

DEGASUS

'14
Summer 1999

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**Interview with
Dave Arneson**

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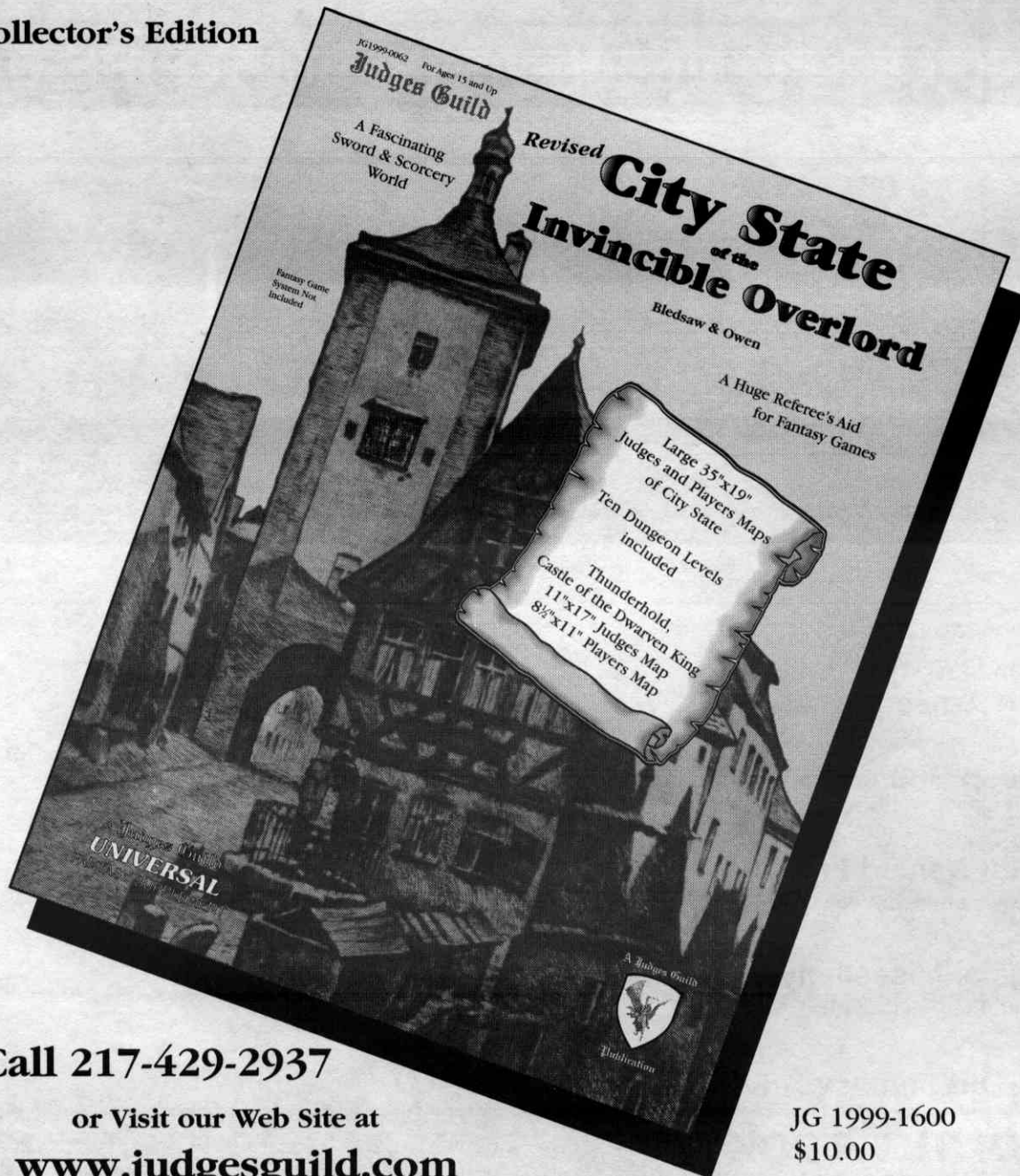


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Pegasus #14

Summer 1999

Publisher:
Editor

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From the Overlord

Salutations, Guildmembers!

Greetings to all my gaming friends who hoped for this moment. We are back and I'm sure everyone is anxious to know what we intend to publish. I wish to fill the needs of all our loyal customers but have very real limits primarily due to financial constraints. The demand for our products this long after we stopped producing them is evidence of the viability for our return.

To those in the industry that view us as competitors, I wish to say relax. Judges Guild has always supported the whole gaming hobby and we intend to continue this policy. The best days are yet to come. Publishing tools multiply and computers enhance our horizons.

The first step was to locate genuine gaming talent with the needed skills to turn ideas into products. I was fortunate to find Greg Geilman and Jean McGuire felt the same passion for Judges Guild as old guildmembers. Indeed, the both were and Greg had designed *In Search of Kelandors Gold* long ago (Product Design Manager!). Jean has extensive credentials in three main areas, Gaming (a roleplaying enthusiast for over 20 years), Publishing (she is a columnist for a newspaper out east) and Programmer (she owns a small software company and website design service). So, Jean became the new Editor in Chief.

We received messages of praise and hope from Dave Arneson, Gary Gygax, Ken St. Andre, and other notables upon our website going up. Orders began to flow and the moneys raised permitted us to begin the following projects: *City State of the Invincible Overlord*, *Inferno*, *Pegasus Magazine*, *Inferno*, and the *Land of a Thousand Doors*. I wanted the *Wilderlands* products back in print (it was the world's largest wargame map ever published, beating the *Europa* series by a few inches in one direction) and I wanted to support the new technologies coming down the pike with ever better PCs sitting on gaming tables. We decided to produce a CD of all the

Wilderlands series ... *Judges and Players* maps, the manuals for each, and supporting software.

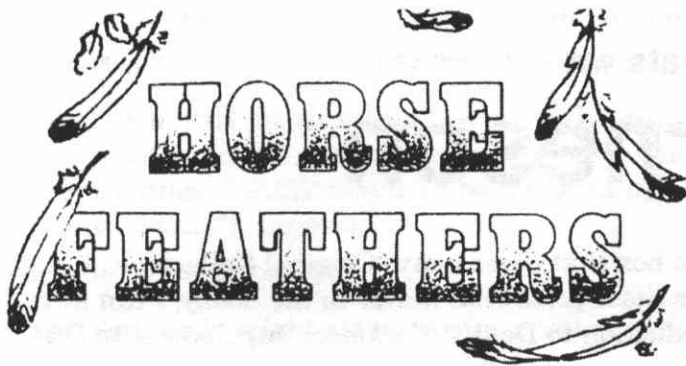
All is still in a flux as I type this ... we are drained of funds, feverish of brow, headaches aplenty ... once more into the fray! I pray that all comes together at GenCon ... then to send out the Guildmember subscriptions and upload the magazine to the protected area of the website for our favorite people to access ... the best judges in the world ... our Guildmembers.

Due to recent rulings by the government, we dare not accept volunteer help ... and we have had many volunteers come forward. Two offers of financial help have been received. Our hopes are unlimited but our reach is short in resources available.

The guestbook is my main way to determine what the fans want at this time. I hope I have chosen wisely so the sales will produce income sufficient to provide for real growth.

Join me in this hope at least, Judges Guild will return some of the excitement of the early days. The simple pleasures of a well supported campaign are legendary but whole generations of gamers have not felt that thrill. In 1976 when my campaign was in bringing in spectators to watch and learn how to roleplay ... my group would rant, shout, jump, and howl after midnight. We were often flush with excitement or laughter ... a time to remember and still talked about by many.

Return those Halcyon days ... become less serious, shorten the rules, stretch your imaginations, and create much because it costs the same as being mediocre. We will carry the banner to the top (yes I'm a little nuts ... crazy about role playing campaigns and the gamers that bring them to life) ... bring on your dragons and let the stuffed shirts pile up. Forward to Victory or at least to GenCon ... (shake my hand ... pat my back ... I need help and another soda) ... hope to see you there.



HORSE FEATHERS

It is a humbling experience, to say the least, to find myself as Editor of a magazine that can trace its roots to the earliest days of the roleplaying hobby. And deep roots they are: **Pegasus #13**, published fifteen years ago, was the last publication in a run that started with the first broadsheet issues of the **Judges Guild Journal**, predating even such venerable publications as **Dragon**. That's a lot of history to have peering over one's shoulder!

I have been a roleplayer and wargamer for over twenty years, and like most gamers who read magazines I have spent much of that twenty years griping about how I could do so much better than the editor of any given gaming magazine. I take it back. I take it all back!

Putting together a magazine takes an enormous amount of work and an enormous amount of skill, most of which can only be learned on the job. It makes that job, and that learning, even more interesting when one unexpectedly has to move to another city on virtually no notice while doing all of this, and a month before GenCon at that! My fellow editors... (how strange it seems to be typing those words) My fellow editors, I salute you. You have my heartfelt respect and admiration. (and Roger, now it's *your* turn to bring *me* the big bag of M&M's)

In future issues of **Pegasus**, **Horse Feathers** will be a full-fledged editorial column, a place where your humble Editor can pontificate on the roleplaying hobby and on the industry. It will be a bit short this month, due to the space used for the introductory section above ... enough about editing, on with the rant!

They're Called Games For a Reason

Back in the late 1970s when I first became involved in this hobby, we knew what we were doing. Oh, we didn't always know what the rules meant, or quite how play was supposed to proceed

at times, but we knew the fundamental truth of what we were doing: *We were playing games.*

There was nothing complicated about it: We played **Chess**, and that was a game. We played **Risk**, and that was a game. And, we played **Dungeons & Dragons**, and that too was a game. It said so right there on the box.

It will be 22 years this Christmas since I opened the package with that little white pasteboard box in it – the box containing “Rules for Fantastic Medieval Wargames Campaigns Playable with Paper and Pencil and Miniature Figures.” (*role-playing* was a new word back then, outside of a psychological context) I took my little white box, and I got together with my friends, and we played games.

Somewhere along the line, some people seem to have become ashamed of playing games. RPG rule sets began to deny their identity as games. They became Interactive Literature, Sagas, Improvisational Drama. Gamemasters became Directors, Storytellers, and a dozen other euphemisms for a proud title. Players, no longer comfortable *playing*, were now Actors, Personae, and more. Anything, it seems, to disguise the fact that we grown-ups were *playing a game*. People might laugh!

The interesting thing is, of course, that nobody usually laughs at adults who watch *other* people playing games. Instead, they are supported and supplied by a multi-billion-dollar industry – professional sports. Why is it more respectable to watch someone else play a game than to do it yourself?

It's time to take back our games!

We don't have to be Storyguides or Actors, acting out roles in a Saga. We don't have to feel guilty that we are not analyzing our deepest psyches, expanding our inner selves, exploring alternative modes of thought, or whatever other buzzwords are hot this week. We don't need to stress about how much authenticity we're putting into our portrayal of a character who does not, and can not, exist in reality. Never mind the theater, the psychodrama, the shared fiction. This stuff is supposed to be fun. It's supposed to be entertaining. It's supposed to be stress-relieving, not stress-inducing.

Let's pull out our dice, get together with some friends, order out for pizza, and **play some games!**

Pegasus chats with

Dave Arneson

To any old gamer, someone who still has the little white box that *doesn't* say "Original Collector's Edition" on it, Dave Arneson needs no introduction. For those somewhat newer to the hobby, I can introduce him best by quoting E. Gary Gygax from his introduction to Dave's *Blackmoor* supplement to D&D, published in 1975:

"Dave Arneson . . . is there really such a creature? Yes, Gentle Readers, there is, and shudder when the name is spoken. Although he is a man of many talents who has authored many historic rules sets and games ... Dave is also the innovator of the "dungeon adventure" concept, creator of ghastly monsters, and inscrutable dungeonmaster par excellence."

Yes, this is *that* Dave Arneson – the man who started it all. He's still around, still writing, and of course, still gaming. Pegasus talked to him just before he moved to Florida to take up a teaching position at Full Sail University. Pegasus #1, back in 1981, featured an interview with Dave Arneson. The introduction to that interview gave a good bit of background on Dave's own history, and that of the game industry, and is reprinted here:

The infamous Blackmoor campaign, Dungeons & Dragons, and fantasy roleplaying games, all began during the summer of 1970. At that time, Dave Arneson was active with the Midwest Military Simulations Association. The group was mostly interested in Napoleonic miniatures campaigns, and a segment of that group met every weekend in the basement of Dave Arneson's parents' house in St. Paul. One weekend, instead of hundreds of Napoleonic miniatures, the gamers discovered Blackmoor, the first fantasy roleplaying adventure campaign. After some initial groaning about trying something new, the players descended the now well-worn main staircase to Blackmoor dungeon. Once play began the players were hooked, and the Blackmoor adventures came to dominate the group's interest with only an occasional break for Napoleonics.

