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PROTEUS

No 10

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The Triad of Evil



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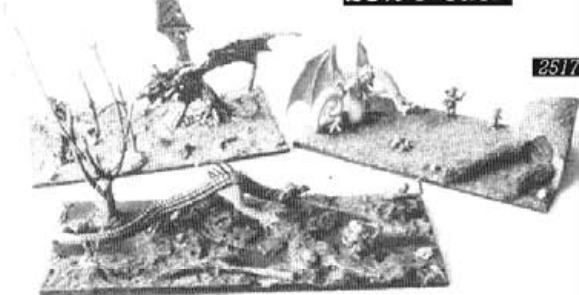
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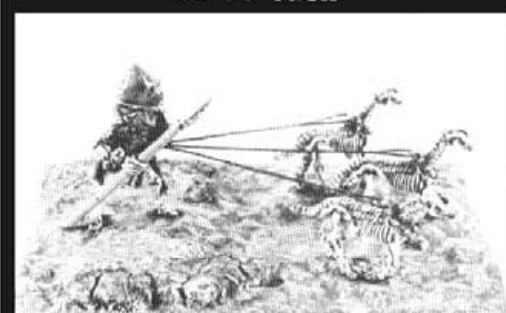
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PROTEUS

No. 10

The Triad of Evil

by Elizabeth Caldwell*

DICE and a pencil are all you need to begin this adventure – then *you* decide which route to take, which dangers to brave.

As you progress in your Quest, you are likely to encounter various traps, or face monsters. You will also get information, or find certain items which will be of help to you in your quest. You should record these in your *quest sheet* as well as keeping an account of how many rations you have left. As you use up rations, remember to cross them off in your *quest sheet*.

It is important that you build up a map of the way. You may not succeed at your first attempt, but each new journey will give you more information – until you are at last successful in your quest.

If you try to read the magazine in numerical order, it will make no sense. You must choose, when you are given the choice, which section to turn to, and which traps, puzzles, or monsters to face. Good luck!



The free poster in Issue 11, on sale March 20th, is by Keith Berdak.

We'll be taking a slightly different approach in PROTEUS 11. There'll be monsters, magic and mayhem as usual, but the story will test your wits, imagination and sense of humour to the limits.

Make sure of your copy of PROTEUS by placing a regular order with your newsagent, or subscribing.

**The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of R. B. Newton in the development of this story.*

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Introduction

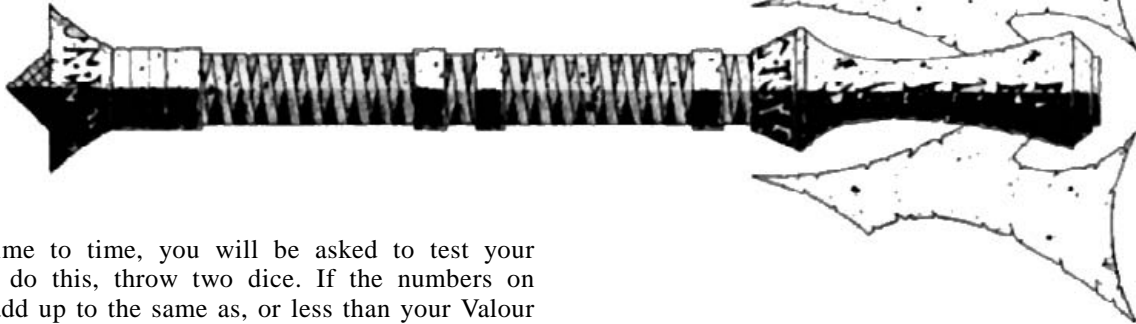
TWO dice, a pencil and paper are all you need to journey through the catacombs of Lllamar. Use the pencil and paper to draw a map of your progress through the catacombs, as you may not succeed in your quest the first time and the map will help you in future attempts.

Before you begin, you must determine your characteristics of Dexterity, Strength and Valour. Record these on the Quest Sheet along with any other items and information you discover, that you need to keep note of.

Dexterity – Roll one dice. Add 6 to this number and make a note of it on your Quest Sheet. This indicates your skill and swordsmanship.

Strength – Roll two dice. Add 12 to this number and make a note of it on your Quest Sheet. This indicates your stamina and fitness.

Valour – You start the adventure with 12 Valour points. These indicate your resistance to evil and at the beginning of the adventure your resistance is strong. As you journey through the catacombs, however, you will face many dangers which will test your courage and purity of heart. Your Valour points will therefore be reduced each time the Forces of Darkness weaken your spirit and win a victory over you.



