get a look at the baby. His skin is terribly raw and blistered, and he is too weak even to cry. In order to cure him, you must restore one Endurance point (the equivalent of only a flesh wound to you, but a grievous injury for a small baby). Attempt the healing in the usual way.

If you manage to give him back one Endurance point, turn to **222**. If you cannot do that, turn to **84**.

6

Your desperate attacks fall in an onslaught that even the mighty Water Elemental cannot withstand. It falls apart, torn into a million droplets, and then seems to fade altogether. Not even a ripple disturbs the surface of the waves where, seconds ago, a giant fist of water towered twenty metres into the sky.

Hovering on the carpet above you, Augustus gives vent to his rage in a loud, guttural scream.

Turn to **328**.

7

(ENCHANTER) With much reluctance, you summon a Faltyn to your side. 'Let us forgo the customary bargaining,' you begin as it materialises beside you.

'Lost on the frozen Mistral Sea . . . ' it muses, pretending not to have heard you. 'A slow death seems certain, but for my aid. In view of the gravity of your predicament - and the fact that I must flit across kilometres of pack-ice and snow to determine where you now are - the charge for my services is higher than usual. I will take nothing less than the jewelled scabbard of the Blood Sword. We may indeed forgo bargaining, as you requested.'

If you agree that it can have the scabbard (whether or not it is you who actually have this item), turn to **220**. If you refuse its demands, turn to **155**.

8

Grinning, it stalks towards you. There is no gleam of recognition or intelligence in its eyes. It will slay

you and rip open your flesh with its talons if you don't do something.

If you fight it, turn to **37**. If you wish to use an item, turn to **449**. If there is a Sage in the party who wishes to act, turn to **206**.

9

As the Lady in Grey dies, the suits of armour slowly fall apart. Each metal section strikes the floor with a mournful knell, and rust spreads across them as you watch.

Varadaxor groans, shaking his head to clear it. He rubs his limbs as if they were cold, and slowly walks over to the body.

Turn to **108**.

10

It crashes to the earth, which shudders under the impact. Stepping around the hulking corpse, you make your way down to the edge of the lake. The water is stagnant and coated in a fetid scum. It is not frozen over, but seems cold enough to deter you from swimming. You head towards one of the gates, but a growl of menace gives you pause . . .

Looking around, you see that the Guardian-Beast has recovered from the wounds you inflicted. Fully restored by its master's magic, it strides forwards to deal you further blows.

You have no intention of wasting your energy in fighting it again. You turn and run.

Turn to **432**.

11

Lazarus unfurls a chart and shows it to you in the dim light. 'Behold,' he cries, stabbing a finger at it, 'and I'll tell a tale to gallow you. 'Tis no mere whale

I'm after, but the World Serpent himself, Jormungand, the Trickster's whelp!' He fixes you with a visionary stare that seems to pass right through you and the cabin to the heaving grey waves of the boundless ocean. He turns back to the chart at last and moves his finger along an arc drawn on it. 'Here he lies in the depths of the Mistral, battening on whales and dreamin' of the end of time. This line shows where, you see - dead below the path of the Red Death when it sweeps through the sky by night. Heh, this old chart cost a pretty sum, I can tell you . . .' He glares at you suddenly and rolls it up again. 'We go to hunt that old sea-worm and bring his carcass upon our decks, and every man Jack aboard the *Questing Beast* will be rich when we've done the deed. While as for me - well, old Lazarus will be accounted a prodigy of heroism in time after for this catch!'

You inwardly reflect that the captain's acquaintances in Port Quanongu would account him a prodigy of madness if they had heard his plan. You nod vigorously as he goes on to describe how Jormungand will be brought to the surface and slain. At last, with foam flecking his lips, he falls silent and stares with fanatic intensity at the chart in his hand.

You go solemnly up and pace the deck. After a while Lazarus emerges from his cabin and grins broadly at you. You find it difficult to muster a smile in return . . .

Towards dusk a furious gale springs up and the sailors scurry to reduce sail. The *Questing Beast* is flung pell-mell across surging waves. The sea becomes mountainous, and the horizon is lost in driving squalls. All available hands - including you - are sent to the bilges to bail water. The violent

lurching begins to make you queasy, and you may be seasick. Each player must roll two Dice, adding one to the score if you had breakfast today. A score of 10 points or more means that you are ill, losing two Endurance points. (Special note: if you had only two Endurance points left, reduce your score to one for seasickness; it will not actually kill you!)

Turn to **261**.

12

(SAGE AND/OR ENCHANTER) Augustus appears to be an artificer, a wizard who relies on constructed devices for much of his power. You understand little of the paraphernalia stacked on the shelves around you, but you spot one or two items that might be of interest . . . You reach out your hands and then hesitate: might not Augustus have inscribed one or more of his devices with a runic trap to ensnare burglars?

Turn to **453**.

13

The cowed figures shrink back as you rush in, disappearing into shadowed crevices in the walls. The zombie grins without intelligence and clacks its teeth, casting off the shroud and stepping down from the bier. You must fight this walking dead monster created from the cadaver of your friend.

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Zombie

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: 1 Die

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 3

Armour Rating: as worn when alive

Endurance: 30

If you destroy it, turn to **329**.

14

(ENCHANTER) What item do you think you should use here? Two blue eye-jewels (turn to **42**) or an ivory drinking-horn (turn to **488**)?

15

The Warlock-King chooses some breathtaking locations for his battles... Now you are clinging to a rod of cold metal, somewhere where the wind whistles cold and raw. You try to take in the details of where you are. You are holding on to a tenuous network of metal rods, like a giant web in the sky. You see only a limitless blue haze running into the distance all around. Looking down, you can just make out a few wispy clouds hundreds and hundreds of metres

The Warlock-King sits in the centre of the web. His huge crystal throne is set in the cold sky. He still wears his crystal crown, and hung around his neck on a cord you now see the item you have come so far to obtain: the hilt of the Blood Sword.

He sees you looking at it and his aged face twists into a brittle smile. 'A precious talisman indeed. It guarantees my sovereignty from the magi, so I have no intention of parting with it. Perhaps you are willing to part with the scabbard, though?'

You know enough not to do that! If you threaten to drop the scabbard, turn to **307**. If you wish to use

an item, turn to **282**. If you try clambering along the web to attack him, turn to **530**.

16

'Please be quiet,' says Augustus. 'It is difficult to control the carpet with your whining protestations!' You are surprised at Augustus's angry response; only a few moments ago he was doing his best to be charming, but now a savage smile plays on his lips and he stares fervently ahead of him. 'If you wish to know whither we are bound, I have merely turned the carpet towards my castle where I hope to pick up some supplies,' he tells you after you have complained again.

If you object to going to his castle, turn to **536**. If you agree to go to his castle, turn to **65**.

17

You wander into the tap-room of the inn, which is thick with the fumes emanating from the clay pipes that most of the sailors seem to be smoking. At the far side of the room you see a group of priests dressed in fine cloaks sitting talking intently to an old man in a black brocade coat. At the bar, a large party of traders and furriers are bartering noisily.

If you want to go and talk to the priests, turn to **83**. If you want to talk to the traders and see if there is anything worth buying from them, turn to **358**. If you want to find the landlord and enquire about renting a room at the inn, turn to **515**.

18

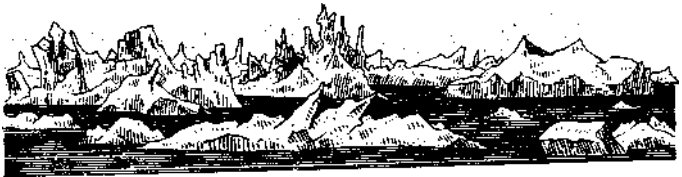
You brandish the crucifix, which reputedly contains the finger-bone of St Ashanax, before the eyes of the sailors. Suddenly it jerks in your hand as though pulled by an invisible force, and points horizontally

on its chain like a hound on a leash.

'Heathen curs!' you shout. 'Behold the power of the True God. Where the holy symbol points, there we shall steer our course. Unlimber the oars. Scull us yonder, you sea dogs!'

They, having fallen on their knees in quaking awe, scurry to obey. Soon the ship is moving in the direction indicated by the crucifix. The sails flutter as you reach a breeze, then billow out. Amid shouts of jubilation from the crew, the *Questing Beast* breaks the waves northwards.

Turn to **298**.



19

You step forwards over the threshold of the cottage. The first player in the battle order immediately plunges through the illusory floorboards of the cottage into a pit full of sharp stakes, taking a three Dice wound (less Armour Rating). The wizened figure stands and, with an imperious wave of his hand, the 'cottage' disappears, leaving just a clearing and a pit bathed in the eerie light of the Blue Moon. The figure before you is the skeletal form of the Stalker! 'Blue Moon is the master of illusion...' it hisses through its fleshless lips.

Turn to **198**.

20

(ENCHANTER) You speak, breaking into the flow of his melody. He stops and looks at you enquiringly. You tell him that you personally don't play any

instrument but you know of one who does . . . The man looks surprised but nods his agreement. You close your eyes and from the ethereal planes you summon a Faltyn, which arrives invisible, tittering over some faerie joke, still swathed in the cloud of incense that seems to be the atmosphere of the planes beyond. You instruct it to entertain you with music, and despite its look of disdain it plucks an invisible lute from the air and begins to sing a beautiful song of times long past when the golden age still was upon the earth. Even you, hardened to the wiles of the conniving Faltyns, feel a tear in your eye as the ethereal creature comes to the end of its song . . . The foresters seem similarly entranced, and each of them deposits one gold piece into the palm of your hand. Five of these gold pieces disappear as the Faltyn grabs them and vanishes with a titter. You are left with five gold pieces; mark these down on your Character Sheet.

You can *either* now go and rest - turn to **486** or go and watch the game of chequers - turn to **554**.

21

Now you must determine the Troop Strength of all the forces that have gathered to fight for you against the skeletons.

The Imperial Selentine First Legion:

Troop Strength 4

The Battalion of Shadow:

Troop Strength 4

The Berserker Thegns:

Troop Strength 3

The Company of White Annihilation:

Troop Strength 2

The Fang-Warriors:

Troop Strength 2

The Mist-Phantoms:

Troop Strength 1

The Knights of the Wildwood: Troop Strength 3

Add up the Troop Strengths of all the forces you

have summoned. This gives the total Troop Strength of your army. Now pray that it is enough to overcome the Warlock-King's skeletal fighters.

If the total Troop Strength is 13 or more, turn to **359**. If the total Troop Strength is 10 to 12, turn to **459**. If the total Troop Strength is 7 to 9, turn to **519**. If the total Troop Strength is 4 to 6, turn to **357**.

22

You pull the scroll from its case and read it. The magic takes effect immediately, causing the green glyphs on the parchment to glow softly in the gathering gloom of the evening. The scroll crumbles to dust as you become invisible.

Through the pane of ice underfoot you see nictating membranes close in bafflement across the glaring eye. As the tentacles sweep blindly about in an attempt to find their vanished prey, you creep past them and head for the coast.

Turn to **117**.

23

(ENCHANTER) Focusing your concentration on the amulet, you experiment with a variety of command words and occult gestures. The carpet shudders and descends in a stomach-wrenching spiral. Your touchdown on the pack-ice is jarring enough (all players lose one Endurance point) to convince you not to bother trying to operate the carpet again.

Turn to **344**.

24

You are awakened by screams of terror. You sit bolt upright, reaching out instinctively for your weapons. The guttering flames of the camp fires illuminate a

scene of awful bloodshed. The merchants that you saw ranged about the chequers board earlier are now stalking about the clearing. Their teeth are bared in mad grins, and their cloaks are thrown back to reveal cruel daggers that glint in the light of the Blue Moon. They are cutting about them as casually as harvesters reaping corn, and with each sweep of a knife a forester or wayfarer falls bloodied and dying . . .

Leading the butchery are two huge wolves with glaring luminous eyes. You know them at once for werewolves! They lope forwards among the wayfarers. Women and children run in terror as the surviving menfolk arm themselves with cudgels or staves.

You scramble for your weapons. Turn to **119** to fight these killers, but because you must get to your feet, draw your sword, etc, you must wait three Rounds of combat before you can take any action.

25

The Warlock-King has summoned an army of skeletons to slay you. Against such overwhelming odds, there seems no hope for you. You will be impaled helplessly on their spears as soon as they reach you. As you back away, looking desperately to and fro for an escape route that you know does not exist, the battle-standard begins to pulse with light. The cowled figures rise from their tiered seats, uttering a gasp of horror, and begin to shrink back into the shadows. You have no idea what is happening, but you seize the battle-standard and brandish it above your head. As you do, you are washed in glory. The ghosts of ancient generals from the halcyon days of Selentium whisper to you: *Beworthy of the Eagle.*

You look at the battle-standard, shining with unbearable light in your hands. Even the Warlock-King takes a step back as he sees it, shielding his eyes with his long sleeve. The skeletons falter uncertainly. But the proud glory of the First Legion is enhanced, not dimmed, by the centuries that have passed since Selentium fell. And no legion would ever allow its standard to be taken in battle . . .

Ghostly troops form between you and the advancing skeletons. They gradually become real. Ranks of reincarnated legionaries stand awaiting your command!

Turn to **178**.

26

Augustus has retreated on seeing the tide of battle turn against his demons. Now he stands on his carpet, with one slender hand on the amulet around his throat. You start forwards towards him, but the carpet is already rising and soaring out away from the tower.

He hovers at a safe distance and watches you, his face contorted with rage. 'Rot there forever!' he screams. He shakes his fists and then commands the carpet to veer away and fly back to Krarth. You watch until he is a speck lost against a haze of white.

Entering the tower, you reach a circular gallery overlooking the stair-well. A stair-well - but no stairs linking the floors. Glancing down, you see two more galleries and then the ground-floor hall.

If there is an Enchanter in the party, turn to **93**. If there is no Enchanter, turn to **238**.

27

You are wretchedly tired after your flight through

the forest, and you are soon snoring fitfully. Suddenly you are jerked awake by a sound nearby. Your flesh crawls with mounting horror. A fleshless foot has stepped upon a twig, and a glowing-eyed skull face is leaning over you . . .

Turn to **212**.

28

(SAGE) Augustus wove warding spells into his carpet to protect it from any such psychic assault. There is a blinding flash of light as your psychic assault on the carpet rebounds back on you! Roll Psychic Ability or less on two Dice to resist. If you fail, you have lost the power of Exorcism for the rest of the adventure.

Now turn to **133** and make another choice.

29

You leap over the side and fall into the freezingly cold water of the harbour. You struggle back to the surface and gasp for air just as the sailors are aiming their harpoons at you from the rail. You have an uncomfortable feeling that these men seldom miss their target, whether it be as large as a whale or as small as a human!

A shadow passes overhead. You dismiss it as a seagull at first, but when you see the sailors gawping in amazement you look up. A flying carpet bearing a violet-robed man is hovering over the water nearby.

He stoops and gives you a hand up. 'When a quick exit is called for,' he says with a smile, 'the magic carpet of Augustus is ideal. Rise, o rug! North and east, *pro tempore*.'

The carpet swivels around and then shoots up into the air with dizzying speed. Not a moment too

soon - below, you see the harpoons pierce the waves where you were floundering only seconds earlier.

Turn to **424**.

30

(SAGE). .. It's no good, you cannot get in the right frame of mind to Levitate. Your ability to concentrate seems to have gone for the moment, so you cannot try again. Turn to **314** if someone else wants to try to rescue the Faltyn. Turn to **221** if everyone who wants to has now tried and failed.

31

The light radiating from the battle-standard illuminates the ivory drinking-horn, which starts to glow. A swirl of red-tinged mead spills out of it, and where this torrent strikes the ground it gives rise to huge barbarian warriors. They glare at the advancing skeletons and chew their shields, eager to enter the fray.

Note that you now have the Berserker Thegns on your side. The drinking-horn vanishes, so delete it from your Character Sheet, then turn back to **178**.

32

You take the scabbard from your belt and brandish it aloft. The snow vampire drops to its knees, horror-struck, as scintillant beams of rainbow light flash from the jewels. It watches you aghast, but seems powerless to move as you step forwards and touch the scabbard to its flesh. Immediately the scarlet glow that suffuses it fades, its fangs and talons disappear, its expression of hate and fear changes to one of honest bewilderment. The power of the Blood Sword scabbard has restored your comrade's

soul. He or she joins the living once more, as all memories of a fleeting Undead existence fade like dreams . . .

The excitement has left you quite unable to sleep. You watch the irate glare of the Red Death star sink beyond the horizon. The chill light of dawn is not long in coming. You give thanks that your companion was brought back to you from Undeath, then reverently wrap the Blood Sword scabbard in its cloth.

If you have provisions, you can eat breakfast (cross off one day's worth of rations). Any player who does not loses one Endurance point.

Turn to **422**.

33

(ENCHANTER) You may *either* summon a Faltyn (turn to **230**) *or* cast Prediction (turn to **386**).

34

(PLAYER WITH SHADOWCLEAVER) You feel the silver falchion sing along the length of its blade. The tarnish that discoloured it before now fades, causing it to shine brilliantly. The furthest corners of the room are suddenly bathed in relentless light like the desert sun. The demon Umborus begins to roar in pain, a sound like the scream of a burning man. Even if you could feel pity for such a monster, your magical blade has none. It pulls your arm up, plunging to the hilt in the demon's shadowy breast.

Silence descends. Looking up, you find no sign of the demon. Shadowcleaver lies at your feet. Now white-hot, its glow illuminates the chamber. You cannot retrieve it, so delete it from your Character Sheet. Beside it lies an ugly black lump, like a huge gob of soft tar. It is the Heart of the Dark, all that

remains of the foul shadow-demon. Take it if you wish, then turn to **145**.

35

You enter the gate-house. A number of pallid men and women in dusty finery shuffle around the floor in a mournful dance, although you can hear no music. Gradually they notice you, and one by one they stop dancing. At last you feel all eyes on you as you cross the hall. You look back- the dancers have gone, and now you see just a room festooned with cobwebs in which large grey spiders run frantically to and fro.

Somewhere, as if from a great distance, you hear shrieks (whether of mirth or anguish you cannot tell) and a discordant music of jangling bells, pipes and lyres. You approach a stone door bearing this inscription on its lintel: *Here is thy journey's end. After life's fitful fever, sleep thee well.* You push at the door, which opens with a groan.

Turn to **428**.

36

Surrendering to a mob is never a dignified course of action. Any Warrior in the party must deduct thirty experience points from his or her award at the end of the adventure.

They seize you and thrust you into a small boat which is quickly lowered on to the waves. Water immediately begins to seep between the planks, and you know that you will have to do a lot of bailing to keep the craft afloat.

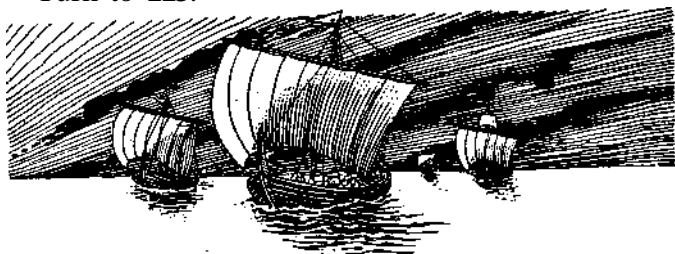
'You must be cursed by the gods of Krarth,' shouts Lazarus as you row away. 'Good riddance to you, say I!'

The *Questing Beast* moves away until you can hear



the jeers of the crew as only a faint keening on the wind. At last her sails disappear below the horizon, leaving you totally abandoned on the open sea.

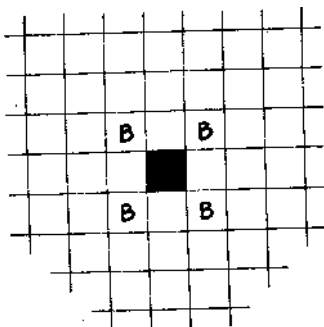
Turn to **113**.



37

Players may distribute themselves on the squares marked B (for bedroll). Any former players who have become snow vampires should place themselves anywhere they wish as long as each snow vampire is within two squares of one of the players.

Vampirised players do *not* have the characteristics and powers they possessed when alive. A snow vampire is merely an Undead spirit which has taken over a mortal body; the person's former skills, spells, etc, cannot be used. However, if a player possessed a magic item such as an enchanted sword or a scroll, he or she can still use this as a vampire.



Snow Vampire(s)

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 1 Die +3
Psychic Ability: 7 Awareness: 8
Armour Rating: as worn when alive
Endurance: 25 each

If the battle ends in victory for the vampire(s), the adventure is at an end. If the remaining players win, turn to **228**.

38

It snarls and cowers back as soon as you present the crucifix. Like all soulless things, it cannot abide the sight of a holy relic. It grovels on its knees, scrabbling at the hard-packed snow like a cornered animal. Then it looks up at you with a desperate gleam in its eye. In the familiar voice of your old comrade it says: 'My friend . . . wait . . .'

You cannot show mercy to this ungodly thing. You press the crucifix to its blood-red brow. Its mouth gapes, and it gives vent to a final, hideous shriek that would strike terror into the bravest heart.

You crouch by the motionless corpse of your lost comrade until dawn. The flesh has turned pale, and the fangs have vanished from the now-smiling mouth. You leave the crucifix on the body (you may strip off any other weapons or equipment the player possessed) and bury it in a snow-drift.

You have little stomach for breakfast, but if you have rations then you should eat all the same. Any player who does not loses one Endurance point.

Turn to **422**.

39

As you stand looking dumbfounded at the hole in the floor through which your comrade(s) fell, four

more arrows fly from the slits. Distribute these shots evenly between any players left. Each of the arrows does one Die damage, with armour protecting as normal. You realise that you have no alternative but to throw yourself down the chute in the floor below you. You do so as another volley of arrows flies through the air where you would have been standing.

Turn to **213**.

40

You enter the transept. The walls here are fashioned from skeletal hands that reach out into the room as though in a frozen gesture of supplication. A sense of foreboding almost overwhelms you.

If an Enchanter wishes to cast Prediction before the party proceeds, turn to **305**. If you wish to advance regardless of your foreboding, turn to **160**. If you wish to leave the transept and the cathedral, retracing your steps, turn to **547**.

41

(SAGE) The creature reaches out its skeletal arms towards you as it closes with you. Suddenly it stumbles and falls to the ground centimetres from your feet. You release your mind from the vice of concentration in which you had placed it and look down at the remains of the thing.

Turn to **303**.

42

(ENCHANTER) Some instinct makes you lift the gems to your eyes and, holding them in place by squinting, you can now see the fluid, aerial bodies of the Sylphs in front of you. Turn to **100** for the fight, but make your *fight* rolls on the usual two Dice rather than on the three Dice mentioned there, as the Sylphs are no longer invisible to you.

43

(SAGE) You try to concentrate your mind again on the matter in front of you, but in dismissing the strange sights and sounds you were receiving a minute ago it would seem that you have also dismissed your ability to gain Paranormal Sight.

Turn to **256**.

44

'I will take the scabbard of the Blood Sword now,' he says. He holds out his hands.

If you want to give him the scabbard, turn to **419**.
If you want to attack him, turn to **522**.

45

You follow your comrade's bier at a short distance. Soon the procession comes to a huge cathedral-like structure, its steeples soaring into the night air. With a gasp you realise that it is made entirely of bone. The steeples are cones of human skulls, the buttresses human thigh-bones and the walls are pulverised fragments of rib-cages and arms. As you enter the darkness, you smell a pungent incense mingling with the powerful scent of decay. In front of you the pallbearers' trailing robes disturb layers of dust as they advance towards the altar at the end of the nave and set down the bier. Apart from the sickly starlight that filters through the high windows above the nave, the only other source of illumination is the blue light of the processional candles and a dull glow from up in the rafters of human bones. Peering up, you see a glimmering Faltnyn attached to a cross of bone hanging upside-down inside an iron cage.

When your eyes return to the altar, you see one of the pallbearers fetch a tarnished silver falchion from

a recess by the altar and place it across the breast of your motionless comrade.

What do you want to do now? If you want to attack the pallbearers, turn to **202**. If you wish to leave and return the way you have come, turn to **152**. If you would like to use an item, turn to **448**. If you want to wait and see what happens, turn to **567**.

46

Howling voicelessly, they circle you. One glance into their eyes tells you that your comrades are lost - these are just macabre monsters that intend to drain your life-blood if they can!

If there is a Sage who wishes to try something, turn to **206**. If you fight them, turn to **37**. If you think you may have an item that will prove useful, turn to **376**.

47

(ENCHANTER) You decide to try a Prediction spell. The skein of the present suddenly separates and blows away as a cobweb would if suddenly disturbed by a sharp gust of wind. *[Before you, you see the same forest clearing in which you stand. But now it is night and the scene is full of running figures and the carnage of battle. You see mutilated corpses lying on the ground as their killers stand over them repeatedly stabbing with wickedly curved assassins' knives. You realise with a start that the victims of this bloody assault are the foresters, and - or is it your imagination? - do you fancy that you see among the ghastly corpses one wearing a cape that resembles your own .. ?]* Suddenly it seems that a dark curtain is drawn over the vision, and you find yourself back in the present, the orange glow of the camp fire in your eyes.

Turn to **468**.

48

She is barely strong enough to speak, but her mind is lucid. 'I am from Wyrd,' she says in a small voice. 'I tried to escape, along with my two brothers, for our family had suffered too long under the Warlock-King's tyranny. But the Eislaken rose up to slay my brothers, as it slays ... all who try ... to flee . . .'

Her voice begins to trail off. You realise she is going into shock, a coma from which she will never awaken. She lost too much body-heat before you found her, and no ministrations of yours can save her now.

Will you ask her a question: 'What is the Eislaken?' (turn to **135**), 'What is the source of the Warlock-King's power?' (turn to **544**), 'How can the Warlock-King be defeated?' (turn to **284**) or will you let her die in peace (turn to **59**)?

49

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

A host of gore-spattered claymores swirl out of the red orb. As they appear they are no bigger than needles, but they have enlarged to full size within seconds. For a heartbeat they hang in the air, like the bristling weapons of Berserkers searching for a foe. Then they sweep forwards . . .

If you are in combat, or about to enter combat, the claymores scythe down and inflict a total of 1 Die x 1 Die on your opponent(s) before vanishing.

If you are not in combat, the claymores direct their strikes at you.

Damage inflicted by the claymores is distributed evenly among possible targets (rounding fractions up), and then each person struck gets to subtract his or her Armour Rating from the wound he or she has

to take. For example, if the damage roll were 3x5 then a total of fifteen Endurance points would be inflicted. Suppose these were to be taken by both a Sage (Armour Rating two,) and a Warrior (Armour Rating three). The former would lose six Endurance, the latter five.

The orb vanishes. If you survive, return to the entry you were reading before.

50

Your one-time companion is truly dead this time. If you have an item that can resurrect him, you may use it at this juncture. If not, you may say a short prayer over his body and take any items that he has which you want. Examine his Character Sheet to see what he had. You also discover a large skull-amulet around the corpse's neck. Mark it down if you wish to take it, then turn to **353**.

51

(TRICKSTER) You quickly scale the wall of the cathedral, there being plenty of foot and hand-holds in the protruding bones. When you are level with the Faltyn's cage, you brace your legs and leap out. Roll Awareness or less on two Dice.

If you make the roll, you have succeeded in grabbing the cage. Eventually you manage to disengage the Faltyn from the pins that hold it to its crucifix. Once you have done so it lowers you to the ground. Turn to **568**.

If you miss your roll you fall and take one Die damage (from which armour does not protect you). You feel disinclined to try again, so return to **314** if another player wishes to have a go at rescuing the Faltyn or to **221** if everyone who wants to has tried and failed.

52

What item do you want to use? The orb of fire (turn to **324**), an amber tinderbox (turn to **77**) or a pinch of silver dust (turn to **64**)?

If you do not have any of these items, or do not wish to use them, you hurry in the opposite direction to the route the procession was taking; turn to **152**.

53

You let go of the scabbard. Its jewels flash in the cold light as it drops, tumbling down into the infinity of blue. The Warlock-King utters a harsh command, and a bloated spider-thing appears at the foot of his throne. It drops swiftly on its web, somehow overtaking the scabbard's descent and seizing it in its many slender legs.

'Normally the act of relinquishing the scabbard would leave you defenceless against the five True Magi,' says the Warlock-King as the spider returns to him. 'But even their power cannot reach into the Dream of Wyrd. Here, I am the absolute monarch - as you shall learn.'

Seizing the scabbard, he causes the metallic web to which you are dinging to vanish. You are left to plummet downwards in the never-ending nightmare he has fashioned for you . . .



54

If you bought Screebo the raven, note who is his



new owner. The bird does not count as an encumbrance item as he will follow you around if he is not carried.

If you haven't already done so, you may now join the traders by the bar by turning to **358**. Or you may look for the landlord and try to rent a room at the inn; turn to **515**.

55

The violet-cloaked man gives you a rather wintry smile. "This will never do," he says with quiet menace. 'Augustus of Vantery is not one who can take no for an answer.'

He takes a bottle from his belt and pours its sulphureous contents into the sea, shrieking: '*Latet Mors in gurgite vasto!*' Immediately a white frothing disturbs the surface of the sea. The waters seethe and churn as a vast wave rises up to form a huge fist. It gathers size as it rolls towards the ship, and soon it is higher than the mast. The sailors cower in dread. The captain crosses himself and murmurs: 'We are doomed; it will smash us to flotsam.'

'Unless I choose to save you!' snaps Augustus. 'Come now, I will call off the Undine if you will just do one thing. To save yourselves, you must fling the scabbard of the Blood Sword into the sea.'

If you do as he says, turn to **419**. If you refuse to do it, turn to **439**.

56

Your tactics seem effective and the Elf-Lord's pieces gradually fall to your advance - right up until the moment when, in one sweeping move, he takes all your counters at once with his last remaining brevet-piece! You stare at the board in stunned amazement. How could you have been so foolish as

to line up your pieces for him to decimate them like that? Was he only toying with you all along?

He gets up. 'The game is ended, and you have lost. Return to your mortal vale.'

Will you go, as he says? If so, it is the end of your quest. But you did agree to decide the issue on the basis of the chequers game, and he did beat you ...

You must decide whether to end your quest here, in failure, or to defy the Elf-Lord. If you choose the latter, turn to **211**.

57

(SLEEPING PLAYER(S)) A noise disturbs your fitful slumber, a noise like the growl of a rabid animal. You are instantly awake and alert. A ruddy face, distorted by blood lust, is pressed close to yours in the darkness. The long white fangs are those of a snow vampire, but the features are those of your comrade!

You jump to your feet. You must put aside all thoughts of this monster being your friend. He is dead. When a mortal dies and joins the ranks of the Undead, all that is left is a soulless husk driven by the need for warm life-blood!

If you are confronted by a single vampire, turn to **8**. If more than one other player has become Undead, turn to **46**.

58

The Faltyn speaks, for the first time in your experience of dealing with these creatures, with a kind of respect in its high sibilant voice: *'Your largess will not go unrewarded,'* it says. *'First, when you cross the room step only on the black squares. Of the five items you find in the chest, it is best to take the orb of fire. When activated, this item will grow rapidly into a ball of white heat that no earthly force can quench. Use it wisely.'* So saying, the

Faltyn vanishes. Following its advice, you cross the floor safely and open the chest.

Turn to **294**.

59

Her eyes close as death comes for her at last. It is the very moment of sunset. You are sorry for her, but you have done all you can and now you must get to the coast while you still have the twilight to see by. If you wish to take the fur cloak and/or gloves from the body, you can do so.

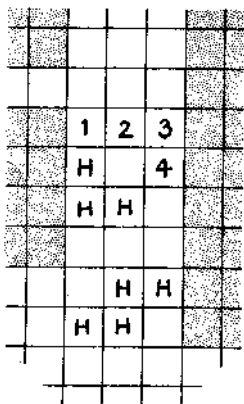
Turn to **365**.

60

If *all* the players elected to remain on the slab, turn to **183**. If some players jumped off and others stayed on, turn to **385**. If *all* players jumped off, turn to **489**.

61

The unending tangle of thorns stretches on and on. You dash madly with the slavering Frost Hounds right behind you. The thorns seem to reach out, snagging your clothing, scratching your skin in an effort to impede you. Each gulp of cold night air burns your lungs. Your limbs tremble with fatigue. At last you have no choice - you turn to face your pursuers.



Frost Hounds

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Fighting Prowess: 8 | Damage per blow: 2 Dice+1 | |
| Psychic Ability: 9 | Awareness: 9 | |
| Armour Rating: 0 | | |
| Endurance: | <i>first</i> 25 | <i>fifth</i> 25 |
| | <i>second</i> 25 | <i>sixth</i> 25 |
| | <i>third</i> 25 | <i>seventh</i> 25 |
| | <i>fourth</i> 25 | |

You have no energy left to *flee*. If you survive, turn to **66**.

62

You are lying on grass beside a lake. You sit up and look around. The lake looks disturbingly familiar - very like the one on which the Palace of Eternal Dusk was built. But there is no sign of that proud edifice, only a broken and weathered ruin overgrown with a profusion of ivy. And the lake you saw earlier was stagnant and foul. This one is clear and fresh; it sparkles in the sunlight . . .

But if this *is* somehow the same lake, then behind you should be . . . You turn, expecting to find the sombre Forest of Thorns, but the soaring pines bear no resemblance to those evil briars.

A shadow falls upon you in the warm sun. You jump to your feet, ready for combat, but it is not Gristun the Guardian-Beast this time. A woman with a gentle smile and wise eyes stands before you, leading a dazed old man by the hand. She reaches out to take something from around his neck, and offers this to you. You look down at the object - it is the Blood Sword hilt.

You start to thank her, but she and the old man are already walking away across the lush grass. He stares at her as though befuddled at first, but then she says something and you hear him break into delighted laughter.

Your quest for the hilt now successfully completed, surviving players can divide equally among them an award of a thousand experience points. Then turn to **570**.

63

(TRICKSTER) Suddenly you realise what has been worrying you. The grass and moss of the forest floor don't grow at all on the side of the cottage. You look around the bottom edge of the building; it seems that the cottage could have dropped here out of the sky but a minute before. You decide to do a bit of investigation. Hanging your cloak on a stout branch that you find lying nearby, then placing your hat over this, you clutch the other end of the branch and thrust your construction through the doorway of the building. Anyone within the cottage will be able to see only the realistic outline of a figure standing silhouetted by the Blue Moon behind.

'What is this?' hisses a voice from within. 'Why do you not fall into the pit, mortal?' You hear a dry cracking sound, as of bones creaking in movement, and you sense something lunging into the decoy you have made and passing right through it. You hear a bony wail and then a strange splintering sound. Suddenly the cottage disappears altogether and you find yourself standing on the edge of a steep-sided pit. At the bottom you see the skeletal form of the Stalker thrashing about trying to disentangle itself from a stake that has gone right through its rib-cage. It has fallen into the very pit, previously covered by its illusion spell, that it intended for you.

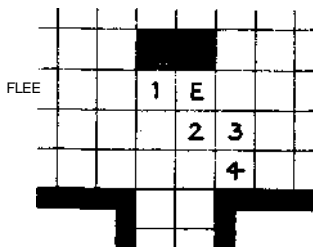
Turn to **258**.

64

You lunge forwards and scatter the dust in the air

over the pallbearers' heads. They halt, but do not turn to face you. There is a howl of wind, unnerving in the hitherto dead silence of the chamber.

With a harsh noise, like two swords dashing, the Undead executioner who took your companion appears astride the bier. His heavy scythe is in his hands as he leaps down to confront you. You must fight him for the body and soul of your friend.



Executioner

Fighting Prowess: 9

Damage per blow: 4 Dice+1

Psychic Ability: 9

Awareness: 8

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 50

If *you flee*, turn to **152**. If you win, turn to **387**.

65

Time passes and you watch the frozen seascape slide majestically past far below. Hearing Augustus mutter something under his breath, you look down to see a massive rime-encrusted pinnacle of rock which projects up from the frozen surface of the sea. Atop it, its white spires dazzlingly reflecting the sunlight, stands a castle. The carpet begins to descend towards this, and as you near it the brilliant reflection from its walls becomes almost blinding.

Augustus turns to you. 'Enough foolery. It is time for me to explain matters to you. I serve the True

Magus Uru, who has attained godhood as White Light. The jewelled scabbard you bear is his, and you must now hand it over to me. If you refuse...' He lets his voice trail off as he glances significantly down to the pack-ice below.

If you part with the scabbard as he demands, turn to **419**. If you refuse, turn to **504**.

66

You stumble on until it seems that only the numbing cold in your legs keeps them from buckling under you. Your lips are stiff, stung to soreness by the freezing air. Your eyes feel heavy in their sockets.

Should it not be dawn by now? There is only a grey, indeterminate half-light.

Turn to **104**.

67

Something wakes you from your deep sleep. You look around the clearing but cannot see your comrade. Suddenly something falls against you from behind and you twirl around, only to find the sightless eyes of your friend staring you in the face. As you watch, his flesh becomes parchment grey and crumbles to dust, and you are left with just two handfuls of fine grey powder in your hands. Right in front of you, behind where your comrade was standing, is the skeletal form of the Stalker.

Turn to **521**.

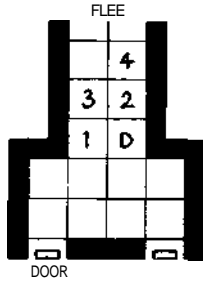
68

(ENCHANTER) Prepare your spell. As you do so, the skeletal being turns its unliving gaze towards you as if it suddenly senses your presence.

If you wish to abort your spell and *flee*, turn to **492**. If you wish to continue to prepare your spell, turn to **86**.

69

Though small, the demon is far faster and stronger than you would have thought. Varadaxor hangs back so that you have room to fight it.



Demon

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice*
Psychic Ability: 10 Awareness: 9
Armour Rating: 2
Endurance: 30

*Note: Its barbed tail is slick with poison. Anyone wounded must roll one Die, and on a roll of one he or she loses an additional four Dice Endurance as the poison enters the bloodstream.

If you win, turn to **462**. If you *flee*, turn to **406**.

70

(ENCHANTER) Reluctantly it rematerialises again, unable to resist your sorcery. 'Explain your words!' you demand hurriedly, ever-mindful of the plummeting flare. [*The flare is sent by the Blue Moon!*] it cries. *You have angered one of the dead magi who dwell in the skies. Destroy his servant before it gathers power from the ancient earth and stones of this land!*]. Now the Faltyn will wait no longer and vanishes, although you have many questions you would like to ask it.

Suddenly, with a high-pitched whistle the flare crashes through the trees at the edge of the clearing and explodes in a shower of blue sparks at its centre.

Turn to **180**.

71

You utter a lusty battle-cry and charge forwards together, intent on the destruction of your giant foe. Thanatos hefts his mighty weapon and displays the jagged teeth that run along its cutting edge. 'Whether I stand against one or many, the outcome is as sure,' he bellows.

| | | | | | |
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Thanatos the Giant

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 4 Dice

Psychic Ability: 8

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 45

If you *flee* back into the Leaves of Remembrance, turn to **367**. If you slay Thanatos, turn to **111**.

72

You turn your back on the captain indignantly: 'Pah!' you snort. 'It is not seemly for persons of good birth to tether themselves to the rowing-benches like low cattle. There are doubtless other ways to reach the shores of Wyrd. Good day!'

As you leave the quay, a thin man in a violet cloak steps up to you and greets you. 'I am Master Augustus of Vantery,' he says, 'a mage of some

renown. I couldn't help overhearing your conversation with the captain just now. The journey to Wyrd is not lightly undertaken, but if you're determined to go then it is in my power to make it less arduous.' As he speaks, he fingers a white bead that hangs by a thong at his throat.

If you ask him to continue with what he is saying, turn to **166**. Otherwise, your only other option for gaining passage is by going up to one of the whaling ships; turn to **417**.

73

The wolves lie dead at your feet along with the merchants who served them. As you watch, the wolves start to revert to human form, and you now see that they were the two men who were playing chequers earlier. No foresters are left in the clearing: either they are all slain or they have all fled into the woods.