From that inauspicious, and sometimes rowdy, beginning grew the concepts that became Dungeons & Dragons. The "rules" developed from notes Dave kept on decisions he made. News of the game spread beyond the Twin Cities to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and Gary Gygax. Both Gary and Dave had been active in the Castles and Crusades Society, a wargaming group devoted to play with miniatures in a medieval setting. They had also worked with Mike Carr on a set of Napoleonic naval combat rules entitled Don't Give Up the Ship. So they frequently corresponded regarding gaming news and ideas, and Gary was quite interested in the Blackmoor campaign. Dave visited Gary in Lake Geneva during February, and led him down into the Blackmoor dungeon for his first adventure. Gary was fascinated with the game and immediately began a similar roleplaying campaign, Greyhawk, for his wargaming group in Lake Geneva.

Within a month after that visit, Gary and Dave decided to collaborate in writing a set of rules so that other groups around the country could play and enjoy this exciting new game of fantasy roleplaying. After extensive correspondence, and playtesting by both groups, they managed to complete the original three booklets of Dungeons & Dragons by the end of that year. Tactical Studies Rules, predecessor of TSR, was formed to publish and market the game after several companies failed to show an interest in the game. From its first publication in February, 1974, Dungeons & Dragons took off. In 1975, the first supplements were published. In July of 1976, Judges Guild was founded.

Today, nearly eighteen years after those words were printed in Pegasus #1, TSR is no more, fads have come and gone, the game industry has changed almost beyond recognition, and Dave Arneson? Well, here's what Dave has to say about it all:

Pegasus: Are you still involved in wargaming?

Dave: Oh, yeah. I just got back from a gaming convention on the west coast last weekend.

Pegasus: What sort of stuff are you playing now?

Dave: I do a little bit with Don't Give Up the Ship, the sailing ship rules, do some with Seven Years War, 20 millimeter, and I've been refereeing a local American Civil War campaign using heavily modified Fire and Fury rules. I think that'll all be wrapped up next Monday, I hope. A nice clean end to a campaign for a change – that'll be novel.

Pegasus: What a concept!

Dave: Somebody might actually win.

Pegasus: As opposed to just sort of fizzling out.

Dave: Yeah, usually they fizzle. I'd say, nine times out of ten, campaigns, whether they're a fantasy campaign or a wargame campaign, fizzle out.

Pegasus: Someone can't make it for a couple weeks, someone moves away....

Dave: And since I'm the referee and I'm moving away, that's a worse than usual problem.

Pegasus: Where will you be teaching?

Dave: It's called Full Sail University. It's associated with the University of Central Florida, it's what's called a satellite or associated school.

Pegasus: Is any part of Blackmoor still running?

Dave: Well, we try to get together at least once a year, some times three or four times a year, with the original group. Even when I lived in California, whenever I'd come home on vacation we'd try to get together, even if it was just a few of us, so that we could keep the campaign running. Since I've been living back here I've been able to do a little bit more of that. I've got the old hands that are in one group, and I've got some younger folks that are in what I call the new group, although it's all the same campaign. I try to mesh them both together, pretty much. So it's been going now since, oh, '71, '72, which was when we started roleplaying, which was long before there was a D&D. If the Guinness Book of World Records ever asks me, I've got the longest-running fantasy roleplaying campaign in the world.

Pegasus: Going on to changes in the industry ... back when we started, going on 25 years ago, everyone was pretty much discovering roleplaying for the first time. There was all the excitement and so on. Today it's almost totally commercial, as close to mainstream is it's ever going to get. What changes do you think that's made in the hobby, in the people who are playing?

Dave: Well, you know, it was a lot more fun when we started out. Some of the changes were good, because, well, first edition Dungeons & Dragons didn't even tell you how many dice you were supposed to roll to generate your stats. You could tell from the numbers, but it never did say you were using three six-siders. There needed to be a lot of cleaning up and tightening up, but I think what happened, oh, ten, fifteen years ago, things got so commercial, TSR was making studies about what grade level they should be writing their rulebooks for, they would include boxed dialog for everything, and that caught on with the other outfits. Sitting down and reading boxed dialog, going through seven or eight volumes of rules, is a long way from the scribbled notes I started off with, even the first three-volume set of Dungeons & Dragons. It just got very, very complicated and, in the efforts to simplify things, they just lost whatever creativity was left. We talked about Judges Guild, they're really the ones that started doing modules in a wide variety of areas. I'd done a couple for TSR. They didn't call them "modules" back then of course. They didn't have boxed dialog in there, and it was up to the referee to pass that information on to the players as they played. That was probably a little bit of too little information, could have used a little more help in that regard, but then it's like suddenly they went to the opposite extreme, trying to provide them with everything. I think what you lost there was the spontaneity of the whole operation. I would have rather seen efforts expended improving the quality of referees, whether it was a referee class, or college, or more seminars than the couple you get at a gaming convention once in a while. A lot of people want to be referees, but that doesn't make them good referees, because a good referee has got to be a

good storyteller, keep things moving along. You can have a crummy set of rules, and if you've got a good storyteller, you can still make it work. Or you can have a great set of rules, and a lousy storyteller for a referee, and it doesn't matter.

Pegasus: So you think that there's been too much dependence on trying to do everything in the rules, and getting away from the Judge's own creativity?

Dave: Oh, yeah. Too many of them try to do everything, or they follow the official line of "You can't change anything or you'll destroy the rules." Aw, forget it. That's not the way things started, that's not the way things should be. If something doesn't work, get rid of it. If something works in another set of rules and you want to put it in your game, go for it. The [rules'] job is to make the referee's life easier, so he can referee, not harder.

Pegasus: Do you think that some of this – stifling creativity, basically turning the referee into just a speech synthesizer for the designer, is one of the things that has contributed to the decline in roleplaying?

Dave: Yeah... Well, for one thing, frankly, I think it's helped enough poor referees become adequate referees when they're not really good enough. The other thing is that it's all regurgitated so much, time after time, there doesn't seem to be much new coming out, either as far as roleplaying genres or concepts, or just the way to do things. That may not necessarily be bad, but if you keep going over the same ground time after time you're going to lose a lot in the freshness of things. Card games came along and that put a big dent in things but now the cards are starting to go back down to a reasonable level, people are more interested in fantasy games again. One of the talks at the game manufacturers' show a few weeks back in Las Vegas is how roleplaying is coming back. Like, I'm surprised, right.

Pegasus: It took a couple years longer than we expected.

Dave: Card games are fine, but you know, that's not fantasy roleplaying, that's card games. Again, nothing against card games, but you don't have the possibilities for different types of play or different adventures that you've got in a roleplaying game, whether it's fantasy or something else.

Pegasus: What other changes have you seen in gamers, rather than in gaming itself? How are we different?

Dave: Well, it seems like they're a lot older. Used to all be young – high school kids, college kids – you don't see that too much any more. I don't know if that's because they're off playing video games or card games, or they're just not interested. I think some of it's the video games because you get much more of an instant feedback response from a video game than you do from a roleplaying game. Again, is that good or bad? I think that's bad, because I think they ultimately have a lot more fun playing roleplaying games than shooting up spaceships and aliens. I'm going to be going down to Florida and teaching computer game design. Last year there were like 2,000 computer games released, most of which I bet you haven't seen.

Pegasus: Yeah, and out of those 2,000, I'd be willing to bet that over 1,900 (at least) of them stank.

Dave: Probably, because if you eliminate the games where they have all the graphic violence the law will allow, the prettiest explosions, the most gravitationally challenged female characters, oh, not many left!

Pegasus: The thing that bugs me about so many games – and I'm a computer game player myself – the thing that bugs me is they've left out one minor detail: They forgot to put in the fun!

Dave: Yup. A lot of these computer games, what determines whether they get funded, whether they get backed, it depends on the marketing departments at these big companies. The marketing departments like to do things that have been successful in the past, either for them or for somebody else, and they get into ruts really, really quick.

Pegasus: I was in the beta test group for Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri – have you played that, by the way?

Dave: No.

Pegasus: Excellent game, if you're into Civilization-type games. Of course, I'm a little biased, my name's in the back of the book. But if that hadn't had Sid Meier and Brian Reynolds behind it, it never would have had a chance to get out the door.

Dave: Oh, no, Marketing would have shot it down.

Pegasus: On the other hand, if J. Fred Programmer came up with the concept, nobody would have touched it.

Dave: Nah.

Pegasus: Which is why we have 9,000,603 clones of Doom out there.

Dave: Probably more than that.

Pegasus: Back to my whole collection of questions here ... speaking of computer games, we used to think they were the wave of the future. Is that future any closer than it was?

Dave: Oh, the future's here. It turned out to be a lot dumber than I thought it was going to be. Now they're saying that games on the Internet are going to be there. Yeah, at least you get some group dynamics going, but you never really know what the guy on the other side of the line is really like. And that's not going to change when they have live video or anything. Whatever you can do online, you can fake. At least with a face to face group, if a guy's a turkey you can kind of edge him out of the bunch after a while. And the group dynamics is what I felt really made fantasy roleplaying the fun that it was. Sure, a lot of groups don't get along after a while. I can't say that my old D&D group all loved each other. They don't. But we get together and play. We did that two weeks ago. But it was funny, they formed up on either side of the table in the same grouping they always did.

As far as the future goes, oh, there'll be more bells and whistles, live, interactive, three-dimensional, etcetera, etcetera. Maybe if they can come up with some kind of portable environment projectors, you'll get people actually being able to go out as a group, physically, to have an adventure, even if they're all sitting in the same room. That'll be a little bit better. I certainly would find it to be fun. But I think the promise of computer games fell unfulfilled. We obviously don't have a holodeck yet.

Pegasus: Of course, given the amount of trouble the holodeck caused in Star Trek: the Next Generation....

Dave: That's true. I'd worry about it taking over the planet when I wasn't looking.

Pegasus: It was the most dangerous place on the ship.

Dave: Yeah, it can't have been any better than the beta model!

Pegasus: You've pretty much approached my next question, which was going to be whether computer roleplaying games will ever be real RPGs, will replace getting together with some friends and a lot of pizza.

Dave: My gut reaction is now, but that's not to say it's not going to happen, not to say that it's not better than what exists today, because it will be better, and it will happen. If they find a way to generate the same group dynamics you get sitting together in the same room, more power to it.

Pegasus: So you think that's going to have to wait for the holodeck?

Dave: Yeah, it might not be as fancy as the one on the Enterprise, but you don't have to worry about it taking over the world, either. I know there's more than one group out there working on the concept.

Pegasus: Are computer game companies going about things the right way, emphasizing graphics and special effects?

Dave: Ah, they're taking the easy road out. It's easy to hire people to do graphics and animation. They always leave game design, it's either really, really early in the process when they do the game design, or it's really late in the process, when they can't change anything. Graphics are easy to do, you can compartmentalize it, you can assign it to teams, it's all very wonderful for the bean-counters up in

Accounting. It's pretty obvious that if you've got something flashy and gory, it's going to sell to a lot of people, and the bigger companies, as I mentioned earlier, their marketing is pretty narrow, really. They're not out there looking for something new and exciting.

Pegasus: Games Workshop has built an empire on the collectible miniatures game. Not that I should comment, I'm putting together a Chaos Beastman army at the moment. Where I am, if I'm going to get any wargaming done at all where I am, it's going to be pushing little Beastmen around the table against players young enough to be my kids.

Dave: The historical gamers, for years, were pooh-poohing all this roleplaying, because it wasn't real wargaming with lead. Well, a lot of the lead is plastic now, and frankly, if I can get people pushing little Beastmen around, then I can switch them over to Civil War soldiers pretty quick.

Pegasus: How would you address the contention that some game systems, the AD&D rules in particular, promote roll-playing over role-playing?

Dave: Most are roll-playing. I always stress the role-playing part when I do my games. All too many of the computer games that claim they're roleplaying games aren't, just a little bit different stats for a little bit different robots running around. And most of the pseudo-roleplaying games that have come out, in boxed sets and whatever, aren't a lot better. They all pay lip-service to the roleplaying part, but they all end just having you roll different dice for different situations. There again, that has taken away from a lot of the spontaneity of actually roleplaying. When I do my games, I give roleplaying points for people staying within their character. If they want to go out and kill things, that's easy to do, and a lot of referees that's all they do, but there's more to it. The richness is not in just rolling dice, the richness is in the characters and becoming part of this fantasy world.

