

THE ELRIC SAGA

Sea Battle Near Melnibone

By Ken St. Andre

This is a solitaire adventure compatible with the *Stormbringer* role-playing system. In it you will have the opportunity to play the part of Elric VIII, 428th Emperor of Melnibone, in his first decisive clash with foreign enemies and his treacherous cousin Yyrkoon.

While the adventure is based upon Michael Moorcock's published Elric stories, it is not limited by them. It is possible to obtain endings different from the outcome in the book *Elric of Melnibone*.

In order to play through this adventure you will need a pencil, paper, and several 6-sided, 8-sided, and 20-sided dice. Some knowledge of the mechanics of either *Stormbringer* combat or *RuneQuest* combat will make it easier to play. It would be helpful to have a copy of the *Stormbringer* rulesbook, but is not absolutely necessary. A short discussion of *Stormbringer* combat is on page 28 for your convenience. Go to 24A.

24A Your skin is the color of bleached bone, your eyes are two slanting crimson slits above high cheekbones, your stark white hair floats out from beneath the verdigrised dragon helm like a cloud of milky smoke. You are Elric, 428th Emperor of Melnibone, and you are an albino. The royal blood is wearing thin and weak after 10,000 years of glory, but you have various drugs and potions

that allow you to simulate the strength of a normal man — nay, not a man, but a Dragon Lord of Melnibone. Your war captains are gathered before the Ruby Throne to hear your words. Foremost among them is your cousin Yyrkoon, he who holds you in scorn and lusts after the throne itself. Also present are Dyvim Tvar, Keeper of the Dragon Caves, and Magnum Colim, Admiral of the Melnibonean fleet. They are waiting expectantly, gorgeous in jewelled armor and dragon helms.

"My lords" Your voice is high and has the carrying power of a bugle, though you did not speak loudly. "One hundred of the war galleys of Argimiliar are sailing for Imrryr. They will be here before nightfall tomorrow, eager to slay us and plunder the Dreaming City of its millenia of accumulated wealth."

Yyrkoon interrupts. A smile of bloodthirsty glee contorts his perfect features. "We will sail and meet them with battle barges and dragons. We will smash them on the seas and then continue on to their homelands, burning their cities, enslaving their women, slaying . . ."

"No dragons" It is the voice of Dyvim Tvar. "They have not recovered since you used them against the Vilmerian pirates last year, Yyrkoon."

Yyrkoon's speech falters to a halt. "Have you a plan, your majesty?" he smirks.

"I do," you reply. You wait for their attention and then tell them of your plan to defend Melnibone with battlebarges and warriors only. A few details are hammered out with your

captains. Then the question of command arises.

Once again Yyrkoon puts himself forward. "Let me command the warriors and the ships" he shouts. Then, moderating his voice, he continues, "Surely, Elric, you have more important things to do — perhaps a book to read?" His blatant sarcasm is unworthy of the wit and subtlety of a true Melnibonean. You feel a surge of pity for your envious cousin — he wants what you have so badly, little knowing what a curse you have found it already in your one short year of rule, but the pity is greatly adulterated by annoyance that he should dare to speak to you in such a manner before the other lords. If you are willing to let Yyrkoon have complete control of the battle forces, go to 25E. If you deny his request, go to 27A.

24B By the time Yyrkoon returns to Imrryr, he lets everyone know that he is now the ruler of Melnibone and that things are going to change. Magnum Colim and Dyvim Tvar are quite unhappy with their new liege, but there seems to be nothing they can do. Imagine Yyrkoon's dismay when he walks into the throne room and finds a mysterious figure sitting on the Ruby Throne. He runs up and snatches the cowl away from your face. Screaming with frustration he admits his treason before witnesses, and you have a few guards take him away while you ponder a suitable punishment for this traitor. After much thought, you reach a decision and issue your orders. Go to 26B.



Luise Perenne

illustrated by Luise Perenne

25A Straasha heard your summoning, Elric, but decided to honor your wish and let you die. You drown and become a mindless zombie serving in the Chaosfleet under Pyaray. Yyrkoon achieves his ambition of being Emperor of Melnibone. END.