You notice that one of the werewolves had one of its paws severed during the fight, and that this has not returned to human form. You may take the wolf's paw (mark it down on your Character Sheet).

Now turn to **85**.

74

(WARRIOR) The tide of carnage rushes down towards you, but you are determined that it will not sweep you aside like a weakling. You crouch, seizing the edge of the bridge with your steel-hard fingers. Just before the torrent hits you, you cover your head with your cloak. You are buffeted by bones, and the wave of blood is like an ogre's grip trying to pull you from the bridge.

You must roll equal to or under your current Endurance on three Dice to stand firm. If you

succeed, the torrent passes, to leave you standing rock solid upon the bridge. But fail the roll and you are swept to your death . . .

Turn to **430**.



75

You push open the heavy door of the Fimbulwinter Inn, grateful for the warmth that envelops you and quickly drives the chill from your bones. The common room is almost deserted, but the landlord - a short, thick-set man with a black beard - greets you cheerily.

'There is a crackling good fire in the hearth,' he booms. 'Sit you down. I will briefly describe the tariff of this establishment. For a gold piece you may purchase supper - a small sum for the hot spiced ale, root cakes and Mercanian black pudding for which the Fimbulwinter is famed! We have private rooms at the moment, for commerce is slack now with winter coming on. A room costs one gold piece, or you may sleep on the floor here in the common room for nothing.'

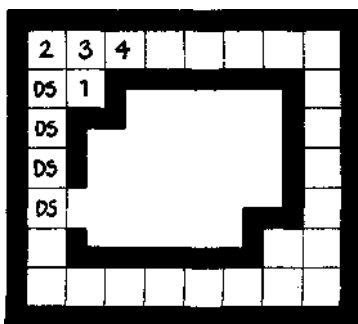
Decide whether you wish to have supper and/or a room, and cross off the appropriate sum.

If you decide to have supper, turn to **531**. If not, turn to **537**.

76

Augustus takes a step back when he sees your look

of defiant fury. He is more used to dealing with people whom he can cow with his sorcery. He glances at the servitors, then frantically waves them forwards to attack.



Demon Servitors

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

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 5

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: *first* 8 *third* 8

second 8 *fourth* 8

Here in Augustus's isolated tower you really have nowhere to flee. If you kill his servitors, turn to **26**.

77

You strike a spark from the tinderbox, and immediately a shoot of sparks falls in a torrent about the bier, miraculously igniting the lanterns. The pallbearers (if you haven't slain them already) flee in terror.

To your surprise you see your friend suddenly sit up on the bier and throw aside the shroud covering him. Return his Character Sheet to him. Because he has faced death and triumphed, he is no longer afraid of it, and therefore has become fearless in

combat. He increases permanently his Fighting Prowess score by one.

A deathly shriek echoes from the darkness ahead. Possibly something is angered by the delay of the funeral cortege. You decide to go the other way.

Turn to **547**.

78

You murmur the word of power that energises the orb. It grows hot immediately, forcing you to drop it at your feet to avoid a serious burn. It sizzles as it hits the ice, but even the arctic cold cannot cool its fire. White flames envelop it as it grows to incandescent heat, throwing up a billowing cloud of steam from the pack-ice. For a few moments, wrapped in your thick clothes, you experience a wave of sweltering near-tropical heat. The huge red eye under you blinks uncomprehendingly as the orb sinks through the melting ice towards it . . .

An inhuman scream of agony splits the air, the bubbling screech of the blinded monster. The tentacles thrash madly like corn in a storm. You make a dash for the coast as the ice quakes and cracks beneath you. Glancing back, you see that the monster has broken through the ice and pulled its gigantic body half out of the water, squirming blindly in unendurable pain. You have no pity to spare for a creature such as that, but at least you do not bother to gloat over its throes. Turning your back on it, you walk on to the shore.

Turn to **117**.

79

You stroll up to the puppeteer, who greets you with such ingenuous good cheer that you believe she must be a simpleton.

'Is the play over?' you ask, for want of anything better to say.

She smiles at you as she puts the tiny mannikins into their box. 'Oh no,' she replies. 'It isn't over yet.'

You are just considering this statement, which seems full of portent, when she adds: 'There are shows here every day at dawn, noon and dusk.'

She has folded the booth up into a haversack almost as big as she is. You help her get it on to her back, then watch her hobble away down the street.

'A strange woman,' you think as you set off to look around the town.

Turn to **306**.

80

You quickly stretch out on the freshly laundered sheets on the bed of your room and are soon in a deep and dreamless sleep. Your sleep gives you back half your rank in Endurance points (halves round up). Once you have slept, you return to the main common room where a roast lamb is turning on the spit over the fire. You eat your share and recover a further one Endurance if you are still wounded after your sleep.

Turn to **245**.

81

You shelter in the lee of a hill for the night. It gives some cover from the harsh wind blowing down from the north, and also shields the light of your camp fire from the village. You have decided it is best to avoid attracting any attention.

Sleep is uncomfortable and troubled by dreams that you cannot quite remember when you wake. You take breakfast with a vague sense of unease gnawing at your thoughts. Any player with a

bedroll regains one lost Endurance point for the night's rest; a player without a bedroll *loses* one Endurance point. If you eat breakfast, remember to cross off one day's rations; this also restores one Endurance point to anyone wounded.

Turn to **520**.

82

(ENCHANTER) The Sylphs move forwards to attack you as you prepare your spell. Turn to 100 for the fight: the spell will have its customary effect if and when you cast it.

83

You lose sight of the priests as you push through the crowded throng at the bar towards them. When you reach them finally you find that there is no sign of the old man you saw sitting with them earlier. You now see that the priests wear flesh-tinted lacquer masks. 'Come sit with us,' says one of them, his voice muffled by the mask in front of his mouth. He sweeps their pet raven, a mangy irascible creature, from a bench at the head of the table. The bird screeches fiercely and struts to and fro underneath the table. You seat yourself, and after a moment's silence the priests start speaking to you, one after the other.

'North and east of here lies the kingdom of Wyrd,' says the first.

'Across the ice that closes from the north with the coming of winter,' murmurs another. 'An arduous journey.'

'No boat can take you there, nor would any captain sail to the shores of Wyrd.'

The fourth priest sighs and for a moment there is a silent pause. He looks sadly at the bird strutting

up and down underneath the table: 'Will you buy our old raven, Screebo? We want only one gold piece for him.'

If you want to buy the raven, pay the gold piece. The priests don't have anything more to say to you so you bid them farewell. Now turn to **54**.

84

You shake your head and look at the baby. 'It is a tragedy that he should die so young,' you murmur. 'Life is not just.'

Shan'hans nods. "This applies particularly to life in our country,' he says. 'Death here, though an occasion for sadness, is also a god-given boon.'

The mood of the peasants is understandably morose. After a while, Shan'hans' wife brings you a pile of hides. 'Sleep here by the fire,' she says. 'No nightmares tonight, because of the Seer.'

You start to ponder her words as you settle down for the night. In the event, your sleep is free from dreams of any sort. You wake in the morning invigorated and alert. Each wounded player regains Endurance points equal to half his or her rank (rounding up), plus one Endurance for the nourishing pottage and garlic buns you are given for breakfast.

It is time for you to be on your way. You thank Shan'hans and the villagers for their hospitality, and bid them farewell. Stepping out into the crisp morning air, you slowly trudge through the snow away from the village.

Turn to **520**.

85

The camp site is strewn about with the corpses and severed limbs of those slain in the combat. All the foresters and merchants are dead or have fled into

the woods. You search the camp thoroughly, discovering a scattering of coins that amounts to forty-five gold pieces. There is the board and pieces used in the game of Krarthian chequers, too. You also find a silver wolf's-head clasp on one of the chequers players' cloaks. Take which items you wish and mark everything down on your Character Sheet(s). Suddenly you hear a dull groan coming from the other side of the camp fire. Investigating the sound you find the lyrist lying on his side, trying to staunch the tide of blood that pours from a wound in his chest. He is still alive, but only just. . .

Turn to **335**.

86

(ENCHANTER) Guided by some supernatural power, the creature lopes directly towards where you crouch in the shadows. You have three Rounds in which to cast your spell, then it will have reached you. It has a Psychic Ability of six, an Armour Rating of one, and an Endurance of thirty.

If it reaches you, turn to **276**. If you Enthral it, turn to **248**. If you destroy it, turn to **303**.

87

You continue skipping from one stepping-stone to another. Roll equal to or under your Awareness on two Dice. If you make it, you have reached the other side of the bridge and are safe. If you fail, your foot vainly tries to find a solid surface where there is now only air and you plummet to your death.

If there is anyone else to cross, turn to **240**. If all surviving players are across, turn to **35**.

88

The door shuts with a barely audible click. Sudden-

ly a deep booming laugh rings out behind you. Whirling around, you see a man's face floating in the air. Thin lipped and petulant, he snarls: 'Afraid of the demon outside? Why, I had its wings clipped - the true terror lurks *here!*'

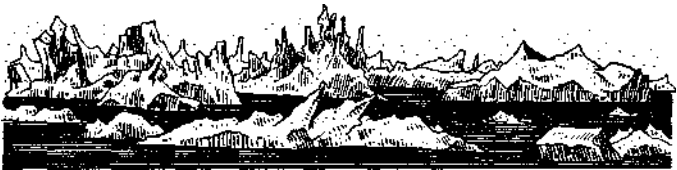
The face vanishes and now you see a horde of scorpion-like beasts as large as wolves scuttling along the gallery towards you.

Turn to **95**.

89

Time has run out. The watery fist looms above the ship, which seems no more than frail driftwood before a creature of such immense power.

If there is a Warrior in the party, turn to 283. If there is no Warrior, it is too late for anything except a brief muttered prayer - then the Elemental smashes down, sinking the ship, and you soon freeze to death in the icy water.



90

The spark you strike from the tinderbox leaps out in a long streamer of fiery light, splitting to ignite all four lanterns. A bright white light floods out. If you have not already dealt with the pallbearers, they now scatter in terror.

The shroud flutters aside and the figure on the bier arises. Your double. You watch him approach with sword-arm raised to strike. You are staring straight into your own calm, impassive face.

If you put up your own weapon to fend off the blow, turn to **456**. If you stand still and wait for it to strike, turn to **375**.

91

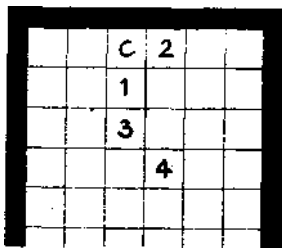
You awaken lethargically to find the morning heavy and grey. If you have rations, then you may take breakfast. Each player who eats must cross off one day's rations. Any player who does not have breakfast loses one Endurance point.

You pack up the camp and then, turning your eyes to the north-east, you set out on the long journey to Wyrd.

Turn to **422**.

92

The Chieftain lifts his axe above his head and utters a gust of battle-crazed laughter. The other barbarians begin to chant and bang the tables with their huge fists. They are eager to see blood spilled - your blood.



Chieftain

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice+1
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
Armour Rating: 1
Endurance: 30

If you kill him, turn to **451**. If you bring him under Servile Enthralment, turn to **243**.

93

(ENCHANTER) The various levels of Augustus's tower are just close enough together for you to use the spell of Immediate Deliverance to teleport between them. The absence of stairs poses no problem. You - and your companions, if you are not alone - may explore the tower at whim.

Turn to **470**.

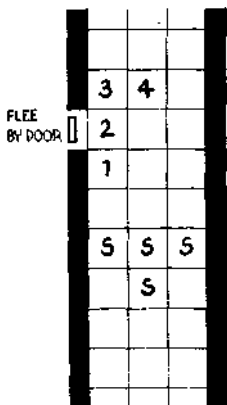
94

(SAGE) You step off from the side of the cliff . . .

You open your eyes and find that you are floating gently downwards. You soon come to a soft landing on the pack-ice below. If you are alone, turn to 344. If there are other members of your party yet to get down, turn to **498**.

95

These arthropodal monsters must be among the deadliest opponents you have ever faced. They are slow and cumbersome, but their chitinous armour is like segments of iron and their stings carry acidic venom.



Scorpions

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: 3 Dice

Psychic Ability: 7 Awareness: 6

Armour Rating: 4

Endurance: *first* 18 *third* 18

second 18 *fourth* 18

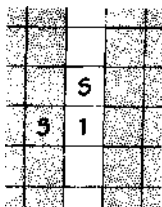
If you *flee* out into the courtyard, turn to **272**. If you kill the monsters, turn to **249**.

96

The hall is shrouded in silence and gloom once more. You approach the bier with its unlit lanterns standing sentinel at each of its corners. The body of your former companion is stiff and cold. You may say a prayer over the body, or you may wish to resurrect him (assuming you have an item which permits this). You may take any items from the body if you don't resurrect it and then hurry on your way; turn to **152**. If you wish to use an item, turn to **52**.

97

(SAGE) Your eyes are dearly of no use to you in this situation. Better to fall back on instinct and intuition. When you parry the first halberd-strike with your staff, you know you have made the right choice.



RETREAT

Sylphs

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 1 Die+3

Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 8
Armour Rating: 0
Endurance: *first* 14 *second* 14

You cannot advance along the bridge because one of the Sylphs blocks your way. If you retreat, turn to **226** and make another choice. If you slay them both you can proceed; turn to **350**.

98

(FIRST PLAYER IN BATTLE ORDER) As you step on to the white square there is a sudden flash of blinding white light and the smell of heavily charred flesh. To your horror you realise that it is your own burning flesh that you smell. You have taken a four Dice Endurance wound from which armour gives no protection. If you die, pass this book to the next player in the battle order (if there is one).

Now that you have seen that the white squares are dangerous, there is no difficulty in avoiding them and making your way over the black squares to the plinth. Once you have got there you open the chest.

Turn to **294**.

99

The Elf-Lord ponders your suggestion. Like most creatures of faerie, Elves find it difficult to resist a challenge, whether to a game, a battle or a riddling contest. At last he reaches his decision. Still watching you, he calls to his warriors: 'Bring a board! Fetch playing-pieces! Mortal shall duel with faerie, then, across the chequered squares.'

One of the Elves lopes off into the forest, returning within a few minutes with a chequers set. He places it down, and you and the Elf-Lord sit down on either side of the board.

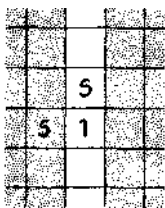
The Elf-Lord takes the white pieces, to which he is entitled as the challenged player, then considers his first move.

Decide who is playing against him. If it is a Trickster who wishes to try cheating, turn to **134**. If you decide to play the game fair and square (only a Trickster has the option to cheat!), turn to **434**.

100

This is not going to be an easy fight because you cannot see your opponents. You can see their heavy pole-arms well enough, though - and feel them, too!

You must make *fight* rolls on *three* Dice against these invisible beings.



RETREAT

Sylphs

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 1 Die+3
Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 8
Armour Rating: 0
Endurance: *first* 14 *second* 14

You cannot advance along the bridge because one of the Sylphs blocks your way. If you retreat, turn to **226** and make another choice. If you slay them both you can proceed; turn to **350**.

101

(SAGE) You unstopper the flask of milk and use it to douse the flame. The room is cast into darkness,

dispelling the hard shadows. Thwarted, the sinuous tendrils sink back into the stone of the dais.

Turn to **145**.

102

Silence returns to the hall. All that remains of the cowed figures are empty robes and the spluttering blue candles. You step up to the bier and have the eerie experience of staring straight into your own dead face. Or so it seems.

Somehow you have an overpowering feeling that you should light the lanterns at each corner of the bier. For this you could use the orb of fire (turn to **553**), an amber tinderbox (turn to **90**) or one of the blue candles (turn to **485**). If you decide to use none of these items, you can continue on your quest (turn to **547**).

103

The landlord immediately loses his friendly attitude towards you when he sees your lack of money. He grumpily points out a barn in which you can sleep. Anyone sleeping in the barn who is wounded will recover one Endurance.

Turn to **245**.

104

The cursed forest seems to stretch on without limit. Bristling briars hang all around, resembling the poisoned black knives of a thousand skulking assassins. The snow has a stark grin, the wind stings you with its merciless stroking. The sky is the colour of lead.

You lose all sense of the passage of time. You cannot tell if you have been travelling for hours or for days. You are walking as in a dream, weary and

only half-conscious of your changeless surroundings ...

Suddenly you become aware that you have left the Forest of Thorns behind you. You are walking across a barren moor sprinkled with snow towards a wide lake ringed by strange hunched crags. The water glistens in the dreary twilight. Looking back you see the edge of the swart, thorny forest you have traversed. Your journey through it seems faintly unreal now, like a dream looked back upon after waking or like the waking world glimpsed in dreams.

Your gaze drops to the snow behind you. It is unblemished, showing no sign of tracks leading from the forest's edge. You leave no footprints where you walk.

Turn to **168**.

105

(SAGE) In the flickering movements of the tendrils you recognise the arcane ritual used to summon Umborus the Dark, a shadow-demon of incalculable power. The shadows that are now flitting about the room will soon coalesce and form his mortal body. You must somehow disrupt the ritual before he appears, but how?

If you want to use the orb of fire, turn to **495**. If you wish to use a flask of milk, turn to **101**. If you have neither, then there is nothing you can do to stop the ritual; turn to **380**.

106

(SAGE) You use your ESP. [*You are surprised to discover that the merchants are still awake. Although they are pretending to be asleep, their minds seem to be alive with thoughts - apparently of a particularly stirring and*

emotive nature. You are now beginning to have doubts whether they are in fact merchants at all]

Turn to **468**.

107

(WARRIOR) You have no innate advantages that will help you in this situation, so gathering your courage you leap on to the first stepping-stone and leap frantically from that to the next one as the first disappears. Incredibly, you have not fallen by the time you have reached the middle of the bridge. Now you are surrounded by the flying crystal skulls that try to buffet you off the bridge.

If you want to stand your ground and smash them out of the air, turn to **476**. If you decide to ignore them and continue your mad dash for the gate-tower, turn to **87**.

108

You look in horror as the grey dust spills from the woman's head over the floor. Varadaxor manages a smile, however: 'Now my brothers' souls may rest in peace,' he says, spitting for emphasis into the pile of dust.

If you wish to leave the room now, turn to 406. If you would like to search it, despite the ominous grey dust, turn to **311**.

109

You have a feeling you should try to light the four lanterns on the bier. Perhaps some form of sympathetic magic will be able to rekindle the corpse's vital spark? But then you wonder whether you really want to raise up your *doppelganger* . . .

You may try to use an orb of fire (turn to **553**) or an amber tinderbox (turn to **90**) to light the lanterns if

you wish. If you don't have either of these items, or don't want to use them, go back to **426** and choose again.

110

(SAGE) You cannot locate the source of the power that the skeletal being possesses and now it turns towards you as if it has sensed your mental powers being concentrated on it. Its blue eyes lock on to yours and it stalks forwards.

You may *either flee* (turn to **492**) *or fight* (turn to **276**).

111

Stepping over Thanatos's body, you take a look at the chamber he was guarding. It is just a bare circular room, not very large, illuminated by a lamp that hangs from the vaulted roof. A single item stands in the centre of the floor, but when you step forwards to investigate you see that it is an extraordinary item indeed: the proud battle-standard of the First Legion of Imperial Selentium. It must be almost a thousand years old, and an object of veneration throughout the civilised world. Dazed, you reach out and take it. You can almost imagine the ghosts of previous wielders of this battle-standard speaking to you, imparting the dauntless wisdom of a bygone age . . .

The battle-standard gives you the spirit to face the horrors of the transept again, but when you retrace your steps you find they have all vanished. Returning to the echoing nave, you stride to the doors of the cathedral of death and leave.

Turn to **547**.

112

(TRICKSTER) You swiftly analyse the situation and,

with a flash of inspiration, whip off your cloak and loop it around the bottom of the narrow bridge. Grabbing hold of both ends you swing over the side and hang there as the torrent passes harmlessly overhead. Although you have been spattered by gore, you are otherwise unharmed and you haul yourself up on to the surface of the bridge.

Turn to **430**.

113

You drift for hours. At last, late in the afternoon, a shaft of amber sunlight breaks through the iron-grey clouds and shows you a line of cliffs to the west. Against them, the red flash of a merchantman's sails blazes like blood. Attracted by your shouts, the merchantman changes course and is soon close enough for you to read the name painted on her bows: the *Madonna*. Stalwart deckhands with honest, smiling faces help you aboard.

The captain is a well-dressed and obviously cultured merchant from Ferromaine. When you have told your story he nods sagely. 'Alas, all whaling men are scurvy blackguards. Those of Krarth doubly so, for they know nothing of the True Faith. I would not command a ship in these waters given the choice, but I am on a mission to Dourhaven, and the northern route by way of the Rymchaeld Ocean is closed by arctic ice this late in the year.'

Turn to **565**.

114

(ENCHANTER) The tinkling of bells announces the arrival of another Faltyn by your side. It surveys the scene and its brother Faltyn with some distaste: 'I shall take an item for my trouble,' it says haughtily.

'And in advance, if you please . . .'

By preference it will take the following (the first item on the list being its first choice, etc):

an iron bell

an amber tinderbox

a skull-amulet

some silver dust.

If you have none of *these* items, it will take a different item of your choice; cross it off your Character Sheet.

It then flies up, frees the other Faltyn and disappears. The first Faltyn descends . . .

Turn to **568**.

115

A deathly cold grip closes on the last player in the battle order. He or she struggles in vain to break free as life-energy is drained in the form of one Die Endurance (armour protects as normal).

You whirl around and stare aghast into the face of your pursuer. It is your former companion, lost when the executioner attacked. But he has no words of friendly greeting, no comradely smile - only the stark grin of one of the walking dead. It is a zombie with staring eyes and ashen-hued skin which stalks to attack you, a zombie formed from the body of your old comrade!

Turn to **360**.

116

You head east. It is about noon when you come to the coastal town of Port Quanongu. A bored-looking guard waves you past him through the narrow gate into the crowded streets. The air is laced with the smells of tar and fish and salt spray.

As you stand in the midst of the jostling passers-

by, momentarily stunned by the clamour of town life after the quiet countryside through which you have been travelling, a scar-faced sailor comes up to you.

'Be you lookin' to sign on a whaler?' he asks. 'Look no further if so, for the *Questing Beast* has need of sturdy young limbs.'

He scrutinises you with his one good eye. What answer will you give? 'By all means lead the way to your ship!' (turn to **232**), 'And is this *Questing Beast* bound for Wyrd?' (turn to **395**) or 'Point out a tavern and then begone, churl' (turn to **269**).

117

The shoreline of Wyrd is ringed by high splintered cliffs above a strand of gelid mud and shingle.

You look to the north. Across this benighted land you must travel, to the Palace of Eternal Dusk where the Warlock-King dwells. Doubtless he will prove a mighty foe, but you must defeat him in order to acquire the Blood Sword hilt.

If there is a Sage in the party, turn to **209**. If not, turn to **534**.



118

The whalers are now armed to the teeth and are closing in on you where you stand on the poop. Which item would you like to use? A silver crucifix (turn to **18**), the orb of fire (turn to **560**) or a pouch of tahac (turn to **490**)? If you have none of these items, you must either fight the sailors (turn to **148**) or surrender (turn to **36**).

Some of the foresters take up weapons and fight, a futile struggle against the overwhelming foe. Glancing at you with their red eyes, the werewolves lope forwards through the fray. In their wake, three of their servants also come forwards, staring with dazed eyes like walking dead.

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Werewolves

Fighting Prowess: 10 Damage per bite: 2 Dice
 Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 9
 Armour Rating: 0
 Endurance: *first* 22 *second* 22

Note: The werewolves are not easily wounded by non-magical weapons. Unless you own an enchanted weapon such as the Sword of Loge or the blade Blutgetrunker, you should inflict only half your usual damage score on them (round fractions up).

Servants

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: 1 Die
 Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 5
 Armour Rating: 0
 Endurance: *first* 10 *third* 10
 second 10

To *flee* would be useless - the swift werewolves

would soon outdistance you in the woods. If you win, turn to **73**.

120

Something about the merchants watching the game of chequers has made you uneasy, but you can't quite put your finger on it . . .

If there is a Sage in the party who would like to do something, turn to 106. If there is an Enchanter who would like to try something, turn to **47**. If there is a Trickster who would like to take some action, turn to **132**. if you don't want to act, or you are a Warrior on your own, turn to **144**.

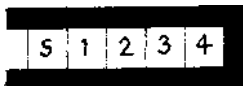
121

(SAGE) By the sacred countenance of Dharuma, you've got it. You carefully increase your mass by focusing your mental powers, and the carpet slowly descends on to the pack-ice of the Mistral Sea. When you (and your comrades, if any) step off, the carpet floats back up to its original altitude. You now see it as only a tiny speck high in the sky.

Turn to **344**.

122

It reaches you, leering horribly as it realises you are trapped in the ice-bound boat with nowhere to run. Perhaps you must make this a life-or-death stand, as it seems that the Stalker would pursue you to the very rim of the world if need be ...



Stalker

Fighting Prowess: 9

Psychic Ability: 9

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 50

Damage per blow: 3 Dice+3

Awareness: 8

Note: You should adjust its Endurance score for any arrows you have just shot it with. Disregard any damage you may have inflicted in previous encounters, however - it is being continually replenished by the sorcerous power of the Blue Moon.

If you *flee* by teleporting to the shore, turn to **308**. If you fight on and destroy it, turn to **263**.

123

(TRICKSTER) You observe that the two Sylphs follow different tactics. One moves in over the bridge to block your path, attacking with sweeping strokes of its halberd. The other hovers to your left and jabs at you with short linear motions.

Since their fighting styles are so rigid - almost pre-programmed - you might be able to get them to hit one another. This will call for some fleetness of foot. Each Round, instead of attacking them, you can try to roll Awareness or less on two Dice. If you succeed, the Sylphs miss you and strike each other for 1 Die+3 damage. If you fail, you must determine whether they hit you as normal.

Once you are sure of the procedure, turn to 100 for the combat. You can, of course, give up this strategy and fight them in the conventional manner if you prefer.

124

You instinctively feel that you could bring this double of yourself out of its deathlike trance by using sympathetic magic. It seems to you that if you could somehow light the lanterns standing at each corner of the bier you might be able to rekindle the body's vital spark.

If you wish to try that course of action, you can use either the orb of fire (turn to **545**) or an amber



tinderbox (turn to **176**). If you don't have these items, or don't wish to use them, you must either attack (turn to **516**) or retreat back the way you came (turn to **547**).

125

(WARRIOR) Your duty as one of the warrior caste is clear: Truly, noble sir,' you swear, 'this demon woman will account for her misdeeds.' You make an oath for yourself, and also on behalf of any of your comrades. They may or may not be too happy about you involving them, but the old man is overjoyed: 'For ten years no one has taken up my quest, although many have heard my tale. Truly you are the bravest of the brave.'

Turn to **164**.

126

Pondering the meaning of the old woman's prophecy, you make your way across the forest clearing where you will camp tonight. The last rays of the afternoon sun slant down across the treetops. You and a number of other wayfarers are travelling together for reason of safety through the great forests of south-eastern Krarth. The clearing is now a bustle of activity as merchants, pilgrims and hunters prepare camp for the night.

Since you joined the old woman, some foresters have appeared with their families and are now roasting venison. You sniff the appetising aroma of the meat, mingling pleasantly with the scent of pine-smoke, and one of the foresters carves you some. Thanking him, you wander towards where you have built your own camp fire.

As you do, the plangent notes of a melancholy tune drift across the clearing. Looking over, you see a man strumming a lyre. He wears a tunic and

breeches of white cotton - white once, in fact, but now travel-stained to greyness. His face indicates a strong, proud man, and his wistful melody is nothing like the jaunty jigs played by most minstrels.

Beyond him, at the edge of the clearing, you see a group of merchants dressed in the grey travelling cloaks of their kind. They are peering intently at a game of Krarthian chequers being played by two tall men. These players huddle to keep warm in the cool autumn air, wrapping their mantles of blue-grey fur closer about their shoulders. It surprises you that the merchants should be so absorbed by the game, as Krarthian chequers involves complex and elegant strategy. Your own opinion of the merchant class is that they are incapable of appreciating such an art.

If you would like to go over to the minstrel and listen to his tune, turn to **502**. If you would prefer to watch the game of chequers, turn to **554**. If you would rather just rest after your long journey, turn to **486**.

127

The demon nods slowly. 'You have answered well. The left-hand door is the one you want.'

If you want to open the left-hand door, turn to **398**. If you want to try the right-hand door, turn to **200**.

128

One of you must take watch. Decide who this will be, then turn to **285**.

129

The creature shudders as the energy that has sustained it is suddenly removed. It falls to its knees

and regards you with its now barely glimmering blue eyes. 'No mortal will ever wield the Sword,' it croaks before sliding sideways into the dark waters of the mere. There is not a trace of it to be seen, and you break the ice and row back to the shore.

Turn to **165**.

130

(WARRIOR) You immediately sense that you are holding a mighty weapon. It will add one to your Fighting Prowess (though, of course, if you already have a magical weapon that adds one to your Fighting Prowess, then you cannot fight with it *and* the axe at the same time). The axe will also add one to your damage scores. Using it, you can choose the *throw* option in combat; this is like the *shoot* option for Sages and Tricksters, but the axe when thrown does 1 Die+1 damage. It can be thrown up to three squares on any battle map, but it will immediately return to your hand after you have thrown it.

The axe will function only for you. If you are killed, the next person to touch it will be its rightful new owner; if this happens, that person must refer to **400** for its powers.

Now turn to **226**.

131

(SAGE) Concentrating your mind, you search for the source of the creature's energies and then try to stifle them.

Roll two Dice. If you get 2 to 6, turn to **110**. If you get 7 to 12, turn to **484**.

132

(TRICKSTER) You slide into the dark shadows at the side of the clearing and creep up on one of the

merchants lying on his bedroll. Something about the man's irregular breathing tells you that he is awake. He seems to be waiting for something to happen; but what could possibly happen, in this empty clearing? Using the tricks of ventriloquism that you learnt when you first started your trade, you project your voice across to the merchant as if it were one of his nearby friends who spoke: 'Is it time yet?' you say. The man replies in a harsh whisper 'Quiet, fool, the foresters will hear! You know we can start only when the Blue Moon rises.' You slink back into the shadows, wondering at his words.

Turn to **468**.

133

You watch the corpse drop until it is just a tiny speck lost against the white haze of frozen sea below. Your elation at victory over Augustus soon fades when you start to consider your next problem, however: how are you going to get down from here?

Is there a Sage who would like to try something? If so, turn to **445**. If there is a Trickster who wishes to act, turn to **2**. Perhaps there is an Enchanter who is willing to try a magical remedy? If so, turn to **452**. If there is none of these in the party, turn to **389**.

134

(TRICKSTER) You see no impediment to cheating. A superior chequers player would not consider that he was behaving dishonourably if he used his skill to beat a novice at the game. So why should there be anything dishonourable about using your particular skills - sleight of hand, in this case?

Your strategy relies on diverting the Elf's attention, letting your right hand drift with apparent indecision over one side of the board while your left

hand improves your pieces' positions on the other. You cannot over-use the ploy, of course, because he would notice that your pieces were not where they were before. On the other hand, you must not be so cautious in *under-using* your trickery that you lose the game. ... Getting the balance right is what will decide whether you manage to deceive him.

If you have changed your mind about cheating, you can always play the game straight (turn to **434** if you decide to do so).

If you still wish to cheat, roll 2 Dice+1. Once you have rolled the Dice, you *cannot* change your mind about cheating - you have made your attempt, and the Dice will show if it paid off or not. If the score is equal to or less than your Awareness, turn to **239**. If it is higher, turn to **218**.

135

'A great monster that lurks in the sea below the ice. Its body is vast, with a single eye set in the midst of eight long tentacles. Oh, that hideous eye ..!' Her voice trails off.

Turn to **59**.



136

Your guess proved right and you stroll across the black squares to the plinth in complete safety. You open the lid of the chest.

Turn to **294**.

137

The Warlock-King has summoned an entire army of

Undead warriors to destroy you. Against such overwhelming odds, you do not stand a chance. The skeletons advance with gruesome grins, forcing you back to the very wall of the arena. You look up behind you, desperately seeking an escape route, but find only the nightmarish faces of the spectators leering down at your plight.

The first ranks of the skeletal army reach you. You face their spears with grim resolution. It is time to die.



138

Your tactics seem effective and the Elf-Lord's pieces gradually fall to your advance - right up until the moment when, in one sweeping move, he takes all your counters at once with his last remaining brevet-piece! You stare at the board in stunned amazement. How could you have been so foolish as to line up your pieces for him to decimate them like that? Was he only toying with you all along?

He gets up. The game is ended, and you have lost. Return to your mortal vale.'

Will you go, as he says? If so, it is the end of your quest. But you did agree to decide the issue on the basis of the chequers game, and he did beat you...

You must decide whether to end your quest here, in failure, or to defy the Elf-Lord. If you choose the latter, turn to **211**.

139

'You may have killed my mistress,' the small creature says. 'But I am still bound by her command. One of these two doors leads to her treasure, the other to a grisly fate. In order to find which is the right door, you will have to answer this riddle:

*Sharper than steel,
Softer than doth,
Brighter than emeralds,
Yet a thing with no value.'*

Once you have decided what answer you will give to the demon's riddle (only one answer is allowed per party), write it on a piece of paper and turn to **171**. If you feel you have no time to waste on riddles and ought to attack the creature right away, turn to **69**.

140

The middle gallery has several doors leading off it. Some are locked, but you manage to find one that isn't. Entering, you find it to be a sorcerer's laboratory.

If there is a Sage or an Enchanter in the party, turn to **12**. If not, turn to **453**.

141

You push off through the crowds lining the narrow streets on this crisp autumn morning. You pass a booth where a puppeteer is giving one of the distinctive Taper World' displays of eastern Krarth. You stop to watch, entranced at the little figures of card which are so skilfully made to seem like great wizards and noblemen from myth. This particular performance seems to be pure whimsy - or some mythological story you have not encountered before.

If you want to stop to watch the show, turn to **418**.
If you would prefer to carry on down the street, turn to **306**.

142

You lie down again, finding the blankets unpleasantly clammy in the mist. Exhausted as you are after the gruelling battle, sleep comes quickly. The baleful gleam of the Blue Moon bathes the clearing where you lie ...

You seem to look down upon your own camp in a dream. The stiffening corpses are piled high all around, seeming impossibly ghastly through the distorting lens of dream. The mist hangs in a grey wreath, mushrooms bursting like boils from the soil where it sits. The scent of pines, mushrooms and blood mingles in the air, thick and stifling.

Then your dream becomes a nightmare. The corpses' eyes flicker open, reflecting the blue radiance with a spectral hue. The bodies twitch back to a horrible semblance of life, rising to their feet and closing in on you as you sleep.

Suddenly you know you must wake up or die. But *can* you wake up . . . ?

Turn to **268**.

143

He looks at you with rheumy eyes as you step over to talk to him. He listens to your introduction and then motions you to sit beside him. He stirs the cold embers in the grate with a poker, and begins his tale.

'I was once as young and healthy as you. Though old and broken now, I was a straight sapling in my youth - my waist was then as thin as my wheezing chest is now, and my chest then was as broad as this paunch I presently wear. Age, that implacable foe,

has not been kind to Varadaxor, Knight of Lushon. Here I must sit to the end of my days, unavenged. And when I gulp my last of Middle-Earth's air, the thought that shall rankle my breast and burn my brain is that the evil Lady in Grey has not been slain for her unholy crimes!

If you ask him to go on with his story, turn to **301**. If you decide not to waste any more time but to hurry on your way, turn to **116**.

144

You wait for hours lying on your bedroll, your eyes half-open. You are beginning to doubt that your suspicions had any grounds at all when suddenly the disc of the Blue Moon drifts up over the forest edge and sends its metallic beams coldly into the clearing. As its light falls on the two chequers players who still keep watch by the dying embers of the fire, you see them suddenly transforming. Hair bristles on their hands and faces, and their noses suddenly change shape, becoming the shape of a wolf's snout. They drop on to all fours. Finally you see them bare their yellow, glinting canine teeth and let out a fierce growl. At the same time the merchants rise up as one from their sleeping-rolls, exposing the long and deadly knives that they have kept concealed under their grey robes. They quickly set about slashing and hacking at the sleeping forms of the foresters. The screams of those who awaken just before they are butchered reverberate around the clearing. Now you can see others stirring and arming themselves with the few rudimentary weapons that are available to them. Many of the surviving women and children flee into the gloomy depths of the forest.

Turn to **119**.

145

The outlines of the room fade away. You stand in nothingness for a moment, a vast infinity of mist. Gradually sounds drift to your ears - the clash of weapons, the screams of dying men. Then these sounds fade too, to be replaced by a steady incessant thud. It is like the beating of a huge heart, relentless and rhythmic, growing closer - louder - until you are almost deafened. Then, as a scene begins to form around you, you realise it is not the beating of a heart at all ...

You are standing in the pit of an arena. The noise you thought was a huge heartbeat is the cacophonous chanting of the ghoulish crowds who have come to see you fight.

Turn to **508**.

146

'This is the village of Misdraex,' says the pedlar, puffing out another great cloud of tahac smoke. 'Yonder east,' he says, pointing with the stem of his pipe, 'is the Mistral Sea: it be but an afternoon's journeying to Port Quanongu, where you may take ship to Wyrdr or Yggdras Isle.' He stuffs his pipe back into his mouth and, shouldering his pack, hobbles off down the road.

If you would like to continue on down the road to the coast, turn to **267**. If you would like to enter the inn, turn to **429**.

147

Your tactics seem effective and the Elf-Lord's pieces gradually fall to your advance - right up until the moment when, in one sweeping move, he takes all your counters at once with his last remaining brevet-piece! You stare at the board in stunned

amazement. How could you have been so foolish as to line up your pieces for him to decimate them like that? Was he only toying with you all along?

He gets up. "The game is ended, and you have lost. Return to your mortal vale."

Will you go, as he says? If so, it is the end of your quest. But you did agree to decide the issue on the basis of the chequers game, and he did beat you...

You must decide whether to end your quest here, in failure, or to defy the Elf-Lord. If you choose the latter, turn to **211**.

148

These whaling men are scurvy, treacherous and pox-ridden, but it must be said that they do not lack skill when it comes to a fight.

| | | | | | |
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Sailors

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Psychic Ability: 6

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 0

Endurance: *first* 20 *fifth* 20

second 20 *sixth* 20

third 20 *seventh* 20

fourth 20

If you win, turn to **251**. If you surrender, turn to **349**.

He scowls at you but backs down. 'Very well - the old rate applies.'

Deduct the sum of one gold piece if you wish to stay at the tavern tonight (two gold pieces if you want the one bunk near the fire). Bidding the landlord a sour good morning, you saunter out into the streets.

You are immediately swept along by the crowds that mill about the bazaars and market-places. You pause to watch a 'Taper World' show. This is the distinctive puppet show of eastern Krarth, where tiny mannikins of lacquered card are cunningly made to prance about like real wizards and noble knights of myth.

So enthralled are you by the performance that you are taken completely by surprise when your weapons are stripped from you! You are seized, and swords prod your ribs. You are hauled about to face an officer of the town militia.

He spits at you. 'Foreign scum. Did you think you could sneak away from the scene of your vile murder so easily? Luckily, the landlord of the Ulrik's Bones Inn lost no time in reporting the crime. In this town, the penalty for murder is nothing so pleasant as hanging . . . !'

If there is a Warrior in the party who wishes to do something, he or she should turn to **513**. If there is a Trickster who wishes to do something, he or she should turn to **345**. If there is neither a Trickster nor a Warrior in the party, turn to **552**.

150

(ENCHANTER) You are now an expert at teleportation and have no problem materialising inside the cage. You quickly free the Faltyn from the pins

binding it to the bone crucifix, and the fay creature lowers you to the floor.

Turn to **568**.

151

You walk on, the barest glimmer of the Blue Moon now showing above the top of the trees. Surely dawn cannot be far away, you think. Suddenly there is a rustling to one side of you. A wildcat rushes out, screeching ferociously. You breathe a sigh of relief as you see it bounding between the trees in the dim moonlight, then turn to see where it came from, only to stare straight into the fleshless face of the Stalker ... It is standing right in front of you!