Pegasus: Going back to Blackmoor, what was or is the best thing about it as games go?

Dave: When something like that is unique, and it was first, it's hard to point at it. There are certainly worlds out there with far more depth and creativity in them than Blackmoor had or has. It was just my little fantasy campaign, in an area not much bigger than a couple of large states put together, maybe Montana. I always found plenty for them to do, they didn't have to go out and conquer new planets every weekend or something like that. We'd go through time warps occasionally, just to keep them on their toes. To me, what made it unique and different was that a lot of what made up Blackmoor was input from the players and the way they were seeing the world, and what they were doing in it. I just kept notes. I built the framework, and would occasionally throw in a few storylines, but it was the players get involved in filling in a lot of the gaps that made a difference. I haven't been involved in a lot of other fantasy campaigns, so I can't say that this is unique to Blackmoor, but it sure seems that way.

Pegasus: So what are you planning on doing next, gaming-wise, development-wise?

Dave: Well, I'm going to Florida to teach computer game design and game interface design. I think that's my next project, probably will be until I get settled in. I've been approached by some companies to do another roleplaying game. My stipulation was, it sounded fantastic, it sounded interesting, but if you want it any time in the next two years, that's probably not going to happen.

Editor's Note: The history of Dave Arneson's original Blackmoor campaign, and many of his notes, maps, charts, and tables, were published by Judges Guild as First Fantasy Campaign. There are still a few copies of that product available for sale, including a handful autographed by Dave himself.

Magical Miscellany

New magic items to for every fantasy campaign

The following seven items of low to moderate power and somewhat unusual in effect. Some, such as the Summoning Gems, are of obvious use. Others, such as the Spider Eye Necklace, will take some care and planning to use to their best effect. Finally, there is the Kittenstone, which is a comfort and a convenience to any traveller – at least, any traveller who is not allergic to cats!

Spider Eye Necklace

This appears to be a necklace of small gleaming black spheres. One such sphere at a time can be detached and pressed against any surface, where it will stick securely. (a firm tug will remove it) The sphere will then provide 270 degree remote visual capability to the person wearing the necklace. Each bead can only be used once. Activation of any subsequent bead deactivates the current one, as does removing it from its surface or the user moving more than a kilometer from the bead's location. In any event the bead expires and turns dull in 30-90 minutes after activation.

The user must concentrate on the necklace to receive information from the bead, and can therefore move no faster than a walk, and is always surprised unless in an area visible to the active bead. A necklace has 3-12 of these special beads, easily distinguished from the remaining jet or obsidian beads.

Wand of Magical Location

This wand can be used to locate a single previously designated item. There is no command word as such; rather, the wand is moved over and around the object in a complex pattern. This uses one of the 2-24 charges within the wand and magically "sensitizes" the wand to that particular object. (The target object is not affected or enchanted in any way, and thus no magic can be detected on it) Thereafter, merely by holding the wand and concentrating on the item, the person who sensitized it can cause it to point toward the previously designated item if within 20 kilometers outdoors, 500 meters indoors or underground. Only non-living

items from 1-50 centimeters in diameter can be affected. The target object can be moved, carried, etc., even out of range, and still be located when again if it and the wand's user once again come into range.

Paralysis Net

This is a small throwing net such as a gladiator might use, though it appears to be knotted of some silky material rather than rope. When the Paralysis Net is dropped or thrown over a living creature, the target must make a saving throw (as appropriate to game system) against magic to avoid paralysis. If this is successful, the target must make a second save to avoid being magically slowed while in the net and for 1-4 minutes afterward. In this case the victim has the normal chance of working free of the net but of course, due to the slow effect, attempts are made half as often as normal, and the net-wielder can see a probable escape before it occurs. If the save against paralysis is failed, the victim is totally paralyzed until unwrapped from the net. This only affects voluntary muscles; breathing, heartbeat, and such continue normally. This effect also persists for 1-4 minutes after release.

The Paralysis Net must be thrown, dropped, wrapped, or otherwise targeted by a person. It will not function as anything other than a normal net if dropped automatically in some fashion, such as part of a trap.

Summoning Gem

Generally a large semi-precious gem such as amethyst or topaz. If the gem is closely examined in good light, the faint image of an animal can be seen at its heart. When the gem is thrown to the ground it will shatter and the animal will appear. The animal thus summoned can be controlled by simple verbal orders by the person who threw the gem: it can be commanded to attack a designated foe, cease to attack, or disappear. If not commanded to leave it will remain for 10-15 minutes.

Only normal animals, such as bears, wolves, tigers, etc., have ever been found within such gems, but the possibility of gems which can summon monsters should not be ignored.

Ring of Understanding

Enables its user to discover the basic attitudes and intentions of any creature with a mind, however simple. Concentrating for 30 seconds reveals its basic attitude: "friendly", "neutral", "hostile", "hungry", etc. After a minute, the magnitude of feeling is discerned: "very friendly", "mildly hostile", "somewhat scared", etc. Another full minute of concentration will reveal greater detail, including a clue to its intentions: "neutral, will fight if threatened", "friendly if fed", "cautious, will attack if reinforced", etc. It can be used for up to three minutes at a time, after which the user must rest for ten minutes for each minute the ring was used before using it again. (Other activities may be performed normally during this time) The attitude sensed will be what the subject feels toward whoever or whatever it is currently interacting with, or anticipates. For example, if the subject is a Dermac, a shopkeeper talking to Fox, the user of the ring, it will reveal Dermac's attitude toward Fox and perhaps whether or not he's in a mood to haggle. If the shopkeeper is talking to another customer, Fox will detect Dermac's attitude toward that customer. If Dermac is not interacting with anyone, and unaware of anyone's presence, a random attitude — his emotions of the moment — will be read.

The Kittenstone

This appears to be merely a flattish oval black stone, about the size of an egg. Despite its polished appearance, it feels fuzzy when touched, and sometimes vibrates slightly when held. If placed in a sleeping area, such as at the foot of a bed, it will raise the temperature of its immediate area as though a live cat were curled up there. It does, however, have one side effect: It will cause people allergic to cats to sniffle and wheeze.

While the Kittenstone might not be of much use to the average adventurer, a good market for them would undoubtedly exist among ordinary people if the secret of their manufacture could be discovered. That is assuming, of course, that the rumors that Kittenstones are really the eggs or dormant forms of some strange monster are unfounded.

Frog-Eye Helm

This unique item is a bascinet subtly shaped in the form of a frog, with two bulging froggy eyes sculpted into the top. It looks somewhat silly, causing a small negative reaction modifier (-5%) to anyone who does not know the wearer. Its benefits, however, outweigh the disadvantage of wearing a helm that looks rather like a frog. In addition to having the normal armor effects of a helm of its type, the Frog-Eye Helm has the following special powers:

Enhanced peripheral vision: The wearer can see movement anywhere except for a 90 degree arc directly behind the helm. Note that if something is not moving, or moving very, very slowly (e.g., a slug crawling) it will not be noticed. Some users have reported an inordinate interest in watching bugs.

Swimming underwater: When in water, the wearer's skin functions as a frog's for oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange. This allows a humanoid wearer to survive underwater for ten times the normal limit. If a character could normally hold her breath for a minute and a half, with the Frog-Eye Helm on she could hold it for fifteen minutes instead. Note that this is heavily dependent on the amount of oxygen available in the water: A cold, clear trout stream will allow breathing for considerably longer than the bottom of a bog. The 10x factor is for the surface waters of a normal temperate-zone lake; for other areas, the Judge should adjust accordingly.

Froggy Eyes: The wearer can choose to see solely through the frog eyes on the helm. For game purposes, treat the forward 90 degree arc as being similar to normal human vision, except in black and white, 90 degrees to each side being sensitive to movement only as for the enhanced peripheral vision, and again the rear arc is a blind spot. By submerging in water with just the frog eyes breaking the surface, perhaps with a bit of mud or pond weed to disguise the top of the helm, it is possible to hide while watching what is going on, taking advantage of the frog skin feature to only surface to breathe every ten minutes or so.



Storm Wrack

An introductory adventure
for 3 to 8 characters

An Unusual Storm

You have lived all of your life in the small fishing village of Arn. It is a peaceful place of about 300 people where the age-old rhythms of a fishing village are interrupted only by the arrival of the occasional trading ship which buys dried and salted fish and sells those few necessities that your village cannot produce for itself, and of course the annual visit of the Royal Tax Collector. The only other settlement nearby is Serne, an even smaller but otherwise very similar village, which is a day's sailing, or two days of risky overland travel, to the south. The larger town of Denby was once a week's travel inland over the King's Road, but with the resurgence of the ogres it is unsafe to travel. The Royal Tax Collector arrives every fall, escorted as far as the Serne fork in the King's Road by a troop of soldiers, then continuing on to Arn with a handful of guards. The people of Arn grumble, as everyone does on tax day, but not much. They are proud to be citizens of the great kingdom and know that without the kingdom's protection, things would be much worse.

Rarely, one or two of the young folk of Arn leave on a trading ship, and more rarely still they return. Targon soCaderic, now the Mayor of Arn like his father before him, was the most recent of the latter. After ten years of absence he returned twenty years ago with wealth and tales to tell. His son Cadras, about the age of you and your friends, has spoken of leaving for a place where he can make a name for himself, a land worthy of his talents. Most people hope that he does, and is one of those who never

come back to Arn.

The storm came up without warning, just over a month ago. The morning dawned bright and clear, but by noon the sky was the blackest anyone could remember and the fishing fleet had returned with only a fraction of their usual load of fish, driven back by a howling storm. The storm lashed the coast until evening, then broke up as quickly as it had come. It was then, right at dusk, that the villagers who had gone to check on the damage from the storm saw the unmistakable silhouette of a distant dragon in the sky.

Cadras soTargon and two of his cronies rode off to investigate. Cadras returned with neither his horse, his friends, nor his hair, with his face blistered with burns. He had, indeed, found the dragon, and he alone had been spared to carry the monster's demands to his father and the village: Every item of gold, of silver, even of finely carved wood, that the village possessed, was to be delivered immediately. Each week, two wagon-loads of fresh fish were to be taken to the dragon's lair. And finally, six of the young maidens and youths of the village, chosen by lottery, were to be chained at the lair to be devoured at leisure. For the village of Arn, this tribute was just short of crippling.

People spoke of having the Arn village militia take on the beast, but the Mayor urged restraint. He pointed out the ease with which the dragon had killed two of the finest young men of the village and defeated his own son. He calculated that the losses from a militia attack on the dragon, even if successful, would surpass in an instant the dragon's

demands for many years. Instead, the Mayor recommended, the tribute should be paid. Then the Royal Tax Collector should be told of the dragon when he made his annual visit, and aid sought from the King's elite dragon hunters.

So the situation stands. What are you going to do about it?

For the Judge Only

If you are going to be playing this adventure, you should read no further beyond this point. Trust me, it would take all the fun out of it.

This is an adventure suitable for any number of beginning characters. Because it has a natural connection between the characters, and a compelling reason for them to adventure together, it is an excellent start to a fantasy roleplaying campaign. In addition, there are several possible paths to follow at the conclusion of the adventure. This will make it a natural lead-in to whatever the Judge has planned next.

Much of the description is given in nonspecific terms — “the kingdom”, “overseas”, etc. This is intentional, so that the Judge can fit it readily into a suitable place in his or her campaign world. Likewise, no explicit character stats are given. This is not at its heart a combat-oriented adventure. The essence of this adventure is a situation that is not at all what it appears to be. While there are several opportunities for combat, and places where more can be added if desired, the primary focus is on observation, thinking, and problem-solving. It is fairly unlikely that the player characters will decide, say, to beat up the Mayor. If your players are the sort who will, it will be the work of a few minutes to assign stats suitable for your game system.

Setting

The village of Arn is a small fishing village on the remote northeastern coast of what was once a much larger and more prosperous kingdom. As the kingdom's fortunes declined, the visitors coming down the increasingly overgrown track called the “King's Road” declined. Eventually, only the Royal Tax Collector appeared each fall. Ogres from the northern mountains moved into the forests that surround Arn.

Life in Arn continued much as it always had. Ships from overseas stopped irregularly to buy barrels of dried and salted fish and to sell items such as iron bar stock and other materials that are not available locally.