25B After the fight with the captain and his dog everything is anticlimactic. Soon the battle is over. Of the 100 ships of Argimiliar that sailed to attack the Dreaming City, four return to their home port of Cadsandria. And so the legend is spread that the Melniboneans are invincible in war. Although there is some grumbling among the younger Melnibonean warriors at allowing any invader to escape, in the rest of the Young Kingdoms you gain fame as a warrior king that will protect your island from similar attacks for years to come. Go to 25C.

25C You return to Imrryr in triumph. Yyrkoon is very unhappy, but no one will listen to him because you are the hero of the populace. Within the month he announces that he is going to travel in the barbarian lands.

He spends some time preparing a small boat with all the luxuries, and has it crewed by demons. On a bleak and foggy morning he sails away from Melnibone. It is only many hours later that you learn he has abducted Cymoril and left a succubus behind to imitate her. It seems, Elric, that you will have to follow him out into the world, but that is the tale of another adventure. END.

25D Compute the damage taken, remembering that armor protects you not at all. If the blow slays you, go to 27E. If you are only wounded, go to 25F.

25E Jubilantly, Yyrkoon leads the other captives out of the Tower of D'Arputna and down to the

harbor. You sink wearily back down on the throne, and bury your head in your pale hands. Cymoril, sister of Yyrkoon, and your true love, comes and sits at your feet. After a while she begins to sing to you and your black mood lifts. Go to 27G.

25F You quickly black out. When you wake you are in your own bed in the tower of D'Arputna and faithful Tanglebones is hovering over you. You feel very weak, but there is not much pain, and soon your wounds will be completely healed. Go to 28A.

25G In the carnage of conflict you see a huge man dealing great blows with a two-handed Lormyrian axe. At his side is one of the great war-hounds of Chalal. As your



eyes cross his, he recognizes you. "Die, demon-spawn!" he bellows. He points at you and cries, "Kill!" Instantly the great war-hound leaps to the attack, with the war captain only a pace behind. Go to Combat, 28B.

If you slay both captain and dog, go to 25B. If you take a critical hit, go to 25D.

26A The water is cool and green and you are sinking fast. As your last gasp of air is running out you find yourself wondering if you will meet Straasha, king of all water elementals when you have drowned. Unbidden, the words of Summoning rise to the surface of your brain, but then you think, why bother? As consciousness fades to black and the pain in your lungs becomes intolerable, you

think you see a great green-bearded face looking at you curiously. Roll D100. If you rolled between 01 and 60, go to 27D; if you rolled between 61 and 100, go to 25A.

26B You are sitting morosely on the Ruby Throne when a very apprehensive noble writhes his way to your feet and begs permission to speak. "What is it?" you snap. "Is my cousin dead?" "No, my emperor,"

he whines. "The traitor summoned a demon that slew his guards. He has fled from Melnibone in a small boat and taken Cymoril with him." You leap to your feet. "Then I must follow him!" you cry. But that is another adventure. END.

26C Yyrkoon follows the fleeing southerners to the open sea and destroys every ship they have. In the process he loses four more battle barges. When he returns to Imrryr, he thinks he is a hero, and many Melniboneans also think so. His arrogance and taunts are going to be worse than ever. Cymoril advises you to have him quietly strangled. If you wish to take her advice, go to 26B. If not, go to 28A.

26D Only a few of the enemy ships reached the open sea. They have raised all canvas to catch the wind, but the Melnibonean sorcerers control the wind. Realizing they cannot escape, they turn and fight. Two ships converge on the Son of Pyaray. The leading one is hit by a fireball, but some stout warrior has lashed the wheel and the flaming wreck comes straight on to crash into the barge. Flaming rigging falls on deck and threatens to set your barge afire. Most of the crew has to work at putting it out. That allows the second ship to come up and board. The desperate warriors of Argimiliar pour across your decks, determined to take this flagship to the bottom with them. Two of them come for you, Elric, and you are beginning to feel weak. It has been too many hours since you last took the drugs that maintain your strength. But you must fight. You raise the old blade of Aubec and the fight begins. Go to 27F.

26E Tanglebones, your faithful lifelong servant has laid out your personal armor and weapons. The armor is a set of black plate with demons bound into the very fabric of the metal. No normal earthly sword should be able to pierce it. The helm is made in the form of a swooping black dragon, and it leaves part of your face exposed. The sword is a great two-handed greatsword, said to have once belonged to the human champion

named Aubec who led the people of Lormyr in the first revolt against Melnibone centuries ago. You also pick up an enchanted shield. Tanglebones is practically chortling with glee to see what a fine figure you make when all decked out for war. You leave him and go board your flagship, the largest of the gold-plated battle barges, The Son of Pyaray. It will be a long wait — several hours at least — until the arrival of the sea raiders. Go to 27I.