Turn to **212**.

152

You pass between two soaring columns of grey-white marble into a series of labyrinthine chambers. The ceiling is shrouded in gloom a hundred metres above you. Bizarre gargoyles and bas-reliefs stare from the walls. Everything is overlain with centuries of dust that swirls in thick ripples, a dry pool through which you must wade.

After some searching you find a way into an inner courtyard of the Palace. Cracked flagstones tilt as you step on them, sending the grubs and insects that shelter there scurrying to a more secure hide-away.

You go up a flight of worn and moss-carpeted steps. The balustrade is wrapped with dead ivy. Suddenly you hear a sound that makes your hair stand on end. A flagstone has just given out an ominous *clunk* under the tread of someone - or something - behind you.

If you turn and face your pursuer, turn to **414**. If you continue on without looking around, turn to **115**.

153

You heave Lazarus's body overboard and you watch as he sinks beneath the waves. You drift on the ocean for hours. Then to your joy you see a ship sailing directly towards you. Before long, you have attracted the lookout's attention and you are taken aboard. The captain informs you that he is bound for Dourhaven, and expects to reach there by nightfall. Soon the pale mountains around the town are seen off the port bow and the ship anchors in Dourhaven Sound, with a bleak ring of black, snow-capped mountains rising up all around you. The captain tells you before you go ashore that the Fimbulwinter Inn at the end of the street is a good place to stay. He also tells you where you may find a chandler's, where you will be able to buy supplies.

If you would like to go to the chandler's first, turn to **288**. If you would like to go straight to the inn, turn to **75**.

154

A thick grey steam billows out as you open the casket. Every player loses one point of Psychic Ability *permanently*. If you've opened all three boxes, turn to **291**. Otherwise you can now open the stone box (turn to **511**) or the iron one (turn to **475**).

155

(ENCHANTER) 'Fay wretch!' you snarl. 'Do you take me for a fool? The scabbard shall not be yours. Name a different price, or avaunt you!'

The Faltyn flickers petulantly. *'I shall take a*

mouthful of your blood, then.'

If you permit this, deduct one Endurance point and turn to **264**. If you refuse, the Faltyn departs; turn to **559**.

156

A passing sailor overhears you speaking to Kenoi, and soon word is passed around the ship's company. 'Lazarus hunts the World Serpent,' they whisper to one another. The World Serpent!

Several harpooners take up the tools of their trade and head for where Lazarus stands on the poop.

Turn to **231**.

157

Do you want to rush through the room and try to open the door (turn to **377**) or do you want to take your time and search the room first (turn to **433**)?

158

The creature laughs mirthlessly: 'The only way to avert your fate would have been to have killed me a moment ago! Now I am out of your power, human!' You realise to your horror that you now no longer control it. Its bones suddenly glow with a cold energy as it holds its fingers up to the Blue Moon, and there is an instant chill in the air. It steps towards you . . .

Turn to **212**.

159

You look down for a moment at the waxy face of the dead lyrist, then up at the cold face of the Blue Moon staring down at you from the night sky. The woodland around you has taken on an eerie appearance in the wash of unearthly light.

Your gaze turns to the jewelled scabbard of the Blood Sword. However unwillingly, you seem to have taken up the old harpist's quest. Record the scabbard on your Character Sheet, along with the number **419**. The scabbard can be passed from player to player, but if it is ever discarded by the party as a whole (the harpist warned you never to part with it!) then you must turn immediately to **419**. Note down the number of the entry you are reading at the time, as **419** will not guide you back there.

What do you want to do now . . . ?

You can stay in the clearing in the midst of the corpses and wait for dawn, although this proposition looks even less attractive when you consider the ground mist now swirling up from the damp grass. If you do that, turn to **142**.

If you would rather decamp and set off through the dark forest straight away, turn to **363**.

160

Darkness settles all around. You seem to hear a morbid chattering from the walls, and then a wheezing chuckle, but when you thrust your torch forwards you see no sign of motion. A howling wind whistles past, bringing on it a hundred plagues and ailments. It is the Wind of Decay, and you must weather it or suffer the consequences . . .

Roll one Die for each in turn of the five ailments listed below. Each player must do this. The player contracts the ailment on a score of 1 or 2. Add 1 to the Die rolls if you previously wound a wet strip of shroud over your face; add 2 to the rolls if you are holding the orb of plague, which sucks the disease spirits into itself.

| <i>Disease</i> | | <i>Effect</i> |
|----------------|----|---|
| Malaria | -1 | from Awareness |
| Typhoid | | -1 from Fighting Prowess |
| Soulbite | | -1 from Psychic Ability |
| Haemophilia | | lose one extra Endurance point whenever you take a wound |
| Wasting Rot | | you can carry a maximum of only <i>eight</i> items, owing to weakness |

These effects last for the rest of the adventure. Once all players have rolled for each of the five diseases, you must decide whether to proceed (turn to **557**) or to retrace your steps and leave the cathedral (turn to **547**).

161

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

You have activated the orb of plague. Spirits of pestilence and disease arise from it, appearing at the edges of your vision like hideous crawling things - huge bloated maggots, fluttering insects, creeping spiders and ragged moths. You feel your flesh crawl at even this vague glimpse of the unclean host.

Each player must roll two Dice. If the score is greater than the player's Psychic Ability, he or she has contracted a wasting disease and can no longer recover Endurance by natural means (sleep, eating, etc). Only such means as magic potions, or a Sage's healing ability, can ever restore Endurance lost by the character.

Any player who rolls equal to or under Psychic Ability, however, is able to conquer the spirits of disease assailing his or her body. The player becomes immune to all diseases, and can disregard

the effects of any disease that would otherwise be contracted in this or subsequent adventures. Note that this immunity applies only to disease specifically described as such - *not* to frostbite, hunger, the effects of poison, etc.

The orb cracks after expending its power. Delete it from your Character Sheet, then return to the entry you were reading before.

162

As you continue onwards you feel a prickling at the back of your neck, and your fatigue leaves you suddenly to be replaced by stark fear. You are now certain that someone or *something* is following you. You quicken your pace and the feeling gradually dies. Finding a stream bathed in the blue light of the setting moon, you decide to follow it. Soon you come upon a clearing in which stands a small rustic cottage, a single lamp burning through one of its windows.

If you wish to knock and ask for shelter, turn to **295**. If you wish to continue on your way, turn to **151**.

163

The Lady in Grey is frozen by the sun's light, but she can still work her sorcery. She struck Varadaxor motionless by magic before his death-stroke could descend. You look at her, noticing now that her gaze still roves the room although she is unable to move her limbs.

Her voice enters your mind: *'Depart my tower at once and I shall permit you to live. Refuse, and all the forces of the netherworld will be unleashed against you.'*

If you do as she says, turn to **394**. If you refuse to leave without Varadaxor, turn to **421**.

Varadaxor is overjoyed that you will aid him. Through tears he says: 'Let us ride now together. The Lady in Grey will look upon the setting sun today with lifeless eyes!'

He gets up out of his chair and hobbles off, returning soon while buckling on his harness. Though he is frail, good cheer makes him sprightly. He calls to the innkeeper to saddle his horse - an aged but still powerful beast with a fierce glint in its eye - and soon you are heading south.

The dew shimmers in the pre-dawn light. A few birds are singing from the hedgerows. You pass a group of peasants beginning their hard day's toil in the fields. Varadaxor, as lightly as if he were riding to a fair rather than a deadly battle, regales you with stories of his youth, and it seems almost no time before you reach the tower. 'Now the grim task is upon us,' says Varadaxor. 'May the souls of my three noble brothers see our deed this day, and may the Mother of God grant that our courage is strong.'

The sides of the tower are choked with ivy, and dusty skulls lie by the open portcullis. You enter cautiously, treading with great stealth up a flight of stairs until you enter a low chamber. It is still filled with gloom, as the sun has not yet risen to shine through the narrow windows. As your eyes become accustomed to the dim light you see a woman sitting on a marble throne at the end of the room. An empty suit of armour stands to either side of her. Her hair is stark white and her skin, for all that she has the features of a young woman, is stony grey. She turns her gaze upon you - a thrilling stare, like the look that a hawk gives its prey. She starts to rise . . .

The first pink rays of the morning sun wash the

room. As the light touches her, the Lady in Grey stops as though frozen rigid.

'She is petrified by the light of dawn!' cries Varadaxor triumphantly. 'We must seize our chance and slay her now.' He jumps forwards, sword upraised, but suddenly stops moving himself. He stands beside the Lady in Grey, sword-edge poised a mere arm's length from her neck, frozen as stock still as she is.

Turn to **163**.

165

You walk on for many hours. Long after the Blue Moon has disappeared over the edge of the trees, the crescent sickle of the true moon rises above you. By its light you find a track that eventually takes you out of the forest, just as the sun is rising ahead of you. Though tired, you trudge on until about midday, when you reach a village. You see an inn in the main street of the tiny settlement. A sign over its door reads: The Sun in Winter.

If you would like to enter the inn, turn to **429**. If you would like to stop and question a peasant, turn to **352**. If you would prefer just to continue along the road, turn to **267**.

166

He draws you to one side and buys you a mug of sour green tea from one of the quayside stalls.

'Explain your words,' you say, grimacing at the tea but enjoying its warmth on this cold day.

He shakes his head and smiles, eyes twinkling. 'Best to demonstrate!' He daps his hands and cries a magic word. Suddenly you and he are rising into the air - borne aloft on a carpet that you had assumed belonged to the tea vendor. The sailors

and longshoremen flock to the quayside and point in amazement.

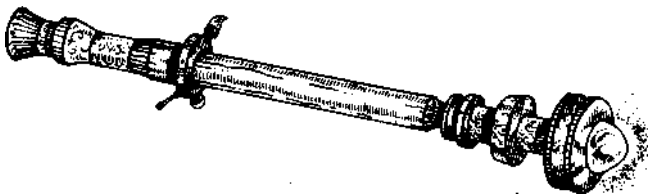
You crouch in shock and near-terror as the carpet soars out of the bay, but Augustus only laughs and helps you to your feet. 'Have no fear,' he says. 'I have never yet lost a passenger.'

Turn to **424**.

167

(TRICKSTER) Looking around, something seems to be out of place, but you can't think what it could be. You scratch your jaw and try to puzzle out what it is. Roll two Dice, trying to get Awareness or less.

If you succeed, turn to **63**. If you fail, turn to **382**.

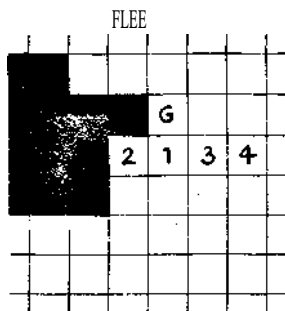


168

The Palace of Eternal Dusk now stands ahead of you, a brooding grey edifice of heavy arches and squat towers, built on an island in the middle of the lake. Three huge covered bridges, doubtless honey-combed with chambers and corridors, stretch out from the central keep across the gelid water. Each bridge is entered by a gate on the lake shore. You know before you reach them that these are the Gates of Confusion, of Carnage and of Fear..

A roar rocks the ground beneath your feet. Shambling from behind a crag comes a giant beast, a thing that walks on its hind legs like a man. Each

scaly plate armouring its body is the size of a knight's shield, each hard horny claw as thick as a spear's shaft. Where it places its feet, the snow melts and the scant grass is left withered and scorched. It is Gristun, the Guardian-Beast that patrols the ways into the Warlock-King's fortress.



Guardian-Beast

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 3 Dice+1

Psychic Ability: 8

Awareness: 6

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: 60

If you *flee* past it, turn to **432**. If you slay it, turn to **10**.

169

The figure gets up, enraged that you are not taken in. It waves its hand and the cottage vanishes - it was only an illusion. You are standing in an empty, clearing on the rim of a pit. Sharp stakes are planted at its bottom. If you had stepped into the 'cottage' you would have plunged on to them!

The figure snarls and dispels the illusion that disguises it. It is the skeletal creature that dropped from the sky like a meteor. Its glittering blue eyes swivel and fix on you as it skirts the pit to attack.



'*Illusion did not work against you,*' it hisses in a sepulchral voice. '*But Blue Moon is also the master of the deathly arts . . .*'

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FLEE

Stalker

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 3 Dice

Psychic Ability: 8

Awareness: 8

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 40

Note: Even if you wounded it in an earlier encounter, its Endurance score has somehow been miraculously restored. It is gathering power from a supernatural source, increasing in strength before your very eyes . . .

If you destroy it, turn to **303**. If you *flee*, turn to **204**.

170

The game ends after a few minutes as night settles over the forest. The white pieces are grouped together in the centre of the board and the player controlling the black pieces then gradually surrounds them, eliminating them all. As each of the black pieces is moved in for the kill, you notice that the merchants are losing interest in the game and are strolling over and lying down on their bedrolls. This action is repeated by all the other merchants as the white pieces are gradually taken. The two fur-coated merchants playing the game finally nod

curtly at one another, pack up their set and also go to bed, leaving you alone in the flickering orange glow of the camp fires.

If you wish to stay awake, turn to **120**. If you too want to go to your bedroll and sleep, turn to **24**.

171

If you have answered 'fire', turn to **479**. If you answered anything else, turn to **265**.

172

If anything untoward is going on, common sense would suggest that the chequers players are behind it. You march up to one and summarily plant a weapon at his throat. He glares up at you with an expression of furious hatred. As he bares his teeth in an animal snarl, you notice the sharp canines that line his mouth. That, and his unusually hairy face and hands . . . Of course - he's a lycanthrope. A werewolf!

You glance towards the treetops to check that the moon has not yet risen. The lapse of concentration is a serious mistake, as the man seizes his chance and barks an order. Suddenly the merchants rise from where they lie. With glazed eyes, they take up long knives and cut about at the sleeping foresters.

'We shall triumph,' growls the other chequers player, getting to his feet. These entranced idiots shall do our work of murder for us. Surrender. Release my brother.'

'Release him, certainly,' you reply. 'From life!' And you drive your weapon deep into the evil werewolf's throat. His brother leaps forwards with a terrible cry, jaws slavering hotly, but the moon will not rise for some time yet, so he does not have the powers he would possess in wolf-form.

Some of the foresters have woken up and are fighting for their lives - a losing battle against the mesmerised merchants. You must take on the chequers player and three of his servants . . .

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Servants

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Fighting Prowess: 6 | Damage per blow: 1 Die |
| Psychic Ability: 6 | Awareness: 5 |
| Armour Rating: 0 | |
| Endurance: <i>first</i> 10 | <i>third</i> 10 |
| <i>second</i> 10 | |

Werewolf (*were-form*)

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Fighting Prowess: 7 | Damage per bite: 1 Die+1 |
| Psychic Ability: 7 | Awareness: 8 |
| Armour Rating: 1 | |
| Endurance: 12 | |

If you win, turn to **85**.

173

(ENCHANTER) Turn to **82**.

174

You are about to leave this horrible cathedral of bone when you notice an archway leading off the side of the nave where one would normally expect the transept to lie in a godly place of worship. If you want to investigate this, turn to **411**. If you want to

leave the cathedral and go back the way you came, turn to **547**.

175

(WARRIOR) Although you at first cannot follow the intricate ins and outs of the game of chequers, you find something to admire in the military precision with which the players deploy their pieces. Indeed, you find something akin to a general's battle-plan in the tactical manoeuvring on the board. After a few more seconds of study you are surprised to see one of the players move one of his pieces into a bad position: surely, you think, this is a cunning trap, luring the other player into a costly exchange of pieces? No, the other player takes the first player's piece with no loss at all. At the same time you are surprised to see not a flicker of emotion at this bit of play on the part of either of the players.

If there is a Sage in the party, you may quietly point this out and he may cast ESP if he so wishes; turn to **348**. If there is no Sage in the party, turn to **170**.

176

You strike a light from the tinderbox and great showers of sparks hurtle like missiles across the nave towards the bier. Four of the sparks, as if guided by hand, land in the four lanterns and they immediately light. The cowled figures wail in fear and flee into the shadows.

Turn to **562**.

177

Screwing up your courage, you make your way down the stairs and hide in the shadows of the balustrade at the bottom. As the eerie procession passes, you see by the light of the blue torches that the figure on the bier is none other than the friend



you lost when the executioner attacked. He appears to be dead, however, and his face is as white as the winding sheet wrapped around his body. Four unlit lanterns stand at the corners of the bier. The pallbearers ignore you as they march past.

If you wish to attack them, turn to **538**. If you wish to follow them, turn to **45**. If you want to go in the opposite direction to the one in which they are going, turn to **152**. If you would like to use an item, turn to **563**.

178

Check your Character Sheet(s) for the items you are carrying. If you have any of the following, turn to the appropriate paragraph. Check the items in this order: the Heart of the Dark (turn to **405**), an ivory drinking-horn (turn to **31**), a white-fledged arrow (turn to **290**), the fangs of a Hydra (turn to **487**), a thurifer's censer (turn to **556**), chequers pieces with the Elf-Lord's rune (turn to **292**).

Once you have checked the effects of all the items you have (or if you don't have any of these items), turn to **21**.

179

You shake your comrade(s) awake. Just then you notice the undergrowth being pushed aside at the edge of the clearing. You hear a dry cackle close by ...

Turn to **521**.

180

Suddenly the whistling noise stops and all is quiet apart from a hissing sound from where steam rises at the place where the flare struck. At the centre of the impact you see a large steaming rock surrounded by shadow. As you watch, the shadow seems to increase in size and a figure arises out of it.

With a dry crackling of its joints it shrugs off the last vestiges of dank soil and stands up. It is a black-robed fleshless thing. Suddenly it swings its head towards you and you find its tiny hard blue eyes staring at you with cold malice.

Turn to **276**.

181

Jadhak gives a blood-curdling groan and his porcine body thumps to the floor, rattling the pewter mugs arranged along the bar. You turn to the landlord and give him a menacing glare. His normally red and corpulent face is now blanched as white as snow.

'I saw it all!' he blurts hurriedly. 'Jadhak provoked you.'

Tell that to the town guards when they turn up,' you reply. '*If they turn up.*'

You decide to leave while he clears up the mess caused by your fight. As you are half-way out of the door, he calls after you: 'Wait. If you wish to stay here tonight, I must ask you to pay in advance, as before. Two gold pieces for a common pallet, and three for the one by the fire.'

If you want to protest at this sudden increase in the tariff, turn to **149**. If you pay the sum he demands, turn to **141**.

182

(TRICKSTER) You jump out on to the bridge of glowing stepping-stones. Suddenly your footing disappears under you and it takes all your nerve and agility to leap on to the one that appears instantaneously nearby.

Do you want to go on crossing like this? If you do, turn to **87**. If you would like to think of some other way of getting across, turn to **381**.

183

The slab drops down with dizzying speed. Finally it slows its descent and you see you are in another chamber; the slab lowers you gently to the floor. You have no idea where you are. You wander over to a grating you see in one of the walls of the room and, peering through, you find that it looks out on to a courtyard. A winged demon squats on a post in the centre of the courtyard, watching the corners of the square intently as if watching for prey. Twilight seems to be falling outside and the yard is swathed in the long shadows of evening.

There is a doorway on the other side of the courtyard. It seems to be your only option. You ease the grating aside and, keeping your eyes on the demon, advance through the shadows.

Turn to **249**.

184

The door slides shut, sealing the passageway as the slavering creature stumps down the passageway baring sharp talons and fangs.

If *all* players retreated behind the stone panel, turn to **408**. If one or more players chose to attack the monster, turn to **413**.

185

(SAGE) You blank out all thought of the great tide of blood and bone that is nearly on top of you, caring not whether you live or die. Life and death are both in the mind, which is itself but an illusion. When you open your eyes you find yourself floating in mid-air and the torrent has already passed under you. You settle back on to the surface of the bridge.

Turn to **430**.

186

(ENCHANTER) How will you avoid the danger? You may either try the spell of Immediate Deliverance (turn to **555**) or use a magic carpet if you have one (turn to **369**).

187

The captain of the *Magdalen* is Master Derzu. Now that you have agreed to his terms he smiles at you warmly and shakes your hand, concluding the deal. 'We put out at dawn tomorrow,' he says. 'In the meantime I would make the most of your time ashore, for tomorrow will be an exhausting day. Do you need an inn to stay at?'

If you have already paid for tonight's lodging at the Ulrik's Bones Inn, turn to **205**. If not, turn to **480**.

188

You step into a zone of utter blackness. Lights appear and slowly weave towards you - the glowing, enticing eyes of the Handmaidens of Oblivion. You can see them now in the soft glow, dimly, their thin lips ready to administer the kiss of death.

If you have any silver dust, you can fling it now into their hypnotic eyes, causing them to flee. Remember to cross the dust off your Character Sheet.

If you do not have the dust, they reach out to embrace you. Each player must roll Psychic Ability or less on two Dice or else vanish from this world forever. (If a player vanishes, so does any equipment he or she is carrying.)

Surviving players can go deeper into the transept (turn to **367**) or go back through the Groan of Doom (turn to **557**).

189

They snarl, and a wary look enters their staring eyes. Like all creatures that lack a soul, they fear the unassailable power of faith.

They are edging in towards you. Obviously their hunger for warm blood outweighs their fear. Turn to **37** for the battle, but note that if you touch one of them with the crucifix (requiring a *fight* roll of 2 Dice+2, as it is not balanced for use as a weapon) then you will destroy it instantly.

190

You are lying on grass beside a lake. The Blood Sword hilt is beside you, and you reach out to take it. Surviving players may divide equally between them an award of eight hundred experience points.

Sitting up, you look around. The lake looks disturbingly familiar - very like the one on which the Palace of Eternal Dusk was built. But there is no sign of that proud edifice, only a broken and weathered ruin overgrown with a profusion of ivy. And the lake you saw earlier was stagnant and foul. This one is clear and fresh; it sparkles in the sunlight...

But if this is somehow the same lake, then behind you should be ... You turn, expecting to find the sombre Forest of Thorns, but the soaring pines bear no resemblance to those evil briars.

Turn to **570**.

191

You pull the sword from its scabbard and muse upon it. It belonged to the trickster-god Loge and you suddenly remember a snippet of Mercanian myth: Loge was the father of several monsters, and one of these was Jormungand the World Serpent.

The sword seems to sing out exultantly across the sea.

Turn to **510**.

192

(ENCHANTER) You may *either* summon a Faltyn (turn to **332**) *or* cast a Detect spell (turn to **423**).

193

Unfortunately, it is impossible to move Varadaxor and you have to abandon him to his fate. If there is a Warrior in the party, he must lose fifty experience points from the amount that will be awarded him at the end of the adventure for breaking his oath to the old man. You decide to head for the coast and turn east down a road leading towards it.

Turn to **116**.

194

Your heart is racing as you approach the bier. But the shroud is empty - your double has gone. You are not sure whether to be relieved or horrified at this. Looking around, your gaze falls on a skull-amulet by your feet. Take this if you wish (remember to add it to your Character Sheet) and then turn to **174**.

195

You strike the tinderbox and immediately sparks fly like well-directed missiles from it towards the bier. The lanterns blossom with light and the cowed figures seem blinded by the sudden illumination. They flee in terror.

Turn to **197**.

196

You are anxious to leave the gory sight as soon as possible and stumble through to a gallery beyond

the dank chamber. There is a huge wooden doorway ahead of you carved with strange glyphs. You push it open and look out across a courtyard that lies beyond. A huge winged demon crouches on a post at its centre, darting its eyes here and there as if anxious for prey. There is a doorway on the other side of the courtyard, but to reach it you would have to pass right in front of the demon. High above, you can see intermittent pulses of light.

The demon does not seem to have noticed you yet. If you wish to thrust the door shut and think of a plan, turn to **88**. If you'd rather just rush out into the courtyard and attack the creature, turn to **249**.

197

Suddenly you see your 'dead' comrade stir then rise to his feet, casting off his winding sheet! You rush to him and find that although he has no memory of anything after the scythe cut him down he is unharmed.

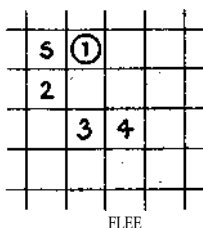
As he has triumphed over death, he now has no concept of fear, and his Fighting Prowess is increased by one. He is still holding the tarnished silver falchion that was placed over his chest. Engravings on its blade identify it as Shadowcleaver. The pallbearers also dropped a skull-amulet by the altar; take it if you wish.

Turn to **174**.

198

The player in the pit cannot strike back against the monster until he or she *climbs* out. This action requires a roll of Awareness or less on two Dice, attempted each Round. If the roll fails, the player stays in the pit and must try to *climb* out again next Round.

While the player is in the pit, the Stalker's *fight* rolls against him or her are made on 2 Dice—1 (to represent its height advantage). If fighting a multi-player party, it will concentrate its attacks firstly on whoever fell in the pit.



Stalker

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 3 Dice
 Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 8
 Armour Rating: 2
 Endurance: 40

Note: If you wounded it earlier, its Endurance score has somehow been miraculously restored and enhanced. It is gathering power from a supernatural source, increasing in strength even as you watch...

If you destroy it, turn to **303**. If you *flee*, turn to **204**.

199

You rush through the Gate of Confusion, the stone portcullis of which is decorated with a complex frieze of interlocking glyphs. As you pass under it, the portcullis crashes down, narrowly missing you and blocking you from the Guardian-Beast. It rages and thunders as it hammers on the metal, but it cannot get through. You pause to regain your breath before passing on up a sloping passageway that leads into the gloom in front of you.

Turn to **229**.

200

You swing open the right-hand door. Instantly a fierce gale springs up and you are sucked by its force into the room. With a loud thud the door closes behind you and then vanishes completely, leaving you staring at a blank wall! The room you find yourself in is completely bare apart from three caskets that lie neatly arranged in the centre of the room: one is made of wood, another of stone and the final one of iron. Each bears an inscription on its lid. The one on the wooden casket reads: 'The key to safety is in the stone casket.' The one on the stone box reads: 'The key is not in a casket with a true statement on its lid.' The iron casket has the following on its lid: 'Only one casket bears a true statement.'

If you wish to open the wooden casket, turn to **154**. If you wish to open the stone casket, turn to **511**. If you wish to open the metal casket, turn to **475**. If you wish to open none of them, turn to **280**.

201

Trudging nearer, you see that the three are a girl, a youth and a tall imperious man. The youngsters wear no warm clothing or furs as they dance barefoot upon the ice, and you can see that they are graceful and comely beyond belief. The tall man watches you approach, then spreads his red cloak wide. He fades, becoming first a bright scarlet haze, then a shadow coloured like a fading ember. Then he is gone altogether.

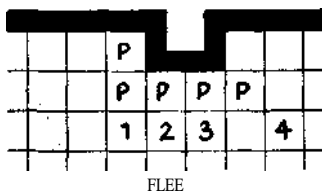
The girl and the youth sing wistfully as they dance across the pack-ice. Their song is wordless, but seems to speak of lost hopes, of broken dreams and faded grandeur.

If you wish to follow them, turn to **362**. If you return to your camp and go back to sleep, turn to **91**.

202

You rush in to attack. As you approach the altar, the figures turn and each unhurriedly raises its candle to illuminate the face within the cowl... And there you glimpse an indescribable horror that makes your blood run cold.

The cowed figures make no attempt to defend themselves, and only a single hit is needed to put one down, but when a player destroys one he or she must roll rank or less on 1 Die+1. Failure means that the sight of the creature's face has literally scared him or her to death!



Pallbearers

Psychic Ability: 9

Armour Rating: 0

Endurance: *first* 1 *fourth* 1
 second 1 *fifth* 1
 third 1

If you kill them all, turn to **442**. If you *flee* back the way you came, turn to **152**.

203

(TRICKSTER) You speak to the man, interrupting the flow of his melody. He looks up at you quizzically

and you explain to him that you would like to accompany him but that you lack any instrument with which to do so. He nods curtly to where a harp rests against the ornately carved saddle of his pack mule which is tethered to a nearby tree. You pick up the harp, which is made of a rich black wood you do not recognise. Drawing your fingers over the cobweb-fine strings, you produce one of the most haunting and beautiful melodies that you have ever played.

The old man forgets to continue with his own playing, so impressed is he by your abilities. When you stop there is an awestruck silence for a while in the forest glade. From far off you hear the mournful cry of a bird, then silence. Finally the man speaks, and strangely there are tears in his eyes: 'You have played well. The beauty of your music surpasses mine. You have been given the gift, I know not from where. Take then the harp as my gift to you; it will make you sing of joyous things even in the midst of gravest danger, when the creatures of the night rise up and would have your soul.'

You take the harp and would thank the man, but he seems to have sunk into a trance, listening to the far-off cries of the mournful forest bird.

You can now go and rest (turn to **486**) or you can go over and watch the chequers game (turn to **554**).

204

You run pell-mell through the forest, your cloak ripped to tatters by clinging brambles and your face scratched by overhanging branches. Finally you stop, completely out of breath. Ahead of you is a dark mere with a boat moored at its edge. You are certain that the skeleton is somewhere behind you, making its way through the forest towards where

you stand. You have no time to skirt the mere - you climb into the boat.

Turn to **315**.

205

Be sure that you have already paid for *tonight's* lodging. If you only paid for *last* night's accommodation, then you must part with another gold piece now if you want an ordinary pallet, and two gold pieces if you want the pallet in front of the fire. You will recover one Endurance if you have the common pallet and half your rank in Endurance (rounding up fractions) if you have slept by the hearth. If you want breakfast at one gold piece, this will restore another Endurance point. Remember that your total Endurance cannot go over your initial score.

If you had any comrades who didn't stay here, you can find out where they spent the night by turning to **480**. After that (or if all players stayed here), turn to **4**.

206

(SAGE) You understand the truth of what has happened. An Undead spirit can take over a fatigued living body if it enters when the soul's psychic defences are lowered by sleep. It can distort the flesh and bone to suit its needs, and corrupt the mortal soul with an overwhelming lust for blood. The result: a snow vampire. Neutralise the Undead spirit - Exorcise it - and the living person is restored . . .

You concentrate your mind and direct a pulse of psionic force with the power to annihilate such Undead spirits. Each vampirised player must roll two Dice: on a score of 2 to 6 he/she remains a vampire, but on a score of 7 or more the Undead spirit is snuffed out and the living player is restored.

If you cure all the vampires, turn to **412**. If one or more vampires remain, you and the other players must fight them; turn to **37**.

207

'Sorry,' you say, getting up. 'The sun will soon be up, and the journey to the coast is yet long. There are other duties that take precedence over your own problem.'

He glares at you, half in anger and half in sorrow. 'You youngsters have no respect for the old principles that were respected in earlier days. Chivalry and duty are unfamiliar concepts. It is to the tune of money and glory that such as you dance.'

Sententious old fool, you think as you leave the inn.

Turn to **116**.

208

The flying carpet descends gracefully through the icy air and touches down on the parapet of the white tower.

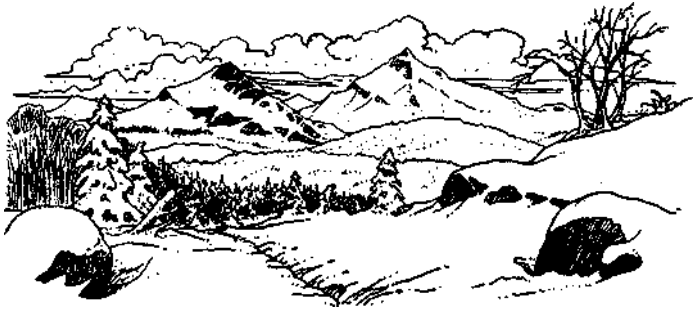
Augustus smiles broadly. 'Here we are at my abode,' he declares, clapping his hands together. Four squat demonic servitors tumble hastily out on to the parapet in answer to his summons.

You glance over the edge of the parapet. It is still a long way to the ground from here.

'Your last chance,' says Augustus. He is no longer smiling. 'Hand over the scabbard of your own free will, or I shall command my servitors to take it by force of arms.' The demonic creatures grin toothily and pull daggers from their greasy jerkins.

If you give Augustus the scabbard, turn to **419**. If you make ready to fight his servitors, turn to **76**.

(SAGE) Ironic that your quest should have brought you to a country called Wyrd, for it truly seems that you are now caught up in the grip of immutable destiny. You reflect on what you know of this strange kingdom. It is ruled by the Warlock-King (that much is common knowledge) from his Palace of Eternal Dusk. Krarthian manuscripts you have looked at place the start of his reign between four and six *centuries* ago. From various sources you have heard that he has the power to enter the dreams of his subjects. He soon learns, therefore, if anyone has done anything to harm or oppose him, and he can even reach out to kill his enemies in their sleep. Presumably that power works only upon the natives of Wyrd; outsiders like you should be immune - you hope.



The social order of Wyrd is strictly regimented. There is a soldier-caste, the Armigers. They must have lost their fighting edge somewhat by now, as the last historical reference to a war involving Wyrd dates back to the fall of Selentium. And the Warlock-King's rule ensures that his realm is never shaken by internal squabbles, of course.

The Solons are the receivers of the law. They oversee the administration of the country and

instruct the people in the proper procedures of ceremony, for Wyrð is riddled with pomp and ritual pervading every aspect of daily life.

The peasants form the mass of the population, a population probably in the region of only one or two million. Wyrð is not a land that could sustain a large society. The peasants must live in the most abject misery, worse even than the poverty of Krarth. The barren land resents their presence. From early dawn to long after dusk, they labour hard in the fields, pulling at hard roots that clog the soil.

The Seers are the only caste not restrained by the weight of tradition. They wander where they will, sleeping in the wildwood or at a peasant's hearth, ignoring the laws that the Solons apply with such diligence to everyone else. It is not clear why the Warlock-King should tolerate these curious figures - half prophet, half storyteller - who seem to make every effort to nurture *a* disrespect for his authority among the peasants. Possibly their dreams are beyond his power?

Turn to **534**.

210

(SAGE) You decide that you are going to have to use one of your skills to detect the exact location of the Sylphs. The most useful is Paranormal Sight. Do you want to use Paranormal Sight to back up your normal vision? If so, turn to **481**. If you close your eyes and rely on Paranormal Sight *alone* to guide you, turn to **97**.

211

You sigh. 'Sorry,' you tell him. 'A deal's a deal and all that, but this is more important than honour or pride. The Warlock-King has to be overthrown, and

that means you'll have to get out of the way.'

'More important than honour?' says the Elf-Lord haughtily. 'I care not a whit for the Warlock-King, but I have beaten you at chequers and that should be an end to the matter. If you now break your oath to turn back, this fault speaks loudly of your true nature. He who cannot keep his word can keep nothing at all!'

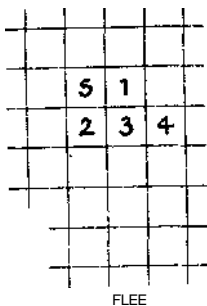
'As to that,' you reply with a shrug, 'who can say whether you truly won by fair means or foul? Elves are known through the whole of Middle-Earth as the word-breakers, the deceitful ones

His pale green eyes flash with fury. 'Do they not say in your land, *hony soyt qui mal y pense?* Reap the due harvest of treachery and troth-breach, then!' He raises his hand to the Elvan archers.

Turn to **425**.

212

The skeletal being stalks forwards to slay you, its tattered black cloak spreading like wings on the night wind. Even if you wounded it in an earlier encounter it is now whole and strong again, fed by an unearthly source of power.





Stalker

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 3 Dice
Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 8
Armour Rating: 2
Endurance: 40

If you destroy it, turn to **303**. If you *flee*, turn to **204**.

213

You plummet in total darkness down a nearly vertical shaft. Flashes of naked steel glint in the dim light as you fall, and you feel your robes being torn to shreds by razor-sharp metal blades jutting from the walls. You see a reddish glow at the bottom of the chute, apparently hurtling towards you at great speed as you topple downwards.

Do you want to try to break your fall by grabbing hold of the walls? If so, turn to **354**. If you are prepared to take whatever damage lies ahead of you at the bottom of the chute, turn to **431**.

214

(SAGE) You peer over the shoulders of the merchants and study the flow of the game. [*However, after a while you have to confess that you are confused by their moves, which appear to bear no relation to the game of Krarthian chequers as you know it.*]

Do you wish to use ESP at this stage? If so, turn to **348**. If you wish to wait to see what happens in the game, turn to **170**.

215

(ENCHANTER) They are striking at you even as you prepare the spell.

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RETREAT

Sylphs

Fighting Prowess: 7

Psychic Ability: 8

Armour Rating: 0

Endurance: *first* 14 *second* 14

Damage per blow: 1 Die+3

Awareness: 8

If you cast the spell, turn to **523**. If you retreat from the fray, turn to **226** and choose another option. If you abort the spell and then fight them, note that you must make your *fight* rolls against them on *three* Dice. If you kill them both you can proceed; turn to **350**.

216

You deploy your troops in a wedge, intending that they should cut you a path through the skeletal soldiers so that you can reach the Warlock-King himself. You are almost upon him before he realises this ploy. Hastily he orders two armoured skeletons forwards to intercept you. Fight your way past them and you can dose to do battle with their master.

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Skeleton Guards

Fighting Prowess: 9 Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 9

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: *first* 21 *second* 21

If you win or fight your way past, turn to **300**.

217

He saunters over and leans against the rail next to you. No sooner has he done so, however, than he notices the gulls circling over the sea in the direction in which you are gazing. 'Gulls!' he cries in excitement. 'That must mean a whale is over there. Cap'n - a whale off the port bow.'

Captain Lazarus emerges on deck and rushes over, clapping Kenoi on the shoulder. 'Well spotted, me boy, them gulls must be feeding off the fish that shoal around a whale.' He goes off to supervise the small boats carrying harpooners which are even now being lowered over the side of the ship. With the cry of 'Whale', the deck has been transformed into a hive of industry.

If you mention to Kenoi that you think the captain is after larger prey than whales, turn to **156**. If you just want to watch the preparations, turn to **510**.

218

(TRICKSTER) You are just in the act of surreptitiously moving a couple of pieces when you feel a tingle run down your spine. You glance up to see the Elf-Lord's gaze fixed on you. Enraged, he brings the edge of his hand down hard, shattering the board and scattering the pieces into the snow. As you scramble out of reach of his sword, he shouts a command and two bowstrings twang. An arrow hits your arm, inflicting a five-point wound (less

Armour Rating). Nothing for it now but to take them on.

Turn to **425**.

219

You walk to the end of the passage and emerge on to a balcony overlooking a courtyard. It is dark, and a bitterly cold wind buffets you. Looking down, you can see crackling braziers in the courtyard far below. A soaring structure that resembles a gate-tower rises up into the night air opposite you across the courtyard. As you watch, a 'bridge' of myriad shifting patterns appears in the air between where you stand on the balcony and the tower with its gate-house opposite. You have no option but to advance across the energy bridge. You test it by hurling small pebbles out on to it from the balcony. The translucent 'stepping-stones' appear to be solid, but every so often - at irregular intervals - each stepping-stone disappears and another one appears in the air nearby.

The trick in crossing will be to guess when the 'stepping-stone' you are on is about to vanish - and where the next one you must leap to will appear!

Turn to **240**.

220

No sooner have you spoken than it takes the scabbard with a gleeful laugh.

Turn to **419**.

221

'Sorry,' you say, shrugging. 'There seems no way in which you can be helped.' You walk through the archway into the transept, with the Faltyn's curses ringing in your ears.

Turn to **40**.

(SAGE) You touch the baby's brow and the scalded skin becomes firm and healthy once more. The women gasp in astonishment. The baby himself stares at you for a moment, then begins to cry loudly. His mother picks him up and begins to rock him gently, and he soon settles down to a contented gurgling.

'A miracle!' cries one of the other women. 'Are you one of the gods?'

'Hardly,' you tell her, smiling. 'In other lands, some mortals can do things that you obviously consider miraculous. Are there no magic-users in Wyrd?'

Everyone in the room lapses into silence. 'Only the Warlock-King,' says one sullenly. They all begin to chatter to one another, trying to dispel their sombre thought of the evil monarch.