Modification

Arn must be cut off from a kingdom which no longer remembers (or at least cares) that it exists, it must have a neighboring village a few days of dangerous travel away, and it must maintain foreign trade contacts. Keeping those things in mind, the Judge could easily relocate it to the southern shore of a desert on a disused caravan route or the bank of a jungle river. Its setting could as easily be Arabian, Meso-American, or African; the quasi-European background used here is merely an example, a setting so familiar to most gamers that its details need not be described.

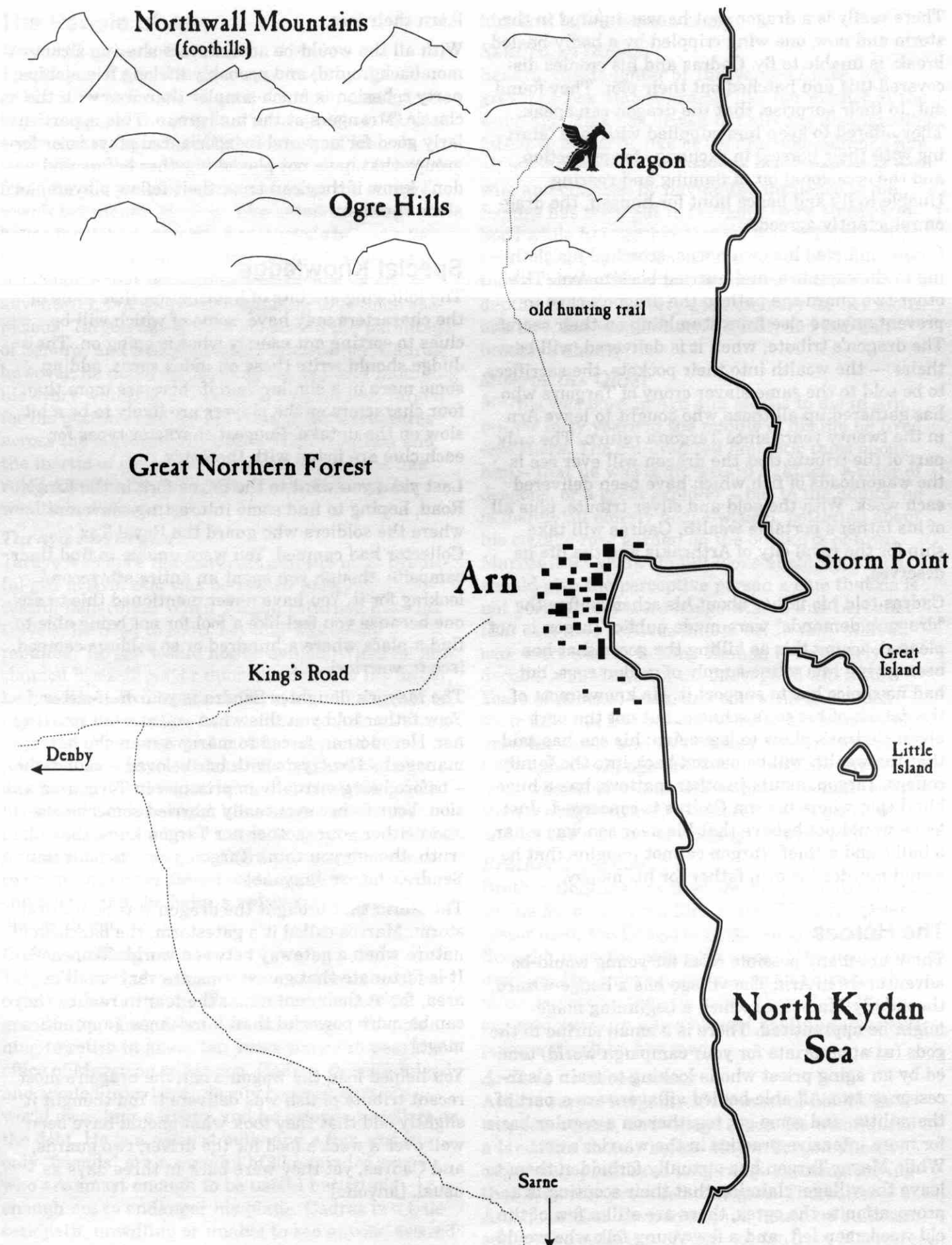
The Facts of the Matter

The great kingdom has been in decline for several generations, and has pulled back from the ogre-infested forests where Arn clings to the sea. The garrisons were withdrawn from the border forts twenty years ago, and Arn is no longer shown on the kingdom's maps and charts. The current king, Rovard III, is struggling to maintain what the kingdom still holds.

Thirty years ago, when Targon soCaderic ran away to sea, he met up with a young man from Serne of similar age and inclinations. They served together as soldiers for a time, then shared more lucrative and less lawful enterprises. When they got word that the fort garrisons had been recalled, they took ship for their respective home villages. No tax collectors came that year, and a party sent to Denby to inquire was attacked by ogres on the road and barely survived to flee back to Arn.

The following year, however, both villages had new Mayors, and the Royal Tax Collectors came again. This time, however, Arn's tax went no further than the Mayor's strongbox, for the “tax collector” was no less than his buddy from Serne. A week later, Serne's taxes were collected by a man who, had anyone in Serne known him, looked suspiciously like the Mayor of Arn. There is no troop of soldiers waiting at the Serne fork, and the “tax collector's” bodyguard consists of the cronies of the Mayor of Serne.

Targon has been content to be the biggest frog in his small puddle, to marry an unwilling girl 12 years his junior, and to rule Arn like a petty, but generally benevolent, despot. Cadras, on the other hand, spoiled by his father, wants more, much more. He thinks his father's lucrative little scam is trivial. He sees his father's wealth as just a start on what he truly deserves. The dragon's demands are an integral part of his plan.



There really is a dragon, but he was injured in the storm and now, one wing crippled by a badly-healed break, is unable to fly. Cadras and his cronies discovered this and hatched out their plot. They found out, to their surprise, that the dragon can speak. They offered to keep him supplied with food (starting with their horses) in exchange for protection, and the occasional bit of flaming and roaring. Unable to fly and hence hunt for himself, the dragon reluctantly agreed.

Cadras inflicted his own burns, scorched his clothing in the campfire, and hurried back to Arn. The other two guard the path to the dragon's cave to prevent anyone else from stumbling on their secret. The dragon's tribute, when it is delivered, will be theirs — the wealth into their pockets, the sacrifices to be sold to the same slaver crony of Targon's who has gathered up all those who sought to leave Arn in the twenty years since Targon's return. The only part of the tribute that the dragon will ever see is the wagonloads of fish which have been delivered each week. With the gold and silver tribute, plus all of his father's portable wealth, Cadras will take ship for the royal city of Arthrakis and the life he deserves.

Cadras told his father about his scheme after the "dragon's demands" were made public. Targon is not pleased, seeing this as killing the goose that has been giving him a fine supply of golden eggs, but had no choice but to support it. He knows most of the details of his son's scheme, but not the part about Cadras's plans to leave Arn; his son has said that the wealth will be poured back into the family coffers. Targon, astute in other matters, has a huge blind spot where his son Cadras is concerned. Just as he would not believe that his dear son was a liar, a bully, and a thief, Targon cannot imagine that he would murder his own father for his money.

The Heroes

There are many possible roles for young would-be adventurers in Arn. The village has a hedge-wizard, the elderly Marros, to which a beginning mage might be apprenticed. There is a small shrine to the gods (as appropriate for your campaign world) tended by an aging priest who is looking to train a successor or two. All able-bodied villagers are a part of the militia, and some get together on a regular basis for more intensive practice in the warrior's art. While Mayor Targon has virtually forbidden them to leave the village, claiming that their scouting is a provocation to the ogres, there are still a few of the old woodsmen left, and a few young folk who would

learn their lore.

With all the would-be adventurers sharing a common background, and probably lifelong friendships, party cohesion is much simpler than it is with the classic "strangers at the inn" group. This is particularly good for new and inexperienced players, or for groups that have not played together before and don't know if they can trust their fellow players, let alone the characters.

Special Knowledge

The following are bits of information that some of the characters may have, some of which will be clues to sorting out exactly what is going on. The Judge should write these on index cards, adding some more in a similar vein if there are more than four characters or the players are likely to be a bit slow on the uptake. Suggest character types for each clue are listed with the entry.

Last year, you went to the Sarne fork in the King's Road, hoping to find some interesting souvenirs where the soldiers who guard the Royal Tax Collector had camped. You were unable to find their campsite, though you spent an entire afternoon looking for it. You have never mentioned this to anyone because you feel like a fool for not being able to find a place where a hundred or so soldiers camped. [scout, warrior]

The Mayor's daughter Sendra is your half-sister. Your father told you this when you started courting her. Her mother, forced to marry a man she hates, managed a few trysts with her beloved — your father — before being virtually imprisoned in Targon's mansion. Your father eventually married someone else and neither your mother nor Targon know the truth, though you think Targon suspects he is not Sendra's father. [anyone]

The storm that brought the dragon was no natural storm. Marros called it a gatestorm, the backlash of nature when a gateway between worlds is opened. It is fortunate that gatestorms are very small in area, for at their centers, at the tear in reality, they can be more powerful than hurricanes. [apprentice mage]

You helped load the wagon when the dragon's most recent tribute of fish was delivered. You thought it slightly odd that they took what should have been well over a week's food for the driver, two guards, and Cadras, yet they were back in three days as usual. [anyone]

The People of Arn

Mayor Targon soCaderic

The Mayor of Arn was once appointed by the King or his representative. Upon the sudden death, twenty years ago, of the previous mayor, his son Targon succeeded to the office. With the help of his colleague from Sarne, he has been running a fine little fraud for the past 19 years, pocketing the entire town's tax money. He lives like a lord in a large house furnished with the finest goods brought for him by the occasional trading ships. The people of Arn believe that his wealth was earned as an adventurer, but some are beginning to become suspicious. Targon has always suspected the parentage of Sendra, and hence virtually ignored her. Cadras, however, he doted on, spoiling the boy and indulging his every whim. Most people in Arn respect Targon for his position and for his tales of his adventures across the northern kingdoms. With tradition and the inertia of the small village on his side he has ruled Arn best by ruling least, satisfied with his wealth and office.

Taraya naTargon

Taraya was once the cleverest and the most beautiful girl in Arn. She was betrothed to Arkos, a successful fisherman. When Targon returned from his travels, he tried to court her and was coldly rebuffed. Targon would not be denied. When he proclaimed himself mayor upon the death of his father, he had his bully-boys seize Taraya and bring her to him, mere days before her wedding to Arkos. A large payment to her widowed mother procured her parental consent, or at least silence, and the next day Targon declared the bruised and weeping girl his wife. After he caught her slipping out in the night to see her beloved Arkos, he kept her a virtual prisoner in his mansion. Eight years and five miscarriages after her forced wedding Taraya died in childbirth, and the baby, a twisted, deformed thing, died with her.

Cadras soTargon

Targon's son Cadras is now seen as the natural successor to his father, as his father succeeded his grandfather. Targon actively encourages this, planning to retire in about ten years time and pass the office of Mayor on to his son. Cadras, been indulged and spoiled from birth, firmly believes that the world owes him a living, and he intends to collect on the debt. He is a natural bully and a liar, and his only "friends" are a handful of like-minded cronies who are smart enough to be useful but stupid enough not to endanger his plans. Cadras is a true sociopath, unwilling or unable to see anyone around

him as a fellow human being.

Sendra saTargon

Sendra, the daughter of Taraya and Arkos, has grown to look almost exactly like her mother at the same age. This has driven her already disapproving father to active dislike of Sendra, who reminds him all too much of Taraya, who he feels cheated of both wife and children by having the insolence to die. Sendra has been put to servant's work since childhood while her brother Cadras was indulged with every luxury. Like her mother, she is brilliant, and though mousy and quiet to survive, has hidden depths and a very, very good memory for her mother's love, her step-father's neglect, and her half-brother's abuse.

Marros the Quiet

Marros was born in Arn and means to die in Arn, but for forty years in the middle of his life he lived elsewhere. The children tell fantastic tales about him – that he was court wizard to kings, a rider of dragons, or a great explorer – but to the adults, he is merely an elderly hedge-wizard, pottering about his cottage rose garden on the outskirts of town. Marros is 93 years old but looks about 60, which should give the perceptive person a clue that he is not perhaps the mere hedge-wizard and herbalist that everyone believes him to be. In fact, Marros was court wizard to King Kamon II for nearly a decade, and Master of the Mageguild after that. Years of politics, wars, and court intrigues took their toll, and he chose to retire to his home village, grow his roses, and write books. His magical skills have faded with age and disuse, and his power is far from what it once was. He wants to be nothing more than a hedge-wizard, a tinkerer, and a gardener, and let the rest of the world go its own way.