From time to time, you will be asked to test your Valour. To do this, throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as, or less than your Valour score, you have succeeded in overcoming the evil forces which are constantly trying to make you fail in whatever you attempt. If, however, the numbers add up to more than your Valour score, the Dark Powers have turned your luck against you. In either case you will be told which section to turn to.

Your Dexterity, Strength and Valour points will vary during the adventure. You may lose Strength points in battle, for example, and then restore them with some

magical item or by eating a meal. You must remember that your Dexterity, Strength and Valour points must not exceed their initial value which you determined at the start of the game.

Further, once your Valour score reaches zero it can then go no lower. If your Valour is reduced to zero, you are not dead, but you will find that the going gets very difficult.

Losing and gaining points

In some sections, you will be awarded extra points. (For example, you may read “Gain three Strength points”). You add these to your current Strength score: but remember, these scores may never exceed their *Initial* values. When you lose points (for example, “Lose one Dexterity point and two Strength points”), you simply deduct these from your current scores.

Replenishing your Strength

The food that you have in your backpack is enough for *five* meals. Make a note of this on your Quest Sheet. Eating a meal restores five Strength points. When you stop for a meal, add five points to your current Strength score and deduct one from your rations. You may do this at any time except during a battle.

Rules for fighting

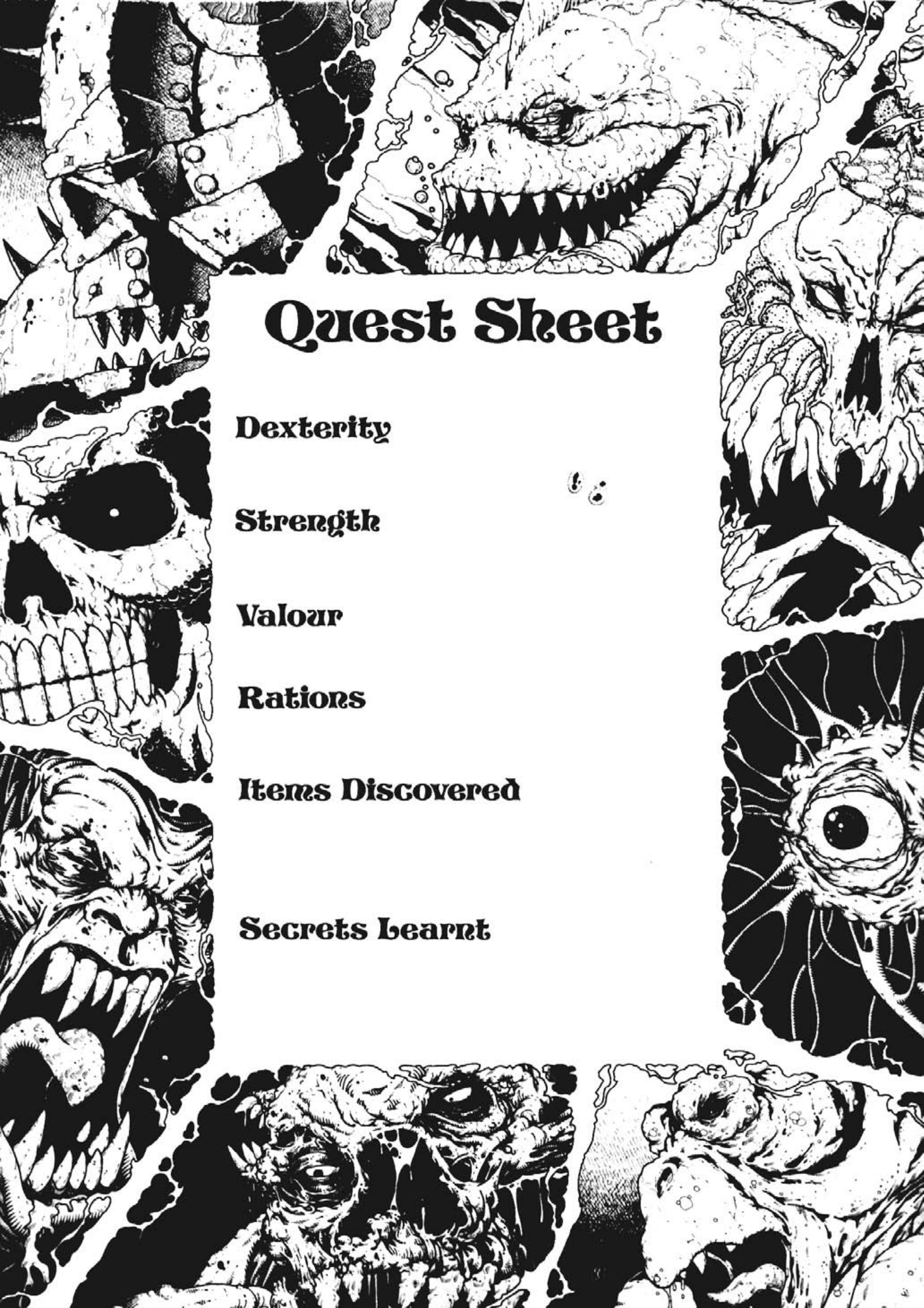
As you explore, you will encounter creatures which you may choose to engage in combat, or be forced to fight with for your life. Each creature will have its own Dexterity and Strength scores, given in the text. Make a note of these.