27A “An emperor needs exercise for his body as well as his mind,” you answer him. “I will command in person.” Your war captains nod their approval. The Emperors of Melnibone were ever first in the fray. “Go and prepare the ships,” you order. As they file out you can almost hear Yyrkoon gnashing his teeth in frustration. Go to 26E.

27B As you lean wearily upon your sword, almost too tired to stand, the blade is kicked away and you fall heavily to the deck. The impact with the hard deck stuns you. Dimly, you are aware that Yyrkoon is looming over you. Suddenly he lays hands upon you and throws you over the side. You hit with a splash that no one seems to notice in the general confusion of the still-continuing combat. The last thing you hear is your cousin’s triumphant laughter. Go to 26A.

27C Calculate the damage. Remember that your armor is no protection from a critical hit. If it is enough to slay you, go to 27E. If you have any hit points left, you will be badly wounded and left for dead as your enemies move on to fight other Melniboneans. Go to 27H.

27D The Summoning succeeds. Straasha rescues you, and takes you to his enchanted realm where all your wounds are healed and you learn much that is new to you. Of that meeting Moorcock writes in detail in the chapter called “The Caverns of the Sea King” in *Elric of Melnibone*. Suffice it to say that with the aid of the Sea Lord, you are completely healed and return to the island in a very short



time, arriving in Imrryr hours before Yyrkoon brings the remnants of the Melnibonean fleet back into the harbor. Go to 24B.

27E You have been slain, Elric, by a lucky blow that penetrated through a gap in your armor. Yyrkoon goes on to win the battle and become the 429th Emperor of Melnibone. He is one of the worst rulers the Bright Empire has ever had, but then he is better than you were. END.

27F You are fighting two common Argimiliar sailors. They are described in section 28B as sailors 1 and 2, and their strategies are indicated. If their primary weapon, the sea axe, is broken or dropped because of a fumble, they will switch to their secondary weapon and continue fighting. If the secondary weapon is also

lost they will throw themselves overboard on their combat phase, thus hopefully getting out of the fight. Go to 28B.

If you have slain or otherwise disposed of both enemies, go to 27B. If you have taken a critical hit from one of the sailors go to 27C.

27G You watch the battle from the safety of the harbor walls.

Although the ships of Argimiliar outnumber the golden battle barges of Melnibone by a factor of three to one, they have no chance against the Melnibonean fireballs and ramming tactics of the barges. Again and again Melniboneans in their demon armor, with their demon swords and other weapons, ram and board the wooden vessels of the southerners. The men of Argimiliar fight very bravely, but it is in vain. In the end only a couple of ships flee from the carnage and make their way back through the maze that protects the harbor of Imrryr. The flagship docks and Yyrkoon invites you to join him as he tracks down and sinks the last surviving southerners. If you refuse his offer, go to 26C. If you accept, go to 26D.

27H You are lying on the deck badly wounded and barely conscious when Yyrkoon reaches your side. He sees that you are still alive, but does not offer to help. Instead, he muses aloud how tragic it is that the young ruler of Melnibone was slain in battle and fell over the side. With those words he quickly tosses you into the sea. Go to 26A.

27I The Son of Pyaray lurks beneath a dark overhang in the grotto walls. It is completely hidden in the darkness of night. Now you hear the sound of oars, the creak of timber and rigging, and the cautious voices of men. The ships of Argimiliar begin to pass your position. They seem near enough to touch in the twisting channel, but they are unaware of the Melnibonean battle barges. As the last ship comes abreast of your position, you signal to your rowers and the Son of the Pyaray leaps out and staves into its side. In seconds it is a sinking, burning derelict. Now the other Melnibonean battle barges strike. Balls of

blue demonfire leap from the catapults to entangle in the rigging of the southern ships. Realizing that they have been trapped, the men of Argimiliar turn to make a grim fight of it. Three ships begin to close with your flagship, and although one is struck by a fireball, the other two keep coming. In moments the barbarians are boarding, and you find yourself in furious hand-to-hand combat. Go to 25G.