Brother Denthas

Brother Denthas has been the keeper of Arn's small shrine for most of his fifty years. When his predecessor died, the Conclave in far-away Ranakis confirmed him in the post with none of the usual formalities. He is devout and pious, and also much more perceptive than he looks. He will aid the adventurers with a few blessed healing salves and potions which he has made.

Ardirc - retired scout

Ardirc supported himself for most of his life as a trapper, hunter, and village scout. He was injured in a landslide shortly before Mayor Targon almost completely prohibited long-range scouting, saying that it merely provoked the ogres. Thereafter Ardirc settled down in a small house he built himself on the outskirts of Arn, not far from Marros' cot-

tage. He keeps bees and rabbits, grows vegetables, and does a bit of hunting to put meat on the table. His two daughters, now matrons themselves, look after his house as needed. Many of the village children go to Ardiric to hear his tales of wild beasts and fierce storms, of ogres and cliff-cats and creatures stranger by far. To some, he has taught his skills at tracking, hunting, stealth, and woodlore.

Other Citizens

Only about 60 of Arn's approximately 300 inhabitants actually work the eight boats of the fishing fleet. As a nearly self-sufficient fishing village, Arn has a number of specialized craftsmen. Since they are not likely to become involved in the adventure they have not been described individually. They include a blacksmith and two apprentices, three coopers with an apprentice each to build the barrels to pack the salt fish in, a whole family of boat-builders, two ropemakers, various weavers, a brewer, etc. There are also farmers who raise grain, vegetables, sheep, and cattle, clam diggers, a stonemason, woodcutters... in short, all the skills needed for the town to survive. Many of the less commonly used trades are the secondary occupations of people who normally work at other jobs. For example, one of the ropemakers also builds fireplaces and chimneys.

The player characters will also have family in town – parents, siblings, etc. Orphans, a not uncommon occurrence given the dangers of the fisherman's life, are taken in by their relatives. And *everyone* in town is related to one degree or another.

The Dragon

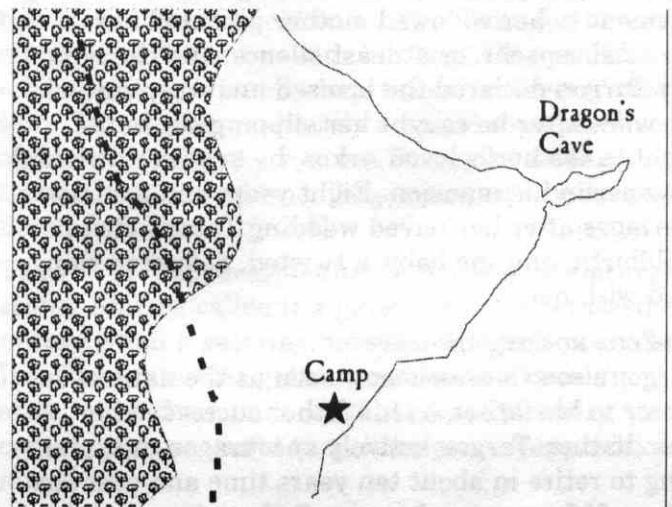
There is indeed a dragon, brought here from another world (or another part of this one, if the Judge prefers) during the gatestorm. He is a young male, approximately forty feet in length, of which 14 feet is tail and another 10 is neck. He is green and scaly, has large batlike wings, breathes fire, and in many other ways is almost the perfect stereotype of the classic dragon. He also has one big problem: exhausted by fighting the hurricane winds of the gatestorm, landing in unfamiliar terrain, he crashed and tumbled on landing, which broke the forearm bone of left wing in three places. Dragons heal very quickly, and within a week it was indeed healed, but it healed *wrong*. He might be able to manage a brief glide, but his wings will not lift him into the air. In short, this dragon cannot fly.

Prior to his arrival on this coast, he had no direct experience with humans, save perhaps for swooping down and eating one or two. He was startled, to say

the least, when he heard Cadras and his companions talking – he had not known that humans *could* talk. Being young, lonely, and curious, he said hello. Perhaps if he talked to these three humans, instead of them scattering so that he could only catch one, they might all come within reach. Then, for perhaps the first and only time in his life, Cadras did something smart: He did not try to attack the dragon. He did not try to bully the dragon. Instead, he offered it one of his friends' horses.

Despite his still dazed condition, the dragon realized that these humans might be worth more alive than in his belly. He and Cadras talked and bargained. In the end, the dragon agreed to remain in his cave, and look impressive when needed, in exchange for regular supplies of fish. Not much of a living, but a way to stay alive while his remaining injuries healed, and he could think of a way to get help for his wing. Cadras never mentioned the human sacrifices or the treasure – if he had, the dragon would have known that he lied. (dragons, being partially magical beings themselves, share with angels and demons the ability to know lies)

Because his only contact has been with Cadras and his two cronies, and they have assured him that nobody else knows where his lair is, the dragon will assume that anyone approaching openly is one of them, or has been sent by them. Given his preoccupation with food at this time (a natural effect of his accelerated healing rate) his first word to a visitor will probably be "Fish?"



The Dragon's Lair

Following the new cart wheel tracks along the old trail north of town, the party will travel over flat, level terrain through a forest of tall pines. The ground under these forest giants is fairly open, covered with a millennia-thick layer of pine duff, so even the oxcart loaded with fish was able to travel

at a good speed here. The path turns uphill and steepens about ten miles from Arn. About six miles from that point, the adventurers will come to an area where the path parallels a large (approx. 800 ft.) hill. The western side of that hill is an almost sheer cliff for approximately a quarter mile. Where the trail turns away from the cliff, there is an overhang which makes protects an area large enough for two or three people to camp, and indeed this dry half-cave is where Cadras' cronies have been living. The two of them share watch duties, so someone is always awake, even if not as alert as a trained scout would be. They have bedrolls, two cooking pots, and their weapons. Their food, brought to them along with the dragon's fish, is on a ledge on the cliff above them, wedged behind a rock, to discourage bears and raccoons. They have been only partially successful in keeping the raccoons out, however, and one of the night watch duties is to hurl rocks at anything making noise near the food sack.

The dragon's actual lair, several hundred yards further along the cliff, is a barren crack in the cliff that is partially roofed by fallen slabs and blocks. It is far from comfortable, but if he is underneath the covered section, it is remarkably easy to defend. Because it is such a small space, a single blast of his flame will fill it and incinerate anyone foolish enough to be inside. The area in front of the lair, the open space shown on the map, is a talus slope. Loose rock makes footing uncertain at best, and trying to move at all quickly across it in the dark is an invitation to a broken leg.

Fighting

Depending on the skills and the interests of the party, several combat encounters are possible. The forests surrounding Arn are the home of numerous ogres, which can attack a traveling party as the Judge sees fit. Adjust the numbers and stats of the attackers to match the strength of the adventurers.

There are other hazards in the forest, too. Should your players wish more of a combat challenge, any of a number of forest-dwelling monsters might have begun to investigate the weekly travels of a wagon-load of somewhat odoriferous fish.

Wyverns have been seen in the area, occasional strays from the Northwall Mountains, on rare occasions. They tend to be scavengers as much as predators and a young one, driven from its parents' territory and looking for a place of its own, might well be wandering around. If the party is weak, the wyvern might be wounded from a previous territorial battle and hence easier to fend off or kill

Finally, there is the encounter with Cadras's friends, and possibly Cadras himself, at the dragon's lair. There, the question is not so much whether the party *can* defeat them as whether they *should*. Targon is still respected, for his official position if not for his person, by many of the citizens of Arn. (possibly including the player characters) He is also the head of as much of a justice system as a town Arn's size needs. Injuring or killing his beloved son could have serious, possibly lethal, legal repercussions ... or just earn you a midnight visit from some of his close friends.

We have not wasted time here with combat stats for ogres, wyverns, and small-time thugs. Not only is there the eternal problem of establishing universal stats, but this is a very open adventure, and any numbers we give would most likely have to be drastically adjusted by the Judge to suit the players in that particular group. Therefore, Judge, it is up to you to select the level of danger that will work for your players.

What next?

If all goes well, the novice adventurers will find themselves in possession of some well-aged dead fish, perhaps a prisoner or two – and some very dangerous information. What they do with it can determine the entire direction of your campaign.

They might return to Arn and confront the Mayor with their discoveries. This is probably a bad move, as he has plenty of support in Arn and the player characters are, after all, just young folks who have a history of getting into disagreements with his beloved Cadras. If Cadras or any of his friends have been injured or killed, arrest will be the least of the consequences awaiting them at Arn.

Waiting for the Royal Tax Collector might be an option if they do not know about Mayor Targon's fraud in that area. If they do – an outcome which is outside the scope of this module – they will have to find somewhere to hide out until his next visit, then sneak in to see him. As the Mayor's partner in crime, he will seek to reassure them while arranging to turn them over to Targon.

With at least some of the Mayor's corruption exposed, a more practical approach may be to go elsewhere to seek help. One option might be Sarne, though as a village similar in size and resources it is unlikely to be able to supply much assistance – and, unless Cadras has spilled his guts about all of his and his father's schemes, it is unlikely that the

party will know that it is run by a man even more corrupt and ruthless than Mayor Targon.

If the characters make their way overland to Denby along the overgrown King's Road, they will have a long, hard journey. It is nearly a hundred miles to Denby, much of it through the Great Northern Forest and all of its dangers. Along the way they will pass one of the vacated border forts. (Judges Guild's *Frontier Forts of Kelnore* will supply such a fort if needed) At last, they will come out into open country, crossing farm fields and pastures to the walled town of Denby.

There, they have a nasty surprise waiting: Arn? Where's Arn? Haw! Never heard of the place!

Denby is now the easternmost outpost of the kingdom, changed from provincial capitol to garrison town by the shrinking of the kingdom's borders. If they have not figured it out before, the truth of the Mayor's schemes will be obvious now.

And what about the dragon? Well, in my own game, the players invited the dragon to travel with them in search of a healer who could mend his wing, and my plans for the campaign were permanently changed – for the better. What will your players do? That, worthy Judge, is a new story, one that you will tell.

For your convenience, the following table will allow you to roll up quick and easy names for any citizens of Arn, including the adventurers themselves.

Name Generation Table

Syllable Pattern - 1d20

1	First/Middle/Middle/Last
2-11	First/Middle/Last
12-20	First/Last

First Syllable - 1d20

1	Al
2	Am
3	An
4	Ar
5	Da
6	De
7	Den
8	Ka
9	Kar
10	Ma
11	Mar
12	Mi
13	Or
14	Ra
15	Ram
16	Sar
17	So
18	Ta
19	Val
20	Vor

Middle Syllable - 1d12

1	ar
2	da
3	de
4	der
5	di
6	ma(r)
7	na(r)
8	pho
9	ra
10	ri
11	thra
12	ver

Last Syllable - 1d12

1	thas
2	kis
3	kos
4	mas
5	mon
6	rask
7	ren
8	reth
9	ric
10	ros
11	tac
12	thar

A Deep Subject

Limestone Caverns

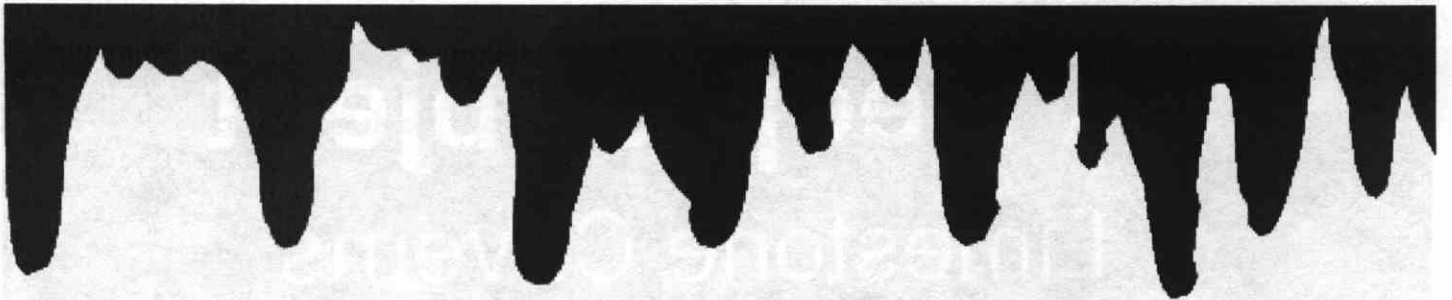
This is the first in a three-part series on caves and caverns. Future columns will cover lava caves, sea caves, and other less common cave types.