To resolve a battle:

1. Roll two dice, and add the creature's current Dexterity score. This is its *Fighting Power*.
2. Roll two dice, and add your own current Dexterity score. This is your *Fighting Power*.
3. If your *Fighting Power* is greater than the

creature's, you have scored a blow and wounded it. Subtract two Strength points from its Strength score at that moment (unless told otherwise in the text). If the creature's *Fighting Power* is greater than yours in this round, it has wounded you. Subtract two points from your current Strength Score. If both scores are the same, you have parried each other's blows, and neither of you loses any points.

The next round in the battle is done in just the same way. You repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 above. When either your or the creature's Strength score is reduced to zero, the battle is over. A zero Strength score means death.



Quest Sheet

Dexterity

Strength

Valour

Rations

Items Discovered

Secrets Learnt

Our Quest Begins..

High upon the lonely snow-shrouded slopes of Mount Eiryia, perched defiantly amongst the craggy peaks, stands the legendary citadel of Llamar. Its crumbling stone walls, bleached white by the elements, appear like a monstrous pile of broken bones, as you stand silently in the thin mountain air, contemplating the conquest before you.

Llamar: the ancient, isolated retreat of the Knights of the Jewelled Heart, once a symbol for all that was good and true in the world, but now harbouring a brooding evil shadow, which awaits only to grow into its full strength before unleashing its terror upon an unsuspecting world.

Everyone knows the legend, but few are those who bear the secret terror of knowing that the legend is in fact true. You are one of those few, and as you stand at last before Llamar, after a journey that would weary the strongest, the legend of the citadel comes unbidden into your mind . . .

Many, many years ago, Llamar was a place renowned for its learning and great deeds, and the Knights of the Jewelled Heart were a powerful force for Good throughout the world. According to the legend, however, Llamar was under constant attack from the Forces of Darkness, and one fateful day, the Dark Powers succeeded in capturing the soul of one of the holy Knights who was weakened by illness. From this conquest, the Dark Powers secretly learnt the strengths and the weaknesses of the Knights, and launched a massive attack upon



the unsuspecting citadel, while the Knights were using all their powers to divert an invasion of the undead from another plane. Thus, the citadel fell to the Dark forces and the Light of Goodness was extinguished by the Evil of night. Lllamar became an unassailable bastion of Evil – except to the pure in heart.

A deep sigh shudders through you as you recall Lllamar's fate. Of those few remaining descendants of the Knights, who know the truth of the legend, it is you who have dared to come alone to Mount Eiryia to seek the fallen citadel and the catacombs that lie at its black heart.

When you were very young, your father was greatly burdened with the knowledge that unless the evil was destroyed, soon it would start to spread its black tendrils further afield until the whole world was enslaved by the children of Darkness. You recall the bleak, winter morning when your father left home to seek the citadel in a desperate attempt to destroy the evil beings which inhabit it – but he never returned. Since that day, much against your family's wishes, you have spent your life training for your own assault on Lllamar. The isolated citadel is seldom visited by any traveller and those who do happen to stumble upon it by accident, are said to fall under Lllamar's evil spell and become eternal servants of the Dark Ones.

You adjust your backpack, check your sword, and leaning on your iron-bound staff, begin the final ascent up to the door of the citadel. Your heart pounds in the thin air as your lungs labour for breath, but at last you arrive at the broken doorway. You walk through the outer walls of the citadel into a deserted courtyard. Everything is covered in crumbling rubble and fine dust, white as powdered bones.