28A The menace from Argimiliar is ended, but the menace of Yyrkoon still remains. His prestige is high in Imrryr, while yours is at a new low, but that is a problem for another time. END.

COMBAT

28B To prepare for solo combat in *Stormbringer* you will need to list all of the combatants in the following format as in the example below.

Name	DEX	Weapon	To Hit	Damage	Hit Points	Armor	Major WL
Elric	20	Greatsword	92	2D8+1D6	15	50 hits	8
		Sea Axe	84	2D6+2+1D6			
		Demon Shield	50 to parry				
Captain	11	Lorm. Axe	63	3D6+1D6	10	1D10+2	5
		Sword	53	1D8+1+1D6			
		Sea Axe	43	2D6+2+1D6			
Wardog	13	Bite	74	3D6	16	None	
1 Sailor	9	Sea Axe	42	1D6+2+1D6	8	1D8-1	4
		Scimitar	16	1D8+1+1D8			
2 Sailor	10	Sea Axe	43	2D6+2+1D6	13	1D8-1	7
		Sword	45	1D8+1+1D6			

A. The character with the highest DEX attribute gets to strike first. That will usually be Elric. As the Elric player, you may choose which opponent you will attempt to hit. All living foes will attempt to hit Elric as long as they can keep fighting. Go to B.

B. Make the attack roll on D100. If it misses, go to C. If it hits, go to step D (remember to note a critical hit 5% chance - 01-05). If it fumbles (5% chance - 96-00), go to H. If all combatants have had their turn, go to I.

C. Go to the combatant with the next highest DEX rating. Remember the instructions in A for the allocation of attacks. Then repeat B.

D. The character that has been hit must decide whether to parry, dodge, or take it on armor. That strategy is noted by the character's weapon choices. Characters will always attempt to parry a critical hit, but such a parry, even when successful, will break the weapon making it, except for Elric's sword which is always able to take the strain. If a parry is attempted, go to E; if a dodge is attempted, go to F; if armor is relied on, go to G.

E. Try to make the parry roll. If the parry fails, go to G. If the parry succeeds, check to see if the weapon was broken by a critical hit (see D above). Characters who have a broken weapon may continue to fight with it at 1/2 their normal attack and parry, or discard it for their next weapon by taking a five point penalty on their DEX for one combat turn. In any case, go to B for the next combatant.

F. Try to make the Dodge roll on D100. If the character fails, go to G. If the roll succeeds, the combatant dodged the attack and forfeited the right to attack at any later time in this

combat round. Remember, it takes a critical dodge to avoid a critical hit. Go to B for the next attacker if not hit.

G. Roll the attacker's damage, then:
1. Double that damage if it was a critical hit;

2. If the character being hit has any armor, roll the amount of protection the armor gives. (For Elric subtract the damage done from the demon's 50 points.) Subtract that protection from the total hits taken before wounding the character. (Critical hits ignore armor.)

3. Subtract hits taken from character's hit points. Check for major

wounds (1/2 the hit points or more). If a major wound is taken, go to J. If the wound is fatal, cross the character off the combat list.

4. Go back to step B to continue with the next combatant.

H. In the event that any fumble was thrown, the unfortunate character will drop his weapon, and will need one combat turn to regain it. If hit by a foe on the next combat turn while trying to recover his weapon, the character must attempt to Dodge, or just take the hits on armor. During this turn the weaponless character will be unable to attack or parry. However, if the character has a backup weapon, he may draw it and only suffer a five point loss from DEX for the next turn. Go to C.

I. If the entire combat is finished, return to the section that sent you here and continue reading.

J. Any character who takes a major wound during combat in this adventure will be immediately out of the fight. If the wounded character is Elric, return to the section that sent you here and read the next paragraph. If there are any combatants left to face Elric, continue the fight by going to C.

Elric of Melnibone Noble/War
Albino, STR 5 without drugs.
STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 15 INT 25
POW 35 DEX 20 CHA 25 ELAN 20

Cult - Arioeh Hit Points - 15
Age - 25 Major Wound Level - 8
Armor - Demon Plate, 50 hit points
Combat Bonuses - Attack +44%;
Parry +33%; Damage +1D6; Dodge
100%

Weapon	Attack	Damage	Parry
Greatsword	92%	2D8+1D6	81%
Sea Axe	84%	2D6+2+D6	73%
Demon Sh.	Special		50%

Elric will not dodge unless faced with a critical hit, preferring to let weapons strike his demon armor. When armor is hit, there is a 50% chance that the weapon striking it will break. Roll D6. On 1-3 weapon breaks. (A critical hit will slip by the demon armor.) The dog's teeth will not break & will do damage to the demon armor. Player may choose to have Elric attempt parries with demon shield. A successful parry has a 50% chance of breaking the weapon as per the demon armor. A critical hit will kill the shield.