Caves come in various types, each with its own features, problems, and perils. These not only exist in the caves but sometimes extend to the surrounding countryside. In fact, player characters don't even need to enter a cave for it to have an effect on the campaign. In future installments of this series we will be discussing lava tubes, sea caves, and other forms, but this article focuses on the one most familiar: Limestone caverns.

Limestone caverns are what most people think of when they hear the word "cave". These caverns are formed by the action of water on limestone over long periods of time. You may be surprised to find out that limestone and chemically similar stones such as marble are soluble in water, but only slightly. Huge cavern complexes, such as Carlsbad Caverns and Mammoth Caves, have been formed by dissolving enormous volumes of limestone over long periods of time. The volumes of water involved usually requires that these caves form below the water table or have a constant flow of water through them. Changes in the level of the

water table, cracks in the original rock, and variations in the composition of limestone layers influence what parts of the original limestone are dissolved. It is all possible to redeposit dissolved limestone as water carrying it evaporates. How does this affect what your player characters see and have to deal with in and around limestone caves? Follow along as a party enters and explores a cave.

As the party approaches the cave the land starts to change. The rocks are generally the same as before, including limestone, shale, and sandstone, but the land forms are different. There are rounded depressions with no outlets known as *sinkholes*. Sinkholes are formed when part of the cavern roof collapses. The result may be a slight slump in the land above the cave, an actual hole which seems bottomless, or anything in between. Some sinkholes are no more than yards across. Some are almost a quarter mile wide. In the larger-sized depressions the rock at the top of slopes may be of various types, but the lower levels consist of limestone. The bottoms of these depressions can be filled with rubble, dirt, or water. Streams may enter a sinkhole and vanish. The collapse which forms a sinkhole may be gradual or sudden. A sud-



den collapse usually follows a long dry spell during which water which is partially supporting cavern roof is removed by a drop in the water table. Sinkholes may provide entry to cavern complexes through their sides or bottoms or may be sealed by their own collapse. An actively collapsing sinkhole is quite dangerous with unstable edges and the tendency to increase in size without warning, "swallowing" the surrounding terrain and anything on it. This periodically makes the news when such a sinkhole swallows someone's car (or house) in Florida.

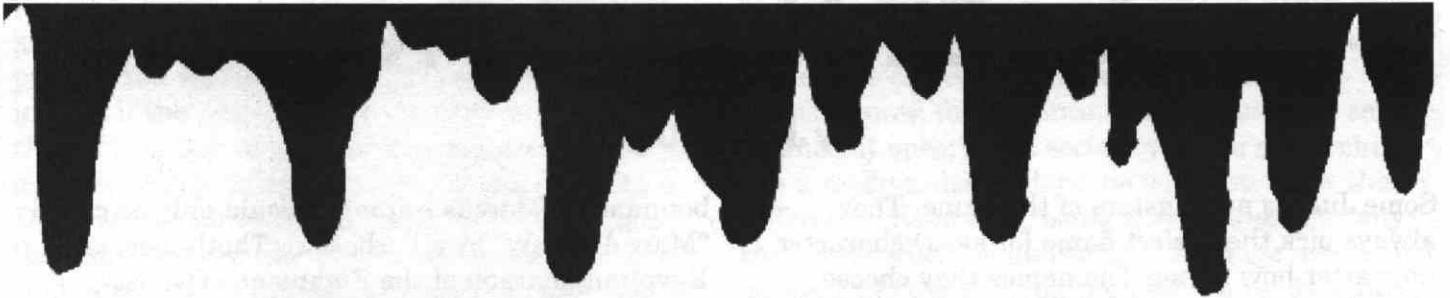
The party may notice streams disappearing into sinkholes, as noted above, or suddenly appearing out of a sinkhole or hillside. Water levels may be the same from pond to pond even though there is no visible connection. This is the result of the local waters being connected through the cave system. It will sometimes be possible to determine that a stream enters the cave system at point "A" and leaves at point "B". This is not to say that the best way from A to B is via the stream. In fact, entering a cave floating down a stream may be the worst possible way in, including being swallowed by a sinkhole.

Entering a cave is usually best done through an opening in a hillside, cliff, or the side of a stable sinkhole. Finding such an opening can be simple ("Look at that big hole in the hill over there!") or it can be a more subtle problem. The best clues to finding an opening to the cave involve finding where something inside the cave is leaving it. Things that may be leaving a cave include water, air, and cave life. A fair sized stream that appears on a hillside may be from an opening large enough to enter the cave from. Air blowing from a small opening may also show a way in that may require digging, explosives, or magic. (No explosives in your world? Tough luck. Try another opening) Another, more subtle, way in which air from inside the cave can lead a party to the entrance is by changing the local microclimate. The air from the cave will always be at a temperature near the year round average for the local climate. For temperate

climates this is about 55 degrees Fahrenheit. This means that in the summer the area near an entrance may be cooler than expected, and in the winter, warmer. In deserts, which generally have great daily temperature swings, areas near cave entrances may be warmer at night and cooler during the day. Cave life that can reveal an entrance can be of two types. Creatures that regularly leave and return to caves, such as bats, can be followed back to an entrance. Creatures that live full time in caves that are forced or wander from their normal habitat can act as clues to the existence of cave entrances. Full time cave dwellers are generally blind albino versions of various surface creatures. Most common are insects and crustaceans, and rarely anything more advanced than fish.

Once the party has entered the cave their first impressions will probably be of mud and debris. The floor of the cave will be covered with rock fallen from the ceiling, material settled from the water that formed the cave, or debris swept in from the surface. Commonly, the floor and walls will be wet with water seeping from the surface. If the water from the surface has traveled through cracks in limestone and carries dissolved limestone into the cave it is possible to have stone formations deposited. *Stalactites* form like icicles from the ceiling of the cave. Small amounts of limestone are deposited as water drops hanging from the ceiling evaporate. Water that drops to the floor of the cave then evaporates leaving behind mounds of formerly dissolved limestone forming *stalagmites*. When a stalactite and a stalagmite meet and grow together they form a *column*. A number of columns in a line that meet and grow together is called a *curtain*. Deposits that form on the walls of the cave and cover other surfaces in a sheet-like manner are called *flowstone*. These formations can only form if water from above containing dissolved limestone enters the cave. If the climate above is dry, water flow is blocked by impermeable rock, or no limestone is contained in the water, the formations will not grow.

The overall layout of limestone caves is of passages



and rooms of varying heights widths and lengths. These rooms were almost all connected at one time but rooms may have been cut off by rock falls or sediment built up over the years. Your party may find passages with any slope, any width, or any height. Passages can twist and turn or end at a pit or blank wall of rock. All is not chaos however. Rooms and passages are most commonly found in roughly horizontal layers. This is due to the changes in the level of the water table and the horizontal bedding of many limestones. The lowest levels of the caves are generally below water level. The horizontal layers of rooms, when found, are often connected by roof/floor collapse or vertical passages dissolved from flaws in the original rock or following secondary compositional differences. The result is a three dimensional maze which can have a few yards or many miles of passages.

There are several major hazards that a party faces traveling through these caves. The greatest hazard is disorientation resulting in getting permanently lost. Falls and other mishaps due to slippery conditions and dangerous climbs are another danger. Falling into a subterranean stream can result in a swift death if the character is swept into the depths of the cave. It is possible to have members of the party become stuck when trying to force their way through small passages. Cave explorers have become so firmly wedged in areas of poor access that they could not be extracted despite the best efforts of rescue crews with modern equipment. Lack of air can be a problem if the party enters a small closed space with restricted air flow from the rest of the cave. The generally cool nature of these caves also produces the possibility of death by hypothermia if the party can not keep warm. Hypothermia is particularly a risk if the explorers are soaked, whether from falling into a pool or merely belly-crawling through mud in a low passage.

There are other wonders to be found in limestone caves. One of the less wonderful wonders is the result of having a million bats living in a cave for thousands of years. At night the bats leave to for-

age for food. During the day they remain in the cave, usually hanging from the ceiling. While they hang they ... how should I put this? ... they excrete solids. Lots of solids. For thousands of years. This produces very thick layers of *guano*. This material is a moderate biohazard, which is to say that if you muck about in it you're likely to catch something nasty, and makes excellent fertilizer.

Sound can travel great distances through caves but may follow odd paths which make it difficult to trace to its source. It is not uncommon to have sounds seem to come from the opposite direction from their actual source. Sound is not absorbed by the rock walls, it just bounces. This also results in the seeming amplification of sound in the cave.

Other minerals, aside from limestone, can be deposited. It all depends upon what dissolved compounds are in the water. For example, there is a cave in Pennsylvania which has a room in which has tiny glowing spots on the ceiling. The glow is caused by radioactive elements in the minerals crystallized on the ceiling. Some deposits lead to impossibly delicate and beautiful formations. Traces of minerals such as iron can tint the cave deposits various colors. If fossils are common in the limestone through which a cave is cut, they can be seen in the walls, making for some interesting decor.

This concludes our brief tour of limestone caverns. If you would like to know more, your local public library will be able to supply you with books on the subject. There is no real substitute, however, for a visit to an actual cave. Many areas of the United States, and elsewhere in the world, have caves which are open to the public through guided tours, often with stairs, paved walkways, and even elevators. While the scientific accuracy of some of the commercial tours is often shaky, the impact of travelling down into a cave and entering an environment so unlike our everyday world cannot be surpassed.

An Elf Named Fred

by Jean McGuire

Some Judges are masters of the name. They always pick the perfect name for every character, no matter how minor. The names they choose always sound authentic and help define the character. Then there are the rest of us.

A Chinese proverb says "The beginning of wisdom is learning to call things by their right names." It is no coincidence that the creation stories from many religions place tremendous importance on the bestowing of names. A properly chosen name has three powerful effects: It helps place the game setting its proper distance from reality. It contributes a feeling of realism and consistency to the setting. Finally, it helps to define the character that bears it. This is important for player characters and major NPCs, but absolutely critical for minor characters whose names may well be the only description the players will have of them.

Names from our everyday reality carry some of that reality with them. This can add unintended shades of meaning to that name. If a character is named Mario, are your players going to think first of Mario Andretti, Mario Puzo, or Mario Cuomo? You can't know, but that connection to reality, even on the unconscious level, will carry unwanted baggage with it. And further, "Mario" signifies "Italian", with all of its own baggage: fast red sports cars, spaghetti and meatballs, moonlit romance in a Venetian gondola . . . whatever your players think about when they think of Italy. You can't know if they are going to think of manicotti or the Mafia, and in either case, something is being brought into your game that is not a part of it.

In addition, many real-world names are very specific to their time and place. They come in waves, as a name becomes a fad and then fades from overuse. I went to school with Tara and Michelle, several of each. Today they would more likely be Brittany and Ashley. Put Brittany or Michelle into a game setting and you give the players hints about time and place — hints that are almost certain to be wrong. To make history more confusing, names also change when they cross over linguistic

boundaries. Marcus Antonius would only be called "Marc Anthony" by a barbarian. Thoth-mes, an Egyptian pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, would certainly not answer to the name Tutmosis that Greek history records for him. And Yeshua ben-Yusuf would be baffled as to who this "Jesus" person is that people keep asking for.

Beware of names that come with cultural baggage of any type. You expect Hercules to be strong and not too bright. Unless there is a very good reason to use it as the name of a respected wizard, a reason explained very early (preferably before the players even learn his name) such a naming would be a very bad idea. Bentley is of course a very prestigious make of car; it would be a fine name for an English butler, but not a barbarian. One Admiral Nelson is enough for history; do not confuse matters with another.

Names from the same cultural background tend to sound similar, and be similarly constructed. This is not nearly so much the case in modern English-speaking cultures which, in a quest for novelty, borrow or create names from any source whatsoever, as it is in other places and times. In some European countries, for instance, it is illegal to give a child any name not on a government-approved list. Even without such a list, traditional names are prevalent. American parents might name their son Mario, but Italian parents are unlikely to name their son James.

Keeping that consistency makes it easy for your players to place a character's name in the proper context. If your elves have names like Lothiniel and Serfaillen, while your dwarves are Bori and Hurin, then it is unnecessary to add "the Elf" when sending someone to speak to the merchant Athaniel, and Duri is immediately short and bearded in your players' minds. If they need information on the homeland of someone named Conn, they will know that asking Finian about it is a better bet than asking Svenbjorn or Aloyoshenka.