You venture cautiously forwards into what was once a mighty hall, now a shattered ruin. In the centre of the hall's marble floor is a gaping hole, like a black wound in the whiteness. A rough spiral staircase leads down into the blackness and you realise that this must be a way into the catacombs under the citadel, where the Dark forces now dwell. Muttering a quick prayer to the powers of Light, you draw your sword, light your torch and venture down into the blackness.

Now read on....

1

The staircase is old but sturdy, and eventually, you arrive safely at its foot, to find yourself in a low, East-West tunnel. The air is deathly cold, and tiny icicles of frozen water drip from the walls and ceiling. You shiver and draw your fur-lined cloak tightly about your shoulders. In the dim light of your torch, you can see nothing of what might lie down the tunnel in either direction, but then your searching eyes detect a rough inscription carved into the tunnel wall. You hold your torch higher to read:

"The powder of Eternal Light

will defeat the spectres, and banish night.

Find the wafers of gold,

and the chalice of old,

then the Eye of Truth may aid you.

From the Well of Purity take waters deep,

and return the Dark Ones to eternal sleep –

and may good fortune ever be with you."

You read the words through several times until they are imprinted in your mind. Then, with sudden shock,

you realise that they are written in your father's handwriting! You stare silently at the inscription for some time and then vowing revenge, you choose a direction and set off down the tunnel. Will you go:

East? Turn to **11**
West? Turn to **41**

2

"Who are you?" you ask the death-like figure.

The man stares at you for some time before replying: "I am Despair." After another pause, he continues: "I am he who the Dark Ones used to gain the secrets of Lllamar. I am the betrayer of the Knights of the Jewelled Heart. I am the Eternal Prisoner, who cannot die, but is cursed to dwell forever upon the fate of those he betrayed. I am here to remind those who come here of their fate if they dare to venture into the catacombs. I beg you, turn back now."

You tell him that you know the risks involved, but are determined to continue. Although the bars that cage this mournful figure are sturdy, you offer to free him if he will tell you who holds the keys.

"You cannot free me," the man moans. "To unlock my cage breaks the spell that has kept me alive and unaging all these many, many years. If the door is opened, I will die instantly, but I know now that that is what I want." He heaves a deep, shuddering sigh. "My . . . masters toy with those like you who come here, and since you have found me, I have to tell you that I can give you one of two things to help you. It is a cruel gesture that the Dark Ones make, for they know that even with these gifts, you have no hope of overcoming their power.

Of the things I can offer, all I can tell you is that one is an object and the other is a spoken incantation. Which will you take?"

Will you choose the object? Turn to **21**. Or ask the man to tell you the incantation? Turn to **31**.



3

Wasting no time, you take out the three precious wafers, and hurl them at the writhing shapes. The slender golden discs seem to expand as they glide through the dark air and each one strikes its target with a force far greater than you intended when you threw them.

The three creatures emit a final wail of defeat as their bodies disintegrate into golden fire, leaving their unholy robes to collapse empty and smoking onto the cold, stone floor. Turn to **250**.

4

To your horror, a black mist seeps out of Death and drifts rapidly towards you. You try to run, but you cannot escape as Death's black spirit reaches you and flows into your body. At its touch, the part of you which is your own identity, mind and will is taken over by the spirit of Death. Your adventure ends here!

5

You turn back East along the tunnel and soon reach the spiral staircase which you recently came down. This time, you continue East along the tunnel – turn to 11.

6

You have not gone far South before the passage ends at a small metal door. It has no lock or handle of any kind, and try as you might, you can find no way of opening it from this side. You have no alternative but to turn back – turn to 13.



7

When you insert the first peg there is a whirring and clicking sound, and as you push in the second one, the door flies open! Inside the safe is a beautiful crystal chalice with an elaborate, golden lid. The chalice glows faintly in the dark safe, and is obviously an object of ancient power and great value. You place it carefully into your backpack and walk over to examine the East door. Turn to 242.

8

If you think the word begins with "S", turn to 168.
If you think it begins with "H", turn to 206.

9

Do you wish to venture into the room? If so, turn to 17. If you wish to return West back to the passage that branched off to the South, and go that way, turn to 119.

10

"The Void," Death hisses, peering at the dice. "The neutral symbol. You are safe . . . for the moment. Roll the dice again." You realise you have no choice. Turn to 100.

11

You make your way East down the tunnel, treading carefully so as to avoid the treacherous frozen puddles of black ice that occasionally coat the floor. At length, the tunnel turns to the North, but set into the East wall at the corner, you notice a low doorway with thick iron bars set vertically across it.