The baby's mother comes to you with tears filling her eyes. 'I can never repay you for what you've done,' she sobs. 'I own nothing in this world, but for a few rags and scraps. Take this old woollen cloak, please. And here is a jug of milk that I got from the cow this afternoon. Apart from these meagre gifts, I can give you only my thanks and good wishes

Note the cloak and the milk on your Character Sheet. You can drink the latter in place of one meal when the text says that you should eat.

Turn to **341**.

The creature falls to the floor. Lodged in its bristly black fur you find a white-fletched arrow. You may pull this from the body and take it if you wish.

Turn to **219**.

224

Augustus is under the effect of Servile Enthralment. You must hurry before he snaps out of the spell... Quickly you command him to lower the carpet on to the pack-ice. As you touch the surface, you see that Augustus has come to and is trying to fly the carpet back up again. Your weapon puts an end to his life in a flash. You search his body and find a gold ring, a white amulet and fifteen gold pieces. Take what you want. You may also take the carpet itself (the carpet is very heavy and counts as *three* items).

Turn to **344**.

225

You make camp beside the trunk of an ancient pine. You feel that there is something uncanny in the total silence of the woods all around you. You daren't light a fire.

In a one-player party, turn to **27**. In a multi-player group, turn to **128**.

226

As you watch, the glowing red walls of the wooden hall appear to burst suddenly into flame, although you feel no heat from the blaze. On the far wall you see a passage appearing beyond the wall of fire. You advance down the passage, which soon ends in a bridge that slopes up over a deep chasm. Hundreds of metres below, you can hear, but not see, the crashing torrent that has chiselled out the gorge over thousands of years. The ramp bridge ends in a gate-tower on the opposite edge of the chasm.

You see two halberds floating in the air above the bridge, one on either side of it. At first you are puzzled by this strange sight, then realise that the halberds must be wielded by Sylphs, invisible

creatures that are almost impossible to defeat in normal combat. Still, you know that there is only one way ahead and that is forwards. There is room for only one person on the bridge.

If you would like to shoot an arrow at one of the invisible Sylphs, turn to **337**. If you do not want to bother with an arrow, decide which of the following characters is going to be the first to cross the bridge, a Sage (turn to **210**), a Warrior (turn to **463**), an Enchanter (turn to **509**) or a Trickster (turn to **392**).

227

You take the scabbard from your belt and brandish it aloft. The snow vampires drop to their knees, horror-struck, as scintillant beams of rainbow light flash from the myriad jewels. They watch you, white eyes wide and aghast, but are powerless to move as you step forwards and touch the scabbard to their flesh. Immediately the scarlet glow that suffuses them fades, their fangs and talons disappear, they lose their scowls of soulless hate.

The power of the Blood Sword scabbard has purged your companions of the taint of Undeath; they return to life and normality, all memories of a fleeting Undead existence fading like dreams . . .

The excitement has left you quite unable to sleep. You watch the irate glare of the Red Death star sink beyond the horizon. The chill light of dawn is not long in coming. You give thanks that your companions were brought back to you from Undeath, then reverently wrap the Blood Sword scabbard in its cloth.

If you have provisions, you can eat breakfast (cross off one day's worth of rations). Any player who does not loses one Endurance point.

Turn to **422**.

228

You stand over a twitching red corpse. It reverts, in death, to the familiar appearance known to you from countless adventures. Desolated at the horrific loss of your comrade(s), you bury the remains under some rocks.

You crouch by the cairn you have made, waiting for daylight, and at last drop off into a few minutes' fitful slumber.

Turn to **91**.

229

Suddenly you see a large, monstrous shape lumber out into the corridor ahead of you. You hear the thing growl as it spots you. At the same time you hear a grating noise and see that a stone slab is sliding down behind you, blocking off your escape route.

You must decide whether to race forwards and confront the monster or to throw yourself underneath the closing door. If you are in a multi-player party, each of the party members must decide this for themselves: there is no time for conferring.

When all players have decided their action and *written it down* on their Character Sheet, turn to **184**.

230

(ENCHANTER) The Faltyn appears beside you. [*Its lilting ethereal voice is cracked with fear: 'Do not expect me to stand against the old magi's powers on your behalf, mortal. In a twinkling I am gone again!'*] It begins to fade back into its faerie realm.

If you call it back, demanding its obedience, turn to **70**. If you let it go and back out of the clearing, turn to **397**.

The captain is startled to be seized abruptly from behind by two burly harpooners. 'What mutiny is this?' he roars in fury. 'Unhand your cap'n, you bilge-rats!'

His protests are ignored and he is quickly bundled into one of the rowing-boats. You are not going to be too sorry to see him go, as his insane plans would have brought disaster on the whole ship's company. You start to turn away.

'Oh ho, wait!' cries Bildad, who has taken charge. You look round to find he is addressing you. 'You can go for good measure,' he says, 'since you were doubtless privy to the cap'n's aims.'

Useless to protest. Bildad is obviously using this excuse to get rid of you because he sees you as a possible threat to his new-found authority. You allow the harpooners to thrust you into the boat with Lazarus. You are lowered into the water and forced by a volley of sewage and spittle to row away. Soon the *Questing Beast* has disappeared from sight in the morning haze.

Turn to **482**.

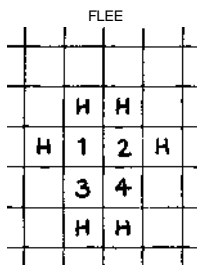
The old sea-salt leads you through the cobbled streets, barging the citizens out of his way unceremoniously. None of them seems anxious to pick an argument with him when they turn and see his tough scarred face. You soon reach the harbour, where you see two whaling ships tethered to the quay. The sailor swaggers up the gangplank of one of them.

If you want to follow him aboard, turn to **417**. If you want to slip away down the crowded quayside to where you can see a small coastal trading vessel named the *Magdalen*, turn to **326**.

You begin to set down your travelling-gear, intending to get some sleep before going any further. Even as you do, your ears strain to catch any sound from the dense forest of briars around you.

You whirl around, hearing a noise, then start to relax. Just an overladen branch tipping its burden of snow to the ground . . . But through the eddy of snowflakes that are gently drifting to the ground, you see the hard bright gleam of two cold eyes watching you from the darkness!

Hastily you snatch up your belongings. The creature is coming closer - no, there is more than one. They are all around you. Their loping tread echoes eerily through the still night. A thicket crashes aside as they close in - they are Frost Hounds, the Warlock-King's hunting pack, with fangs like icicles and eyes that are glaring pools of blackness ...



Frost Hounds

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 2 Dice+1

Psychic Ability: 9

Awareness: 9

Armour Rating: 0

Endurance: *first* 25 *fourth* 25

second 25 *fifth* 25

third 25 *sixth* 25

If you win, turn to **464**. If you get past them and *flee*, turn to **447**.

234

You mention that your quest leads you to the Kingdom of Wyrđ, and ask them if they can advise you as to your route.

There is a momentary silence as they look at one another with amused grins, then one of them lets out a bellow of laughter: 'Why, my advice is that no route is good for travelling to Wyrđ, for few that do go are likely to return!'

They all laugh, disregarding your impatience. The man who spoke before dips his finger in a pool of spilled ale and begins to draw a crude map of the coast. 'Seriously,' he says, 'if you cannot be dissuaded, I will tell you. You'll have to go over the pack-ice at this time of year. Get passage on a ship going north. The *Magdalen*, that brought us here, is a good 'un, and she'll still be berthed in the harbour here. She's the ship to take you north, or I'm a barnacle! Once you get to Port Lukvess, here - or even Dourhaven, if you can - you'll have a three-day hike over the ice to Wyrđ.'

You thank him curtly and take your leave. 'Enjoy your hike!' one of them calls out, braying with laughter. You would be inclined to teach him some manners if he were not so far in his cups.

If you have yet to arrange accommodation for the night, turn to **515**. If you would rather take a stroll around the town, turn to **306**.

235

You race across the pack-ice, away from the blood-drenched talons and fangs of the snow vampires. A peal of mocking musical laughter comes from be-

hind you, but there are no sounds of pursuit. Twin flashes of ruby-red light shoot past you through the night. Where they touch the snow, pillars of crimson mist rise up - then dissipate, leaving two figures of horrible beauty in front of you.

Return to **309** and resume the battle. The vampires start with one 'free' Round in which you don't get an action owing to the element of surprise their rematerialisation has given them.

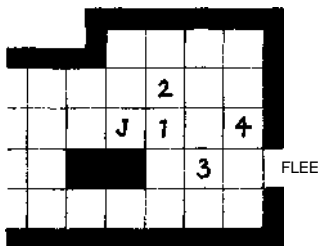
236

(SAGE) You meditate on being weightless and soon your limbs begin to feel airy. You drift slowly upwards until your feet dangle above the floor. Using the walls as a launching-pad you shove yourself gently over to the chest. You land neatly on the plinth and you feel the earth tugging at your limbs once more as gravity reasserts itself. You open the lid of the chest.

Turn to **294**.

237

He growls and draws his sword. 'No one speaks to Jadhak the Scar like that,' he says in a voice heavy with menace. 'You'll have to learn a lesson in respect. A painful lesson it'll be, too.'



Jadhak

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice+2
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
Armour Rating: 1
Endurance: 30

If you kill him, turn to **181**. If you *flee* into the street, turn to **141**.

238

For a while you sit wondering how you are going to get down to the lower galleries. Augustus must have had a way - something more convenient than travelling up and down the stair-well on his carpet, surely . . .

A short investigation of the gallery leads to a chance discovery. There are two thin white crystal rods running up the entire wall of the tower from the entrance hall to the topmost gallery. When you touch one of these you are teleported down a level. Touching the other allows you to ascend. You are able to explore the tower at whim.

Turn to **470**.

239

(TRICKSTER) The Elf-Lord looks perplexed, but you make your illicit moves so artfully that he suspects nothing. At last he is forced to concede defeat. With a slightly petulant gesture, he sweeps the pieces from the board and affects an expression of boredom.

'You lose.' You are unable to resist the taunt.

The agreement is as we said,' he replies. The Forest of Thorns lies ahead of you. We shall not oppose you if that is where you wish to go, though foul and fierce are the dangers that you shall find. Wadwos wander in the briars, and Etaynes with

hungry breath will dog your trail by night. It would be tedious to tell you of the further threats, so no mention need be made of the Eidolons and Wormes and Frost Hounds, too, that may seek you out. The staunchest mortal would suffer no dishonour if his heart quailed now. No honest man would chastise a fellow who turned back from this fell forest.'

You shrug, gathering up your belongings. 'Maybe not - but that is not a viable option. Thank you for the game.' With a wary glance at the waiting Elvan warriors, you pass by them and enter the Forest of Thorns.

Turn to **501**.

240

As you take your first step across the energy bridge the situation becomes even more, alarming. Swarming out of the arrow-slits in the courtyard walls come a host of hovering crystal skulls. They fly towards you, their crystal jaws clicking open and shut greedily. Each person in the party must cross according to their position in the battle order: Enchanter (turn to **407**), Trickster (turn to **182**), Sage (turn to **467**) and Warrior (turn to **107**).

241

Augustus's body topples over the side of the carpet. Do you want to try to catch it? If you do, turn to **257**. If you just let it fall, turn to **133**.

242

The whalers spread out rapidly across the deck, surrounding you. Their ugly faces are not improved by their sly snaggle-toothed grins. The cabin boy, who was scrubbing the planks, dashes for cover.

Jadhak cackles unpleasantly and hastens him on his way with a kick.

FLEE BY JUMPING OVERBOARD

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Jadhak

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice+2
 Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
 Armour Rating: 1
 Endurance: 30 (less any wounds you inflicted before)

Sailors

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice
 Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
 Armour Rating: 0
 Endurance: *first* 20 *fourth* 20
 second 20 *fifth* 20
 third 20

If you beat them all, turn to **478**. If you *flee* by jumping overboard into the harbour, turn to **29**.

243

The other warriors rise, growling low in their throats. One snarls something - you don't recognise the language, but at a guess he is casting aspersions on your ancestry. The other thanes grin like wolves. They do not approve of overcoming a foe by sorcery, and begin to hedge you in with their gleaming axes. You must fight - though you get a

chance to use the Enthralled Chieftain on your side, of course.

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Chieftain

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice+1
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
Armour Rating: 1
Endurance: 30 (less any wounds already taken)

Thanes

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 1 Dice+2
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 6
Armour Rating: 1
Endurance: *first* 18 *fifth* 18
 second 18 *sixth* 18
 third 18 *seventh* 18
 fourth 18

You have no avenue of retreat. If you win, turn to 334.

244

(PLAYER(S) WHO FAILED THE ROLL) *You cast sleep aside. You have no need of sleep, you who have joined the ranks of the Undead. Your flesh is the colour of freshly spilled blood. Your bones ache with a terrible arctic cold that only the warmth of slaughter can thaw. Your talons are sharp - you flex them. Sharp as the Reaper's scythe.*

(You may consider that your adventuring persona(e) is/are now dead, unless and until the text tells you

otherwise. Do not dispose of the Character Sheet(s) just yet, though.)

Your feral gaze falls on the slumbering form of a comrade nearby. Your dim recollections of a life of friendship and comradely loyalty are already fading. In Undeath, all mortals are your rightful prey.

Give the book to the other player(s), who should turn to **57**.

245

You have slept through almost to dawn. You find the landlord up and about his chores. 'How long will you be staying in Misdraex?' he asks. Not waiting for a reply, he continues: 'Headin' east, are you? To Port Quanongu?' You are about to reply when he says: 'Gettin' a boat from there, I expect.'

He leans on his broom looking at you. You think you have a chance to get a word in, but he goes on after barely drawing breath. 'Oh well, no business of mine if you don't want to tell me. Got some travellers turnin' up at noon, so I'll thank you to pay up or clear out by then.' Hearing his wife approaching, he returns to sweeping the floor.

There is an old knight sitting by the empty hearth with a bowl of soup. If you want to talk to him, turn to **143**. If you decide to be on your way, turn to **116**.

246

You find a large chunk of ice jutting up from the surface. It gives you some shelter from the wind, but not much. Huddled up against the savage cold, you slip into a fitful slumber. Bathed in the glow of Red Death, dreams steal into your sleep . . .

... You see a millennial city in the midst of tundra. Its walls shiver and crack as, in the skies above it, phantom armies clash in bloody conflict. As the battle reaches its height, bolts of red fire spit down

from the heavens to strike the city's ramparts. It shudders and then bursts like an over-burdened heart. Torrents of blood stream across the land and pour into the sea, which becomes a boiling cauldron of scarlet. Hot blood courses below the very ice where you now lie in sleep, cracking and melting it. Steam rises all around you, and hissing blood washes over you until you sob with pain and terror. As five lords cackle at your anguish, you struggle to awaken ...

Each player must roll equal to or under his or her Fighting Prowess score on three Dice in order to wake up from this nightmare. Failure means that the player takes a three Dice wound (armour gives no protection), and must try to wake up again next Round. Once a player has woken, he or she can try to wake a companion - who can then attempt the roll to wake up on *two* Dice.

Once all surviving players are awake, turn to **505**.

247

Captain Lazarus smiles, displaying his few remaining teeth. 'We're almost ready to sail. Master Bildad!' he cries to the first mate. 'Weigh anchor and take her out o' the harbour!'

The swarthy mate replies with a growled 'Aye, aye'. You take a last look at the furled sails of the ships still bobbing by the quay, then turn to watch the greasy waters of the harbour slide away beneath you and give way to the cleaner waves of the open sea.

Lazarus turns to you. 'Come down to my cabin. I have somethin' to show you.' As the *Questing Beast's* sails are raised, you follow him down into the dark cabin below the poop.

Turn to **11**.



248

(ENCHANTER) You have the skeletal Stalker under Servile Enthralment. The spell will not continue to control it for very long, for, although the creature is not itself very resistant to sorcery, you sense magical energy passing into it from an external - and inexhaustible - source. If you want to ask the creature any questions about its origins and purpose, you must be quick with them.

If you just want to kill it, turn to **303**. If you demand to know who sent it, turn to **410**. If you ask *what* it is, turn to **339**.

249

You move out across the courtyard. The demon only watches you morosely, making no move to attack. As you pass by, you see it is chained to the post on which it squats.

You approach the doorway in the far wall. You see that a trail of withered grass leads towards it across the garth. Several flowers close to the door are blackened by rot.

'It always has that effect, wherever it goes,' says the winged demon. You turn and ask what 'it' is, but the demon looks around furtively and refuses to say any more. It is with some trepidation that you step forwards and push open the door.

Turn to **275**.

250

A familiar drunken voice rings out across the deck. 'Hold fast before you go signin' on any new hands, Cap'n, for I've a score to settle first. In blood.'

You whirl around to see Jadhak coming up the gangplank, sword in hand. He calls to some of his cronies, who eagerly snatch up harpoons and

belaying pins as they dose in on you.

The captain sneers at you and then moves aside. 'Go on, then, lads,' he says. 'Have your fun.'

If you stand your ground and fight, turn to **242**. Other than that, your only option is to jump over the side; turn to **29**.

251

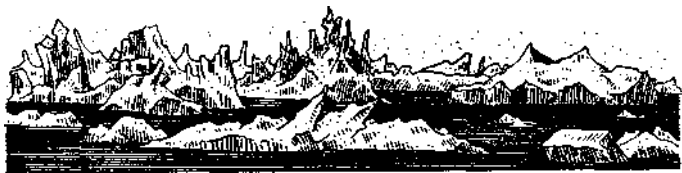
You have defeated the most bloodthirsty of the sailors. Seeing this, their less courageous comrades drop their weapons. Although they still look at you with distrust, it doesn't appear that they are going to attack you again. They fling the corpses of their fellows overboard and then sit sullenly in the forecastle of the ship.

Turn to **499**.

252

You enter what must be Augustus's personal apartments. You find various items of clothing scattered over the richly carpeted floor, including numerous fine fur cloaks and some thick blankets. You know that these will come in useful in keeping you warm as you travel over the freezing pack-ice to Wyrð.

Turn to **470**.



253

The other guards step back in momentary surprise. Before the officer can rally them, you take advantage of the confusion to retrieve your weapons and

run off. Your escape is hampered by the gathering onlookers, however, and you soon hear the shouts of the guardsmen as they close on you.

You dive into an alley in a desperate attempt to shake them off, only to find a sheer wall ahead. A dead end. The guardsmen reach the entrance to the alleyway and cry out for you to halt. You give a grim sigh and turn around to confront them.

A violet-robed man steps out of the shadows close by and calls to you. 'Greetings,' he says brightly. 'I am Augustus, a mage of Vantery.' He glances at the onrushing guards and - bizarrely - starts to unfurl a carpet in the alley. 'Let's forgo full introductions until later, though. Please step on to the rug.'

You have to retreat on to the rug anyway to parry the attack of the first guard. As you do, Augustus utters a magical word - and the carpet takes off vertically into the air! Augustus points down, grinning, at the guards staring up in amazement. Then he touches a white amulet at his throat, mumbles a few more command words, and the carpet soars away over the rooftops towards the sea.

Turn to **424**.

254

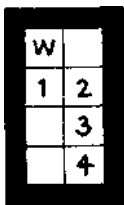
You leap to your feet, scattering the bedclothes all around you on the forest floor. You are covered in a cold clammy sweat, but you see that the corpses scattered around the clearing still stare sightlessly at the Blue Moon, now riding high in the sky. Still, your body aches from the wounds you received in your dream . . . Suddenly you hear a moan of pain from your sleeping comrade nearby, who thrashes about under his or her bedroll as if being mercilessly

dubbed. All *sleeping* players take another 2 Dice+3 Endurance wounding. You quickly rush over to your comrade(s) to waken them from the terrible nightmare.

Turn to **539**.

255

He chokes with indignant rage as you drop down on to the steps of his throne. He seems unable to collect his wits for further sorcery, and instead steps down to fight you with a stunted bronze mace.



The Warlock-King

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: 1 Die

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 16 (less any arrow-wounds already inflicted by a Sage)

If you kill him, turn to **190**.

256

In the faint glimmer of the Blue Moon and the trickle of light escaping from the shuttered lamp, you see a wizened figure in a chair. He looks up and says in a weak voice: 'Ah, it has been so long since I had visitors. Will you step closer, so that my feeble old eyes can see you?'

If you enter at his invitation, turn to **19**. If you back away from the cottage, turn to **169**.

257

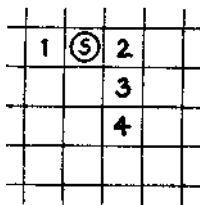
You catch the body and pull it back on to the carpet. Searching it, you find a white stone amulet, a gold ring and fifteen gold pieces in a leather bag. Take what you want. You then roll the body off the carpet and watch it spin downwards towards the pack-ice.

Turn to **133**.

258

The monster is at the bottom of the pit. While it is there, you have a height advantage and can make *fight* rolls against it on 2 Dice-1. Its first aim is to *climb* out, which it will attempt as its action each Round; to get out of the pit it must roll its Awareness or less on two Dice.

Once it is out of the pit, it can strike back at you.



FLEE

Stalker

Fighting Prowess: 8

Damage per blow: 3 Dice

Psychic Ability: 8

Awareness: 8

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 31

Note: If you wounded it earlier, its Endurance score has somehow been miraculously restored. It is gathering power from a supernatural source, increasing in strength even as you watch.

If you destroy it, turn to **303**. If you *flee*, turn to **204**.

'The prophecy was wanting in clarity,' you tell her. 'For such an incoherent jumble of ambiguous images, even the sum of a copper piece would be absurd!'

She fans the cards and draws one, seemingly at random. 'The Mask of Death,' she says, showing it to you. 'The cards seem to be saying that fortune frowns on those who have no charity in their hearts.'

An old fortune-teller's trick! You snort and snatch the cards from her. Quickly you find the one you want and throw it down in front of her. 'The Gallows. The cards seem to be saying that a greedy old woman could easily be hung by her neck from a tree!' You drop the cards in her lap and storm off.

Turn to **126**.

260

(ENCHANTER) You can think of two ways in which to rescue the Faltyn. One way would be to teleport up and free the Faltyn yourself. The only problem that you see in this way is if you misjudge the teleport and fall. The other way is to summon another Faltyn to fly up and free the first.

If you want to cast Immediate Deliverance, turn to **150**. If you want to summon a Faltyn, turn to **114**.

261

All through the night the *Questing Beast* is helpless in the grip of the storm. At last, some time after dawn, the gale suddenly abates and you are left bobbing up and down under a leaden grey sky. If you have the stomach for it, you can eat breakfast now and recover one Endurance point if wounded.

'Who can say how far the storm blew us,' groans

Lazarus. 'Bildad, will you be able to sight our way?'

The portly first mate waddles over. 'No, Cap'n. Through this canopy of storm clouds I could not catch the beady gaze of old Red Death himself.'

You look up at the sky. Not even the sun is visible. The ship seems to be hanging in unending greyness - the sky, the horizon, the sea are all one.

'We need not look far for the cause o' this ill fortune!' shouts one sailor suddenly.

'Aye, 'tis plainer than a whale's spout.'

You turn slowly to see a row of surly scowling faces watching you. The superstitious curs - they blame you for their bad luck. Your nostrils flare as you see them finger their sword-hilts.

'I'd advise you to go quietly,' says the captain. 'Whalers have a strong regard for omens. They'll cast you adrift in an open boat, but 'tis a better fate than being chopped into blubber.'

Doubtless the whalers are mean fighters with sword, harpoon and cleaver. But they have the look of all bully-boys - sly, craven, and not overly bright - so you are not so sure the battle would be as one-sided as Lazarus seems to think.

If you decide to fight them, turn to **148**. If you surrender as Lazarus suggests, turn to **36**. If you wish to use one of your items, turn to **118**.

262

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

You swig deeply from the flask in your hand. It fills you with renewed vigour. If you are wounded, you recover up to two Dice Endurance. (Your Endurance score will not go above its normal, unwounded value, of course.)

There is still enough left in the bottle for one more

draught. You (or a companion) can drink this now or later for a further two Dice Endurance,

Now return to the entry you were reading before.

263

The creature crumbles to ashes at the bottom of the boat, and its black cloak turns to grey powder which is blown away by the wind. All that remains of it are its two blue jewel-like eyes. You may take these if you wish (note them on your Character Sheet if you do so; they count together as *one* item of encumbrance). You can now easily break the ice that surrounds the boat and row back to the shore. You decide that you don't want to spend a moment longer in the forest, and you trudge grimly on.

Turn to **165**.

264

(ENCHANTER) It settles like a translucent blue haze on your arm, the touch of its lips like the stroke of an icicle. When it has taken its mouthful of blood, it spits it out on to the snow. An act of mere spite, then. Typical of a Faltyn.

It gestures into the distance. *'That way lies Wyrd. Keep the north star just to the right of dead ahead as you walk. Each night when the star called Red Death rises, you will be able to check your bearings - it should rise in the east just at the edge of your vision.'*

The Faltyn shimmers back into the nothingness from which it arrived.

Turn to **422**.

265

The correct answer was 'grass'. If you gave that answer, turn to **127**. If you gave any other answer, the creature snickers in contempt and prepares to attack you; turn to **69**.

You hold the gold ring towards the Warlock-King, who merely sneers in contempt. 'Each mortal idea you supply,' he says, 'merely becomes something that my dream-magic can turn against you.'

With a gesture, he causes the gold ring to enlarge and split into myriad glittering hoops. They fly through the air to encircle each player, then start to constrict you.

'An interesting question arises,' says the Warlock-King: 'whether the pain will cause you to let go of the web and fall, or whether you will hold on until crushed to death by the tightening hoops.'

Engulfed in a blaze of agonising pain, you decide that at least you will not hang here so that he can gloat over your death-throes. Relinquishing your grip on the metallic bars of the web, you plunge down into the infinity of nightmare he has created for you . . .



After hours of trudging, you reach the busy port of Quanongu. You have lost one Endurance point through exhaustion, and if wounded previously you lose another two Endurance for not tending to your injuries. You now feel that you cannot go another step without taking some rest. Just in front of you you see a sign advertising a tavern called the Ulrik's Bones Inn. You lean wearily against the bar and call for the landlord. He tells you that there are

no individual rooms left free, as a large party of furriers has just arrived from the north. However, for two gold pieces he will let you have a straw pallet by the fire in the common room. If you don't mind being further away from the fire, he will charge you one gold piece. Breakfast will cost another gold piece. There is only one place for a pallet by the fire, so in a multi-player party decide who gets it. After crossing off what you are paying for on your Character Sheet, turn to **364**.

268

The zombies now cluster around you in your dream, striking at you with their dead grey fists, but you find that you cannot move! Each player loses 2 Dice+3 Endurance (no armour protection) and must then roll Psychic Ability or less on two Dice to awaken. If you fail this roll, you lose another 2 Dice+3 Endurance and must attempt the roll again.

Once someone has woken up ... Turn to **254** if some players are still asleep. If no one is left asleep, turn to **420**.

269

'There, you blinkered swab!' He spits into the gutter and points out a sign right behind you. It is the Ulrik's Bones Inn.

The sailor glares fiercely and then stumps off cursing, pushing his way through the crowd of people thronging the streets.

If you wish to enter the tavern, turn to **17**. If you wish to go east down Harbour Lane, turn to **306**.

270

You are wary of the runic area on the floor and edge your way past it to the door without mishap. You

find yourself in a long gallery hung with mirrors. However, when you look into the mirrors you see no reflection, merely a solid block of shadow. You shudder, not enjoying the experience at all.

At the end of the gallery there is a wide sweep of stairs leading down to a hall set round with strange columns. Down in the shadows of the columns you see a silent procession moving by the light of large blue candles. In the midst of the figures you see a body lying on a bier. The procession will pass the base of the stairs quite shortly.

Do you want to creep down the stairs and take a closer look? If so, turn to **426**. If you would prefer to wait until the procession has passed and then descend the stairs, turn to **371**.

271

(SAGE AND/OR TRICKSTER) Your arrow strikes home, but it seems to have no effect on the now fiercely burning flare as it descends in a blue arc towards you. With a fountain of sparks the flare lands in the centre of the clearing.

Turn to **180**.

272

The door will not budge now! It has been sealed by some magical power for the duration of your combat with the creatures. Return to **95** and fight on, but all players must lose one Round's actions.

273

(SAGE) *[You look down the dizzying precipice and find your thoughts turning to your old master, Palamedes, who was always serene and untroubled in any circumstances. His calm voice seems to speak in your mind, asking you: 'How could you describe this moment?' You*

know that it is not Palamedes' voice, but your own inner self that is questioning you. What will you reply?]

'Jumping off a cliff!' (turn to **94**) or 'Floating like a feather!' (turn to **347**)?

274

The monster will be upon you in *three* Rounds: in this time a Sage could make *one* attempt to Exorcise it, requiring a roll of 10 or more on two Dice; an Enchanter could try to use Immediate Deliverance to teleport himself and any comrades to the shore; a Trickster and/or a Sage (if not Exorcising the creature) could shoot at it. It has Armour Rating of two.

If you have managed to Exorcise it, turn to **129**. If you teleport to the shore, turn to **308**. If neither of the above has occurred within three Rounds, turn to **122**.

275

The door opens on to a banqueting hall of the sort where great knights might gather. There are weapons and shields hanging on the walls (any player lacking a weapon can re-arm), and tapestries depicting mighty battles . . .

But this room is the scene of a massacre! Something surprised the warriors as they dined and drank. Edging carefully past the torn and broken corpses, you try to piece together what must have happened. Several of the bravest warriors apparently grabbed halberds from the walls, but they fought in vain. Whatever it was that attacked them, it possessed tremendous strength. Whole oak tables were splintered in the battle, and you see the marks where fangs completely punctured steel hauberks from front to back.

And now you notice something else. The blood

that covers the walls and floor is still warm and sticky. This carnage happened only a few minutes ago.

Two doors lead on from the hall. A trail of gore leads to one, presumably indicating the route taken by the monster that killed these men.

If you want to follow it, turn to **317**. If you would rather take the other door, turn to **318**.

276

It reaches for you with sharp bony fingers, its eyes flaring with grim blue light.

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FLEE

Stalker

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 8

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: 30 (less any damage already inflicted)

If you *flee*, turn to **492**. If you destroy it, turn to **303**. If you Enthral it, turn to **248**.

277

'A wise question,' she says. 'You deal with your problems in the order they arise.' She squints into the distance, seeming to look at a ridge of snow-covered pines, but focusing in fact on the events that lie in your future.

'This is not easy . . .' she announces at last. 'The Elves will use any means to win, even casting illusions over the playing-pieces to make you think you have lost. The best solution is this: advance your pieces across the board in a regular formation. The Elves cannot easily use their illusion-magic then, as you would notice at once if they made any of your pieces seem to be where it was not.'

You thank Uraba for her help and bid her farewell. Make sure you have made a note of the iron bell she gave you, then turn to **520**.

278

Ensure that you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

You unfurl the ancient parchment and read the two words written there: 'Ruat fulmen.'

A moment passes, during which you can feel the rapid build-up of unearthly power. The air becomes oppressive, a high whistling is faintly audible. Then the sorcery you have summoned is unleashed in the form of a massive white thunderbolt. It descends from out of nowhere, and if you are in combat - or just about to enter combat - you can direct it at one of your foes. The bolt inflicts five Dice damage, less the target's Armour Rating.

The scroll disintegrates into a fine white powder. You can now return to the entry you were reading before.

279

(SAGE) By considering that which cannot be rationally considered, you achieve the flash of instantaneous understanding where all familiar things are seen in a new form. The reality of things beyond the door is independent of the door itself and, realising

this with all your essence, you ignore the door altogether. Even then a tinge of your analytical mind creeps in, wondering at how easily you peer through a door of thick oak . . . Seeing through the floorboards beyond the threshold, you behold a pit full of sharp spikes.

You come to a further realisation. There is no cottage. It is merely an illusion placed in your mind by sorcerous means. The door seems to swing back and bang in the wind. But of course it is not door, nor wind, but mind that is moving . . .

Turn to **256**.

280

You don't have the time to waste on this type of meaningless puzzle: You deliver a hearty kick to each of the caskets in turn, scattering their loathsome contents of crawling insects and strange shadowy manifestations over a wall. Suddenly you hear an inhuman screech of thwarted rage, and cracks start appearing in the walls of the room.

If there is a Sage in the party, turn to **471**. If not, turn to **291**.

281

You fall into silent step behind the eerie procession. They carry the bier into a great cathedral, every centimetre of which seems built of dusty bones. You retreat into the shadows cast by a glimmering light from above. Looking up to find the source, you see a glowing Faltyn hanging crucified within an iron cage that dangles from the rafters.

The cowed pallbearers have placed the bier in front of the altar. One of them fetches a tarnished silver falchion from a concealed recess and places it across the breast of your double. You are sure the

moment has arrived when you must do something. But what?

If you want to use an item, turn to **124**. If you attack the pallbearers, turn to **516**. If you back out quietly and hurry away from here, turn to **547**.

282

Which item do you think will help you? An iron bell (turn to **460**), a gold ring (turn to **266**) or a wolf's-head clasp (turn to **503**)? If you have none of these, you have no choice but to attack, however futile that may seem (turn to **530**).

283

(WARRIOR) Everyone else on board is staring aghast at the Elemental, or kneeling on the deck in resigned prayer. But you were brought up in the Warrior caste, taught to struggle on until the bitter end. A desperate situation demands a desperate remedy.

Augustus brings his flying carpet down closer, gloating at what he believes to be your certain destruction. Good - you were counting on something like that. Your arm sweeps up and you send your sword hurtling through the air straight at his scrawny throat.

You must roll equal to or under your Fighting Prowess on three Dice in order to hit him. If you make it, turn to **446**. If you fail, your sword sails past him and drops into the ocean - but in that case you will be past worrying about its loss, as the Elemental shatters the ship from under you and casts you to a freezing fate in the depths of the sea.

284

She shakes her head weakly. 'First. . . you would

have to find the Palace of Eternal Dusk. Some say it lies at the northernmost tip of Wyrð . . . but I was told it exists only in ... our dreams ...' Her eyelids flutter and her voice becomes almost inaudible. 'Dreams that
Turn to **59**.

285

(PLAYER ON WATCH) [*The setting Blue Moon casts a ghastly light on the old pine tree, making its boughs look like skeletal arms. Suddenly you start in alarm as a creature bursts from the side of the clearing. To your relief you see that it is only a rabbit, tearing through the undergrowth at a great speed.*

If you want to wake your comrade(s), turn to 179. If you want to investigate the area from where the rabbit came, turn to 388.]

286

(SAGE) [*St Ashanax is the patron saint of wayfarers and lost travellers.*]

Armed with this knowledge, turn to **444**.

287

(ENCHANTER) You must get the amulet back - but the only way to do that is to summon a Faltyn. Seeing that you have no choice, you cast the spell. A Faltyn hovers at the edge of your vision, invisible to other mortals.

'I require a white amulet to fly this carpet,' you tell it. 'The amulet in question is around the neck of a corpse lying on the pack-ice a thousand metres below us. You will fetch this amulet.'

'*Entirely possible,*' replies the Faltyn, warming to the usual bout of haggling. '*I will outline the payment I hope to receive. As first preference, I would like two*

sparkling blue eye-jewels. If you do not have those, I will take a silver wolf's-head clasp. If you do not have that, the orb of fire would be acceptable. If you have none of those things, I will accept the crucifix of St Ashanax. Failing all of these things, I will settle for some other item.'

You must give it one of your items in the order of preference it has described. Once the item is handed over, it flits down to the ground. Minutes pass, during which you begin to suspect the fay creature has tricked you in some way, then at last you see it returning.

The white amulet is deposited in your hands.
Turn to **23**.

288

You hurry along the street to the chandler's. A thin veil of snow makes the dark cobblestones slick underfoot, and a raw wind blows from the north. Seeing a lantern in the shop window, you enter. A tall thin man wrapped in a thick woollen cloak steps over from the hearth to greet you. 'I was about to close up for the night,' he says, 'but if your business won't take long then I can serve you now.'

He has a number of things that you might find useful on your quest:

fur cloaks, fourteen gold pieces each
iron rations (seven days), two gold pieces each
gloves, two gold pieces a pair
bedrolls, six gold pieces each
brazier (with fuel), ten gold pieces.

Buy what you want and deduct the money from your Character Sheet(s). Then, as the chandler locks the shop door behind you, you set off down the street to the inn.

Turn to **75**.



289

You pick your way through the blood-spattered snow-drifts, examining the bodies. A Sage and/or a Trickster may wish to loot them of their arrows (eighteen in *all*, enough to fill three quivers) and possibly their seven longbows. (But note that these function just as normal bows in your mortal hands.) The seven Elfin swords might also be worth taking as mementoes.

Having taken what you want, turn to **501**.

290

The enchanted arrow gives off brilliant shafts of light where the glow of the battle-standard touches it. Suddenly it pulls from your grip, shrieking through the air towards the Warlock-King. He stares in alarm, but his hesitation lasts less than a second. Bringing up his arms, he creates a stone block in the air in front of him. The arrow strikes this and shatters, but as it does it gives off a dazzling burst of white light. You blink, and as your sight returns you behold a group of bowmen in white livery, ready to pour their shafts into the approaching horde.

Note that you now have the Company of White Annihilation on your side. Delete the white-fledged arrow from your Character Sheet, then turn back to **178**.

291

There is a sudden blinding flash of light and you find yourself lying on the thick green grass outside. The tower crumbles before your eyes to a heap of ivy-choked rubble. Varadaxor gets to his feet stiffly. 'You have helped me truly well in this matter,' he says. 'For your troubles I would like to give you a

small gift.' He reaches into his saddle-bag and pulls out a silver crucifix. It is a reliquary, he tells you, containing a finger-joint of St Ashanax. He shakes you by the hand and turns his old nag back towards the village in the north.

Do you have a Sage in your party? If so, turn to **286**. If you don't have a Sage, turn to **444**.

292

What was it the Elf-Lord said? *When you contend against the final foe, this sorcery of mine shall aid you*

The playing-pieces are shining with bright green light now. You catch a scent of pine and woodland blossom. Hurling the pieces down to the dust, you are not entirely surprised when they are transformed into full-size Elvan knights astride their warhorses. Horses and riders alike are caparisoned in vivid green, and their weapons and the fittings of their harness are of silver, not iron.

The Warlock-King snorts at this sorcery. 'Fay fighters!' he laughs coldly. 'My troops are not afraid of Elfin swords . . .' But you notice that despite his words his brow is now furrowed in consternation. He is not sure that his power is great enough to deal with the reinforcements you have summoned to your side.

Note that you now have the Knights of the Wildwood to fight for you. Delete the playing-pieces from your Character Sheet, then turn to **21**.

293

'You can work your passage, then,' he says. 'As we whale, you can take your turn at the oar and with the harpoon.' You have no choice but to agree.

Turn to **247**.

An unusual sight meets your eyes as you open the chest: its bottom is a pool of inky blackness from which five hands are rising up. Each hand holds an orb of a different colour. One is red, another blue, the next one is grey, and then gold, and then white. The underside of the lid, blank when you first opened the chest, suddenly begins to squirm and change shape, the metal forming itself into the semblance of a large mouth which suddenly opens and addresses you. 'These five orbs,' it says in a booming voice, 'are each charged with magical energies. These energies will be released when a word of power is spoken over them. The word "blood" activates the red orb, the orb of carnage. "Death" activates the blue orb of mystery; "pestilence" brings forth the power of the orb of plague; the golden orb of bestowing is activated by the word "favour", and the white orb of fire will release its power when commanded by the word "conflagration". You may take only *one* of these orbs, so choose carefully.'

Choose the orb you want, then turn to **297**.

295

You rap at the stout oak door. At first there is no reply, but then the door squeaks open under the weight of your knuckles. A voice says in a shaky, scared fashion: 'Who is there?' It sounds as if it could be some old, feeble person.

If you have a Sage present and he wishes to try Paranormal Sight, turn to **436**. If there is an Enchanter, and he wishes to try Detect spells, turn to **319**. If a Trickster wishes to try something, turn to **167**. If you cannot or do not want to take any of these options, turn to **256**.