Sea Captain

Warrior

Argimiliar Navy Captain

STR 17 CON 10 SIZ 10 INT 16

POW 16 DEX 11 CHA 11 ELAN 5

Cult - None Hit Points - 10

Age - 40 Major Wound Level - 5

Armor - Plate 1D10+2

Combat Bonuses - Attack +13%;

Parry +9%; Damage +1D6; Dodge

71%

Weapon	Attack	Damage	Parry
Lorm. Axe	63%	3D6+1D6	59%
Broadsword	53%	1D8+1+D6	49%
Sea Axe	43%	2D6+2+D6	39%

The captain fights in tandem with his warhound, following up its attack with one of his own. Normally he will not attempt to parry, counting on his armor to protect him. In case there is a critical hit, he will attempt to parry with any weapon in his hand. He will only dodge after a fumble.

Warhound of Chahal

Dog

STR 24 CON 16 SIZ 8 INT 4

POW 3 DEX 13

Combat Skills - Attack +2%; Dodge

50%

Weapon	Attack	Damage	Parry
Bite	74%	3D6	

The dog has the power to dodge and still attack. It will always dodge & will only attack when the dodge succeeds.

Sailor One

STR 14 CON 9 SIZ 8 INT 11

POW 11 DEX 9 CHA 15 ELAN 0

Hit Points - 8 Major WL - 4

Armor - 1/2plate 1D8 - 1

Combat Skills - Attack +2%; Parry

+3%; Damage None; Dodge 10%.

Weapon	Attack	Damage	Parry
Sea Axe	42%	1D6+2	43%
Scimitar	16%	1D8+1	38%

Will attack Elric in sequence & fight till death. Will attempt to parry.

Sailor Two

STR 12 CON 11 SIZ 14 INT 11

POW 15 DEX 10 CHA 8 ELAN 0

Hit Points - 13 Major WL - 7

Armor - 1/2plate 1D8 - 1

Combat Skills - Attack +3%; Parry

+1%; Damage +1D6; Dodge 53%.

Weapon	Attack	Damage	Parry
Sea Axe	43%	2D6+2+D6	41%
Broadsword	45%	1D8+1+D6	42%

Will attack Elric in sequence & fight till death. Will count on armor & not parry. □

STORMBRINGER

Errata

Page 27: A priest gains one point of INT per year after age 25, not POW. However, he must roll higher than his current INT on 3D10 (a range of 3-30) to gain the increase. Some years a priest gets stuck in routine and doesn't learn anything.

CHAPTER 5

Vulnerability of elementals:

Any elemental can be harmed by a Demon of Combat or Protection. All elementals have 30 hit points.

Undines can be harmed by normal weapons. Salamanders and Sylphs are invulnerable to normal weapons, and Gnomes (as well as being invulnerable) can break normal weapons 50% of the time.

Vulnerability of Demons:

Any demon, unless it has a ward pact is vulnerable to normal weapons unless it is in weapon or armor form. Special demon abilities can modify this situation, but not negate it. Of course, with demons such as Gateway Openers, one must find the demon before one can hit it.

Rebinding Elementals:

A character may bind an elemental originally summoned and bound by another if the original binder is dead or gives permission. He need only make the same POWx3 roll that the original binder needed. If the roll is failed the elemental is freed.

Page 67: The example does not make it clear that the needed percentages for the two sorcerers are higher than they would be for beginning sorcerers. Note that they are described as *practiced at doing elemental summonings*. Naturally their skill has increased from the basics shown on page 65.

Page 73: Under demons of Protection, read (3) *those that take spirit form and guard against trespassers* (new word in bold)

Page 76: Under spirit wards change *and multiply the difference by 5 to multiply the difference by 2.*

Add: *When created, a spirit ward is given a definite area of no more than 100 square meters to guard. Its influence will not extend past that area. □*