The sound of a name can help characterize a person. A name, after all, is one's face to the world. If

you know nothing about someone but a name, you know, or think you know, something about that person. You will likely have different mental images if the name on the business card is Dolly than if it is Dorothy. Those suppositions can be entirely wrong, of course — I once worked with a Dolly, so named by her parents, who was a dignified, middle-aged advertising representative. But that is reality. In fantasy, you get to choose the personality *and* the name, so make those images work for you!

Consider the sound of the name. Names with many harsh sounds, such as **g**, **ch**, and **k**, give the hearer a harsh image of the character. Gort and Chokag do not sound like quiet, gentle people. Fluid sounds such as **l**, **m**, and **n** portray the opposite image. Luella and Narel sound much more civilized and refined. Simple vowel sounds, with no diphthongs, and simple syllable patterns, suggest a simple, even barbaric, culture; complex vowels and smooth sounds suggest civilization and sophistication. (the fact that this is often not the case in reality does not change the perception) This is also an effect of the complexity of the name. Names made of a few uncomplicated syllables suggest a less civilized, more dangerous, society than long, elaborate ones. By the time one is through shouting “Lannamielentarma, help me!” the sabre-toothed tiger has made any help irrelevant. That is a good time to have friends named Grond. Erik the Red might have been an excellent thinker, and Parmenides might have had undiscovered talents as a raider chieftain, but we know them as Viking and philosopher.

There are many ways to create names that fit these patterns. Most of us use the hit-or-miss approach: Write down some names, and throw out the ones that don't seem to belong. Repeat as needed. While that works, there are other means more productive. For a historical or pseudo-historical — Celtic myth, for instance — research will supply many useful names. For a completely original setting, you can build names from syllable tables. Finally, as was done by authors like J.R.R. Tolkien, you can create your own language for naming. Calm down, it's easier than you think!

If you are basing a game setting on a historical time, or on the heroic legends of a real-world culture, you have a ready source of names at hand. In the process of doing all of the background research

to build your campaign world you will necessarily encounter many suitable names. Be sure that your names are correct in time and place. Modern Greek names, for instance, are not quite the same as ancient ones; if the society you are researching has a modern descendant, be sure you know the difference. Keep lists, being sure to weed out any that come with the undesirable baggage mentioned above. Not only will you then have a ready source of names for places and people, but your players can refer to your lists as well to choose suitable names for their characters.

For a purely imaginary society, there is a quick way to generate all the names that you need. I call it syllable chopping. First, write down some names that sound right. You might pick Alderic, Cadrathir, and Mavros. About twenty names should do to get you started. Now, cut each name apart into syllables and put them on lists of first, middle, and last syllables, according to their position in the name. In our example, this would give us *Al*, *Ca*, *Ma* for beginnings, *de* and *dra* for middles, and *ric*, *thir*, and *ros* for endings. Add a few more, matching the pattern you see developing, to each list. Ra might be another good beginning, me and la would add some middles, and car would be another good ending. Now, re-combine the syllables by choice or chance. Pick some, roll some dice, or use a computer, and you'll get *Radethir*, *Aldracar*, *Calaros* and *Maderic*. Good names from only a handful of syllables. When you have at least 20 names on each of your beginning, middle, and ending lists, and several syllable patterns (B-E, B-M-E, B-M-M-E, etc.) you can create all the names you need almost instantly.

But what if you want those names to mean something? For a simple naming language, you need not even scratch the surface of the kind of complexity that Tolkien built into the fourteen languages of Middle-Earth. A hundred or so words will get you started. This is the most complex method of naming, but it gives the best results.

Decide, first, what sort of names your people bear. Are they named for virtues that their parents hope they grow to possess, signs a shaman has seen at their birth, or heroic deeds they have done? Are their names meant to attract the favor of the gods, or just be pleasant to the ear? Are people named for their relatives, their ancestors, or great heroes? Consider the relative place of each person in soci-

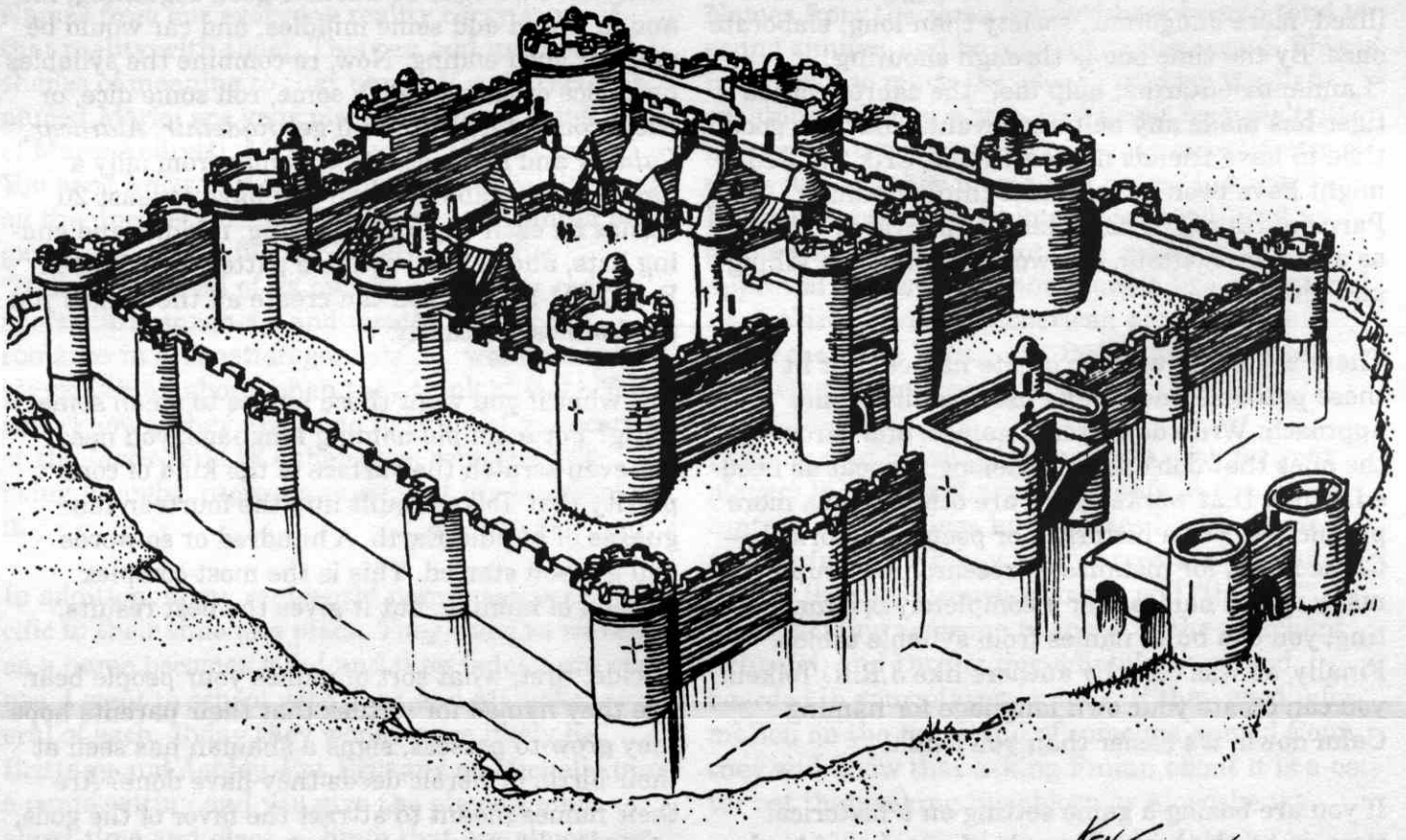
ety. If women are treated as property, whether legally or by custom, girls might be given the names of inanimate objects such as valuable jewels, pretty flowers, or even food and drink. In a society that values heroism and valor, children might be given shameful childhood names like "Fearful Mouse" until they prove their courage and take their adult names from their deeds.

Now write down lists of nouns, verbs, and adjectives that will be necessary for your names. If you chose "Son of Fire" and "Dancing Lady" as names, for instance, list *son*, *fire*, *lady*, and *dancing*. If your names will have differing masculine and feminine endings, make a note of that now. Write down a couple of pages worth of words you want to use for names.

Next, start assigning them sounds. Some basic patterns can make this easier. For example, say that your word for person of indeterminate gender is *nar*. A young person might then be *nir*, with a

vowel shift, and if you use *-a* and *-u* for feminine and masculine endings, you get a whole class of words: *nara*, woman; *naru*, man; *nira*, girl or daughter; *niru*, boy or son. Perhaps the prefix *a-* might denote nobility or respect. If we add a couple of words for fire, *do*, and dancing, *senel*, we could name our people Doniru and Selenanara. Continue in this way, and when you want to name someone "Lord of Dragons" or "Gentle Butterfly" you will be ready.

Names are one of the easiest ways to add verisimilitude to a fantasy setting, and one of the easiest ways to break that critical suspension of disbelief as well. However you choose your names – hit-or-miss, historical research, syllable chopping, or a naming language – having a system to your names will add more to your games.



KEN SIMPSON

Fly With the Pegasus

Pegasus is accepting articles! Do you have a great idea that's just been burning its way out of your word processor? A few fantastic new monsters you can't wait to share with the world? Great ideas for Judges, helpful hints for players, details of an interesting historical setting, an exotic location, or anything else that would help your fellow Judges and players? Even a whole adventure?

We want to read it! We can't promise that we'll accept it, of course, but we are looking for all types of articles related to roleplaying games, and even some for wargames as well. As you can see from reading Pegasus, we cover the entire field of roleplaying, particularly though not exclusively fantasy roleplaying. The following excerpt from the Pegasus Writer's Guidelines should get you started.

Format

All submissions should be typed, double-spaced, in black on plain white paper. The first page should be a cover sheet with the article title, your name, snail address, phone number, email address, and any other contact information we might need to reach you. Each page of the actual article should have the author's name and the title in the upper right corner, and the page number at the bottom center or bottom right. Do *not* justify the text. Do not use fancy paper. Do not use weird fonts. If it gives the editor eyestrain, it's going right back to you unread.

Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope sufficient for whatever you want to have returned. If you do not want the entire manuscript back, please say so in your cover letter; in that case, a standard business envelope and appropriate postage is sufficient. If you want your manuscript returned, be sure you have enough postage and a large enough envelope. I hardly have to say that you should not send your only copy of the manuscript. Bad things can happen to it, and we are not responsible for what the Post Office does.

Immediately after the cover letter, you should always include a signed copy of our Submission Release Form. (available on the Judges Guild web-

site, or via snail mail) This protects both your rights and ours, and we will not read a manuscript without it.

Rights & Payment

We buy all worldwide rights, both print and electronic, unless otherwise negotiated. In the case of any article which involves Judges Guild's own campaign world or other proprietary material, we must buy all rights. Payment is per article, not per word. Current rates can be found on the Judges Guild website at www.judgesguild.com.

Content

The Pegasus is a magazine about, and a playing aid for, roleplaying games. All articles in Pegasus must be written with the Judge or player in mind. With very few exceptions, such as game reviews, a Judge should be able to use at least some aspect of the article immediately.

Articles should be succinct. We do not pay by the word anyway, so take out every unnecessary word. We want to get the most possible material into each issue for the best possible price, so brevity is a virtue. However, in the quest for conciseness, do not leave out anything important. You can assume that your reader knows the basics of roleplaying games, but any specific background information essential to your article should be included.

It is not good business for us to offend our customers. Offended customers cease giving us their money. Therefore, we will reject out of hand any submissions which seem likely to offend, annoy, irritate, or otherwise tick off the people whose money we want. The Seven Dirty Words are right out, as are the usual collection of offensive terms for various groups. So is explicit sex (trust me, we all have perfectly good imaginations), gratuitous gore, and anything which squicks the Editor. Likewise, keep your politics, religion, and social diatribes to yourself. Anyone who agrees with you doesn't need to hear it again, and anyone who

doesn't agree is not going to be convinced anyway. Pegasus is about gaming. Period.

Do not infringe on other people's trademarks, copyrights, or other intellectual property. Use your own imagination, not someone else's. Unless you have (and can show proof of) permission to do so, do not even bother us with things like AD&D stats for Star Wars movie creatures, anything related to games from Palladium (*Rifts*, etc.) or anything else that involves someone else's property. This is not open to discussion. The question is not whether you are right or wrong, or whether copyright and trademark laws are right or wrong, but whether certain highly litigious companies can sue us into the ground. Likewise, do not submit material cribbed from net.books or any other sources. You're just as creative as the people who wrote those, right? So show us!