(TRICKSTER) You see no impediment to cheating. A superior chequers player would not consider that he was behaving dishonourably if he used his skill to beat a novice at the game. So why should there be anything dishonourable about using your particular skills - sleight of hand, in this case?

Your strategy relies on diverting the Elf's attention, letting your right hand drift with apparent indecision over one side of the board while your left hand improves your pieces' positions on the other. You cannot over-use the ploy, of course, because he would notice that your pieces were not where they were before. On the other hand, you must not be so cautious in under-using your trickery that you lose the game . . . Getting the balance right is what will decide whether you manage to deceive him.

If you have changed your mind about cheating, you can always play the game straight (turn to 546 if you decide to do so). If you still wish to cheat, roll two Dice. Once you have rolled the Dice, you *cannot* change your mind about cheating - you have made your attempt, and the Dice will show if it paid off or not. If the score is equal to or less than your Awareness, turn to **239**. If it is higher, turn to **218**.

As soon as you make your choice, the other hands slide back into the inky blackness at the bottom of the chest and disappear from view. The fifth hand remains only until you have reached out and taken the orb from it, then it too slides away. The mouth on the underside of the lid now vanishes and with a sudden blast of wind the chest slams shut. You make your way back to the door.

You may choose to use your orb at any time in the

adventure. In addition, certain entries later on in this book may include the option of your using it. If you wish to use it at any given time, turn from the entry where you are to the relevant entry number for your orb given below. (Remember to make a note of the number of the entry that you are reading at the time first, though.)

orb of carnage [49]

orb of mystery [302]

orb of plague [161]

orb of bestowing [396]

orb of fire [310].

Once you've made a note of the number of your orb on your Character Sheet (in a multi-player party, decide who is carrying the orb), you decide to leave the chamber. Outside, you may open the other door (turn to **200**) or leave the tower altogether (turn to **406**).

298

For two more days and nights the *Questing Beast* sails northwards. Players who were seasick before must roll two Dice to see if they are still ill (2 Dice-1 if you forwent breakfast). A score of ten or more means the player loses two Endurance points as he or she is violently sick again. (A player's Endurance will not drop below one through seasickness, though.)

Shortly after dawn, three days after setting out from Port Quanongu, Lazarus accosts you. 'We lie now under the path Red Death takes through the sky each night,' he says in a conspiratorial whisper. 'Soon the World Serpent will show his head. Then a dozen harpoons and a dozen times a dozen will strike him!' He smacks his fist into his palm. 'An' then he will be dead and we will be accounted such

men that the streets of Port Quanongu will be paved with gold for us!' He wanders off.

Do you have the Sword of Loge Skyrunner? If so, turn to **191**. If you don't, turn to **469**.

299

The man, who introduces himself as Augustus of Vantery, touches a white stone that hangs at his throat and the carpet descends to the deck. While the sailors stare in blank astonishment, you gather together your belongings and bid farewell to the captain. 'May the Saviour and His Holy Mother watch over you,' he calls as you climb on to Augustus's carpet.

'And over all of you,' you reply as the carpet rises into the air. With incredible speed it sweeps up away from the ship, until you can barely see the sail as a sliver of white against the blue-grey sea far below.

Turn to **424**.

300

With measured tread you advance on the Warlock-King's dais. He fixes you with a bitter glare as you step up in front of him. 'These games have gone on long enough,' he shrieks. 'Now, behold the power of the King of Wyrd!'

He brings his thin hands together and a thunderous crack splits the air. Like a breaking mirror, the scene around you shatters into a million fragments.

Turn to **15**.

301

The old knight is well into his story and will not let you get away lightly now. After a long tale about how the Lady in Grey lured his three brothers into a

trap in which they were all slain, he tells you that her tower is but a league south of here. His voice quakes with emotion as he speaks of her: Truly she is a demon in mortal guise. No earthly woman could be so lovely, yet nurture such evil in her breast. Now, will you help me in my quest?"

If there is a Warrior in your party, turn to **125**. If you agree to help the old man, turn to **164**. If you don't want to help him, turn to **207**.

302

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

The orb of mystery holds great and deathly magic. As you speak the word that activates its power, tendrils of flickering azure smoke reach from within it. Most of these clutch at the player holding the orb, but a few reach for any others - friend or foe - standing nearby.

The player holding the orb must roll Psychic Ability or less on 2 Dice+1. If he or she fails this roll, he or she dies. Anyone else (players, as well as foes/monsters if their Psychic Ability scores are known) must make the roll on 1 Die+3.

If any players survive, they see the orb vanish and then return to the previous entry.

303

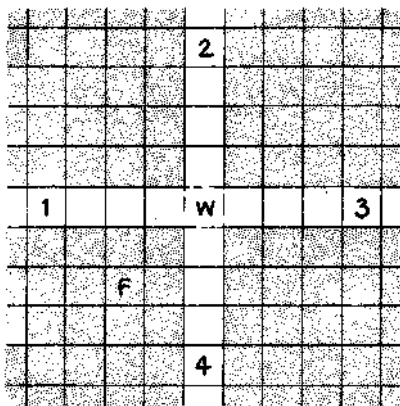
The creature's bones slowly turn into a pasty, mouldering dust, and you are sickened as you smell the fetid stink of advanced decomposition. Its tattered black robe turns from black to grey and then is blown away like a cobweb in the light forest breeze. After a few seconds all that is left of the creature are its two blue crystalline eyes sitting on top of a small mound of white dust. You may take

the eyes if you wish (mark them down on your Character Sheet; together they count as one encumbrance item). You have no desire to linger any longer in the forest, and you decide to get out of it before making camp.

Turn to **165**.

304

Edging through the web towards him would be a slow and arduous task even if you were not being harried by the flying wolf. Each Round, you are able to move *one* square closer. At the start of every Round, before you act, he sends a pulse of crackling energy through the web in an effort to dislodge you. This causes each player to lose two Dice Endurance; armour gives no protection. The flying wolf also attacks, of course; it concentrates its attacks first on the player who had the silver clasp from which it was created.



Flying Wolf

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Armour Rating: 2

Awareness: 8

Endurance: 38

The Warlock-King

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 16

Note that because you are hanging on to the giant strands of the web for dear life, you cannot *cast* spells, *throw* an axe or *shoot* an arrow. You must reach the Warlock-King's throne before you can fight. If there is a Sage in the party, though, he or she can use Levitation to float in place while *shooting* arrows. (The Levitation works automatically if you attempt it. Curiously the Warlock-King's dream-universe seems to intensify the Sage's psionic abilities.)

If you reach him, the Warlock-King dispels the wolf and prepares for the final conflict. Turn to **255**.

305

(ENCHANTER) The curtain of time, opaque to mortal eyes, flutters aside and allows you a glimpse into possible futures. *[You see a series of ordeals. First you will be subjected to ordeal by disease, then by terror, then by destruction and then forgetfulness. Lastly, you go to confront the greatest challenge of ail-but no, the vision clouds.]* You step back, beads of sweat soaking your face, too shaken to cast the spell again for the moment.

If you still wish to go on, turn to **160**. If you wish to leave the cathedral of death and go the other way, turn to **547**.

306

You push your way through the crowded streets of Port Quanongu, passing cursing sailors, oilskin-clad whalers, traders clad in expensive furs, and the occasional woman dressed in bright clothes who winks slyly at you as you pass. Finally you arrive at

the harbour. Two ships immediately attract your attention because of their sturdy, ocean-going appearance: these are whaling ships and their decks are covered with the hooks, harpoons and metal chains that form the instruments of the grisly trade of whaling. Further down the wharf you see a low-lying sloop, the *Magdalen*, which looks to be a coastal trading vessel. This is the sort of ship you are looking for, and you hail the captain. A tall, gaunt man comes to the gangplank and looks you up and down. You enquire where the ship is bound and what fare he will charge for passage. 'We're bound for Dourhaven,' he says in a rasping voice. 'If you're not afraid of hard work at the oars with my crew, passage is free.'

If you agree to work your passage at the oars, turn to **187**. If you decide that rowing for your passage is undignified, turn to **72**.

307

He gives a short mirthless laugh. 'Do so, if you wish. We are in the Dream of Wyrð, where I hold absolute sway. Since I can shape this world by my wishes, the scabbard would not fall far.'

If you drop it anyway, turn to **53**. If you think it would be better to use an item, turn to **282**. If you climb along the web towards him, turn to **530**.

308

In the twinkling of an eye you find yourself on the shore of the mere. The creature stops dumbfounded and twists around trying to spot you. You quickly fire a Sheet Lightning spell at the ice on which the skeleton is standing. The ice vanishes in a hiss of vapour, and the creature sinks like a stone into the dark waters of the mere. There is no sign of it save

its tattered cloak which rises to the surface. You decide to leave the forest as fast as possible.

Turn to **165**.

309

Dream becomes nightmare. The beautiful young dancers are ghastly vampires. Their faces are unchanged outwardly, but now wear a dreadful look of sub-human blood lust. Ivory fangs gleam over crimson lips.

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FLEE

Snow Vampires

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 1 Die+3

Psychic Ability: 7

Awareness: 8

Armour Rating: 0

Endurance: *first* 25 *second* 25

If you overcome them, turn to **366**. If you *flee*, turn to **235**.

310

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

(Special note: if you are on board a ship at the moment, the heat of the orb sets the timbers alight. The ship soon sinks, a blazing wreck. You are cast into the freezing Mistral Sea and, without hope of

rescue, you are dead within an hour.)

The orb begins to grow hot in your hand. You are forced to drop it, uttering a yelp of pain. It gives off a red glow, increasing within seconds to incandescent white heat. Jets of flame spit from it. You reach out, but realise that you can't pick it up again now. It has become hot enough to melt stone or metal, so it would turn your flesh to ashes if you touched it. You must leave it where it lies.

Turn back to the last entry you were reading.

311

You contemptuously flick aside the covering of dust on your boots and stride over to the ivory throne. You think this would be a likely hiding-place for any treasure. You quickly find a catch on the base of it and, pushing it back, you discover that the whole throne hits over to reveal a descending passageway. Lighting a torch, you see that the walls of the passage are painted with scenes depicting the worship of foul demons. You descend the steps, which wind downwards for a long way. Finally you are confronted by two doors; in front of them squats a small toad-like demon with a broad grin.

If you wish to attack the demon, turn to **69**. If you would prefer to talk to it, turn to **139**.

312

(ENCHANTER) The Faltyn seems more respectful when you have paid up: *'Cross the floor stepping only on the black squares. Of the five items you will find in the chest, the orb of fire is perhaps the most useful.'* It vanishes. Following its advice, you cross over to the chest and open it.

Turn to **294**.

313

You rush through the Gate of Fear. You notice as you pass that the 'ivy' fringing its lintel is in fact a band of hissing poisonous snakes that try to drop down on you. Luckily, none of them strikes you. As you pass under the arch of the gate, the portcullis comes clanging down. The Guardian-Beast crashes into it and then begins to yowl with pain as the snakes bite him. He retreats hurriedly, and you are left to recover your breath. After a while you make your way down a winding flight of steps. At the bottom you stumble upon a grisly sight: two or three slain Adventurers lie butchered on the floor, their eyes gouged out and their severed limbs scattered into the far corners of the room which you have just entered.

Turn to **196**.

314

It is dangling in its cage some metres above you. Which character class will try to get it down first? A Sage (turn to **351**), a Trickster (turn to **51**), an Enchanter (turn to **260**)? If none of these is in your party, turn to **221**.

315

With desperate energy you push the boat off from the side of the dark lake and start rowing to its further bank. At this moment the skeletal figure bursts through the bushes behind you. It stops at the water's edge and stares after you as you row madly away. Have you at last escaped it? Suddenly it stoops down and thrusts one of its skeletal arms into the water. Instantly a path of ice forms across the mere, angling right towards your boat and totally encircling it. No matter how you try, you

cannot escape the vice-like grip that the boat is locked in. The skeleton steps on to the bridge of ice and starts walking towards you.

Turn to **274**.

316

The tentacles flail in as you move forwards, striking you with bone-cracking force. Each player loses two Dice Endurance (armour protects normally).

You see that the tentacles are easily fast enough to block your escape. You must either fight (turn to **457**) or use an item against the creature (turn to **549**).

317

The door ahead of you swings open at your cautious push and you pass through into what may once have been a museum. It is now in a shambles. Whole sections of wood panelling have rotted and fallen away from the walls; statues lie toppled and smeared with grime; a ghastly stink of corruption seems to hang in the air like a physical presence: The trail of blood across the floor leads into a corner behind a mouldering triptych. You hear a hissing growl, full of menace, that tells you the monster is lying in wait there.

If you go back and take the other door, turn to **318**. If you advance to face the monster, turn to **440**.

318

You emerge into an open courtyard. Bare trees sway against the cold evening sky, whipped by a bitterly chill wind that seems to be blowing up for a storm. A faint glimmer of lamplight escapes from the mullioned windows of a gate-house across the courtyard. For a moment you think you can hear

the strains of distant, mournful music. You head towards it.

Turn to **35**.

319

(ENCHANTER) You cast your spell and immediately your senses warn you that there is very strong sorcery hereabouts. The magic seems to contain both the elements of illusion and death. Suddenly the door swings open, revealing the dim interior of the cottage.

Turn to **256**.

320

'Right you are,' he says. 'I've got plenty of things for you. Plenty of adventuring clobber.' He undoes his pack and displays his wares on the road. You can see immediately that most of it is junk. The only articles of any interest and their prices are:

a pouch of tahac, eighteen gold pieces

a clay pipe, six gold pieces

six arrows, one gold piece each.

After purchasing what you want, you bid him farewell. You may now enter the inn (turn to **429**) or continue on your way (turn to **267**).

321

The Elf-Lord gradually becomes anxious and indecisive. He seems completely at a loss to know how to deal with your tactics. At last, when the outer edge of your carefully constructed formation reaches his pieces, he concedes defeat.

Gathering up the pieces, he lowers his proud gaze and speaks quietly, saying: 'You set the test, this game, and I am truly overthrown. No grudge shall hold me from fulfilling my troth, though I am

less certain you would have held to your pledge.'

'That is an unmannerly remark to make!' you cry. 'You have lost fair and square. Is that any reason to cast base aspersions on the decency of others?'

He turns his chill gaze on you again. 'My words were spoken in ill-considered haste, and now I must make reparations. I shall give you a gift as recompense for the slight my tongue offered you.' He pronounces a few syllables in a language you do not recognise, and the chequers pieces glitter with green light. 'These playing-pieces now have my rune laid upon them. When you contend against the final foe, this sorcery of mine shall aid you. At that time, the harm you were dealt by my harsh words shall be undone.'

You take the enchanted pieces from him, noting as you do so that his touch is deathly cold. With an uneasy glance at the waiting Elvan warriors, you pass beyond them down the forest road.

Turn to **501**.

322

Even as you raise your weapon to parry the attack, your double vanishes. You are alone in the silent Cathedral of Death. Skulls, wrenched from their owners' necks long ago, stare at you from the walls. You notice something at your feet and stoop to pick it up. It is a skull-amulet. Keep it if you wish, then turn to **174**.

323

You hold out the glittering jewels. They give a brief, cold flare of light. There is a rush of wind across the frozen landscape. You hear a howl - distant at first, as though echoing across an unimaginable distance, it bounds closer . . .

Two translucent blue wolf-spirits leap from the jewels, which vanish from your grasp. They are larger than any mortal wolf, but land with soundless stealth on the ice. They watch the snow vampire(s) with feral intensity. Obviously the emissaries of Red Death and Blue Moon are not on friendly terms - they leap upon each other with tearing claws extended. Scarlet flesh is torn by lupine claws; vampire fangs sink through phantom blue fur . . .

As the battle rages, you gather up your belongings and flee from the spot. Clambering up the crag to a ledge, you find a crevice in which to hide. Here you wait uneasily for dawn, not daring to sleep. The hideous shrieks and snarls from the battle drift across the pack-ice to you, making sleep impossible. It is only when the chill light of morning spreads into the sky that the awful cacophony fades at last.

If you have provisions, you may wish to eat them now. Each player should cross off one day's rations, or else lose one Endurance point.

Turn to **422**.

324

You speak the word of power and the orb of fire begins to glow. You place it on the floor and suddenly flames leap from it in four prongs, each of which ignites one of the lanterns standing at each corner of the bier. A bright white light disperses the shadows, and the pallbearers (if you haven't already destroyed them) scatter in terror.

The orb has now cracked open and is useless (cross it off your Character Sheet). To your surprise you see your comrade suddenly rise up from the bier and throw away the winding sheet covering his body. Return his Character Sheet to him. He has

now faced Death himself and is not afraid of that pale rider. From now on he will enter combat fearlessly, and hence adds one point permanently to his Fighting Prowess. You are reluctant to go in the direction that the procession was taking, so you turn and take the other route.

Turn to **547**.

325

(SAGE) You feel your feet leave the flagstones beneath them and you drift slowly up to the cage. You easily unlatch the door to it, and gently remove the Faltyn from the pins that were holding it to the crucifix of human bone. You drift back to the ground with it.

Turn to **568**.

326

'Ahoy, aboard the *Magdalen*!' you call. 'How much for passage north to Wyrd?'

A tall man comes to the rail and eyes you up and down with gaunt eyes. 'I regret even the *Magdalen* cannot sail through the pack-ice that surrounds Wyrd at this time of year,' he says. 'You may come with us as far as Dourhaven, where we are bound. There is no charge for passage, as you must take your turn at the oars. From Dourhaven you can make your way to Wyrd over the pack-ice.'

If you accept the captain's offer, turn to **187**. If you object to having to row to gain your passage, turn to **72**.

327

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

You eat the bread. It is stale and far from tasty, but

surprisingly nourishing. You devour it greedily until there are only a few crumbs left in your hands.

Something startling occurs. The crumbs begin to swell, clumping together as they touch one another until you are holding a new crust. As long as you have this magic bread, you need never go hungry. At any point that the text gives you the option to eat, you may proceed as if you have done so without having to pay money or cross off rations.

Now turn back to the paragraph you were at previously.

328

Fingering the white amulet that hangs at his throat, Augustus causes the carpet to rise rapidly away from the ship. Peering down at you, he shakes his fist. His voice comes down to you on the wind. It is faint at this distance, but you can hear the tone of bitter rage well enough. 'You have won a single paltry battle, that is all. White Light has other agents - and Red Death, also! And though I harbour only hatred for the Warlock-King, he too can be counted on to oppose you for his own reasons. You will discover that his power is great indeed, greater than any mortal's. Great enough to erase you from this world like a forgotten fragment of dream!'

Augustus's ranting degenerates into a stream of indistinct curses and hysterical laughter. At last, when his wrath is spent, he stares eastwards and flies off on his carpet.

Turn to **565**.

329

You say a quick prayer over the dead body of your former companion. If you have an item that would allow you to restore him to life (such as a scarab),

then you may now use it. If you have such an item, your comrade opens his eyes fully restored; hand him back his Character Sheet. If you cannot or will not resurrect him, then you may take any items he had. You may also take the skull-amulet from around his neck if you wish.

Turn to 174.

330

'Don't be in such a hurry to leave.'

You turn at the sound of this clear young voice. Uraba is sitting on a snow-sprinkled woodpile nearby. She wears only her thin hooded jerkin, seeming not to feel the cold.

You smile and walk over to where she is sitting. 'Thought you'd forgotten to say goodbye . . .'

'No,' she replies. 'But we have to talk about something that the others might not understand. Have this ...' She hands you a small sack. Opening it, you see an iron bell. Uraba laughs at your puzzled expression. 'To ring out the old and ring in the new!' she declares, as though all is made clear by this cryptic remark.

'You're a Seer. What does that mean, exactly?'

She shrugs. 'I glimpse the future, perhaps. Maybe I just tell people what they already know. I can't really say for sure. You, for instance - I can see that you're not destined to kill the Warlock-King. Oh, you may kill him or you may not, but you're not *destined* to. You have a greater destiny than that, and the Warlock-King just happens to be an obstacle in your path.'

'And what is this "greater destiny", exactly?'

'You're asking a Seer to be exact? I'm sorry, I don't mean to sound cryptic and ever-so-wise, but the future just doesn't allow for certainty. Your destiny



is to stop the five last True Magi from returning to Legend - Red Death, Blue Moon and those others. To do this you need to reconstruct the Blade of Life, the weapon that people now know as the Blood Sword. The Warlock-King has the hilt, and that's why you've come to Wyrd to kill him.'

'Originally, perhaps,' you say, nodding. 'But seeing the misery here, the way these people suffer - that's as good a reason to rid them of his evil.'

'Good and evil are like the white and black counters in a game of chequers,' says Uraba. 'Long ago a man - a visionary - used the power of imagination to transform Wyrd into a land of ease and pleasure. The people in those days didn't toil their way through short and miserable lives. All took their fill from the cornucopia. Time wore on without season or death. The land was a changeless thing - a paradise indeed, but a paradise is an inhuman place. Man cannot endure heaven any more than he can hell

'So what happened?' you ask, when you realise she is not going to say more.

'This. Dreams have become sere and sour, the land choked by endless grey. The Warlock-King has dosed himself off from the fount of existence, and his heart has become dull and hard. He holds Wyrd in a withered grip, like a dead flower pressed in a book . . .'

'And you say he's not evil?'

She sighs and gazes bleakly to the north. 'Forget good and evil. Just destroy him if you can.' She looks back at you. 'I can look into the future for you, just one quick peek. I already know that to reach the Palace you must pass through the Forest of Thorns. The Elves will try to stop you, and in order to get past you must either fight them or beat their leader

at a game of chequers. In the forest you will be pursued by the Frost Hounds. They are the Warlock-King's outer line of defence, the first elements of his dream magic to become aware of you. Beyond the Forest of Thorns you will come to the Palace - a dangerous journey, but not a long one: the Palace is located in a twilight world of dreams where earthly geography means nothing. But before you can enter you will have to face Gristun, a monstrous ghoul who guards the three Palace gates.

'Now, I can answer only one question for you. Which will it be: "How can the Elf-Lord be beaten at chequers?" (turn to **277**), "How may the Frost Hounds be avoided?" (turn to **483**) or "What is the best way to get into the Palace"?' (turn to **518**).

331

Something tells you that the floor is not laid out in a chequer pattern by accident. It may be that either the white or the black squares are dangerous and the other colour is safe. Deciding which square to step on, you move forward.

If you decide to step on the white squares, turn to **98**. If you decide to step on the black squares, turn to **136**.

332

(ENCHANTER) The Faltyn appears, tittering to itself musically. Its tittering modulates to a kind of purring sound as it takes in its surroundings. *'Let us straight way enter into bargaining,'* the creature says. *'There is much to be gained here, unless you are not headstrong and refuse to offer me payment. Five gold pieces is the sum I require for telling you the first of the three items of information that I know about this room. Though you are displeased,'* it says, looking at your

face, *'Ifear your ire will be increased when, alas, I must tell you thatfor the other two items of information I will not accept gold, but valuables, perhaps some ofthe curios you have picked up during your travels.'*

If you cannot or will not pay the Faltyn even the sum of five gold pieces, turn back to **398**, where another option will have to be chosen. If you pay the five gold pieces, but decide you are not prepared to part with two items for the second and third pieces of information that the Faltyn has, turn to **535**. If you *are* prepared to part with items for more information, decide which they are to be and cross them off your Character Sheet now. If you want to part with only one item, turn to **312**. If you will give it two items, turn to **58**.

333

(SAGE) Levitation is the ability to negate mass by realising that it has no 'reality'. Perhaps, using the same mental disciplines you use to float upwards, you could increase your mass and float the carpet *downwards*? Perhaps you will not be able to control this sudden gain in mass, though, and you might plummet to your death? Your idea is certainly risky.

If you wish to try it, turn to *either* **121** *or* **383** (you decide which!). If you want to try another option, return to **133**.

334

You wrench open the chest standing by the wall. In it you find a battleaxe with a gold-bound shaft.

If you have a Sage in the party, turn to **541**. If not, turn to **454**.

335

You bend over him and strain to catch his dying

words. They were bound to get me... eventually...' His voice trails off momentarily as blood comes bubbling to his lips.'... Too old... I've been doing this kind of thing for too long . . .'

He stares up at you and struggles to a half-sitting position. Reaching painfully into his haversack he takes out something wrapped in velvet cloth. His hands stain the velvet with blood as he takes the object out and hands it to you. It is a magnificent scabbard made of beaten gold, the jewels encrusting it ablaze with light even though they are illuminated only by the cold beams of the Blue Moon.

'The Five are gathering power . . . ' whispers the lyrist. 'Soon they'll return to the world... then only the Blood Sword can stop them. Find the other pieces... the Warlock-King of Wyrð has the hilt... where the blade is I know not . . . ' His voice suddenly becomes deep and strong, his blue eyes clear and intense. 'I was killed for the scabbard and, now you have it, the agents of the Five will pursue you as I have been pursued. Never part with the scabbard, for it is all that protects you now. You must take up the quest... go to Wyrð; it is your only hope . . . '

He is beyond healing by any means. Only by supreme effort of will has he held on to life for these last moments. Having transmitted his quest to you, he gives a deep groan. His body slumps and his eyes freeze in the sightlessness of death, fixed on the glittering scabbard. You suddenly notice that he is much older than you thought before.

Turn to **159**.

336

He scowls at you. 'May Othag the Devourer have

both you and yer scurvy secrets, then!' he shouts before stomping off down the deck. The sun rises in the sky and the sailors sit about playing a knuckle-bones game. Above you, gulls wheel and shriek. You see the cabin boy, whose name you think is Kenoi, looking over at you with a smile on his face.

If you would like to call him over, turn to **217**. If you stay at the rail looking at the sea, turn to **510**.

337

The Sylphs are creatures of the air and cannot be harmed by weapons shot through the element of air. Cross off an arrow: it glances down into the chasm as if blown by a mighty gale. Now decide which of the following character classes is going to be the first to cross the bridge: a Sage (turn to **210**), a Warrior (turn to **463**), an Enchanter (turn to **509**) or a Trickster (turn to **392**).

338

You feel your hackles rise. Something is definitely following you. You can hear its rasping breath - no, several breaths. An eager panting - a pack of hunting dogs!

You look back and catch a glimpse of them, loping swiftly and stealthily through the black thickets of thorns. They are Frost Hounds, naked flanks blue with cold, eyes like hoarfrost and fangs that are jagged black icicles.

You quicken your pace. So do they. You start to run.

Turn to **447**.

339

Its grisly jaw gapes open and it answers in a chilling voice from beyond the grave: The trusted servant of

the True Magus was I,' it says. 'His trusted seneschal before the Blasting. He has sent me now to this mortal sphere to retrieve something long lost to him: the jewelled scabbard of the Blood Sword. Give it to me and I shall depart.'

If you wish to hand the creature the scabbard, turn to **419**. If you do not want to delay any longer before destroying it, turn to **303**.

340

You stroke the strings of your harp. The massive tentacles stop for a moment. In a frozen, eerie instant you wait within a circle of twining grey tentacles, listening to the whispering wind and the perfect notes of the harp . . .

Then the tentacles whip in to strike you with incredible force. Each player loses two Dice Endurance (armour gives normal protection). Your senses swim as you struggle to your feet and make ready to fight this monstrosity. You dimly notice that its sudden attack has left the beautiful harp splintered and broken beyond repair.

Turn to **457**.

341

'Now I know I was right to invite you in,' says Shan'hans with a smile as you rejoin him. 'By the way, I don't think I introduced Uraba . . .'

You look at the lanky girl who is now sitting cross-legged beside him. She draws back the hood of her jerkin. Your surprise at her appearance does not go unnoticed; she smiles at Shan'hans, who guffaws loudly. You had expected an ordinary teenage girl, perhaps unusually precocious at most - but she looks *nothing* like that. Her head is shaved completely except for a long ponytail of yellow hair. A band of white paint runs across her eyes, and in

the middle of her forehead there is a tattoo in the shape of an open circle. The most curious feature of all, and perhaps the most disconcerting, is her extraordinarily tranquil and self-assured expression.

'Uraba is a Seer,' explains Shan'hans, still chuckling.

'A Seer? But . . . who would think? That is, Lady Uraba, you're very young . . .!' You are making yourself seem foolish. Some of the other villagers notice your embarrassment and also smile.

'I'm no great lady,' says Uraba, grinning. 'I was born in a hut pretty much like this one, actually. No need for grand titles; just call me Uraba.'

You chat for several hours with Shan'hans and Uraba. Most of the villagers seem reluctant to talk about the Warlock-King. Even Shan'hans, whom you can now see to be a fellow of strong moral fibre, shifts uneasily whenever you mention your quest. But Uraba the Seer is quite unlike the others. Irreverent and unafraid, she has her own names for the Warlock-King - 'Old Drybreath' and 'Stifle-Dreams' - and her attitude towards him seems to be one of scorn, even pity, rather than of fear.

At last it is time to go to sleep. 'Lie here by the fire,' says a woman whom you take to be Shan'hans's wife. 'Since a Seer is with us, the night will be free of bad dreams.'

You start to mull over her words as you settle down for the night. In the event, your sleep is free of dreams of any sort. You wake in the morning invigorated and alert. Each wounded player regains Endurance points equal to half his or her rank (rounding up), plus one Endurance for the nourishing pottage and garlic buns you are given for breakfast.

It is time for you to be on your way. You thank Shan'hans and the villagers for their hospitality and bid them farewell. There is no sign of Uraba. You step out into the cold morning air and slowly trudge through the snow away from the village.

Turn to **330**.

342

The panel slides up as the monster dies, allowing the party to regroup and proceed along the passage-way.

Turn to **219**.

343

She regards you with deep, mysterious eyes. 'Less than you offered for the reading . . .' she murmurs.

'But more than you might have received,' you tell her, 'so be grateful for it.'

She gathers up the cards and shambles away between the trees. You watch her for a few moments, troubled by a curious sense of foreboding, and then turn back to the camp.

Turn to **126**.

344

You stare to the north. A feverish grey-white glare shines off the pack-ice, dazzling you. Somewhere in that direction lies the Kingdom of Wyrd. But where, exactly? And can you survive a trek of several days across the frozen sea, with a bitter gnawing wind shrieking down from the Arctic?

If you have a silver crucifix, turn to **346**. If not, but there is a Sage in the party, turn to **474**. If you have neither Sage nor crucifix, but there is an Enchanter in the party, turn to **7**. Failing any of these, turn to **559**.

345

(TRICKSTER) You push back against the guard holding you rather than pulling away as he expected you to do. He resists you, but with a sharp shift of your weight and a swivel of your hip you throw him over your back on to the ground.

Turn to **253**.

346

The crucifix jumps on its chain and points in the air, pulled by an unseen force. You say a prayer, relieved at this divine guidance, and begin to march in the direction in which the crucifix is pointing. Your vigour recovers with your spirits - any wounded players recover one Endurance point.

Turn to **422**.

347

You step off from the side of the cliff and plummet downwards sickeningly, landing with a bone-jarring impact on the pack-ice below. You lose two Dice Endurance, with armour giving no protection.

If you survive and are alone, turn to **344**. If other members of your party have yet to get down, turn to **498**.

348

(SAGE) *[Your ESP detects only the surface thoughts of the players, but even so you can still tell that the game you are watching is not chequers. Far from playing against one another, the players seem to be cooperating, moving the pieces of the chequers board into peculiar symbols and patterns. The onlookers seem entranced by the patterns that the players reveal in this manner, and concentrate on them as if searching for significance in the patterns.]*

Turn to **170**.

349

You drop your weapons on the deck. They grin and seize you in strong hands, quickly binding you with stout hemp. You hear a sharp crack in the air and turn to see one of the sailors practising with a cat o' nine tails. The other sailors jeer at you. Too late for surrender. Let's have a good whippin' party!' they shout. Soon they are drunk on black Krarthian rum, and you pass out under the pain of the merciless flogging that you receive.

Some time later you are thrown lifeless into the ocean. This is the end of your adventure.



350

Dark rolling clouds rise up from the chasm depths as you advance towards the gate-tower at the other side of the bridge. The bridge gently slopes, and you hasten up it towards the gates. Suddenly there is a loud crack and the gates swing open, spilling out a cascade of human skulls and blood which rushes towards you, threatening to wash you off the bridge!

Each player must deal with the danger in his or her own way, starting with the first player in the battle order: an Enchanter should turn to **186**; a Sage should turn to **561**; a Warrior should turn to **74**; a Trickster should turn to **409**.

351

(SAGE) Levitation is obviously the power you have

to use in this case. Focus your thoughts, then see if you succeed in your attempt by turning to either **325** or **30**.

352

An old pedlar staggers by carrying his pack, and is only too glad to stop for a chat with you. He starts stuffing his clay pipe full of vile-smelling tahac weed as he begins to praise his wares. 'Everything a bargain!' he declares, blowing a cloud of dense, choking smoke over you.

If you would like to buy something, turn to **320**. If you just want to ask him where you are, turn to **146**. If you decide it is time you were moving on, you may either go into the inn (turn to **429**) or walk through the village and continue your journey (turn to **267**).

353

There is a bronze door at the top of the stairs. You push at it and it swings back, revealing a wide low-ceilinged room. The walls and floor are constructed of a dull grey marble, but the ceiling glows like a bed of coals: there are intermittent black patches shot through here and there by a deep red glow. Occasionally, lumps of black ash fall to the floor. These immediately transform into large black millipedes that wriggle off into the darkness.

You advance cautiously, approaching a large dais of black marble set into the centre of the room. A flame burns brightly on it. As you watch, tendrils protrude up out of the marble to twist and weave around the flame, casting capering shadows across the walls. A high-pitched whistling is just audible now.

If there is a Sage in the party, turn to **105**. If not, turn to **380**.

354

You scream in agony as the razor-sharp knives set into the walls shred the flesh of your hands. Each player who grabbed the wall loses two Endurance points (armour does not count). Although you will be able to bind up your hands, your weapon handling is severely impaired and you lose one Fighting Prowess for the rest of this adventure.

Turn to **431**.

355

She smiles. You notice that she is not the ordinary toothless crone one might expect to find reading fortunes. Under her wrinkled, nut-brown skin you see the lineaments of a proud and handsome woman.

She takes a small jar from the travelling pouch around her neck. 'This is a herbal salve,' she says. 'An old preparation known to the woodfolk.' Does she mean foresters, or elves? You start to say that you cannot accept it, but she presses it into your hands. 'You will find it soothes the pain of wounds,' she adds, as she gathers up her belongings and walks towards the trees. 'May good fortune go with you on your quest.'

'Wait..!' you call out after her. You glance down at the pot of salve you are holding, then up at the trees lining the clearing's edge. She has gone.

Someone in the party should note the pot of salve on his or her Character Sheet. It holds enough for five applications, and each application will restore one Die's worth of lost Endurance points. You can use one or more applications at any time during the adventure except when you are in combat, and the player who uses it rolls one Die to see how many Endurance points he or she gets back. Remember to

cross off the applications as they are used up.

Now turn to **126**.

356

(SAGE) You attain the state of 'no mind' and close your eyes. When you open them you find yourself drifting slowly upwards. Your comrades must turn to **450**. You may join them in three Rounds.



357

You survey your meagre, motley fighting force. They are desperately outnumbered by the skeletons, but they are eager to do battle for you and may at least buy you time to reach the smirking Warlock-King. It is a slim chance - but better that you should fight and fail than never fight at all...

You call to your troops to close ranks and advance. Roll one Die for the fortunes of war. Add one to the roll if there is a Warrior in the party, as he or she will be better able to direct the tactics of your army. If you score 1 or 2, turn to **393**. If you score 3 to 6, turn to **374**. If you score 7, turn to **216**.

358

The traders nudge each other as you wander over to them, and there is a sudden flurry of activity as they start unpacking their boxes and displaying their best goods. 'Behold!' says one, holding up a snow-leopard cloak. 'The finest and the warmest furs this side of the Gouge. This will save you from the cold fingers of winter.'

Another trader pushes himself to the front, a

small metal brazier clutched in one of his hands: 'Indeed, this winter will be more severe than any in living memory, they say, which is why you need something in which to place your fire and warm your hands!'

After some haggling, you establish the prices of the various items on offer:

thick fur cloaks, ten gold pieces each

iron rations (one week), two gold pieces each

gloves, two gold pieces a pair

bedroll, five gold pieces each

brazier (with fuel), seven gold pieces each.

Buy what you want and deduct the money from your Character Sheet. If you want to continue your conversation with the traders, turn to **234**. Otherwise you can talk to the priests if you haven't done so already (turn to **83**); or you can talk to the landlord if you haven't done so already (turn to **515**); or you can leave the inn and stroll about the town (turn to **306**).

359

You give the order to advance and your army storms forwards to attack the Warlock-King's creatures. Your army is a motley but powerful force, and the skeletons stand no chance against it. The first wave of the charge breaks the Undead ranks, and in moments you see old bones being trampled underfoot in the press of the melee. A skull, caught on a spear-tip, flies through the air and lands at your feet. You kick it aside and stride towards the dais where the Warlock-King stands.

Turn to **300**.

360

Your former companion has none of the abilities he

possessed when alive. It is only a soulless husk that is attacking you, a walking dead monster created from the cadaver of your friend.

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Zombie

Fighting Prowess: 6 Damage per blow: 1 Die

Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 3

Armour Rating: as worn when alive

Endurance: 30

If you destroy this travesty of your old comrade, turn to **50**.

361

Do you have the board and pieces for chequers? If so, turn to **384**. If not, turn to **99**.

362

You have to quicken your pace until you are almost running, but the two beautiful youngsters stay ahead of you. At last they stop, completing their dance, and you hurry closer as they bring the song to an end ...

The last notes fade. There is only the forlorn howl of the night wind. The girl and youth raise their red-lit faces to smile at you.

Turn to **309**.

363

You make your way uneasily through the darkened

forest. The air is crisp with a light frost. Everything but the thin ribbon of path that you are following is lost in the deep gloom of the trees. Through the overhanging branches you can see the Blue Moon sailing like a jewel through the starry heavens. After an hour's trudging through the wood, you reach a clearing. You pause to get your breath, and stare up again at the blue orb. As you watch, it produces a momentary flare of light. For a moment you gaze into the blackness, then your eyes make out a tiny speck of blue light falling earthwards. At first no bigger than a firefly, it rapidly grows in size. A high whistling is audible in the still night air.

If there is an Enchanter who wishes to do something, turn to **33**. If a Sage and/or a Trickster wants to shoot an arrow at the flare before it reaches the ground, turn to **437**. If you just want to back out of the clearing, turn to **397**.

364

An ordinary pallet on the floor of the common room allows for *some* sleep, although you are frequently woken by drunks stumbling over you or by the loud singing of the sailors drinking at the bar. Any player who takes his or her rest in this manner will recover one Endurance point. The pallet by the fire is more restful, allowing for the recovery of half your rank in Endurance (rounding up). Remember that Endurance cannot rise above its *initial* score until you rise in rank (that is, *not* during an adventure!). Breakfast proves to be a tasteless porridge, but you will recover one Endurance for eating it if you're wounded. Any player who had no money to spend at the inn spent an uncomfortable night in the gutter outside and recovered no Endurance.

As you are finishing breakfast, a scar-faced sailor

rolls in off the street and greets the landlord. He quickly drinks three glasses of the local firewater, a potent alcohol brewed from seaweed. After this feat he inspects the common room with large bloodshot eyes, his gaze eventually coming to rest on you. 'Ah, the travellin' sort, if I'm not mistaken,' he barks. 'Mayhap yer lookin' fer a spot of work?'

If you want to tell him that you *are* looking for work, turn to **232**. If you tell him that you are not interested in any proposition that he might want to make, turn to **237**.

365

You hurry towards the bleak grey cliffs that rim the shoreline of Wyrd. You feel a tremor run through the ice under your feet. Staring down, you see through the thick distorting sheet of murky ice a single glaring red eye. Your hackles rise under its vile scrutiny.

Suddenly the ice cracks at eight points in a circle around you, sending up a flurry of splinters as eight huge tentacles rise into view. Water pours from the gigantic sucker-pads as the tentacles thrash at the air and then stretch to converge on where you are standing.