You stoop to peer through the bars into a tiny cell-like room which is lit by a struggling candle flame. In this dim light, you can make out the figure of a man sitting hunched over a low table with his head in his hands, in an attitude of utter despair.

He is dressed in ill-fitting chain mail, over which is a rusty black and gold breast plate, marked with the emblem of the Knights of the Jewelled Heart. No doubt that armour was once polished brightly by its proud owner, but now it hangs around his neck like a great burden he cannot bear. His dark hair falls in dirty ropes around his shoulders, and from what you can see, his hands and face are deathly white and completely fleshless, as if his skin has been stretched over a dead skull and bones.

He gradually becomes aware of your presence, and looks up at you through the bars, with hollow, skull-like eyes. Do you wish to linger here and try to discover who the man is? If so, turn to 2. Or, since you do not know the nature of this half-dead creature, will you leave him well alone and continue up the tunnel North? If so, turn to 40.

12

You enter a North-heading corridor, which quite soon ends at a T-junction. Will you now go:

East? Turn to 125
West? Turn to 42

13

You return North till your arrive back at the crossroads. Will you now go:

North? Turn to 159
East? Turn to 188

14

After defeating the Demon, you decide to withdraw the pegs to try and insert them in a different combination, but this time they will not come out of the holes. You give a discouraged sigh, and leave through the East doorway. Turn to 85.





15

You shout out the word: "Release!" and at once the grey mould flows back off your hands to seep into the surface of the book. Turn to **158**.

16

To your intense relief you arrive safely at the bottom of the pit and retrieve your backpack – turn to **47**.

17

Holding your torch aloft, and treading with great care, you take a few hesitant steps into the total blackness. Too late, you realise you are on the brink of a pit of some kind and you sway backwards to try to regain your balance. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Dexterity score, turn to **69**. If they add up to more than your Dexterity, turn to **29**.

18

After defeating the Lizard, you walk over to examine the table, but its weird shimmer has vanished and it appears perfectly normal. You shrug your shoulders and leave through the North doorway – turn to **198**.

19

With painstaking slowness, you creep stealthily away from the door and begin to circle around the three dark figures. They appear to be playing some kind of game of chance using two dice which rattle together with a sound like dry bones.

Suddenly, the nearest figure turns around to stare directly at you, pulling back its cowl to reveal the skull-face of Death.

"Welcome," it hisses, and the blood runs cold in your veins. Turn to **49**.

20

Both the Water of Purity and the Golden Wafers are needed to completely destroy the three creatures before you. Since you have only one wafer, you can, however, extinguish one of them, and you throw it towards the one you dread the most – Fear itself.

You watch as Fear disintegrates into golden fire, leaving only its smoking black robe. Pain and Death are still before you, however, and although they now represent no physical threat because the loss of Fear has weakened their power, there is a chance that their spirits will try to vacate their tortured bodies and take over your own.

Throw one dice. If you get a 1, turn to **4**. If you get a 6, turn to **91**. If you get any other number, turn to **161**.





21

You tell the man that you will take the object he spoke of, so he throws through the bars a small bundle of cloth. You catch it easily, and as you do so, a brilliant green-gold light spills out from it.

As you unwrap it, the light increases in intensity, until you finally discover its source. Concealed within the dirty wrappings is a beautiful green jewel, cut into the shape of a heart. Its brilliant light fills the whole corridor, and fearing that it might attract unwelcome attention, you hastily rewrap the jewelled heart.

Then, after thanking the mournful prisoner and promising that you will try to find the key to release him, you continue on your way North – turn to **40**.

22

You enter a long, low room, dimly lit by a red smouldering brazier which hangs from the ceiling in black iron chains. Abruptly, the door slams violently shut behind you, causing your heart to pound wildly against your ribcage. Then you hear a faint scraping sound in the far corner of the room, and from out of the black shadows, slinks a pale, ghost-like figure.

It is about man height, but impossibly thin, clothed in tattered, rope-like rags. Its bone-white face is drawn out into a kind of snout, framed by an unkempt mane, which looks more like a mass of writhing serpents than any human hair. You notice that its fingers are unnaturally long, and instead of normal nails, they spread out at the ends into what look like some form of suckers.

You realise the identity of this creature: the Soul Eater, whose existence you had until now thought was only a myth. Lose one Valour Point. Do you know the words of the Incantation which banishes this creature? If so, turn to **32**. If you do not, turn to **121**.

23

You almost succeed in reaching the far side, but it is just a little wider than you judged! Turn to **43**.