Get your facts right. If you make a statement of fact, be certain that it really is a fact. "Everybody knows..." is not good enough. Check your facts. If your article involves a significant amount of factual material — for example, describing the typical shops that might be found in a medieval European town, or legendary monsters of Africa — it should include a bibliography.

Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. We do not expect Oxford scholarship, but we do expect fundamental competence with basic language skills. This is not rocket science! Have someone else proofread your work; you can never see your own typos, because you always see what you *meant* to write there. And don't trust your computer's spelling checker, witch tells yew that awl ewe rite is grate weather ore knot their is allot yew halve dun that ewe knead two fix.

Why do spelling, grammar, and punctuation matter? Not only are they critical to your meaning, but they are also important to your credibility as a writer. Your words are your only image in print. Submitting a proposed article with bad spelling, tortured usage, and fractured syntax is the equivalent of scribbling it in red crayon. Perhaps worse — we would rather retype a manuscript written in crayon than try to decode a semi-literate mess.

You can find the most up-to-date version of these guidelines on the Judges Guild website:

www.judgesguild.com

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Artwork and payment must be in our hands no later than ten days after the dates above.

Formats:

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For further information please contact pegasus@judgesguild.com.

Take the Pegasus Reader Survey

It's been a long time, after all. We want to get reacquainted with you. In order to do that, we have put together a little survey. Fill it out and send it in – send a copy if you don't want to cut a page out of your Pegasus – and let us know who you are and what you want. Your name and address are optional, but if you include them, you will be entered in the survey drawing. The prize? A copy of **First Fantasy Campaign**, not a reprint but the original, that has only been out of its shrink wrap long enough to be **autographed by Dave Arneson**, the author!

1. What types of articles would you like to see in future issues of **Pegasus**?

- Fantasy roleplaying
- Science Fiction roleplaying
- Horror roleplaying (Vampires)
- Horror roleplaying (supernatural)
- Superhero roleplaying
- Cross-genre roleplaying
- Other roleplaying _____
- Historical wargames
- Fantasy wargames
- Science Fiction wargames
- Other wargames _____
- Other boardgames _____
- Some other type of game _____
- Fiction
- Convention listings
- Game reviews
- Book reviews (non-game)
- Miniatures reviews
- Miniatures painting articles
- Game industry news
- New monsters, magic items, etc.
- Characters to encounter
- Charts, tables, and similar game aids
- Short adventure modules
- Historical background material

2. What games do you play?

3. Please rate the contents of this issue of Pegasus from 1 (stinks) to 5 (couldn't put it down)

Dave Arneson interview	1	2	3	4	5
Magical Miscellany	1	2	3	4	5
Limestone Caverns	1	2	3	4	5
An Elf Named Fred	1	2	3	4	5
Storm Wrack	1	2	3	4	5
From the Overlord	1	2	3	4	5
Horse Feathers	1	2	3	4	5
The Horse's Tail	1	2	3	4	5

4. How many people read your Pegasus? _____

5. What other game magazines do you read?

6. What is your age? _____ Sex? M F

7. Occupation? _____

8. Education completed:

- Less than 9 years
- 9th-12th grade
- College
- Graduate school
- Check here if still a student

10. Played roleplaying games for _____ years

11. Played wargames for _____ years

Name: _____

Address:

The Horse's Tail: Rules for an Evil Overlord

This list has been around for quite a while. We think this version is the original, and it comes with the following notice: *This list is Copyright 1996 by Peter Anspach. If you enjoy it, feel free to pass it along or post it anywhere, provided that (1) it is not altered in any way, and (2) this copyright notice is attached.*

Being an Evil Overlord seems to be a good career choice. It pays well, there are all sorts of perks and you can set your own hours. However every Evil Overlord I've read about in books or seen in movies invariably gets overthrown and destroyed in the end. I've noticed that no matter whether they are barbarian lords, deranged wizards, mad scientists or alien invaders, they always seem to make the same basic mistakes every single time. Therefore, if I ever happen to become an Evil Overlord:

1. My legions of terror will have helmets with clear plexi-glass visors, not face-concealing ones.
2. My ventilation ducts will be too small to crawl through.
3. My noble half-brother whose throne I usurped will be killed, not kept anonymously imprisoned in a forgotten cell of my dungeon.
4. Shooting is not too good for my enemies.
5. The artifact which is the source of my power will not be kept on the Mountain of Despair beyond the River of Fire guarded by the Dragons of Eternity. It will be in my safe-deposit box.
6. I will not gloat over my enemies' predicament before killing them.
7. When the rebel leader challenges me to fight one-on-one and asks, "Or are you afraid without your armies to back you up?" My reply will be, "No, just sensible."
8. When I've captured my adversary and he says, "Look, before you kill me, will you at least tell me what this is all about?" I'll say, "No." and shoot him.
9. After I kidnap the beautiful princess, we will be married immediately in a quiet civil ceremony, not a lavish spectacle in three weeks' time during which the final phase of my plan will be carried out.
10. I will not include a self-destruct mechanism unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary, it will not be a large red button labeled "Danger: Do Not Push".
11. I will not order my trusted lieutenant to kill the infant who is destined to overthrow me — I'll do it myself.
12. I will not interrogate my enemies in the inner sanctum — a small hotel well outside my borders will work just as well.
13. I will be secure in my superiority. Therefore, I will feel no need to prove it by leaving clues in the form of riddles or leaving my weaker enemies alive to show they pose no threat.
14. I will not waste time making my enemy's death look like an accident — I'm not accountable to anyone and my other enemies wouldn't believe it.
15. I will make it clear that I do know the meaning of the word "mercy"; I simply choose not to show them any.
16. One of my advisors will be an average five-year-old child. Any flaws in my plan that he is able to spot will be corrected before implementation.
17. All slain enemies will be cremated, not left for dead at the bottom of the cliff. The announcement of their deaths, as well as any accompanying celebration, will be deferred until after the aforementioned disposal.
18. My undercover agents will not have tattoos identifying them as members of my organization, nor will they be required to wear military boots or adhere to any other dress codes.
19. The hero is not entitled to a last kiss, a last cigarette, or any other form of last request.
20. I will never employ any device with a digital countdown. If I find that such a device is absolutely unavoidable, I will set it to activate when the counter reaches 117 and the hero is just putting his plan into operation.
21. I will design all doomsday machines myself. If I must hire a mad scientist to assist me, I will make sure that he is sufficiently twisted to never regret his evil ways and seek to undo the damage he's caused.
22. I will never utter the sentence "But before I kill you, there's just one thing I want to know."
23. When I employ people as advisors, I will occasionally listen to their advice.
24. I will not have a son. Although his laughably underplanned attempt to usurp power would easily fail, it would provide a fatal distraction at a crucial point in time.
25. I will not have a daughter. She would be as beautiful as she was evil, but one look at the hero's rugged countenance and she'd betray her own father.
26. Despite its proven stress-relieving effect, I will not indulge in maniacal laughter. When so occupied, it's too easy to miss unexpected developments that a more attentive individual could adjust to accordingly.
27. I will hire a talented fashion designer to create original uniforms for my legions of terror, as opposed to some cheap knock-offs that make them look like Nazi stormtroopers, Roman footsoldiers, or savage Mongol hordes. All were eventually defeated and I want my troops to have a more positive mind-set.
28. No matter how tempted I am with the prospect of unlimited power, I will not consume any energy field bigger than my head.
29. I will keep a special cache of low-tech weapons and train my troops in their use. That way — even if the heroes manage to neutralize my power generator and/or render the standard-issue energy weapons useless — my troops will not be overrun by a handful of savages armed with spears and rocks.
30. I will maintain a realistic assessment of my strengths and weaknesses. Even though this takes some of the fun out of the job, at least I will never utter the line "No, this cannot be! I AM INVINCIBLE!!!" (After that, death is usually instantaneous.)
31. No matter how well it would perform, I will never construct any sort of machinery which is completely indestructible except for one small and virtually inaccessible vulnerable spot.
32. If I am engaged in a duel to the death with the hero and I am fortunate enough to knock the weapon out of his hand, I will graciously allow him to retrieve it. This is not from a sense of fair play; rather, he will be so startled and confused that I will easily be able to dispatch him.
33. No matter how attractive certain members of the rebellion are, there is probably someone just as attractive who is not desperate to kill me. Therefore, I will think twice before ordering a prisoner sent to my bedchamber.

The Booty List

Except for the Wilderlands CD-ROM, the City State of the Invincible Overlord reprint edition, and Pegasus issue #14, which are new, all of the items listed on this page are "new old stock" – still in the shrink wrap from the early days. These are in very short supply, and when we've found all the boxes, there will be no more. Therefore, all classic items on this list are subject to prior sale.

Individual map sheets

\$2.00	9	City-State Campaign Map 1 (Judge's map)
\$2.00	9	City-State Campaign Map 1 (Players' map)
\$1.00	24	Tegel Manor Map (Players' map)
\$2.00	38	First Fantasy Campaign Map (Player's map)
\$2.00	44	Barbarian Altanis Campaign Map 2 (Judge's map)
\$2.00	n/a	SPECIAL City-State of the Invincible Overlord map: all four maps on one 17"x22" sheet (magnifying glass not included!)

D&D, AD&D, and generic fantasy

\$6.00	14	Ready Ref Sheets (revised)
\$12.00	37	The First Fantasy Campaign
\$6.00	52	Thieves of Fortress Badabaskor
\$5.00	63	Citadel of Fire
\$6.00	80	Of Skulls and Scrapfaggot Green
\$10.00	108	Verbosh
\$5.00	140	Castle Book II
\$6.00	240	The Fantasy Cartographers Field Book
\$8.00	270	Spies of Lightelf
\$6.00	420	Unknown Gods
\$14.00	550	Field Guide to Encounters
\$8.00	560	Portals of Irontooth
\$8.00	690	Masters of Mind
\$8.00	700	Restormel
\$6.00	750	The Illhiedrin Book
\$8.00	770	Portals of Twilight
\$4.00	790	F'Deck Fo's Tomb
\$8.00	800	Glory Hole Dwarven Mine
\$10.00	810	Fantastic Personalities
\$6.00	920	Wondrous Relics
\$9.00	840	Prey of Darkness
\$9.00	990	The Book of Treasure Maps III
\$8.00	1010	Shield Maidens of Sea Rune
\$8.00	1090	Witches Court Marshes
\$8.00	1100	Caves and Caverns
\$6.00	1130	Druids of Doom
\$9.00	1140	Demons of Dundurn

Traveller & Other Science Fiction

\$6.00	410	Astrogator's Chartbook
\$9.00	490	Glimmerdrift Reaches
\$8.00	640	Ghostring
\$8.00	710	Amycus Probe
\$8.00	720	Rogue Moon of Spinstorme

\$8.00	740	Port O' Call: Tarkin's Landing
\$10.00	880	Corsairs of the Turku Waste
\$8.00	940	Waspwinter
\$10.00	960	Darkling Ship

Wargames & Miniatures Rules

\$5.00	68	War Cry
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Other Games

\$9.00	107	Broken Tree Inn
\$6.00	250	Chivalry & Sorcery Gamemaster's Shield
\$4.00	430	Hazard
\$6.00	540	The Nightmare Maze of Jigresh
\$5.00	850	Rat on a Stick
\$9.00	900	Heroes & Villains

Guildmember Subscriptions

\$15.00	n/a	Guildmember Subscription, 1 year
\$10.00	n/a	Associate Guildmember Subscription, 1 year

Magazines & Miscellaneous

\$6.00	115	Dungeoneer #14
\$6.00	470	The Dungeoneer's Journal #25
\$6.00	200	Judges Guild Journal #20
\$6.00	280	Judges Guild Journal #21
\$7.00	370	Judges Guild Journal #22 & Dungeoneer #19 combined issue

New Items

\$3.00	1700	Pegasus #14
\$10.00	1600	City State – Collector's Edition
\$46.00	1500	Wilderlands CD-ROM

HOW TO FIGURE SHIPPING:

Bound Printed Matter rate (book rate): \$2 for the first 5 items (not including subscriptions) plus an additional \$1 for every additional 6 items ordered. Therefore, 1-5 items would cost \$2.00 for shipping, 6-11 items would cost \$3.00, 12-17 items would cost \$4.00, and so on.

First Class Mail: Add \$1 to above prices. Guildmember discount applies only to item prices, not shipping.

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