If you wish to use an item, turn to **549**. If you would rather run for the shore, turn to **316**. If you decide to stand and fight, turn to **457**.

366

The full red flesh withers away, leaving only a pile of ancient bones where the vampires fell. Dried blood covers the bones like rust.

You wearily tread back to the foot of the crag and slump down at your camp to rest. With harrowed nerves and limbs that ache with exhaustion, you soon fall into a sound sleep.

The star known as Red Death hurtles high across the heavens, casting its baleful light upon you. In your sleep, you moan and turn over.

Any players wounded by the snow vampires, *except* the player holding the Blood Sword scabbard, should turn to **558**. If no players were wounded fighting the vampires (or if the only wounded player is also the one holding the scabbard), turn to **91**.

367

You are walking on flagstones carpeted with dead leaves. A faint dry breeze rustles them eerily. Slowly, to your horror, they rise up and clump together to form a vaguely recognisable shape, something like a tall hunched man in a long cloak. This ordeal is the leaves of remembrance, which snatch away the mind's memories . . .

If you have an amber tinderbox or the orb of fire, you can quickly produce a magical flame. The dry leaves catch alight in seconds, emitting a hollow wail as they burn, and you may pass by in safety. If you used the tinderbox then you retain it; but if you used the orb then you must cross it off your Character Sheet, as it is too hot now to pick up.

Without either the tinderbox or the orb, you cannot stop the leaves rolling over you. Each player loses all recollection of his or her past life and skills, becoming a second-rank character in all respects.

You can go still deeper into the transept, on to the fifth and final ordeals (turn to **527**) or you can go again past the Handmaidens of Oblivion (turn to **188**).

368

(TRICKSTER) You realise that the speed of the

torrent, which is what makes it so dangerous, could also work in your favour. If it hits you it will dash you from the bridge, but it is moving so fast that if you jump up it will pass underneath you in an instant.

You must time your jump exactly. You focus your gaze on one of the tumbling skulls (was he once an Adventurer like you?) - when it's close enough to touch, that will be the moment when you must leap up ...

Roll two Dice. If you get equal to or under your Awareness, you flip in a forward somersault over the wave of blood and bones to safety. If you score more than your Awareness, you mistime the jump and get washed off the bridge to your death in the chasm far below.

Turn to **430**.

369

(ENCHANTER) You unroll the carpet with desperate haste as the torrent of blood is nearly on you.

Do you have the white stone amulet that Augustus wore? If you do, turn to **551**. If not, then you will not be able to operate the carpet even if you have managed to unfurl it in time. You are swept off the bridge and fall to your doom. Any surviving comrades should turn to **430**.

370

The Elf-Lord gradually becomes anxious and indecisive. He seems completely at a loss to know how to deal with your tactics. At last, when the outer edge of your carefully constructed formation reaches his pieces, he concedes defeat.

Gathering up the pieces, he lowers his proud gaze and speaks quietly, saying: 'You have outwit-

ted me, mortal. Bested me. Pass on into the Forest of Thorns, if that is truly where you wish to go - though foul and fierce are the dangers that you shall find. Wadwos wander in the briars, and Etaynes with hungry breath will dog your trail by night. It would be tedious to tell you one-tenth of the numberless threats that abound within the thickets, so I shall not mention the Eidolons and Wormes and Frost Hounds, too, that may seek you out. The staunchest mortal would suffer no dishonour if his heart quailed now. No honest man would chastise a fellow who turned back from this fell forest.'

You shrug, gathering up your belongings. 'Maybe not - but that is not a viable option. Thank you for the game.' With a wary glance at the waiting Elvan warriors, you pass beyond them down the forest road.

Turn to **501**.

371

You creep down the stairs with all the stealth you can muster. You find yourself in a huge hall with titanic pillars of marble and extravagant vaulting which is lost in gloom high above. You watch as the lights from the procession vanish from sight, then head in the opposite direction.

Turn to **547**.

372

(ENCHANTER) Augustus's eyes glaze over as your spell takes effect. He is a man of powerful will, and you can sense him struggling to break free of your command. You lose no time in telling him to disband the Elemental. His face strains and his teeth grind with the effort of trying to resist you, but still he raises his arms and cries '*Vade!*'

You look across to where the Elemental's huge fist had been sweeping towards the ship. You blink, look again - there is no sign of it now. Not even a gentle wave remains on the surface of the water to indicate that it was ever there.

Above you, Augustus grunts as he finally overcomes the Enthralment.

Turn to **328**.

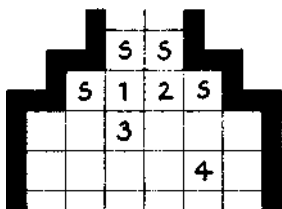
373

(ENCHANTER) Augustus wore a white stone amulet, which was possibly the control talisman he used to fly the carpet. But do you have the amulet?

If you do, turn to **23**. If you let it fall with his body, turn to **287**.

374

Your troops attempt to cut a swathe through the skeletal horde so that you can reach the Warlock-King. But your enemy realises your ploy and orders his elite guard forwards to intercept you. In order to reach the Warlock-King you must first overcome them.



Skeleton Guards

Fighting Prowess: 9

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Psychic Ability: 9

Awareness: 9

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: *first* 21 *third* 21

second 21 *fourth* 21

With the press of the melee all around, there is nowhere to *flee*. If you fight your way past or defeat them, turn to **300**.

375

You stand as if in a dream, confronted by apparently certain death and yet unflinching. The fatal stroke descends . . . One moment you see two selves, then there is only one.

You have faced your own fear of death, and you overcame it. Your Fighting Prowess increases by one point, and this gain is permanent. You are now holding a tarnished silver falchion - the *doppelganger's* weapon. Engravings on the blade identify it as Shadowcleaver. Keep it if you wish.

Hearing a roar from ahead of you in the darkness, you decide that something is displeased at the delay in its sacrifice. Not wishing to find out exactly what it is, you turn and head the other way.

Turn to **547**.

376

Which item will you try? A silver crucifix (turn to **189**), the Blood Sword scabbard (turn to **227**) or two blue eye-jewels (turn to **323**)?

377

Grouching low to avoid arrow shots, you fling yourself towards the door. You have nearly reached it when the floor seems to open up beneath you and you stumble down through a trap door (in a multi-player group the first *two* players fall through the trap door).

If there are only one or two players in the group, turn to **213**. If some players are still left in the room, they should turn to **39**.

378

(WARRIOR) You slowly take out your sword and square off against Augustus. You tilt the blade so that he can see its keen edge. 'Why don't I, just cut through the carpet and see how you enjoy a thousand metre drop?' you say.

'You're bluffing,' he says uneasily. 'You'd die too!'

He is calling your bluff; what do you want to do? If you want to cut the rug to ribbons, turn to **402**. If you want to attack Augustus, turn to **522**. If you surrender, turn to **44**.

379

(TRICKSTER) You know your plan is risky, but what is life without the spice of risk, anyway? You take hold of a thread protruding from the carpet, breathe deeply . . .

. . . And jump off into space!

The thread is unravelling quickly, but it is still giving you some buoyancy and thus slowing your fall. (Your companions, if any, follow your lead and also catch hold of the thread rather than stay on the diminishing carpet.)

The pack-ice is coming up fast. You have to let yourself go loose and roll with the impact if you can. If you score Awareness or less on two Dice (each player rolls separately, of course), you lose only one Die Endurance on hitting the ice. If you score more than your Awareness, you lose two Dice Endurance. Armour gives no protection from this.

If you survive the fall, turn to **344**.

380

The whistling grows louder and louder until it is almost unbearable. It becomes a screech that sets your teeth on edge. You cover your ears, but it

seems to drive like a needle right into your brain.

Suddenly the noise changes from a whistling to a hollow moan. As you listen, you realise it is like the sound of something breathing. A movement across the wall alerts you that you are no longer alone. The hard shadows have taken on substance, and now descend towards you like a giant bat.

A thin voice cackles through the chamber: 'So far have you come! So far! But now you must look into the face of the Dark, that shadow feared by all... Umborus, come forth to slay for your master!'

A tall, shapeless block of shadow looms before you. It has eyes that crackle like distant lightning hidden behind sombre storm-clouds. Implacable claws, tattered knives of black, reach out for you.

If anyone wields Shadowcleaver, turn to **34**. If no one has this weapon, turn to **532**.

381

(TRICKSTER) The constantly shifting bridge is a great enough problem without the crystal skulls that are now whipping past you, trying to knock you off balance. You think that the best solution is to solve one problem by using another. You lunge out and grab one of the nearest skulls and hang on grimly: its occult energy manages just to keep you both flying, but the thing zig-zags crazily towards the gate-house on the other side of the bridge. Just before it impacts, smashing itself into a thousand crystal fragments, you release your grip and roll neatly through the gate-way.

If there is anyone else to make the crossing, turn to **240**. If all survivors are over, turn to **35**.

382

(TRICKSTER) No, you just can't figure out why you

have this uneasy feeling about the cottage, but you remain watchful and uneasy as the door swings open fully to reveal the figure of someone sitting in the gloom of the interior.

Turn to **256**.

383

(SAGE) Oh no! Your mass has increased too quickly and you start dropping at an alarming rate! You smash into the pack-ice, and every player on the carpet loses four Dice Endurance, with no armour protection. Any survivors are thrown on to the pack-ice, and the carpet bobs back up to its original altitude.

If you survived, turn to **344**.

384

The Elf-Lord is tempted by your suggestion. Like most creatures of faerie, Elves are fascinated by games and conundrums. The other Elves lower their bows and peer at the board as you quickly set up the pieces.

The Elf-Lord sits down in the snow and turns the board. 'Yours shall be the black pieces,' he says. 'I take the white.'

You grunt non-committally. Choice of colour is his prerogative as the challenged player, after all. He waits for you to sit opposite him, then makes his first move.

Decide who is playing against him. If it is a Trickster who wishes to try cheating, turn to **296**. If you decide to play the game fairly (*only* a Trickster has the option to cheat!), turn to **546**.

385

The slab continues to descend for a moment, then

stops. Players on the slab cannot now get up to assist their comrades, as the distance up to the room is out of range even for Immediate Deliverance. However if a Sage wishes to Levitate up, he or she may try this by choosing *either* to turn to **512** or **356**. If there is no Sage on the slab (or if the Sage does not want to use Levitation), turn to **450**.

386

(ENCHANTER) Your mind rushes into a vision of the future; myriad possibilities pass you in a coruscating stream of images. [*Suddenly the images stop and you stare momentarily into the grinning face of a skeletal monster. Slowly it reaches for you with fleshless fingers. Something tells you that death lurks in those fingers . . .*] Then the image vanishes and you are left staring at the ever-nearer blue flare. You have just got time to retreat out of the clearing before the flare strikes the earth.

Turn to **397**.

387

The executioner drops to the ground in a flutter of black cloak. When you kick the garment aside there is nothing left except a pile of white ashes. The pallbearers around your comrade's bier step into the shadows and vanish as your comrade, with a groan, comes to his senses! Throwing off the winding sheet covering his body, he steps off the bier. Return his Character Sheet to him. Overjoyed as you are by his miraculous return, you are not given long to enjoy it. A blood-curdling shriek echoes out of the darkness ahead. You back off and go the other way.

Turn to **547**.

388

(PLAYER ON WATCH) *[You peer into the gloom of the forest edge. You can't see anything that might have scared the animal. You turn back into the clearing and walk back to the tree. Just as you get to it you feel a cold breath on your neck and, swivelling around, you come face to face with the Stalker! Its bony fingers close around your neck as you let out one last desperate scream... You die. Hand the book to your surviving comrade(s) and tell them to turn to 67.]*

389

You try think of other ways of getting down, but none occurs, and you realise that you are stuck on the carpet for good. The icy winds howl about you and you know you will be dead from exposure in a few hours. This is the end of your adventure.



390

The executioner holds his scythe aloft in triumph. Amid peals of hideous laughter that bubble up out of his decayed throat, he vanishes into the same mist that is all that remains of your comrade. (The player who vanished must play the monsters now. However, you should retain his or her Character Sheet for the moment.)

You look at the fading strands of mist, then shrug off your sad thoughts and march onwards. You enter a long silent gallery. Looking to your right, you see a line of huge mirrors hung along the wall.



In them you see yourself reflected, and also reflections of bizarre portraits that seem to hang on the left-hand wall. However, when you turn to look at the left wall you see mirrors hanging *there*, apparently reflecting a row of portraits along the *right* wall. You find the effect very disorientating, and it serves only to disturb your uneasy thoughts all the more.

After a long time you reach the end of the gallery. Here it intersects with a cavernous passageway - perhaps actually a wide high-walled avenue, as you think you can glimpse stars far above. The gallery is on a higher level than the passageway, which you can reach by descending a wide flight of stairs. Below, near the foot of the stairs, you see an eerie procession: cowed figures with large blue candles carrying a shrouded body on a bier. They pass along the avenue with slow, silent tread.

If you sneak down the stairs for a closer look, turn to **177**. If you wait in the shadows until they go past, turn to **500**.

391

(SAGE) With the help of your Paranormal Sight you can clearly see each stepping-stone as it comes into life or fades away. This helps somewhat in anticipating where to put your feet. The crystal skulls, though, are still trying to knock you off the bridge. To determine whether you can get across safely, try to roll Awareness or less on 2 Dice-1. If you fail, you fall to your death in the courtyard below. If you succeed you safely reach the other side.

Once you have determined whether you have got across or not, turn to **240** if there is still someone left on the other side of the bridge. If all surviving players are across, turn to **35**.

392

(TRICKSTER) You stride out on to the bridge. Do you want to rely on swordplay or cunning to overcome the Sylphs?

If you decide to use swordplay, turn to **100**. If you would prefer to use cunning, turn to **123**.

393

The Warlock-King has summoned a vast horde of Undead warriors to destroy you. Minute by minute, reinforcements pour up out of the ground to swell their ranks. Against such overwhelming odds, your small band of doughty fighters does not stand a chance. The skeletons advance with gruesome grins, forcing you back to the very wall of the arena. You glance back, desperately seeking an avenue of retreat, but the climb up to the tiered seats is sheer. Even if you could scale it, the sharp rusty spikes at the top would prevent your escape.

The first ranks of the skeletal army break through your troops and reach you. You face their spears with grim resolution. It is time to die.



394

You abandon Varadaxor to whatever fate the Lady has planned for him and slink out of the tower. Any Warrior in the party must deduct 150 experience points from his or her awards at the end of the adventure for this ignoble act. You cannot face the

prospect of explaining what has happened to the old man at the village, so you turn directly east and head for the coast.

Turn to **116**.

395

The Kingdom o' Wyrd,' he says, shaking his head from side to side as he chuckles. 'There's no chance of passage there 'til next spring. The whole coast around it will be solid pack-ice at this time o' year. O' course, you could go north and *walk* across, if you cared to, heh heh.' He spits into the gutter and wanders off into the crowd.

You are standing near a tavern called the Ulrik's Bones Inn. If you want to go in, turn to **17**. If you'd rather walk east down Harbour Lane, turn to **306**.

396

Make sure you have a note of the last entry you were reading.

You must roll to see which of the various gifts the orb can provide will be yours. Roll one Die:

- 1 *Life* Resurrects a slain comrade if his or her body is here. The number of Endurance points the player has on first returning to life is determined by rolling one Die.
- 2 *Health* Any wounded players regain two Dice Endurance.
- 3 *Strength* One player (determined by the highest roll of a Die if the party consists of more than one player) gains a permanent point to his or her Fighting Prowess score.
- 4 *Wit* One player gains a permanent point of Awareness.
- 5 *Talent* One player gains a permanent point of Psychic Ability.

- 6 *Curse* Each player in the party permanently loses a point from one characteristic (his or her choice as to which).

After bestowing its gift, the orb vanishes. Return to the entry you were reading previously.

397

Concealed in the undergrowth around the clearing, you watch the blue flare crash through the trees at the edge of the clearing and explode in a shower of blue sparks at its centre. The high-pitched whistling noise suddenly stops, but now you hear a hissing sound from where steam rises from the place where it struck. In the centre of the steam you can see a black stone which even as you watch cracks apart like an egg. An area of darkness spreads like a pool of shadow. Then a hunched shape rises up from the shadow as though taking shape out of the very ground. It is a skeleton dressed in black tattered robes. Its eyes are glowing blue crystals. It seems to sniff the air as it looks around.

If a Sage wishes to attempt to Exorcise it, turn to **131**. If a Sage and/or a Trickster wishes to shoot arrows at it, turn to **491**. If an Enchanter wishes to blast it with a spell, turn to **68**. If you just want to slip away quietly without attracting its attention, turn to **492**.

398

As you open the door, magical torches light up on the walls. The entire floor of this square room is covered by a black and white chequer pattern. A bronze chest rests on a stone plinth in the middle.

If there is an Enchanter in the party and he or she would like to do something, turn to **192**. If a Sage

would like to do something, turn to **494**. If there are both a Warrior *and* a Trickster, and they would like to do something, turn to **569**. Otherwise you may just walk over to the chest (turn to **331**) or you can leave the room and try the other door (turn to **200**) or you may leave the tower altogether (turn to **406**).

399

A fur rug hangs over the narrow mouth of the cave, allowing only a chink of light to escape. The light lies like a bright spear across the snow, pointing your way to safety. At least the light and the narrow gap into the cave will give you some slight advantage over the diabolic hounds . . .

All such thoughts vanish as you dive through the cave entrance. Beyond the draped fur you behold a dazzling sight. There is a huge hearth, where a pot of stew bubbles enticingly over a crackling log fire. You smell roast meat, and golden light glimmers on bottles of wine and mead. Your flesh, flayed by cold outside, now tingles as the warmth returns to it.

A woman is sitting in a chair by the fire. She looks up with a welcoming smile, and the firelight causes her eyes to twinkle. 'Hello,' she says. 'Do come in.'

You hold up your hand, warning her to stay quiet, and edge back to the cave entrance. You hear nothing outside. Your thoughts conjure an image of the hounds waiting in sinister silence, banding about the cave mouth. But when you flip back the fur and look out, you see only the slowly drifting snowflakes and the stillness of the thorn forest.

'The wolves, or hounds, or whatever,' says the woman, 'won't come in here. I don't think they like the warmth.'

'Who are you?' you ask, allowing her to lead you to the fireside. Your normal instinct is always to be



suspicious, but you are too tired and cold really to keep your guard up now. You fall ravenously on the food and drink she hands to you.

'It is time to sleep,' she says gently. Though old, she is a handsome woman. You find her words comforting, and they gradually lull you into slumber . . .

You feel her old brown hands pulling a blanket across you. It seems for a moment that you see her face looking down at you. She looks younger now, her face radiant and full of dignity and wisdom. Her gown of white samite glows in the golden firelight. . .

Turn to **403**.

400

The axe adds one to your Fighting Prowess when you use it. Remember that if you should happen to own a magical weapon already you cannot use both it and this axe at the same time!

The axe functions only for you, its rightful wielder. If you are slain, the next person to touch it becomes the new owner. In that event, tell him or her what it does. (If that player is a Warrior, he or she will need to refer to **130**, as the axe works differently in a warrior's hand.)

Now turn to **226**.

401

You raise the blue jewels to your eyes, clinging to the desperate hope that they will provide you with miraculous vision - perhaps show you some sort of escape route. That hope is soon dashed. The jewels provide only a distorted and tinted view of the massive tentacles as they whip in to strike you. Each player loses two Dice Endurance as the tentacles hit

with a force that shakes your teeth in your head. The blue jewels drop on to the ice and disappear through a crack into the cold sea beneath.

There is no time to get away now. You must fight.

Turn to **457**.

402

(WARRIOR) 'We all have to die some time,' you reply indifferently, swinging your blade down at the carpet.

'No!' screams Augustus. 'I'll set you down on the very shores of Wyrd!'

You sneer at his cowardice; all sorcerers are cowards, you know, but Augustus certainly wins the prize. With your sword prodding him in the small of his back you get Augustus to fly you to the bleak shores of the Kingdom of Wyrd. He sets you down and quickly soars away. Soon the carpet has disappeared over the horizon.

Turn to **117**.

403

You wake with a start. The woman has gone. You are not sure how long you slept, but you feel completely restored. If wounded, you can return your Endurance to its normal score.

With spirits bolstered by soothing rest, you gather your belongings to set off. Among them you find that the woman has left you a gift: an amber tinderbox. Note this on your Character Sheet if you wish to keep it.

You emerge from the cave. You would have thought it would be dawn by now, but the forest is suffused in a grey gloom that gives no clue as to the time. The thorns look ragged and evil in the twilight as you regretfully make your way from the cave and follow the path north.

Turn to **104**.

404

The pack-ice underfoot seems to become thinner as you approach the shoreline. There are none of the high and fancifully shaped ice tors, and in places you notice cracks through the ice to the chill grey sea beneath.

You are a little over a kilometre from the coast when you spot a fur-clad figure lying on the ice. He is not moving. You had hoped to make all haste in order to reach solid ground before nightfall, but if you detour to see if this stranger is alive then that may not be possible.

If you go to the stranger's assistance, turn to **465**. If you decide you cannot waste time on someone who's probably dead anyway, turn to **365**.

405

Even the dauntless First Legion of Imperial Selenium cannot hope to prevail alone against the countless unliving warriors that the Warlock-King has called up from the ground.

Fortunately, it seems that they will not have to fight alone. The Heart of the Dark begins to throb in your grip, spilling black blood into the sand by your feet. Gradually the blood begins to give off a dark miasma, which solidifies in the form of heavy-set men-at-arms in sable livery. The Battalion of Shadowstands ready to receive your commands.

Note that you now have the Battalion of Shadow on your side. Delete the Heart of the Dark from your Character Sheet, then turn back to **178**.

406

Once outside the tower, Varadaxor dips into his saddle-pouch and produces a silver crucifix. This item is a sacred reliquary,' he says. 'In it is the

finger-bone of St Ashanax. Take it - and may all the saints look over you on your travels.'

You accept the gift. (If there is more than one of you in the party, decide among yourselves who receives it.) Gently smiling to himself, the old knight rides off towards the north.

If there is a Sage in the party, turn to **286**. If not, turn to **444**.

407

(ENCHANTER) You look at the bewildering flux of stepping-stones, at the crystal skulls that are now alarmingly close, and at the hair-raising drop below . . . There are just too many permutations to worry about! You cast Immediate Deliverance, teleporting everyone across the gap to the gate-house.

Turn to **35**.

408

The panel slides shut just before the creature reaches you: you catch a glimpse of its black, spittle-flecked face and then hear it roar with rage and batter at the panel. You smile at your escape, but then the ground under your feet suddenly opens and you topple down a sloping chute.

You land with a solid thud on a marble slab, slightly dazed but otherwise unharmed. You are in a huge and bitterly cold chamber illuminated by beams of blue light which flood down into the area where you are lying. You can barely make out the far walls of the chamber, but you can see that there are hundreds of slabs arranged in precise lines across the hall. Each slab is about three metres square and is separated from the next slab by a gap of two metres. In the spaces between the slabs, the floor is covered by a greyish mist. A grey shadowy figure

moves between the slabs, slowly swinging an ornate censer from side to side. The mist spills out from this and on to the floor. As the figure gets closer you see that he is a thurifer dressed in stiff brocade robes, the shoulders of which spread upwards like wings. He wears an ornate mitred hat that keeps his face in shadow. Occasionally he stoops over a slab and inspects what is lying on it intently, but you cannot see what he is looking at because of the gloom and the mist.

The slab you are on suddenly begins sinking into the floor. All players must decide whether to jump off into the mist-filled hall or stay on the slab and see where it takes them. You will not be able to confer with your comrades (if any). When each player has written whether he or she wants to get off the slab or stay on it, turn to **60**.

409

(TRICKSTER) You are renowned for both your agility and your quick thinking. Which will save you now? Agility (turn to **368**) or quick thinking (turn to **112**)?

410

Its skeletal jaw drops open and you hear a chilling voice speak in answer to your question. 'Magus Tor sent me: he who is of the true and rightful Tor lineage. He who survived the Blasting. He now seeks to slay you. Only through me can you hope to avert your fate . . .'

If you ask it how you may avert your fate, turn to **158**. If you do not want to delay any longer but kill it now, turn to **303**.

411

You step towards the archway. Just then a feeble,

high-pitched voice calls out, disturbing the utter silence of the Cathedral of Death. You look up at the Stricken Faltyn hanging in its cage from a rafter. *Wait,* it cries weakly. *Free me and I may be able to assist you.'*

If you agree to try to help it, turn to **314**. If you ignore it and go through the archway, turn to **40**.

412

By the Sage's strength have the forces of dread darkness been dispelled. You stand for a moment in silence. It may truly be, as Sages teach, that of all the powers of Middle-Earth none can equal the mysteries of the human mind.

Dawn streaks the sky with a chill grey light. Any player with rations can deduct one day's worth for his or her breakfast. Players who do not have rations must either beg some from a comrade or else go hungry (losing one Endurance point).

Turn to **422**.

413

The grisly creature doses to fight you, gibbering with unholy joy at the thought of rending your flesh.

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Ellesgaunt

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 2 Dice+3

Psychic Ability: 7

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: 35

If you win and there are other players behind the door, turn to **342**. If you win and no players jumped behind the door, turn to **223**. If you lose but there are still other players alive (behind the door), they turn to **540**.

414

You stare aghast into the face of your pursuer. It is your former companion, lost when the executioner attacked. But he has no words of friendly greeting, no comradely smile - only the stark grin of one of the walking dead. It is a zombie with staring eyes and ashen-hued skin which stalks to attack you, a zombie formed from the body of your old comrade!

Turn to **360**.

415

(ENCHANTER) Which spell do you want to use? Ghastly Touch (turn to **173**), Eye of the Tiger (turn to **82**) or Immediate Deliverance (turn to **215**)?

416

You are not interested in taking on this battle-drunk madman. Seeing you dismiss his challenge, he stares for a moment in dumbfounded rage, then bellows to his thanes. They rise from the tables, scowling darkly at you, and move in with axes raised.

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Chieftain

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice+1
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 7
Armour Rating: 1
Endurance: 30

Thanes

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 1 Die+2
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 6
Armour Rating: 1
Endurance: *first* 18 *fifth* 18
 second 18 *sixth* 18
 third 18 *seventh* 18
 fourth 18

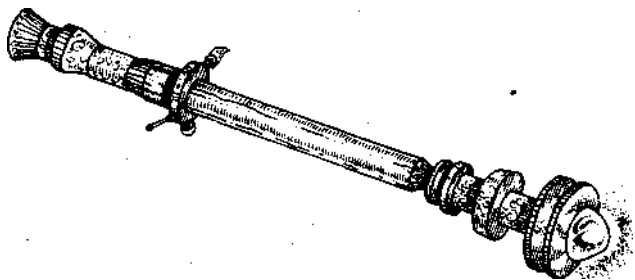
From a quick scan of the hall you see there is nowhere for you to run. If you win, turn to **334**.

417

You stride up the gangplank of the nearest whaling ship, the *Questing Beast*. The crew look at you darkly as you step on to the blubber-covered decks, your feet slipping slightly in the grease. The captain, whose face seems to have been crushed at some stage so that it has the appearance of a bruised melon, walks up to you with a limping gait. He looks you up and down with eyes that seem to burn with a strange fire. 'Arr, yes,' he growls. 'You'll be ready for a spot of whaling, I shouldn't doubt. Come with me and I'll sign you up.' He points aft to his cabin and you follow him towards it. He gestures with obvious satisfaction at the hold as you pass it. 'Down there is where we store the flesh and bones,' he says with a chuckle, 'after boilin' up the fat and saltin' what's edible. You'll soon learn the ropes . . .'

If you fought and fled from Jadhak the Scar

earlier, turn to **250**. If you either slew or never met Jadhak, turn to **473**.



418

The play begins by depicting a mythic time when the whole world was flooded, an effect which the puppeteer contrives by allowing streamers of blue and green silk to blow over the front of the booth. In the play, people must live underwater like fish. Then the saviour comes down from heaven and drains the world (the streamers are drawn away). But there is still water above the world, falling from the sky in torrents, and when the saviour sees this state of affairs he places a bung there to prevent it from flooding the world again. Thin silk ribbons show that barely a trickle now escapes into the world - seasonal showers that the saviour, in his wisdom, has allowed for.

After the saviour has gone, five nobles appear in the watery realm above the sky. Each wears a brightly coloured cloak. They stoop manfully over the bung, but for all their efforts they cannot move it and fulfil their intention of drowning the world again. Now their earthly agents are represented at the bottom of the puppet-stage, tugging at the cord which hangs from the bung.

At this point the folk hero of the play makes his entrance. He is a wandering minstrel who is seeking a fabled sword with which he can dispose of the five evil noblemen. The lacquered mannikin sweeps back and forth across the booth, but each time he is on the point of finding the sword, the audience warn him with loud cries that the agents are about to pull out the bung. Invariably he rushes back to the cord in time to prevent this, but thereby loses his chance to find the sword.

Eventually one of the nobles in the sky, the blue-cloaked one, sends two men garbed in wolf-pelts down to the world. They fall upon the harpist and kill him while he sleeps. This event seems to mark the end of the play. The puppeteer - whom you now see is a thin old woman with a slightly bemused smile - starts to pack up while the audience applaud and drop coins in front of her.

If you want to wander off now the play is over, turn to **306**. If you wish to talk to the puppeteer, turn to **79**.



419

You are floating in a timeless void. Eternal space

surrounds you - a thing without depth, colour or form. There is no sound.

How long have you been here? Time means nothing in the stark void, but your last mortal memories were of relinquishing the jewelled Blood Sword scabbard.

The giant image of the scabbard floats against the darkness before you. Taunting laughter echoes all around you, gradually filling the emptiness with a sense of time and staggering space.

The image of the lost scabbard disappears. Five majestic lords appear - huge and mighty, their presence overwhelms your senses. They radiate light. Each is robed in a single colour, shining with so agonising an absolute of that colour that your vision stings and swims. On one side you behold a lord in scarlet, on another a lord in cerulean blue. A third is clad in emerald green, another in gold. And the last of the dread lords is wrapped in scintillant white.

The red lord speaks. 'In the place where mortal voices, though those of strong lords, spoke to the shapers of men's fate, that place was called in mortal tongue, Spyte.'

The walls of Spyte towered high', continues the blue lord, 'for it was not yet at the time that feuds should crack the keystones, nor at that time had ravening flame tasted the ramparts.'

This long endured,' says the lord in green. Those who could speak of the first days of Middle-Earth spoke their lore to mortal ear. Mortal words, though those of lords most wise, were counted by all from shore to shore as inviolate commands.'

It is the turn of the gold. The brutish thing that lives in the darkness of the belly then stirred, the cursed creature that drives oath-brother to war

with oath-brother, that hellish hate that eats from within.'

'From three score now only five await the day that is to come,' pronounces the white. The images grow dim. 'From this pernicious place we shall go, escape the foul fastness of the void, and return into the mortal land. No thing on Middle-Earth now opposes us . . . !'

The five lords fade away, and you are left alone in the void.



420

You wake with a strangled cry. Your body is bathed with a cold, clammy sweat. Looking around, you see that the clearing is empty save for the corpses who stare with sightless eyes at the pallid orb of the Blue Moon, now close to setting over the soaring conifers to the south-west. Your nightmare doesn't seem to have been real, then, but your body still aches from the wounds that the zombies inflicted on you.

Turn to **539**.

421

Her eyes flash with hot anger. '*So be it!*' she snarls telepathically. The two empty suits of armour beside her throne suddenly heft their spears, then move forwards with clanking footsteps to attack you.

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FLEE

Suits of Armour

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 3 Dice

Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 4

Armour Rating: 5

Endurance: *first* 21 *second* 21

Varadaxor cannot move. Neither can the Lady in Grey, and although you can direct spells and blows at her she is well defended by her sorcerous wards.

The Lady in Grey

Psychic Ability: 9

Armour Rating: 4

Endurance: 20

If you cast *any* spell at her, turn at once to **514**. If you kill her, turn to **9**. If you *flee*, turn to **193**.

422

If you expected that the frozen surface of the Mistral Sea would be flat and smooth, you soon learn your error. It is an undulating expanse of pitted ice, as hard and as grey as iron. A shroud of sparkling snow lies over the petrified seascape, and sometimes the ice juts up in baroque tors and bergs

carved by the wind. A persistent, keening gale rushes down out of the north, cutting through your clothing and chilling you to the marrow.

Days and nights pass as you trudge ever nearer to your goal. You feel suspended like dust in a relentless white glare by day, stranded in an illimitable void by night. In all, you spend three days on the ice - and the cold takes its toll. Each player loses five Endurance points *for each day*, with the following modifiers:

one less point lost each day if you wear a fur cloak;
one less point lost each day if you have rations to eat;

one less point lost each day if you have a bedroll;
one less point lost each day if the party owns a brazier.

Also, a player who does not own a pair of gloves will suffer frostbite and must subtract one from Fighting Prowess for the rest of the adventure.

Any players who survive the three-day ordeal at last catch sight of land. It is the coast of Wyrd.

Turn to **404**.

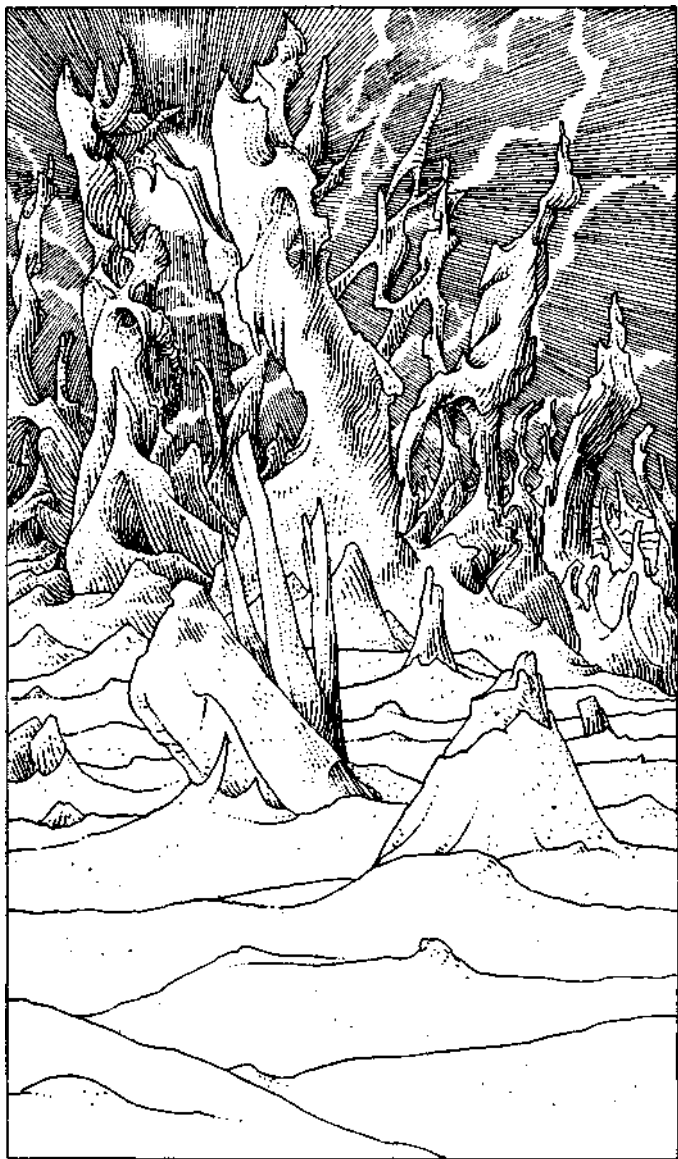
423

(ENCHANTER) The white squares on the floor shine brightly with magical energy. You cautiously decide to avoid them as you make your way over to the chest and open its lid.

Turn to **294**.

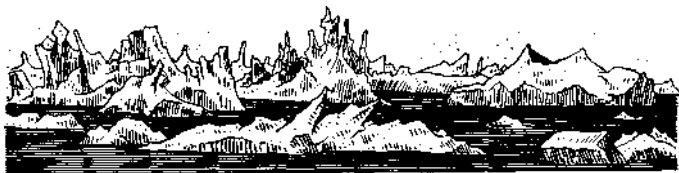
424

You are flying a thousand metres above the sea. The fishing boats are no bigger than tiny specks. 'Instead of the days you would normally have spent travelling to Wyrd,' Augustus says, 'you will now reach your destination in a matter of hours.' He shouts



exultantly as the fierce winds whip his cloak out behind him and you shoot over the sea at ever-increasing speed. You huddle down as low as you can. Despite the excitement of your flight you are chilled to the marrow by the wind. Soon you see a white blaze of light shining from the ice-pack that covers the northern ocean. To the west you can make out the thin grey line of the coast. Now you can see huge icebergs drifting in the water and you look down in amazement at the azure sea. Augustus mutters something and touches his white stone amulet. The carpet begins to veer sharply to the east.

Do you want to complain about this sudden change in direction? If so, turn to 16. If you would rather ignore it, turn to **65**.



425

The Elves are determined not to let you use the path through the Forest of Thorns. They step forwards, smiling grimly, as you prepare to fight.

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Elves

Fighting Prowess: 8

Psychic Ability: 8

Armour Rating: 1

Endurance: *first* 22

second 22

third 22

fourth 22

Damage per blow: 1 Die+1

Awareness: 8

fifth 22

sixth 22

seventh 22

Note: If a player holds the crucifix of St Ashanax, the Elves will be unable to *move* into any *one* square (the player's choice) directly adjacent to him. This represents the fact that he is able to display the crucifix to the Elves who, being soulless, must retreat from it. The player must designate at the start of each Round *which* of the squares adjacent to him he is pointing the crucifix at for that Round. He can also use the crucifix to force an Elf towards whom he *moves* to retreat one square.

In any Round in which an Elf is not adjacent to an opponent, the Elf will *shoot* an arrow. This is exactly like the *shoot* option of a Sage or Trickster, and requires the usual roll of Fighting Prowess or less on two Dice. An arrow shot by an Elf, however, inflicts a loss of 1 Die+1 Endurance (less Armour Rating, of course) if it hits its target.

You can see no value in trying to dash past the Elves. They presumably know all the forest paths, and would soon catch up with you and pick you off with their arrows.

If you win, turn to **289**.

426

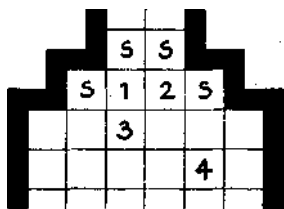
You hide in the shadows at the bottom of the stairs as the procession goes past and you get a good look at the figure lying on the bier. You recoil in horror

when you see that the corpse's face is identical to your own, its eyes staring sightless in death. An unlit lantern stands at each corner of the bier and 'your' body is wrapped around in a white winding sheet. The cowled figures carrying the bier have not spotted you.

What do you want to do? If you want to attack them, turn to **3**. If you want to use an item of some sort, turn to **109**. If you want to wait until they have passed and then set off in the other direction, turn to **547**. If you wish to follow the procession, keeping your distance, turn to **281**.

427

You deploy your troops in a wedge, intending that they should cut you a path through the skeletal soldiers so that you can reach the Warlock-King himself. The tactic works, and the superior skill and numbers of your army force the skeletons aside. You are almost at the royal dais before a band of skeletons manages to struggle free of the general melee. The Warlock-King anxiously orders them to protect him. Fight your way past and you can close to do battle with him.



Skeletons

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Fighting Prowess: 7 | Damage per blow: 1 Die+1 |
| Psychic Ability: 7 | Awareness: 6 |
| Armour Rating: 0 | |
| Endurance: <i>first</i> 8 | <i>third</i> 8 |
| <i>second</i> 8 | <i>fourth</i> 8 |

If you win or fight your way past, turn to **300**.

428

Even the distant music stops. You wait in silence and deep darkness for several heartbeats, then a grey glimmer partially illuminates the gloom. You see that you are standing in a chamber with eight very high walls. In front of you looms a door. It shimmers in the light cast by four candles set on the floor. You walk up to them and see that they are connected by lines of silver dust, forming a square within which runic symbols have been chalked. If you wish to take the candles and/or the dust, you may do so. Add them to the items on your Character Sheet(s).