24

You continue on your way East, shaking from the ferocity of the Vampire’s attack, till at length you come across a crossroads. Will you go:

- North? Turn to **159**
- East? Turn to **188**
- South? Turn to **6**

25

The silver key fits the lock perfectly and you open the box. Will you now take:

- One wafer? Turn to **75**
- Three wafers? Turn to **145**
- Six wafers? Turn to **155**

26

As you insert the second peg, the floor abruptly gives way beneath you and you fall about eight feet into darkness. The trapdoor closes above you and as you stagger to your feet and look around, you see that you are in a small, circular cave.

The walls are coated with dimly glowing fungi except for one patch where there is a small, metal door. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Valour, turn to **45**. If they add up to more than your Valour, turn to **65**.

27

You stagger back from the mirror, trembling violently, your body damp with the cold sweat of fear. Whatever it was you just experienced, you know it was one of the worst moments of your life . . . the feeling that you were being torn apart from within. Lose two Valour Points. Will you now smash the mirror? Turn to **37**. Or leave this room? Turn to **224**.

28

You have not deciphered the word correctly, but something seems to warn you against trying to discover the meaning of the other words. For some inexplicable reason, you feel like you have had a lucky escape. Turn to **158**.



29

You are unable to regain your balance and fall screaming into the black, bottomless pit. Your adventure ends here!

30

At the sight of the symbol you have thrown, Death gives a sharp hiss and draws back slightly. You see that engraved upon the dice are the images of a chalice and three small circles. Have you placed the Eye of Truth upon your forehead? If so, turn to **90**. If not, turn to **60**.

31

The man closes his sunken eyes for a moment, and then recites:

“Where lies the strength?
 Here in my heart.
 Where lies the hope?
 Here in my mind.
 What joins the two?
 My soul, O Soulless one.
 May the Dark Ones take you –
 Soul Eater . . . begone!”

Hoping that you will recall the words correctly when the right moment occurs for you to use them, you thank the mournful prisoner and promise to try to find the key to release him. Then you set off along the tunnel North – turn to **40**.



32

You recall the words that the despairing Knight told you of, and quickly shout out the Incantation.

Immediately, the Soul Eater lets out an unearthly shriek and starts to writhe in agony. Its pale body begins to ooze a black, foul-smelling slime, which gradually envelopes the entire creature.

Then, with a final, almost pitiful moan, the Soul Eater's body melts into a pool of steaming black liquid, which rapidly evaporates until nothing at all is left. Turn to **151**.

33

You take a few steps back from the pool, then run up to leap out across it. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Valour, turn to **23**. If they add up to more than your Valour, turn to **92**.

34

You continue on your way West, shaking from the Vampire's attack, till at length the tunnel ends at a small door. The door is slightly ajar, and through the crack you can see a faint glow of silvery light. Curiosity overcomes your better judgement, and you push open the door. Turn to **182**.

35

You walk through into a long room with a high, vaulted ceiling. The air is still and heavy, and deathly quiet, and you feel as though you are entering an ancient, undisturbed tomb. At the far end of the room is a low altar with something glinting upon it. To either side of the altar is a small, wooden door. The floor of the room is formed of an elaborate marble mosaic and you wonder if there might be the trigger of a hidden trap concealed by the complex pattern.

You begin to pick your way carefully across the floor, and with intense relief, you eventually arrive safely at the altar. This room must have once been a place of worship for the Knights and therefore concealed no traps.

Fixed onto the altar is a small, silver box with a crystal lid, inside which lie six Golden Wafers. They are about the size of a small coin, beautifully fashioned and paper thin. The box is locked and has a tiny key hole in the front. Do you have a tiny silver key? If so, turn to **25**. If not, turn to **238**.



36

You discover that the device is a wall safe, the door of which is in the form of a five-pointed star. An identical star is drawn in the centre of the door, and each star has a small, circular hole at each of the five points. Each hole is numbered from 1 to 5 on both stars, and you see there is a small peg set into each of the holes labelled number "1". Two more pegs lie on the floor at the bottom of the wall. The safe door is locked, and you realise that to open it, you must place the pegs in the correct holes.

By the side of the safe door, in faded, barely readable letters, are the words:

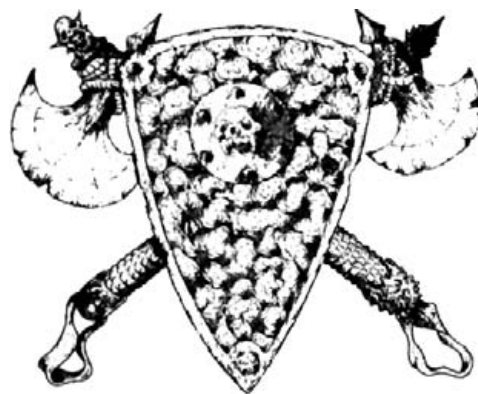
"Three by three and two by two,

Be warned: take care in what you do."