Turn to **543**.

429

The landlord greets you loudly as you push open the low door leading into the main room of the inn. 'Rooms are one gold piece each,' he declares. 'Dinner likewise will also cost a gold piece.'

If you can afford two gold pieces, turn to **80**. If you cannot afford the food and the room, turn to **103**.

430

One of the players in the party has either got past the bloody torrent or been swept to a horrible death in the chasm below. In a multi-player party it may now be someone else's turn. This should be determined in battle order sequence.

For an Enchanter to determine whether he or she survives the torrent, turn to 186. For a Sage to determine whether he or she survives the torrent, turn to 561. For a Warrior to determine whether he or she survives the torrent, turn to **74**. For a

Trickster to determine whether he or she survives the torrent, turn to **409**. Once all surviving players are safe, turn to **35**.

431

You land heavily on a pile of lice-infested straw. Each player loses one Die Endurance for the fall, or 1 Die-1 if he or she grabbed the walls. Armour protects players from this damage in the usual way.

You see that you are in a high-ceilinged wooden hall. The timbers are bathed in a smouldering red glow as if they are on the point of bursting alight. At long tables around the hall, red-bearded warriors with skin tinged the colour of flame sit quaffing mead.

At the far end of the hall, the hearth-fire casts a shuddering light upon the huge form of the Chieftain. He is more than two and a half metres tall, and his axe beside him is no shorter. He stands beside a gilded treasure-chest which, though larger than any you have ever seen, is not as broad as his great shoulders.

'I hat Bors,' he bellows in the Mercanian tongue, 'governour of dis gyng!' His words may be unclear, but his tone cannot be mistaken. He is issuing a challenge to mortal combat.

If you step forwards to fight, turn to **92**. if you refuse the challenge, turn to **416**.

432

Which gate will you take into the Palace? The Gate of Carnage (turn to **528**), the Gate of Confusion (turn to **199**) or the Gate of Fear (turn to **313**)?

433

As you slowly circle the room, six arrows fly from

the slits. Distribute these among all present, rolling Dice to see who gets hit by any extra arrows. Each of the arrows does one Die damage, with armour protecting as normal. If you have survived this you will realise that staying in this room for long is not a good idea: you rush towards the barred door in front of you ...

Turn to **377**.

434

You must decide what strategy to use against the Elf, bearing in mind that as a soulless creature he is likely to be a methodical but uninspired games player.

If you use your central playing-pieces as a wedge to penetrate his defence, turn to **56**. If you decide to advance your pieces across the board in a regular formation, turn to **370**. If you employ the bluff of pulling back your central pieces and then closing the outer ones behind him as he attacks, turn to **138**. If you decide to try making an occasional random move in order to throw him, turn to **542**. If you play a straightforward game with no overriding strategic technique, turn to **147**.

435

(ENCHANTER) You grasp the touchstone and exert all your will in an effort to make it work. You sense magic within it, like a psychic trap that you must disarm. You feel into it with your Enchanter's senses, using your own energy to direct the mystic forces that will activate it.

There is a sound like a clap of thunder. A radiant blue figure stands before you, floating in empty space beside the carpet. The touchstone becomes dust that the wind snatches from your hand.

'If you wish to reach the ground, I shall convey you there safely,' says the Djinni. 'For I have been pent within that stone for a hundred thousand days and nights, and now by your action I am free.'

He spreads his arms and the wind becomes a gale. You (and your companions, if any) are borne down to the pack-ice far below. The Djinni bows and then flies up until he is lost to view in the grey clouds.

At last you count the cost of activating the touchstone - you realise that some of your own spirit-energy supplied the strength that the Djinni needed to break free. You have permanently lost one point of Psychic Ability.

Turn to **344**.

436

(SAGE) You focus your mind on a place beyond thought, beyond material reality: suddenly your head is filled with the most diverse and strange feelings and experiences. You distinctly hear one hand clapping in space . . . you see the colour of thunder . . . and a thousand other contradictory things.

If you want to dismiss these images from your mind, turn to **43**. If you try to stay with these images, turn to **279**.

437

(SAGE AND/OR TRICKSTER) Roll to hit. If you succeed, turn to **271**. If you fail, you watch as the flare strikes the ground in the centre of the clearing; turn to **180**.

438

At the instant Augustus is slain, you hear a moan of

incredulous joy go up from the sailors gathered at the rail. The Water Elemental has vanished as though it never existed. Perhaps it was, in fact, just some deadly phantasm conjured up by the wizard's magic.

You watch his corpse tumble from the carpet and disappear under the waves. A thin strand of his blood is caught in the ship's wake, and swirls in a faint pink eddy as you sail on amid great revelry from the crew. A jug of gin is passed around, but you stand aloof at the stern and watch the hovering carpet disappear into the distance. It will mark forever the spot where its master's body fell into the sea ...

Turn to **565**.

439

'So be it,' says the wizard Augustus, folding his arms. 'Die, then.'

The Water Elemental bears relentlessly down on you. You have three Rounds before it reaches the ship. That is, each player has the chance for three actions. It is possible to *shoot* arrows at the Elemental or to *cast* spells at it (though it is immune to Psychic spells). Perhaps you will be able to destroy it in time . . .

Elemental

Armour Rating: 0

Endurance: 65

Or you may prefer to concentrate your attacks on Augustus himself. He is within range of arrows and spells, but arrows shot at him would be across the prevailing wind, so the *first shoot* roll each player takes must be on 2 Dice+2 as he or she makes adjustment for the wind speed.

Augustus

Psychic Ability: 9

Armour Rating: 0

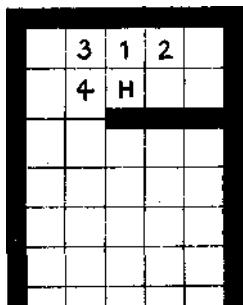
Endurance: 40

If you kill Augustus, turn to **438**. If you bring him under Servile Enthralment, turn to **372**. If you kill or Enthral the Elemental, turn to **6**. If you have failed to deal with either of them within three Rounds, turn to **89**.

440

You creep around the decorated screen, but for all your stealth the monster has heard your approach. It is a Hydra. Usually these monsters are very deadly opponents, but this one is sorely wounded already. Obviously the warriors in the hall sold their lives dear, for most of the Hydra's heads hang limp and broken. Blood oozes from great gashes in its scaly flanks. Probably it crawled here to the museum to die.

Nonetheless, it is eager to fight to the bitter end. Its huge serpentine tail rattles and throws several coils to block off your retreat. This is a conflict from which you cannot *flee*.



Hydra

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per bite: 2 Dice+2

Psychic Ability: 9

Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: 8

Note: Two of the Hydra's heads are still alive. This means that it can strike at any *two* opponents adjacent to it in each Round.

If you kill it, turn to **506**.

441

You break into the melody of the lyre, explaining that you can't play a musical instrument. The man ignores you completely and you walk away. Suddenly you hear his deep, resonant voice break into song: it tells of a mythical sword snapped into three pieces at the Blasting of Spyte, how those pieces were spread across the lands, and how the scabbard of the sword fell into lowly hands, some say into the hands of a wandering minstrel... The words of the song become progressively more indistinct as you wander away.

You feel very tired. Do you want to rest? If so, turn to **486**. If you would like to wander over to watch the game of chequers, turn to **554**.

442

You stand beside the bier on which your friend lies. You may either loot his body (take any items of interest you find on his Character Sheet) or, if you have the inclination, perhaps you would like to think of ways in which you might bring him back to life?

Something tells you that if you could light the lamps standing at each corner of the bier, your comrade's life spark would return to him. However, you know that no ordinary flame would suffice . . . If you have either the orb of fire or the amber

tinderbox, you can use them to light the lamps. (If you use the orb, remember that it works only once, and that you must now cross it off your Character Sheet.) As an alternative, you may have another item, such as a scarab, which permits resurrection.

If you do *not* resurrect your comrade, then in addition to any items marked on his Character Sheet, you can also take the tarnished silver falchion that the cowled figure left on the corpse's chest. This falchion is engraved with the name Shadow-cleaver: note it on your Character Sheet.

If you resurrect your friend, turn to **197**. If you do not, turn to **174**.

443

(SAGE) You frown, trying to *will* yourself to fly, but unfortunately nothing happens. The tidal wave reaches you and sweeps you off the bridge to your doom. Surviving players can turn to **430**.

444

You watch Varadaxor ride off, and then turn to the east.

Turn to **116**.

445

(SAGE) You have no idea how to control a magic carpet, but maybe your psionic disciplines could serve to neutralise the problem in some way?

If you would like to try Levitation, turn to **333**. If you would like to Exorcise, turn to **458**. If you want to use neither of these, return to **133** and choose another option.

446

(WARRIOR) Augustus blinks once, utterly incredulous, before your thrown sword all but decapitates him. At the instant he dies, a cry of inexpressible emotion goes up from the sailors gathered at the

rail. The Water Elemental has vanished as though it never existed. Perhaps it was, in fact, just some deadly phantasm conjured up by Augustus's magic.

You watch his corpse rumble from the carpet and disappear under the waves - taking your sword with it, unfortunately.

You spit into the grey sea, then the captain comes over and puts his arm on your shoulder. 'You saved my ship!' he says. He's nearly in tears.' .. And all our lives. Take my sword - it is the least I can do to show my gratitude.'

You take the sword - an old, somewhat rusty scimitar. As the man said, it is the least he can do for you. Record it on your Character Sheet in place of the weapon you lost, then turn to **565**.

447

The Frost Hounds stay hard on your heels. You can feel their freezing breath on your back, hear the relentless crunch of their racing paws in the snow. More come to join the pack, hearing the hideous howls of their brethren. Your legs begin to tire and your breath comes in short gasps . . .

You dash madly along the path. Up ahead, it divides in two. In one glance you take in the details: the right-hand branch continues as far as you can see, but the left-hand branch leads to a cave from which the light of a fire shines invitingly. The cave could provide shelter and safety - or a dead end from which there will be no escape . . .

If you go into the cave, turn to **399**. If you keep on running along the path, turn to **61**.

448

It occurs to you with a sudden conviction that you

must light the lanterns on your comrade's bier in order to save him. There are two items whose flame might accomplish this.

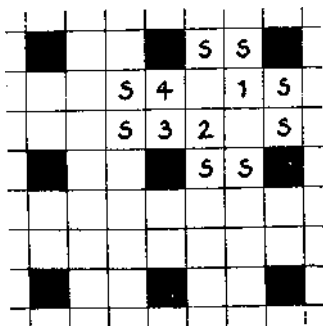
If you would like to use the orb of fire, turn to **461**. If you would like to use an amber tinderbox, turn to **195**. If you have neither of these items (or do not want to use them), return to **45** and make another choice.

449

Which item will you try? A silver crucifix (turn to **38**), the Blood Sword scabbard (turn to **32**) or two blue eye-jewels (turn to **323**)?

450

(PLAYER(S) IN ROOM) The thurifer sees you. He is young, a mere stripling with unshaven down upon his cheeks. The discovery surprises you for a moment because from his movements and stance you would have imagined him to be much older. As you falter, he gestures at the slabs, screaming invocations in a reedy voice. A number of incomplete skeletons stir at his command. Rising up to form grotesque patchwork monsters, they jump down from the slabs to give battle.



Skeletons

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Fighting Prowess: 6 | Damage per blow: 1 Die+1 | |
| Psychic Ability: 6 | Awareness: 6 | |
| Armour Rating: 0 | | |
| Endurance: | <i>first</i> 7 | <i>fifth</i> 7 |
| | <i>second</i> 7 | <i>sixth</i> 7 |
| | <i>third</i> 7 | <i>seventh</i> 7 |
| | <i>fourth</i> 7 | <i>eighth</i> 7 |

As the fleshless warriors encircle you, you notice the thurifer running off. He's not all that confident that his creatures will triumph, obviously.

If you wish to *flee* by jumping down to the slab to join your friend(s), lose one Die Endurance for the drop and turn to **183**. If you beat the skeletons, turn to **472**.

451

You turn from the body, wiping sweat from your eyes in the stifling heat, and stand ready to face the Chieftain's thanes. However, instead of attacking you, they roar in approval. One of them gets up and lurches drunkenly over to you, thrusting an ivory drinking-horn into your hands before slumping back on to his stool.

Make a note of the drinking-horn if you want to keep it, then turn to **334**.

452

(ENCHANTER) Augustus obviously belonged to a different school of magic from your own. The spells he employed were unlike any you have ever seen. But if he could operate this carpet, you feel sure that you can do so too! You rack your brains. Usually exceptional magical items such as flying carpets are tied to a magical 'focus' - a control talisman such as

an orb of fire (turn to **529**), a white amulet (turn to **373**) or a blue touchstone (turn to **435**). If you don't have any of these, or if you don't think they would help, turn back to **133** and choose a different option.

453

There are a number of strange objects littered around the room. Among them you notice a brazier, a crust of stale bread, a fluid in a grey bottle, a silver plate inscribed with a pentagram and a gilt-edged scroll. After deciding what (if anything) you would like to take, and noting this on your Character Sheet(s), turn to **455**.

454

If a Warrior took the axe, turn to **130**. If another Adventurer took the axe, turn to **400**. If no one took it, turn to **226**.

455

Of the objects you may or may not have taken:

The brazier appears to be of no immediate usefulness.

The crust of bread can be eaten at any time during the adventure except during combat; note down the entry you are at when you eat it, then turn to **327**.

The grey bottle of liquid may be drunk at any time except when in combat; note which entry you are at when you drink it, then turn to **262**.

If you took the silver plate with the pentagram symbol, turn now to **497**.

The scroll may be read at any time, *including* during a combat. Note the number **278** and go to this entry when you read the scroll. You will need to note down the entry you are at beforehand, as **278** will not direct you back there.

If you took none of these items, turn to **470**.

456

Your double vanishes. You are alone in the vast columned hallway. At your feet lies the shroud, which you may take if you wish.

A screech of rage comes from the darkness ahead. Some creature enraged by the delay of the funeral cortege, perhaps? You don't wait to find out but head off in the opposite direction.

Turn to **547**

457

You move quickly, turning your gaze this way and that. You must be alert to signs of impending attack from any or all of the eight tentacles.

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Eislaken

Fighting Prowess: 7

Damage per blow: 2 Dice

Armour Rating: 2

Awareness: 7

Endurance: *first* 11 *fifth* 11

second 11 *sixth* 11

third 11 *seventh* 11

fourth 11 *eighth* 11

Note that you are essentially fighting the Eislaken's tentacles as though they were eight individual monsters. In order *to fight a tentacle*, you must *move* to one of the holes where they emerged through the ice. Since the tentacles can stretch far overhead, they *can fight* any player, no matter where he or she is standing. The creature is immune to Psychic spells.

Once you have managed to destroy six of the tentacles, turn to **525**.

458

(SAGE) Possibly the flying carpet contains a trapped demonic spirit. These spirits are not strictly the Undead ones you would normally Exorcise. Do you want to try neutralising this one by this means? If so, turn to **28**. If not, return to **133** and choose another option.

459

You call to your forces to close ranks and advance. They outnumber the skeletons, but the latter have the advantage that they are immune to fear, fatigue or pain. Nonetheless, as the two armies clash you are confident that your side will win the day.

Roll one Die for the fortunes of war. Add one to the roll if there is a Warrior in the party, as he or she will be well able to direct the tactics of your troops. If you score 1 or 2, turn to **374**. If you score 3 or 4, turn to **216**. If you score 5 or more, turn to **427**.

460

You brandish the bell. The Warlock-King's mouth begins to curl into a contemptuous sneer, but as you start to ring the bell his expression changes to one of horror. With each resounding knell, deep cracks

appear across his crystal throne.

'Desist!' he screams, jumping to his feet. Thousands of images whirl through the skies around you, seeming to flit like phantoms out of the breaking throne. You shake the iron bell with all your might. . .

Suddenly the Warlock-King's arms drop to his sides and he gives you a look of resignation. 'It is over,' he says. The crystal crown upon his brow bursts into a thousand fragments ...

Turn to **62**.

461

You hurl the orb across the vast expanse of the cathedral nave, speaking the word of power as you do so. It bursts into a ball of fiery flame on the altar steps and immediately tendrils of flame shoot out as if guided by some unseen hand into the lanterns at each corner of the bier. Some of the cowled figures burst into flame; the others run in panic.

Turn to **197**.

462

Facing the two doors, you wonder which one to go through.

If you choose the left-hand door, turn to **398**. If you choose the right-hand door, turn to **200**.

463

(WARRIOR) You cannot see the Sylphs, but you can see the halberds. You aim your blow towards the weapons, hoping to disarm the invisible creatures. To disarm a Sylph you must make a successful *fight* roll on 2 Dice+3. Until it is disarmed, each Sylph will strike at you each Round (Sylphs have a Fighting Prowess of seven, and do 1 Die+3 damage).

Fleeing is not an option during this combat. When you have disarmed both, turn to **350**.

464

You prod one of the bodies and its skin caves in like a thin sheet of ice. Blood - or murky ice water? - sluices from the brittle veins. The corpse is gradually covered in a sparkling web of frost.

Under no circumstances will you camp here! You gather your equipment, scattered during the melee, and you set off down the path. The forest is swathed in horrible silence. Your nerves tingle, presaging danger. You bare your weapons. A growl comes from some distance to your left, just as you glimpse two dark shapes prowling next to the track off to your right. More of the devilish creatures are closing in on you.

You quicken your pace. So do they. You break into a run.

Turn to **447**.

465

You reach the stranger and roll him over. No, *her* - it is a young girl with raven-black hair, wearing a peasant's homespun under her thick cloak. She is very weak and her flesh is as white as alabaster, but she is still breathing.

If a Sage wishes to heal her, he should roll for this in the usual way, and once she has regained at least one Endurance point, turn to **48**.

If the party has no Sage but you do have a brazier *and* rations that you are prepared to share, turn to **533**.

Failing either of these, turn to **59**.

466

As you relate what the captain said to you, the

mate's eyes fill with horror: 'By the bloody maws of Koth and the Nineteen Entities of Storm! By all the eyes and appendages of Rugose Chanavolju . . . ! Just as you fear his list of imprecations is endless, he turns to you once more: 'The captain must be madder than a fiend from the Pit . . . Hunting the World Serpent. . . Lads! Lads!' He goes rushing off down the deck. The other sailors gather around, listening with mounting horror as he relates what you've told him.

Turn to **231**.

467

(SAGE) You are desperately trying to avoid the flying skulls that are trying to buffet you off the bridge and also predict where the next solid stepping-stone will appear. Things look desperate, but you think that perhaps using Paranormal Sight will help you spot which stones will appear next. If you wish to do that, turn to **391**. On the other hand, you might attempt Levitation in case you miss your footing or are knocked off the bridge. If you wish to do so, turn to **526**.

468

You decide that there is *definitely* something wrong here. But what?

If you want to wait to see what happens, turn to 144. If you want to take action now, turn to **172**.

469

The first mate, Bildad, approaches you and draws you to one side. 'I noticed you talking to the captain,' he says with mock casualness. 'What would that have been about? The weather, perhaps? But today it is unremarkable apart from the fair wind, and you

talked for a long time . . . What, then? It must have been something truly momentous as there is nothing else to discuss on a dull voyage like this.' He suddenly turns to you with a penetrating gaze.

If you tell him that your (conversation with the captain is none of his business, turn to **336**. If you tell him what Captain Lazarus said to you, turn to **466**.

470

If you have not already done so, you can now explore the top gallery (turn to **252**), the middle gallery (turn to **140**) or the lower gallery (turn to **524**).

When you have explored all three galleries (or as many as you wish to explore), you can descend to the hall and leave the tower; turn to **548**.

471

(SAGE) You have studied logic, and you understand that the Lady in Grey left this puzzle to confound her foes even after she herself was dead. Fortunately, you also realise that there is no solution to the puzzle posed by the caskets, and you might have lingered here until you died trying to solve an insoluble problem. (The puzzle purported to be one based on truth values, but any logician knows that without a frame of reference such a puzzle is merely a collection of statements with no interacting truth or falsity. Such a puzzle cannot be solved: only boldly refuted, as you did!)

Turn to **291**.

472

The slab rises again into the room, reuniting the party. The thurifer's censer still emits occasional

puffs of smoke. You may take it if you want.

Turn to **493**.

473

You explain to the captain, whose name is Lazarus, that your quest requires you to travel to the Kingdom of Wyrd. 'Not a place I'd care to visit!' he exclaims, stroking his stubbly chin. 'Still, we will be sailing across the Mistral Sea for a week or two, then putting into Dourhaven to unload our cargo. A bit north o' there, the sea'll be just a sheet o' pack-ice. You can walk across it to Wyrd if you have the stamina for such a journey. The fare to Dourhaven is fifteen gold pieces a passenger.'

If you pay him this sum, turn to **247**. If you tell him you can't afford the fare, turn to **293**.

474

(SAGE) You watch the sky, recalling the maps and charts you pored over so carefully in your younger days. In particular, you strive to remember the details from some old astronomical texts compiled in the academies of Opalar. The north star hangs like a bright bauble in a limpid green-blue sky. As dusk gives way to night, you are able to calculate your route to Wyrd by watching the curving path of the star the Krarthians call Red Death.

It is late, and cold. Now you must sleep, gathering your resources for the arduous journey that lies ahead.

Turn to **246**.

475

As you open the box you find that its lid is covered with a particularly disgusting form of leech, and that their suckers are even now draining the life-

blood from your hand: you start to feel faint. This weakness does not disappear with time: you have lost one point of Fighting Prowess *permanently*. Eventually the blood-sated leeches drop off you and you stamp them into a pulp on the stone floor of the room. If you have now opened all the caskets, turn to **291**. If not, you can now open the stone box (turn to **511**) or the wooden box (turn to **154**).

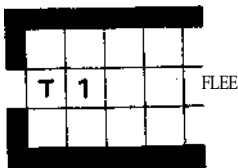
476

(WARRIOR) You splinter a couple of them into tiny crystal shards, but then the stepping-stone on which you are standing begins to vanish. Another one must be appearing nearby, but the skulls are now clustered right around you and you cannot see it. As you plummet to your doom, you hear the chiming laughter of the skulls above you . . .

If there is anyone else left to cross, turn to **240**. If all surviving players are now across, turn to **35**.

477

(DUELLINGPLAYER) You stride forward to accept Thanatos's challenge. If you are accompanied by any comrades, they are held back from joining the fray by an unseen wall of force. They can only watch and wait for the battle's outcome.



Thanatos the Giant

Fighting Prowess: 8

Psychic Ability: 8

Armour Rating: 2

Endurance: 45

Damage per blow; 4 Dice

Awareness: 7

Note: The skull-amulet, if you have it, gives some protection against Thanatos, who derives his power from the God of the Unliving, Chernobog. If you are wearing this amulet, you can add seven to your Armour Rating and damage scores for the duration of this fight.

If you defeat Thanatos, turn to **111**. If you *flee* back into the leaves of remembrance, turn to **367**.

478

The deck of the whaling ship is now even more a scene of carnage than it was before the fight. The ruffians lie about in spreading pools of blood that mingle on the planks with the gore of the whales they have lately slaughtered.

'Admirable skill,' says a voice from above. 'And waste no time on remorse - they were all loutish cut-throats who would have killed their own mothers in a tap-room brawl!'

You look up, blinking against the cold white glare of the sky. A flying carpet is hovering above the deck!

The violet-robed man on it stoops and gives you a hand up. 'Your battle has attracted the attention of the town guard,' he says, 'and I see them heading this way even now. No matter - the magic carpet of Augustus is equal to the problem. Rise, o rug, and take us hence! North and east, *pro tempore*.'

The carpet swivels around and then soars up into the air with dizzying speed. You watch the *Questing Beast* dwindle until it is just a matchwood toy far, far below.

Turn to **424**.

479

'Fire' was *not* the correct answer! The demon sud-

denly extends its sharp claws and leaps forwards to attack you.

Turn to **69**.

480

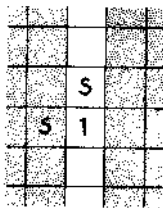
Derzu recommends an inn called The Barrel of Gin which is situated just off the waterfront. A bunk there costs one gold piece a night. After you have paid the money, you wander the streets of the town then settle down for the night. You will get half your rank in Endurance during your sleep (round up fractions). If you take breakfast (one gold piece) you will recover another Endurance point (don't forget you can at no stage exceed the total initial Endurance on your Character Sheet).

If you have any comrades who went to the Ulrik's Bones Inn, they can check **205** for the benefits of their sleep. After that, turn to **4**.

481

(SAGE) It gradually dawns on you that you have made the wrong choice. Your eyes tell you that a halberd is about to strike you at the same time that your inner vision suggests the move is just a feint. Gradually, bewildered, you feel your psionic sense fade.

You must rely on your sight to do battle with these invisible entities; make your *fight* rolls on three Dice.



RETREAT

Sylphs

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 1 Die+3
Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 8
Armour Rating: 0
Endurance: *first* 14 *second* 14

You cannot advance along the bridge because one of the Sylphs blocks your way. If you retreat, turn to **226** and make another choice. If you slay them both you can proceed; turn to **350**.

482

Hours pass. You row on across the grey waters. You don't have much idea where you are heading, but at least the exercise keeps you warm . . .

Suddenly Lazarus, who has been slumped disconsolately in the bows all this time, gets to his feet and brandishes his falchion. 'Tis you I've to blame!' he shrieks. 'You lost me my ship!'

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Lazarus

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 1 Die+2
Psychic Ability: 6 Awareness: 6
Armour Rating: 0
Endurance: 14

If you win, turn to **153**.

483

She closes her eyes and considers the question. It is eerie to think she is looking into your own future . . .

'Seek the light,' she says abruptly. Noticing your puzzlement at this, she adds: 'You will know when you find it.'

You thank Uraba for her help and bid her farewell. Make sure you have made a note of the iron bell she gave you, then turn to **520**.

484

(SAGE) Concentrating your mental energies, you lock on to the creature's thought patterns. Suddenly it spins around, flailing at the air as if it is being assaulted by a swarm of stinging insects. Its blue eyes light up and it starts stumbling towards where you stand.

If you wish to break cover and run, turn to **492**. If you wish to continue your psionic assault, turn to **41**.

485

You realise almost at once that you have made a horrible mistake. A sepulchral blue-grey gleam suffuses the corpse. With a voiceless snarl it casts off the shroud and arises with stiff movements. Its face is fixed in a macabre scowl. It rushes forwards, hands raised like rigid talons, intent on your death.

Its characteristics are the same as yours were at the start of the adventure. However, it is not using a weapon so you should adjust its Fighting Prowess and damage scores by -2. Whatever your adventuring class, it attacks only by physical means.

You know that you cannot run from this fight. If you win, turn to **456**.

486

You lie down on the blankets you have laid out in the clearing. Soon twilight descends on the forest, then, as the last birds sing from the trees, darkest night descends. You listen for a while to the mournful strumming of the musician at the far side of the

clearing, the cheerful chatter of the foresters as they prepare their evening meal and note that the merchants remain in their tight ring around the chequers board, as if entranced by the game in front of them.

Turn to **24**.

487

On impulse, you scatter the Hydra's teeth on the sand of the arena. You step back as a hissing sound fills the air. The teeth exude a green luminescence that steadily grows into a host of man-like shapes. As the glow fades, you discover that a hundred wiry creatures stand between you and the oncoming skeletons. These creatures have greenish-white skin and, although they have the bodies of men, from the shoulders of each of them sprout nine serpentine heads.

Note that you now have the Fang-Warriors on your side. Delete the Hydra's teeth from your Character Sheet, then turn back to **178**.

488

(ENCHANTER) You draw the horn from your backpack and then stare at it stupidly: what use is a drinking-horn to you now? Suddenly, one of the halberds sweeps in and knocks the horn from your grasp, sending it spinning into the chasm below (cross it off your Character Sheet). The other halberd hits you before you can defend yourself, doing you 1 Die+3 damage.

If you are still alive, turn to **100**.

489

The thurifer had not noticed you before. Now, he is so unnerved by the speed and ferocity of your



charge that he drops his censer and flees in blind panic.

You stop by the censer, seeing no advantage in a tiring pursuit of the thurifer when it is not he but the Warlock-King who is the real foe.

The censer is still producing puffs of mist from time to time. You can take it if you want.

Turn to **493**.

490

Their eyes light up. Nothing is more dear to a sailor's heart than the vile weed tahac. Immediately all thoughts of violence are forgotten as they clip their falchions back on their belts and instead take up clay pipes. You hand the pouch around and they greedily stuff wedges of the noxious-smelling weed into their pipe bowls. Squatting down on the deck, they begin to puff at the tahac and stare dreamily out to sea through the drifting clouds of smoke that soon envelop them. Each pipe bowl is modelled to resemble a leering sea-demon out of Krarthian mythology, so through the haze of smoke you actually see two sets of ugly faces - each sailor and his clay pipe.

'You're not so bad after all,' declares one of the sailors as the tahac has its usual intoxicating effect.

'No, indeed,' says another mildly. You notice he is missing an ear and has a leather eye-patch. 'I think I'm going to compose a song describing your virtues.'

The song will be long, for those virtues are numberless!' cries another man, whom you know as Hakron Fleshripper.

The tahac was certainly one of your best purchases. You watch them sink into a total stupor, then you help half a dozen of the most bloodthirsty ring-

leaders over to the rowing-boat. They grin stupidly and make no protest as you cast them adrift.

When the others recover from the tahac, you point out that the crew is now missing a few troublesome elements. Those that remain must work that much harder. Recognising the menace in your tones, they slope off to raise the sail. You notice them wincing at the hangover the weed has given them, and grin in satisfaction.

Turn to **499**.

491

(SAGE AND/OR TRICKSTER) You have two Rounds in which to shoot your arrows before it reaches you. Roll to hit in the usual manner. The skeletal being has an Armour Rating of one and an Endurance of thirty. It will have reached you after two Rounds.

Turn to **276**.

492

You hurry away from the spot where the skeletal monster fell to earth. Frosty twigs crunch under your feet. The cold orb of the Blue Moon glares down through the forest canopy like an eye from a spider's web.

After a time, when you have put some distance between you and the apparition, you risk stopping to listen. The forest is shrouded in dead silence.

If you wish to camp here, turn to **225**. If you wish to press on through the woods, turn to **162**.

493

You hurry along the mist-filled paths between the slabs, trying not to notice the shapes that lie stretched out on them. Finally you reach an exit

from the hall and find yourself in the fresh cold evening air. You take great gulps of it into your lungs before making your way towards a dark gate-house that you can see on the other side of the courtyard.

Turn to **35**.

494

(SAGE) Something about the floor makes you feel very uneasy. You think that it might be best to Levitate over it. You know that this can be risky as it is a skill that you don't use very often.

If you would like to take a risk and Levitate, turn to **236**. If you decide not to take the risk, return to **398** where another option will have to be taken.

495

(SAGE) You fling down the orb on to the marble dais, shouting as you do this the word of power that activates it: 'Conflagration!' The orb shatters, exploding in a white blossom of fire which snuffs out the wan flame burning on the dais. Then, as the orb's fire dies, complete darkness settles on the room. The hard shadows fade, and the thwarted tendrils sink down into the stone once more.

Turn to **145**.

496

Bidding the landlord farewell, you take up your belongings and set off. You have soon left the narrow cobbled lanes and high black walls of Dourhaven far behind. The air is cold and crisp, but you are in good spirits as you trudge through the thick snow that blankets the fells.

Late in the afternoon you catch sight of the crag the landlord told you about. Not wishing to spend the night out on the pack-ice, you make camp in its

lee. The bleached daylight fades from the sky as you drift off ...

Towards midnight you are woken by a sweet singing. Far out to the east you see three figures the colour of ruby, dancing upon the snow.

If you want to investigate, turn to **201**. If you decide to go back to sleep, turn to **91**.

497

(PLAYER WHO TOOK THE ITEM) That was a mistake. Like many sorcerers, Augustus is paranoid about his magical secrets. Even here in his virtually impregnable fortress he laid a trap for thieves. And you have sprung that trap.

The pentagram on the plate whirls before your eyes. It seems to be sucking you towards it with inexorable force. Roll *three* Dice. You must score Psychic Ability or less to resist the pentagram's power.

If you succeed in resisting, you drop the plate and rush out of the laboratory, shaken but safe.

If you fail to resist, you shrink until you are no bigger than a fly and you are then pulled down into a force-field that springs up around the plate. If you have any comrades, they are powerless to aid you - they must leave you trapped here forever and go on with their quest.

Surviving players turn to **470**.

498

To climb down safely, each player must roll Awareness or less on two Dice. Failure means that the player's concentration lapses for a moment and he or she slips. The fall will do two Dice damage (no armour protection). Once everyone is down, turn to **344**.

499

The ship drifts on the ocean currents for hours. At last you feel a small breath of wind brush your cheek and the sails begin to flap in the steadily stiffening wind. The clouds part to show a glimpse of the afternoon sky. The captain springs to the helm and brings the ship around into the wind. With a faint cheer, the sailors man the ropes and soon you are making headway over the waves.

Turn to **298**.

500

You descend the stairs and watch the procession as it makes its way round the bend in the avenue. Soon even the glimmer of candlelight draws off into the darkness. You decide that it is best to take the opposite path to the one they have just taken, so you turn to your left.

Turn to **152**.

501

It is night, the sky pitch black, but the snow seems to hold a faint luminescence of its own. The tangled thorn bushes, higher than your head, form a web of blackness against the backdrop of white.

Your boots crunch on the powdery snow. The wind has dropped now, making the awesome cold slightly more bearable. You begin to consider making camp for the night. Then a soft sound reaches your ears, a *crisppadpadpad*-stealthy footfalls crunching in the snow.

If you wish to stop here and make camp, turn to **233**. If you decide not to stop just yet, turn to **338**.

502

The musician is not an old man, but his hair is as

white as the driven snow. As you approach he looks up, his eyes the colour of the blue sky over the forest. Without ceasing his plucking at the strings of his lyre he grins at you and says: 'Join me if you know how to.' He concentrates again on the strange wistful tune and you are left to think on his words.

If you are a Trickster, then you know how to play a musical instrument and can accompany him; turn to 203. If you are an Enchanter and wish to join in the music-making, turn to **20**. If you are neither a Trickster nor an Enchanter, you are unable to play any musical instrument; turn to **441**.

503

'A wolf's-head clasp,' says the Warlock-King casually. 'One of Magus Tor's little gimcracks, I expect. Let me show you what I can make of that.'

He closes his eyes and the crystal crown he wears gives a faint glow. Suddenly the clasp jerks out of your hand and begins to swell and transform, becoming a giant silver wolf with bat-like wings. Its metallic eyes glitter as it swoops towards you.

'I hope you are enjoying your nightmare,' says the Warlock-King with a short bark of laughter. 'You should - all its elements are of your own devising!'

Turn to **304**.

504

'You treacherous dog!' you snarl at Augustus. 'The likes of you will never have the Blood Sword's scabbard.'

Augustus smiles thinly at you, letting the arm that was extended towards you to receive the scabbard, fall back to his side. 'Very well,' he says. 'We will land at my castle yonder, where my minions will perform interesting experiments upon

you while I rejoice in my master's acquisition of the scabbard.'

Are you going to let him land at the castle? If so, turn to **208**. If you want to fight him now, turn to **536**.

505

You crouch in the snow, still trembling from the terrors of your nightmare. Glimpses of the ghastly dreamworld still linger at the corner of your vision, making further sleep impossible. The sun rises at last, staining the eastern sky the colour of blood. The pack-ice beneath you is solid, the harsh frozen landscape unchanged since yesterday. Your dream was just a horrifying vision with no truth in it...

And yet, as you prepare to break camp, you find yourself remembering an old Ta'ashim adage: *A dream is the naked face of truth.*

Turn to **422**.

506

The Hydra's body dissolves into a putrid green ash, and you feel nauseated as you inadvertently breathe in the fumes. Soon, only its sharp teeth are left, lying at your feet. If you want to take these with you, you can. All the teeth together should be counted as one item of encumbrance. You continue through the doorway that you can see at the back of the museum.

Turn to **318**.

507

The next day you rise with the dawn. Each player will recover one Endurance if they are below their maximum. Some of the sailors have caught squirrels in the woodland fringing the shore, and are now

cooking a stew over the camp fire. You may eat some for breakfast and recover one Endurance point.

Soon you board the ship and, rowing against the waves that break at the mouth of the cove, you head back out to sea. Again, a steady wind bears you northwards.

At noon you glimpse an extraordinary sight: from the far horizon off to the south a small speck appears and, growing in size by the second, hurtles towards you. You see that it is a man flying on a carpet. Soon you stare up at him where he hovers above the deck. Ignoring the other sailors, he looks at you: 'If you are bound for Wyrð, as I think you are,' he says, 'then perhaps you would prefer to travel by more comfortable means?' He indicates the carpet with a flourish of his violet cloak.

If you would like to accept his offer, turn to **299**. If you decline, turn to **55**.

508

The arena is bathed in an eerie greenish light from several lanterns set on posts on the walls. The eager crowds that squat in the tiered seats look unpleasantly unhuman - more like giant insects wrapped in dark cloaks, rubbing their thin hands and calling in a droning chant for your blood.

As the chanting lulls to a sinister murmur, you turn to face the royal dais that overlooks the arena. An old man stands there, a person of sneering lip and baleful eye. He raises a glowing staff, the light of which throws him into stark relief while the rest of the scene seems cloudy and dim. You notice a crown of ice, or crystal, set on his wrinkled grey brow.

His brittle voice silences the last hushed murmurs of the crowd. 'This is the realm of Wyrð, where I



have ruled for centuries,' he cries, pointing to you. 'You have presumed to invade my sovereign land. You have entered my Palace of Eternal Dusk, perhaps hoping to slay me...!' He lowers his voice and stares straight at you. 'Such foolishness. Do you think others have not tried to assassinate me? A rightful ruler is never without enemies. And where are those would-be murderers now, those misbegotten churls who hoped to bury their blades in my royal heart? Why, they are here . . . they come now to teach you the lesson they have learned . . . !'

He frowns and spreads his hands. Something pokes up out of the ground some distance ahead of you. It is a bony white hand, twitching as it finds purchase for its grip. Small mounds erupt elsewhere, as things long buried claw their way up out of the dust. Then the dry earth of the arena cracks apart, and skeletons wearing rusty armour burst to the surface. More and more of them spill out into the open, until a numberless horde of the creatures surges grimly forwards to attack you.

If you have the battle-standard of the First Selenine Legion, turn to **25**. If not, turn to **137**.

509

(ENCHANTER) You stride forwards bravely. One of the halberds drifts over to block your path; the other still hangs to one side. You know that Sylphs, being elemental creatures of the air, cannot be affected by airborne attacks - which includes all your attack spells except Ghastly Touch!

If you wish to draw your sword and fight, turn to **100**. If you wish to use a spell, turn to **415**. If you wish to use an item, turn to **14**. If you decide to retreat, turn to **226** and make a different choice.

The metallic grey expanse of water begins to seethe and boil. A huge slab of muscular flesh breaks the surface, sending the *Questing Beast* lurching to one side. Then a coil rises up, towering high over the mainmast in an arch as monumental as the Ratherbosk Bridge that spans the Gouge. You see an eye - an eye as big as a boat. It blinks once, and then the whole monstrous bulk of the World Serpent's head rises into view. Its mouth yawns open, spewing out a torrent of salt water. The ship could sail between the creature's fangs - each as big as the tallest tree - without difficulty.

Jormungand the World Serpent breathes the air. Each intake of breath howls across the waves, catching your sails. Inexorably, the ship is sucked closer . . . Crashing coils sweep down as he overruns you, then submerges without seeming to notice the screams of the tiny drowning men, or the splintered driftwood in his wake.

You cling to the remains of the mast and a current sweeps you westwards. Only you seem to have escaped. But the ordeal is not yet over, for your exposure to the icy water could still spell your doom. Each player loses 1 Die+1 Endurance, with armour providing no protection.