Will you remove the two pegs, and put them in the two number "5" holes (assuming that "Three by three and two by two" means $33 + 22 = 55$)? Turn to **7**.

Or, put the two pegs from the floor in the number "3" holes ($3 \times 3 + 2 \times 2 = 13$)? Turn to **26**.

Or, use all four pegs and put them in the two number "3" and the two number "2" holes? Turn to **133**.



37

Standing well to one side of the mirror, so as not to glimpse your reflection a second time, you raise your sword and bring it crashing down onto the glinting surface!

You shudder involuntarily, as the sound of smashing glass is accompanied by an eerie wailing, as if from a thousand different voices. The wailing increases in intensity, until you are forced to cover your ears with your hands, and then, as the voices reach an almost unbearable pitch, every one of the glass boxes shatters, and the lights burst forth in streaks of discordant clashing colours, which dart wildly about the room.

With sudden horror, you realise it is from the lights that the eerie wailing is coming! They are the souls of those who have gazed too long into the oval mirror, ripped from their human bodies by the mirror's evil magic and imprisoned for eternity in the glass boxes.

Only when the mirror was smashed could they be released, and now their one desire is to return to a living human body. They swarm towards you, weaving and darting in the cold air, and then dive straight for you, seeping through your skin to use your body as their host. You scream in terrified horror as your brain is filled with a thousand different personalities, all clamouring for dominance over your body. Your adventure ends here, in madness and death!



38

It has been a fierce battle, and you rest a while before venturing a little further East, but the tunnel gets increasingly small, and when you once more hear the grinding of rock beneath your feet, you turn hastily around and head back to the crossroads – turn to **77**.

39

The symbol on the dice is that of a jewelled Heart – you may restore two Strength points and two Valour points. When Death realises what symbol you have thrown, its skull-like face gives a sharp hiss of annoyance. You smile inwardly, feeling that at last you might be getting the upper hand, and throw the dice again. Turn to **100**.

40

You have not gone far North, when the echoing of your footsteps dislodges a sudden shower of black icicles from the tunnel roof. The icicles are not large, but they are dagger-sharp. Throw one dice to discover how many icicles strike you, and lose that many Strength points.

Cursing at your misfortune, you press on, taking great care to tread quietly so as not to dislodge more icicles. Quite soon, you come across a new tunnel off to the West. Will you take this new tunnel? Turn to **111**. Or continue on your way North? Turn to **106**.

41

You set off down the tunnel West, shivering in the icy cold air, and gradually become aware of a faint glow ahead of you. As you proceed along the tunnel, the glow becomes brighter, and you notice it appears to come from strange patches of slime that occasionally coat the tunnel floor. The further you proceed down the tunnel, the more frequent the slime patches become, until they cover not just the floor, but most of the walls and roof as well. Will you keep heading West? Turn to **51**. Or, disliking the look of the strangely glowing slime, turn back? Turn to **5**.

42

You set off down the West corridor, and after a short distance, you notice another passage branching off to the South. You decide against that way, however, as you do

not wish to head back in the direction you came from. You therefore continue on your way West – turn to **62**.

43

You fall into the pool, which is filled with bubbling acidic fluid, and scramble as quickly as you can to the far side. You drag yourself out of the burning water, choking on the foul gases, with your skin stinging painfully. Lose two Strength points, and turn to **162**.

44

In desperation, you wave your torch at the dark spectres, and although a few back off slightly, the majority of them press closer. Your torch flame seems to have little effect upon their bewitched fabric. You feel unseen, icy fingers clutch at your limbs and wrap around your throat. You try to scream, but your cry is drowned by the victorious inhuman keening of the spectres. Your adventure ends here!

45

You rush to the door and to your relief it is unlocked. You open it and walk through into a low, narrow tunnel that leads West and finally ends at another door, this time made of stone. It opens easily and you step through into a North–South corridor. The stone door swings silently closed behind you, leaving no trace of its existence in the wall on this side. Turn to **245**.