If you survive, you are relieved to see a ship on the horizon at last. Miraculously you are spotted and picked up. Shivering, you sit with a bottle of rum and tell the captain your tale.

'A sorry matter,' he says at last. 'But fate has now chosen to smile on you. We are bound for Dourhaven, and expect to berth there before night-fall.'

Sure enough, dusk is creeping across the sky when you catch first sight of the mountain-ringed



harbour of Dourhaven. As the ship ties up at the quay and the crew set about unloading, the captain approaches you. 'I can recommend the Fimbulwinter Inn if you need somewhere to stay,' he says, nodding towards the wharf. 'It is at the end of that street. On the way, you will pass a ships' chandler's where one can pick up supplies.'

You thank him and stride down the gangplank.

If you wish to go straight to the inn, turn to **75**. If you wish to stop off at the chandler's on your way, turn to **288**.

511

A shadow flies out of the box and settles on the heads of each member of the party. All players affected thus find that their minds are permanently clouded by the shadow and that they have lost one Awareness point. If you have opened all three caskets, turn to **291**. Otherwise you can now open the metal box (turn to **475**) or the wooden one (turn to **154**).

512

(SAGE) You have been over-anxious and have not achieved the state of 'no mind' needed to Levitate.

Turn to **450**.

513

(WARRIOR) Your muscles bulge. With a mighty

roar that causes even the officer to take a step backwards in alarm, you gather all your strength and swing the two guards holding you around. Their heads crack together and with a moan they slump senseless to the cobblestones.

Turn to **253**.

514

She creates a psychic shield to protect herself from your spell. The spell-energy glances off without harming her, but in diverting it she has allowed her concentration to lapse from the petrified body of Varadaxor. Freed from her magical paralysis, the old warrior takes full advantage of this turn of events. His razor-edged sword arcs down towards the Lady in Grey, and she can do nothing to defend herself. Varadaxor's stroke cleaves the head from her shoulders, and it falls with a crunch on the stone floor. The impact cracks it like alabaster, and you see that it is dust, not blood, that seeps from the veins.

The suits of armour become inert, their motive force destroyed.

Turn to **108**.

515

You eventually locate the landlord, a large, red-faced man who pours with sweat as he rushes to and fro serving customers.

'There are no rooms available,' he says, taking a disdainful look at your shabby travelling-clothes. 'A pallet in the common room costs one gold piece a night - or two gold pieces if you want to be next to the hearth.' He holds out a meaty hand. 'In advance.'

You have no choice but to pay him, as you cannot

be sure how long it will be before you get berth on a ship. Cross off the money from your Character Sheet(s). There is only one pallet by the hearth, incidentally, so in a multi-player party you must use some means to decide who gets it.

While you are talking to the landlord, the priests get up and leave. If you have not yet done so, you could talk to the traders by the bar; turn to **358**. Otherwise, you can go for a walk around the town; turn to **306**.

516

The pallbearers make no attempt to defend themselves as you rush in. Instead, they lift the blue burning candles to their faces and you blanch in horror as you see faces from your worst nightmare. A ghastly chill seizes your heart. To survive this you must roll equal to or under your own rank on 1 Die+1.

Each Round you will kill one of the creatures (it only takes one blow from your weapon to destroy them), but each Round you do you will have to make the roll again or die of fright.

If you kill all *five* pallbearers, turn to **194**. If you flee back the way you came, turn to **547**.

517

Passing between the black boles of a few scattered trees, you descend into the valley and wade through snow-drifts to the promontory where the village is situated. Overlooking a frozen pond and stream, it consists of a single large wooden hall with a peaked roof of thatch, surrounded by four or five small stone huts that are presumably for storage.

The smoke you saw is drifting up from a vent in the roof of the central building. You head towards it,

shivering in a sudden merciless gust of wind. Inside, a dog starts barking. That tells them you're here, anyway, so you forget all notions of caution. You reach out and rap on the door.

It is opened and a lantern thrust out towards you. You cannot see the man holding it because of the sudden glare in your face. You shield your eyes. Aromas waft warmly out from the smoky interior of the hall - of stew, boiled meat and potato-spirit. Also the sweaty stench of men and animals.

'What is it you want?' demands the man at the door.

'Shelter, for one thing,' you reply. As your vision becomes accustomed to the light, you can make out the details of his face. A balding squint-eyed man, scrawny like a sick rooster. He looks old. In Wyrd, where a long life is a rare and not very desirable fate, that probably means he's about twenty-five.

'Who are you?' he says suspiciously. 'You're not from Wyrd, I can see that.' He pauses, then seems to make up his mind. He opens the door and steps back. 'Come in, come in.'

'And be quick about it!' snaps a toothless old man squatting by the fire. 'Once the cold gets in, it'll only go out again with the spring!' He cackles at this adage, then turns back to stare at the burning peat.

The hall is full of people and animals - mostly pigs, chickens and dogs, though you notice two scraggy cows pressed against the far wall. The whole village and all of their livestock must cram into this building for the winter. Following the man with the lantern, you press between them to the hearth. The meat you smelled cooking turns out to be a chicken. When she sees you looking at it, a woman by the fireside glares and clangs the lid down on the pot,

The man turns and invites you to sit on the rug beside him. He calls to a boy, who scurries over with wooden bowls filled with hot gruel. The man pours mugs of fresh water for you as you eat, and tells you about the village:

'My name is Shan'hans, and I am headman of this village. Normally we would not dare take in strangers, but the snow has cut us off from the major roads. We should not be seeing any lawgivers around here for a month of two.'

You take a swig of water. 'How does one get to the Palace of Eternal Dusk?' you ask Shan'hans.

He looks right into your eyes for a space of heartbeats, then turns and calls out to a gaggle of people on the other side of the hearth: 'Is the baby any better?'

One of the group - a tall, lank-limbed girl of about thirteen - gets to her feet and saunters over. You study the rest of the group. Several women crouch over a cot, their faces drawn with worry. 'No better,' says the girl quietly to Shan'hans. 'He will not survive the night, I'm afraid.'

Shan'hans shakes his head sorrowfully and looks at you. 'Boiling water was spilt over the baby this morning. He is terribly scalded.' His gaze falls to the floor. 'Death will be a mercy.'

If there is a Sage in the party who is willing to heal the child, turn to 5. If you can treat him with a potion or a salve of healing, cross one dose of this from your Character Sheet and turn to **564**. If you cannot help, turn to **84**.

518

Uraba wrinkles her nose and squints up into the sky for a few moments. 'Gristun is powerful but stupid. Do not waste your strength fighting him, just dodge

past and run for the gates. There is a Gate of Carnage, a Gate of Confusion, and a Gate of Fear. Choose the one whose test you feel best able to face.'

You thank Uraba for her help and bid her farewell. Make sure you have made a note of the iron bell she gave you, then turn to **520**.

519

You call to your forces to dose ranks and advance. They are about equal in number to the skeletons, and very keen to do battle. But the skeletons, of course, have several advantages in that they are immune to fear, fatigue and pain. You watch as the fighting surges back and forth across the arena, occasionally shouting commands to your troops.

Roll one Die for the fortunes of war. Add one to the roll if there is a Warrior in the party, as he or she will be better able to direct the tactics of your troops. If you score 1 to 3, turn to **374**. If you score 4 to 6, turn to **216**. If you score 7, turn to **427**.

520

You head north under a sky laden with snow. Wherever you can, you walk in the shelter of pine trees, for the arctic wind whistles around you and stings your skin. Each exhalation freezes into crystals of ice, a fine white flurry of snow-dust on the breeze.



Snow is falling thickly by mid-afternoon, when you approach a forest of tangled black thorns. A path of sorts lies through the briars ahead of you, but as you trudge towards it a group of tall figures dressed in grey and green emerges. They carry longbows and slim silver swords.

The leader of these Elves steps forwards to face you, meeting your defiant gaze with his cold green eyes. Then he speaks: 'Now wild weather of the world awakes throughout this land. Clouds cast keenly their cold upon the earth, with great gusts from the north to shiver the flesh. The blizzard bears down upon all living things; the whistling wind whips from the fells, filling every dale full of deep drifts.'

He pauses, still holding you in the soulless scrutiny of his pale eyes. 'The way ahead is ours, and the toll we exact is mortal blood. We shall deny you these woods. A vaunt! Follow your own tracks back through the snow. You shall not pass.'

Typical Elf- says everything three times over. You stare back at him and consider your next move.

Will you suggest a game of chequers to decide the issue? If so, turn to **361**. If you would prefer to fight them, turn to **425**.

521

The creature bursts into the clearing as you snatch up your weapons. Its skinless jaws gape, spilling grave-earth on to the grass at your feet. Its eyes glow a bright blue. It seems to be growing stronger by the minute, drawing energy from some unearthly source - even if you wounded it before, it is now stronger than ever.

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FLEE

Stalker

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 3 Dice
 Psychic Ability: 8 Awareness: 8
 Armour Rating: 2
 Endurance: 40

If you destroy it, turn to **303**. If you *flee*, turn to **204**.

522

Balanced on his flying carpet, a thousand metres above the frozen sea, you prepare to do battle with the wizard Augustus.

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Augustus

Fighting Prowess: 8 Damage per blow: 2 Dice+2
 Psychic Ability: 9 Awareness: 7
 Armour Rating: 0
 Endurance: 40

Note: Augustus uses three spells, and may strike using a strange double-bladed dagger that he draws

from his robe. Roll each Round for his action:

- 1 or 2 Strikes with the dagger
- 3 to 6 Prepares/casts a spell

His spells are:

Vaporous Serpent (Complexity Level 2) A Psychic spell affecting one target, who loses 2 Dice+2 Endurance if he or she fails to resist.

Bewilder (Complexity Level 2) A Psychic spell that affects one target, causing him or her to discard his or her weapon (see page 11) and fight bare-handed if it takes effect; after four Rounds the spell wears off, whereupon the character must take one Round to pick up his or her weapon again.

Shatter (Complexity Level 3) A Blasting spell that can be directed at a single foe, causing the loss of three Dice Endurance (armour protects).

Augustus uses these spells in random order (unless one of the players is taking his part, in which case any strategy is of course up to him or her).

If you get Augustus under Servile Enthralment, turn to **224**. If you kill him, turn to **241**.

523

(ENCHANTER) You teleport past the invisible creatures. If you still have any comrades who have yet to pass them, they must choose an option from **226**. If you are alone, or none of your comrades makes it to your side of the bridge, turn to **350**.

524

You investigate the doors leading from the lowest of the three galleries. At first you conclude they are

guest chambers. Then you notice that all the doors can be padlocked from the outside. You find nothing in them of interest.

Turn to **470**.

525

A bubbling roar echoes through the ice. The monster has had enough. Spilling greasy black blood from numerous wounds, it pulls its remaining appendages back into the water. Under the sheet of ice on which you are standing, you see the eye blink once, inscrutably, then sink into the depths.

You walk on through the deepening shadows of night to the coast.

Turn to **117**.

526

(SAGE) Roll 2 Dice+1. If you score equal to or less than your Awareness, you get across to the gatehouse safely ... If your score is greater than your Awareness, you have missed your footing and are falling. If this happens, roll one Die: a score of 1 to 3 means that you have not been able to Levitate and you fall to your doom; 4 to 6 means that you are Levitating and you hover in mid-air until a stone appears beneath you, whereupon you must roll on your Awareness again, as above. If you succeed next time, you have managed to cross safely.

Once you have got across or have died, anyone else waiting to cross should turn to **240**. If all surviving players are across, turn to **35**.

527

You are at the end of the transept. An archway lies ahead, but the way is blocked by a giant warrior. Strange armour of violet jewels and ebony plaques



hangs about his huge frame. From the depths of his necroid helm, you glimpse a bony smile.

He stands with his hands, enclosed in gauntlets of black metal, resting on the hilt of his jagged-edged sword. The blade's point rests on the cracked flagstones by his feet, where you see a gathering of dust accumulated through the centuries he has stood guard here before the arch.

'I am Thanatos,' he declares in rumbling tones suggesting the approach of thunder. 'I am ready to meet in battle any who would pass beyond this point - in single combat, or massed attack from any too craven to duel equally.'

If you wish to retreat through the Leaves of Remembrance, turn to **367**. If one player steps forwards to fight Thanatos, turn to **477**. If two or more players wish to attack at once, turn to **71**.

528

The razor-sharp prongs at the bottom of the portcullis of the Gate of Carnage are stained with human blood. Crushed skeletons lie beneath it, their rusty suits of armour punctured by the deadly spikes. You realise that you will have to rush swiftly into the chamber you can see beyond the gate if you want to avoid a similar fate. Your mind is made up when you hear the roar of the Guardian-Beast right behind you. Without further ado you throw yourself into the room and the portcullis crashes down behind you, barring you from the creature. The beast slavers and spits through the latticework of the portcullis, but you are careful to keep out of range of the acidic gobs. You walk through a shadowy chamber hung about with musty tapestries and littered with crumbling furniture that falls to dust when you touch it. Eventually you reach the entrance of a

round chamber with a high vaulted ceiling. Looking in, you see that there are a number of arrow slits set into the wall at head height. A heavy barred door stands on the opposite side of the room.

Turn to **157**.

529

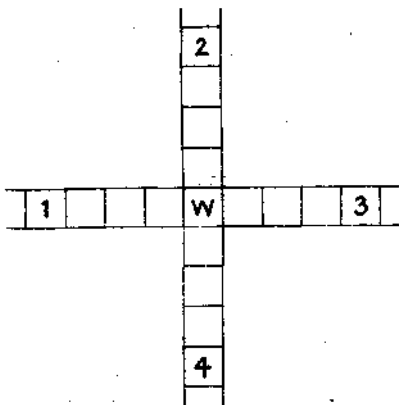
(ENCHANTER) The orb of fire grows warm as you pronounce the word of power to activate it. In seconds it is too hot for you to hold. You drop it with a screech of pain. It lands on the carpet at your feet and bursts into flame. Suddenly realising the danger, you try to kick it off the carpet. . .

Too late. Fire licks around your legs, hungrily devouring the fibres of the flying carpet. Your flesh bums, but you have no time to think of the pain as you plunge through the air to a horrible death on the rock-hard ice below.



530

Edging through the web towards him will be a slow and arduous task. Each Round, you are able to move *one* square closer. At the start of every Round, before you act, he sends a pulse of crackling energy through the web in an effort to dislodge you. This causes each player to lose two Dice Endurance; armour gives no protection.



The Warlock-King
Armour Rating: 2
Endurance: 16

Note that because you are hanging on to the giant strands of web for dear life, you cannot *cast* spells, *throw* an axe or *shoot* at him. You must reach him before you can fight. If there is a Sage in the party, though, he or she can use Levitation to float in place while *shooting* arrows. Remember that you cannot move any closer towards him with Levitation. (The Levitation works automatically if you attempt it. Curiously, the Warlock-King's dream-universe seems to intensify the Sage's psionic abilities.)

If you reach him, turn to **255**.

531

The landlord goes away and returns shortly with large flagons of mulled ale and slices of steaming blood pudding on the crumbly black turnip cakes of eastern Krarth. It is deliriously filling, and any player who bought supper recovers two Endurance points if wounded.

Turn to **537**.

532

You have no defence against the Warlock-King's demon. Its icy fingers penetrate your flesh. The screaming that you can hear is your own . . .

Each player must roll equal to or under his or her Psychic Ability score on *three* Dice. Failure means that the player is annihilated, consumed body and soul by the ravening demon. Even if the roll is made successfully, the attack still leaves its scars: the player *permanently* loses one point from Fighting Prowess, Psychic Ability and Awareness.

After this, Umborus returns to the nethermost darkness from which its mad master summoned it. Surviving players - if any - should turn to **145**.

533

You kindle the brazier as quickly as you can and lift her closer to its warmth. Spots of colour return to her cheeks, but her body remains limp and cold. She gives a soft moan, and you slowly feed her from your rations (cross off one day's worth), chewing each morsel yourself first so that she can swallow it. Then you notice that her dark blue eyes have fluttered open.

Turn to **48**.

534

You make your way inland, trekking north along the edge of a snow-clad valley. Far below, you can see the soft flickering glow of light from a village. A plume of hearth-smoke rises in the cold night air, making the outline of fir trees on the other side of the valley shimmer. Involuntarily you start to make your way down towards the village, the thought of warmth and comfort calling to you. Then another thought stops you dead in your tracks. Would the

villagers welcome strangers from another land?

If you go down to the village, turn to **517**. If you pass it by, turn to **81**.

535

(ENCHANTER) The Faltyn sneers as you hand over the five gold pieces. *'Your meanness has perhaps cost you much,'* it snickers unpleasantly. *'However... The chest contains five items, of which you may take only one. The orb of fire is perhaps the best.'* So saying, the Faltyn vanishes. You may now either walk across to the chest (turn to **331**) or return to **398** and choose another option.

536

Augustus raises his arms threateningly as you move towards him. His eyes flash as he gathers magical energy. 'You are foolish indeed to oppose me under the circumstances,' he cries. 'Even if you managed to slay me here, a thousand metres up in the sky, how would you get down?'

He laughs at you. The carpet lurches as if by his whim and you nearly lose your balance.

If a Warrior wishes to act, turn to **378**. If not, you still have no alternative but to attack; turn to **522**.

537

The night is restful. Even though the snow begins to fall more heavily, and soon drapes the narrow windows in wreaths of white, the landlord keeps his hearth as warm as a furnace. Each player regains lost Endurance points equal to half his or her rank, rounding fractions up. You rise at dawn, refreshed by your sleep, and call to the landlord to bring breakfast.

As you wait, an old woman hobbles into the

common room and drops an armful of logs on to the fire. She brought them in from the courtyard, and they still wear a sheath of ice crystals which hiss and spit as they catch alight. Watching the leaping flames, you could almost imagine pictures in them - first of a smiling woman with kind eyes, then a brittle-faced man with a malevolent glare.

'Ah, yes,' murmurs the old woman, barely looking up as she passes you; 'some see their dreams in fire. Others in ice . . .'

You turn to reply, but the landlord comes in with breakfast and you are distracted. Breakfast costs another gold piece, and players who eat it can regain another Endurance point (up to their normal Endurance limit, of course). The landlord sits with you for a while, puffing at a pipe of tahac weed. When you describe your quest and where you must go, he offers advice:

'Head north along the coastal cliffs. By dusk you will come upon a white mountain which marks the shore in summer. Looked at from one angle it resembles a mother holding her child, and if you travel in the direction she seems to face - north-east, that is - you will be on the pack-ice. Two days or so should bring you to Wyrd.'

Turn to **496**.

538

You rush in to attack. As you approach, each figure unhurriedly raises its candle to illuminate the face within the cowl . . . And there you glimpse an indescribable horror that makes your blood run cold.

The cowed figures make no attempt to defend themselves, and only a single hit is needed to put one down. But when a player destroys one he or she

must roll rank or less on 1 Die+1. Failure means that the sight of the creature's face has literally scared him or her to death!

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Pallbearers

Psychic Ability: 9

Armour Rating: 0

Endurance: *first* 1 *fourth* 1
 second 1 *fifth* 1
 third 1

If you kill them all, turn to **96**. If you *flee*, turn to **152**.

539

A malign magic is at work in the forest clearing. Even your dreams have taken life and physically harmed you. You know that you cannot rest for another minute in the clearing and, hastily gathering your equipment, you hurry away through the dark overshadowing trees, trying to make out the thin ribbon of the track in the cold blue light shed from above.

Turn to **165**.

540

The door slides up in time for you to witness the horrific sight of the Ellesgaunt feasting on the vital

energy of your friend(s). Completely regenerated, it attacks with renewed vigour . . .

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Ellesgaunt

Fighting Prowess: 7 Damage per blow: 2 Dice+3

Psychic Ability: 7 Awareness: 7

Armour Rating: 3

Endurance: 35

If you kill it, you can loot - or resurrect, if you have an item for that - your slain comrade(s). Then you proceed deeper into the Palace.

Turn to **219**.

541

(SAGE) *[With a sharp intake of breath you recognise that before you lies the fabled Axe of Heraklos! You know that it has magical powers and that these powers will work for only one person until that person dies. You believe that the axe would be most useful in the hands of a Warrior.]*

A decision must now be taken about which player is going to pick up the axe. Once this has been made, turn to **454**.

542

Your tactics seem effective and the Elf-Lord's pieces gradually fall to your advance - right up until the moment when, in one sweeping move, he takes all your counters at once with his last remaining brevet-piece! You stare at the board in stunned amazement. How could you have been so foolish as

to line up your pieces for him to decimate them like that? Was he only toying with you all along?

He gets up. 'The game is ended, and you have lost. Return to your mortal vale.'

Will you go, as he says? If so, it is the end of your quest. But you did agree to decide the issue on the basis of the chequers game, and he did beat you...

You must decide whether to end your quest here, in failure, or to defy the Elf-Lord. If you choose the latter, turn to **211**.

543

If you are in a multi-player party, turn to **566**. If you are on your own, turn to **270**.

544

'I heard a story once that he shapes all his magic from what he sees in our dreams, and that... long ago, Wyrd was a bright and joyous land . . .' Her eyelids flutter and her voice becomes thick and low. '. . . But now . . . our land and our dreams . . . are dull, grey . . .'

Turn to **59**.

545

You throw the orb across the gap between you and the cowled figures, shouting the word of power as you do so. It immediately bursts into flame and, as if guided by an unseen hand, jets of flame reach out and light the lanterns at each corner of the bier. Those pallbearers not consumed by the flame howl in terror and flee into the darkness. (Cross the orb off your Character Sheet as it is now destroyed.)

Turn to **562**.

546

You must decide what strategy to use against the Elf, bearing in mind that as a soulless creature he is likely to be a methodical but uninspired games player.

If you use your central playing-pieces as a wedge to penetrate his defence, turn to **56**. If you decide to advance your pieces across the board in a regular formation, turn to **321**. If you employ the bluff of pulling back your central pieces and then closing the outer ones behind him as he attacks, turn to **138**. If you decide to try making an occasional random move in order to throw him, turn to **542**.

547

You pass between two soaring columns of grey-white marble into a series of labyrinthine chambers. The ceiling is shrouded in gloom a hundred metres above you. Bizarre gargoyles and bas-reliefs stare from the walls. Everything is overlain with centuries of dust that swirls in thick ripples, a dry pool through which you must wade.

After some searching you find a way into an upper courtyard of the Palace. Cracked flagstones tilt as you step on them, sending the grubs and insects that shelter there scurrying to a more secure hideaway.

You go up a flight of worn and moss-carpeted steps. The pitted stone has the look of leprous skin, and the once-ornate balustrade is wrapped with dead ivy. Moths sit with spread wings on the leaves, but when you brush against them they, too, crumble to dust...

Turn to **353**.

548

You go down to the ground floor of the tower and

with a great effort pull open the massive iron doors. A huge demon stands motionless in front of the door, its back turned to you. You squeeze past its icy bulk and hurry away, but it ignores you completely apart from an angry swish of its scaly tail. Its function seems to be to keep people out rather than to keep them in. You make your way over to the sheer cliff overlooking the icy wastes of the Mistral Sea. You will have to climb down from the pinnacle. It is too far for an Enchanter to teleport. A Sage might be able to Levitate, though.

If there is a Sage in the party who wishes to Levitate, turn to **273**. If there is no Sage, or if he or she wishes to climb down anyway, turn to **498**.

549

The thick tentacles snake in towards you, but you keep your thoughts calm as you consider the item that might be of use to you now.

If you activate the orb of fire, turn to **78**. If you have a scroll of invisibility and wish to use it, turn to **22**. If you play a harp, turn to **340**. If you look through two blue eye-jewels, turn to **401**. If you don't have any of these items, or if you decide not to use them, you must either fight the monster (turn to **457**) or make a dash for the shore (turn to **316**).

550

You wait for the deadly blow, but it never comes. Instead, you find yourself cutting with a powerful stroke through the neck of a cowering double who stands before you. As you strike, this apparition disappears. After an instant of disorientation, you feel a great calm settle over you. You have faced your own fear of death, and you overcame it. Your Fighting Prowess increases by one point, and this

gain is permanent.

You are aware of the tarnished silver falchion in your hand. Engravings on the blade identify it as Shadowcleaver. At your feet is a skull-amulet. Take either or both of these items, then turn to **174**.

551

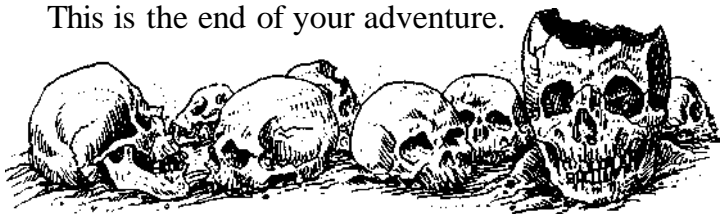
(ENCHANTER) The carpet would have been useless to you if you hadn't had the white stone. Clutching it in your hand, you and your comrades (if any) leap on to the carpet and take off just as the tide of blood and bones sweeps over where you were standing. You find, though, that you cannot get the carpet to move; it merely hovers a metre or so above the level of the bridge. You have to abandon it and jump down on to the bridge.

Turn to **35**.

552

Rude hands seize you and the guardsmen begin to lead you through a crowd that is even more hostile to you when they hear about the foul murder you have perpetrated at the Ulrik's Bones Inn. At first you are struck by small pebbles, then larger rocks are hurled. The guardsmen are not keen to try protecting you from the ravening mob; after all, you were going to be executed the next day anyway ... They leave you to be lynched by the mad crowd and you meet a horrible end under their pummelling rocks and fists ...

This is the end of your adventure.



553

The orb begins to heat as soon as you utter the word of power that activates it. Suddenly flames shoot from it and ignite the lanterns at each corner of the bier. The cowed figures around you (if you have not already dealt with them) are burnt like tissue-paper in the intense white heat.

The orb shatters (cross it off your Character Sheet). You watch your double - or is it more than that? - rise slowly from the bier. He advances, face impassive, sword upraised to smite you.

Do you want to raise your own weapon to ward off the blow? If so, turn to **456**. If you wish to remain motionless and wait for it to strike, turn to **375**.

554

You saunter over to the merchants, who seem to be totally immersed in watching the game. You call out a greeting, but none of them turns away to look at you. In fact, they seem totally absorbed in the battle unfolding in front of them on the chequers board. You gradually turn your attention to the game yourself as the players move their pieces to and fro, each of them by various devious routes trying to encircle their opponent's pieces and thus neutralise them.

If you have a Sage in your party, turn to **214**. If there is no Sage in your party, but there is a Warrior, turn to **175**. If there is neither a Sage nor a Warrior in the party . . . you soon lose interest in the complicated mechanics of the game and decide to rest; turn to **486**.

555

(ENCHANTER) You have three Rounds in which to call the spell to mind (if you hadn't already) and *cast*

it. If you succeed, you teleport to a point on the bridge behind the torrent of blood and are saved. If you fail, you are swept off the bridge and fall to your doom in the chasm below . . .

Turn to **430**.

556

Thick smoke suddenly spreads out of the censer. Within moments your vision is completely obscured. You can barely see your own hands in front of your face. You begin to wonder whether the Warlock-King has worked some further pernicious spell to aid his skeletal thralls. But then, as the smoke disperses, you see a band of tenuous mist-creatures standing beside you. They catch sight of the advancing skeletons and begin to issue eerie battle-cries, awaiting the moment when your command will send them forth to fight.

Note that you now have the Mist-Phantoms on your side. Delete the censer, which has vanished in the smoke, from your Character Sheet, then return to **178**.

557

In this part of the transept the walls are formed of damp clay. Cavernous mouths gape at you from the shadows, making a macabre sound: the Groan of Doom.

If you have an iron bell, it rings loudly now of its own accord and drowns out the terrible groaning.

If you do not have the bell, you are demoralised by the noise and each player must halve his or her Fighting Prowess (rounding fractions up) for the rest of the adventure.

To go further into the transept, turn to **188**. To return through the Wind of Decay to the cathedral, turn to **160**.

558

(PLAYER(S) WOUNDED FIGHTING THE SNOW VAMPIRES) *The angry glow of Red Death bathes your wounds. They sting, causing you to thrash about in your sleep, but you do not wake yet. Red Death is casting its lure to you. Its ethereal melody calls to you from the vast vault of the night sky, trying to claim your soul. Sunk in slumber, do you have the strength to resist it?*

Each player reading this section must roll four Dice. If you score less than or equal to your Psychic Ability, then you shrug off the star's eldritch power.

*Any players who score higher than their Psychic Ability should turn to **244**. If all players make the roll successfully, turn to **91**.*

559

You have only a vague idea of which direction you must travel. Still, it is better to trust a hunch than freeze to death of a certainty. You trudge on for kilometre after wearying kilometre. As night falls, you huddle miserably against a hump of snow-shrouded ice and wait for sleep.

Days pass, in which darkness and daylight seem to merge. All around you the pack-ice throws up its febrile glare, vexing your vision and making your thoughts reel. You stagger on, feeling nothing in limbs made brittle and numb with cold. Around you throughout your journey whirl the cheerless sun, the stars, the icy luminosity of the moon and the baleful glow of Red Death. Occasionally the faintly glimpsed faces of five titanic lords swim before you. Ice mirages, you would think, if it were not that you could hear their distant laughter ...

Every day the cold takes its toll. Every player who has no rations must lose one Endurance point per day. An additional Endurance point is lost each day

by any player who does not have a fur cloak.

The nights are still more severe. Each player loses one Die Endurance per night, or 1 Die-1 if he has a bedroll. If the party possesses a brazier, this reduces the night-time loss of Endurance by a further point. (Armour, of course, does nothing to protect its wearer from the depredations of cold.)

Any player who does not own a pair of gloves will suffer frostbite, and must subtract one from Fighting Prowess for the rest of the adventure.

After five days and nights, fortune or blind chance provides any surviving players with a glimpse of land. The shore of Wyrd.

Turn to **404**.

560

The orb explodes into a glowing ball of white-hot flame as you drop it to the deck. The fierce heat soon burns through the planks and the bottom of the ship. Amid the screams of the burning seamen you see the mainmast topple slowly over and crush Captain Lazarus beneath its weight. You leap into the water and grab part of the mast that is drifting away from the blazing wreck of the *Questing Beast*. Soon there is nothing left of the ship or its crew apart from a wisp of smoke on the water.

Turn to **113**.

561

(SAGE) Obviously, Levitation is the appropriate psionic discipline to use in this situation. You begin to prepare yourself . . .

Will you cancel from your mind all thought of the on-rushing torrent? If so, turn to **185**.

Or will you focus your attention on floating over it? If you do that, turn to **443**.

562

As the lantern light shines upon the body, it returns to life. You watch with some trepidation as your *doppelganger* rises from the bier and walks with measured tread towards you.

Face calm and impassive, the *doppelganger* stops in front of you and then slowly raises the silver falchion to strike.

If you put up your own weapon to fend off the blow, turn to **322**. If you stand still and wait for it to strike, turn to **550**.

563

Which item would you like to use? An orb of fire (turn to **324**), an amber tinderbox (turn to **77**) or some silver dust (turn to **64**)? If you have none of these or want to make a different choice, turn to **177**.

564

You go over to the cot and gently move the anxious women aside so that you can get a look at the baby. His skin is terribly raw and blistered, and he is too weak even to cry. The girl was right - he would not survive until dawn in this condition. Luckily you can do something about that. You apply the magical substance to the baby's scalded skin, which immediately becomes firm and healthy. The women gasp in astonishment. The baby himself stares at you for a moment, then begins to gurgle happily. His mother picks him up with a shout of pure joy, tears streaming down her face . . .

'A miracle!' cries one of the other women. 'Are you from the home of the gods themselves?'

'Hardly,' you tell her, smiling. In other lands, some mortals can do things that you obviously

consider miraculous. Are there no magic-users in Wyrd?"

Everyone in the room lapses into silence. 'Only the Warlock-King,' says one sullenly. They begin to chatter to one another, trying to dispel all sombre thoughts stirred by the mention of their monarch.

Turn to **341**.

565

The rest of the day passes uneventfully and night creeps slowly across the sky. There is a possibility of seasickness for players who were ill yesterday. This entails a roll on two Dice if you had breakfast, 2 Dice—1 if you didn't. On a score of 9 or less the player has got his sea legs, but on a score of 10 or more he is ill again, losing two Endurance points (down to minimum Endurance score of one - seasickness is never fatal!).

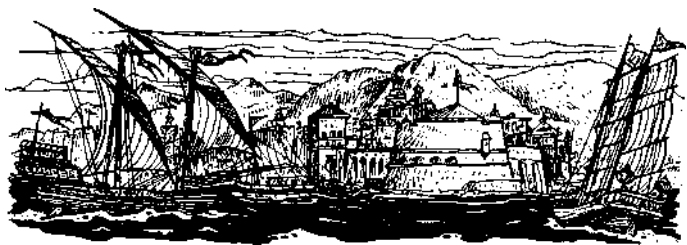
As the last glimmer of sunlight fades beyond the high cliffs along the coast, the captain takes the ship into a cove where you will spend the night.

Your sleep is dreamless and deep. Each player recovers one Endurance point, plus another point if he or she decides to have breakfast.

You row north, keeping the coast in view. 'Tonight we should reach Dourhaven,' predicts the captain. He is right. Dusk sees your ship gliding past the black stone harbour walls and into the dock.

Even at this late hour, the wharf is crowded with longshoremen, merchants and fishermen. All bustle around, so intent on their business that they do not seem to notice the cold or the light flurry of snowflakes drifting down out of the evening sky.

The captain sees you standing on the quay and comes over, pointing to a row of shops leading from the seafront. 'Yonder is the chandler's. Perhaps you



need to buy provisions for your journey? He also supplies bread and salted fish. At the end of the street you will find the Fimbulwinter Inn which, despite its ominous name, is a hospitable place run by an old Mercanian merchant of my acquaintance.'

You thank the captain and set off down the street. If you wish to visit the chandler's shop, turn to **288**. If you pass by and go into the inn, turn to **75**.

566

The area of floor that is covered with runes looks dangerous. You decide to edge past it. With a sigh of relief you reach the door ahead of you only to stop dead as a figure out of your worst nightmares steps out from it: you see a grinning rotted corpse dressed in an executioner's apparel, its face wriggling with worms that drop to the floor from its putrefying eye-sockets. The scythe it holds in its dead hands is even now swinging viciously towards the first person in the battle order. There is nothing that he or she can do to prevent the blow from striking home. As it does, the player concerned just evaporates into a thin mist. . !

Turn to **390**.

567

One of the cowed figures removes a small box from its robe and takes out a skull-amulet. The other

figures bow their heads in deference and start a plaintive chanting in hollow voices. A chill spreads up your spine as you hear this sad dirge. The figure places the amulet around your comrade's neck and then plunges the falchion deep into his chest. Seconds pass, and then to your amazement you see that your comrade is slowly sitting up from the bier. Soon he is standing, and as the starlight glances across his eyes you see that they are cold and dead and that he is now an Undead zombie.

If you want to leave the cathedral now and go back the way you have come, turn to **152**. If you wish to run in and attack, turn to **13**.

568

'You've helped me,' says the Faltyn, 'so I will help you.' It gestures over to the archway that leads to the transept. *'The transept holds a series of ordeals culled from the dreams of myth. Strong sorcery, such as that contained in ancient items, may be needed. Certainly you should avail yourself of a skull-amulet. A handful of silver dust is also advisable. First, however, I would recommend that you tear strips from the winding sheet by the bier over there and soak them in water from the font, then wind them across your lips . . .'* So saying, the Faltyn vanishes. You may do as it suggested: the shroud still lies by the bier and the font is full of water.

Each player must decide whether the Faltyn gave good advice here and act accordingly. If you didn't take the skull-amulet before, go back to where you saw it and pick it up. (If you didn't see it before, you won't be able to find it, no matter how hard you look!)

If you now want to enter the transept, turn to **40**. If you would prefer to leave the cathedral and return the way you came, turn to **547**.

569

(WARRIOR AND TRICKSTER) You decide that with a bit of teamwork you will be able to reach the plinth without having to step on the black and white chequered floor which to both of you looks as if it could well be booby-trapped. The Warrior picks up the Trickster so that he is cradling the Trickster's feet in his arms: then with a great heave he sends the Trickster spinning across the room, where he lands with an acrobatic flourish by the side of the plinth. Varadaxor throws you a rope that he has kept twined around his body and ties one end of it to a brass wall-fitting near the door. You tie your end around one of the brass handles of the chest, and when you test your tightrope you find that it will take your weight easily. Now that you have arranged your escape route, you open the chest.

Turn to **294**.

570

You return south, finding the same story all around. The country of Wyrd seems to have awakened at last from out of a nightmare. The people who last night went to sleep in a world of poverty and pain now find themselves awakening into a verdant and bountiful land. The Armigers and Solons, agents of the Warlock-King's authority, cast their armour and judicial maces into the hedgerows to rust. The sound of laughter and song rings out through the land once more.

A few days later you are sitting beside a fire in the midst of a majestic pine forest. The happy folk of Wyrd cavort around in dances to appease the spirits of winter. The festival was a grim one in past years, when the winters were bleak and cold, but now the evening is mild and pleasant. Night and winter no

longer seem as terrible as they once did.

You are reminded by this scene of the foresters' camp where your adventure began. You find your eyes fixed on the Blood Sword hilt and scabbard where they glitter beside the camp fire. Your quest has not ended yet, for you have still to find the final section of the sword: its blade . . .

Where will that part of your adventure take you? Find out in the third book in the series: *The Demon's Claw*.

Glossary

- Blue Moon** One of the spirits of the magi, the others being White Light, Red Death, Gift Star and Plague Star. In astrology, Blue Moon stands for mystery, paradox, illusion; also the boundary between life and death, and hence it can represent mystical wisdom.
- the Blasting** The demon-spawned disaster in which Spyte 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.
- Coradian Sea** The sea around whose shores are located the richest ports and cities of the world. Coradian is also used as a collective adjective for the countries of the True Faith - Algandy, Chaubrette, Kurland, the New Selentine Empire, Asmuly and Emphidor - which surround this sea.
- Ferromaine** The richest port on the Coradian coast.
- Gift Star** One of the spirits of the magi, the others being White Light, Red Death, Plague Star and Blue Moon. The significance of Gift Star in astrology is as a symbol of luck

- Krarth (both good and bad) and the oracle. 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 and 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 - and sometimes by assassination.
- Plague Star One of the spirits of the magi, the others being White Light, Red Death, Gift Star and Blue Moon. Seen in astrology as indicative of illness, Plague Star is interpreted in another sense as the decay and corruption that must inevitably follow any act of creation.
- Red Death One of the spirits of the magi, the others being White Light, Gift Star, Plague Star and Blue Moon. In astrology, Red Death is generally

taken as the symbol of wanton carnage and terror. Others see it as conflict in a general sense - perhaps within an individual's psyche - which, if resolved, leads to enlightenment.

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.

the Spirits of
the Magi

Five small luminous objects which are sometimes visible in the northern skies at night. Each appears about a fifth the size of the moon's face. According to the popular superstition of Krarth, these objects are the apotheosised spirits of the five greatest wizards among the True Magi. They appear frequently in folk tales (usually as malevolent entities constantly plotting and dreaming of their return to the land of men). Less sinisterly, they are potent symbols in astrology.

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 ruins, 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.

the Warlock-King The centuries-old ruler of Wyrd. He has the power to shape reality within the boundaries of his kingdom, and can enter the dreams of his subjects to question or to punish them.

White Light One of the spirits of the magi, the others being Red Death, Gift Star, Plague Star and Blue Moon. The meaning of White Light in astrological terms is as knowledge and consciousness - absolute and positive action which brings about permanent change.

Wyrd An island kingdom situated in the Mistral Sea, east of Krarth. It is ruled by the Warlock-King, who was a vassal of the True Magi until the Blasting.

BLOOD SWORD

From the Palace of Eternal Dusk, the Warlock-King holds his realm in thrall. His tyrannized subjects live in perpetual fear, for they know their evil monarch can see into the minds of others and slay them in their dreams.

Only outsiders from beyond the boundaries of Wyrd may slay the tyrant – and they will need all the courage and skill that mortals ever can possess.

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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