46

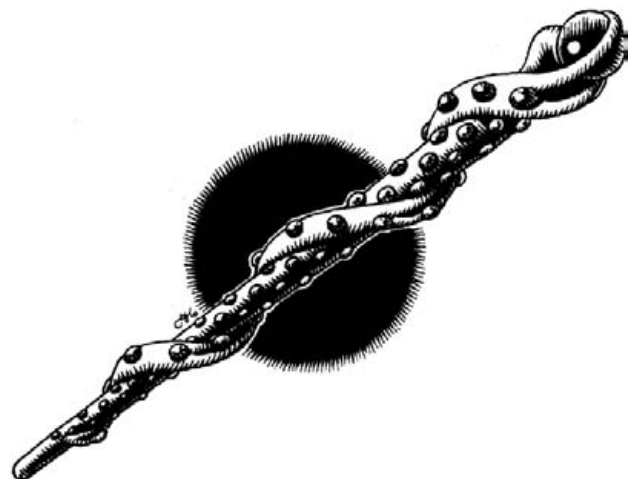
You have not deciphered the word correctly and when you speak it, there is no effect. Will you take the book with you? Turn to **86**. Or, leave the island immediately? Turn to **158**.

47

You are about to attempt to climb back out, when there is a sound behind you, like many claws scratching upon rock. You whirl around and find yourself facing three large, hideous creatures. They have swollen, black, bulbous bodies, and four pairs of legs, reminding you of ugly spiders, but their heads are white and bony and hairless, like skulls, with burning eyes and jagged, razor-sharp teeth. In an instant, they are upon you! Fight them one at a time.

| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| SPIDER-HOUNDS: | 8 | 6 |
| | 10 | 4 |
| | 7 | 6 |

If you win, turn to **58**.



48

You have no hope of escape as the knife plunges towards you. Your adventure ends here!

49

“You who have dared to come this far must be prepared to carry through to the end,” says the voice of Death. “Come, sit with us.”

Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Valour points, turn to 99. If they add up to more than your Valour points, turn to 79.

50

You realise that these holy items must somehow be the key to the destruction of the three beings before you. Death’s reaction upon seeing their images on the dice confirms this. Quickly, you take the chalice from your backpack, and taking off its lid, you throw the Water it contains straight at the three gruesome creatures! The Water smokes and burns like acid where it touches them, and all three emit howls of rage and pain. Do you have three Golden Wafers? If so, turn to 3. If you have only one Golden Wafer, turn to 20.

51

Abruptly, the tunnel widens out into a small cave, but as you are about to move forwards, you are rooted to the spot by a wild, manic howling! All is silent again as you look around the cave – and then a blow on your shoulder knocks you forward, stumbling, into the cave. Lose one Strength point.

With your back to the wall, and your sword drawn, you can now make out the creature facing you. Its bulbous head is dominated by two huge black eyes and a broad mouth, which it now opens, emitting another ear-splitting cry. From its short, squat body two thin arms project, and long, spindly legs support the creature.

You aim a blow at it – but its agility is astonishing; it evades the blow with ease, striking you again with its fists as it leaps, screaming to one side. Lose one more Strength point.

In order to pass the Shrieker, you need to get in just two good sword-blows. However, because of its great speed and agility, this will not be easy!

If you wish to fight the Shrieker, turn to 72. If you would rather turn and run back along the tunnel East, turn to 61.

52

You are about half way round the narrow ledge, when it collapses beneath you and you plunge into the bubbling pool of acid! Turn to 153.

53

You go through into a short passageway that leads North until it ends at two impressively carved wooden doors. You tentatively give them an experimental shove, and at your touch, they fly wide open, hitting the walls to each side of them with a loud clang. You cringe inwardly, hoping this has not alerted any of the citadel’s residents, and then walk through into the room beyond – turn to 63.

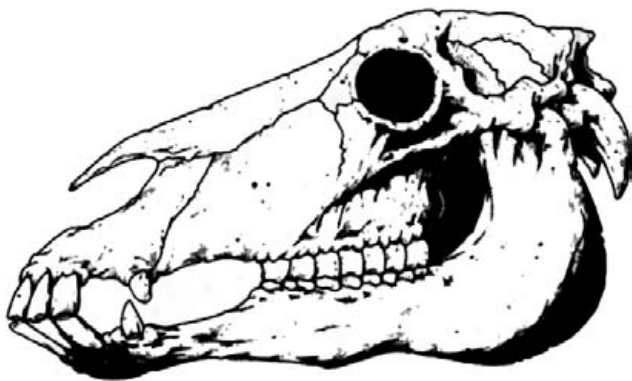


54

Although you search most carefully, you cannot find any clue that might indicate a secret door lies hidden at the end of the passage. You have no alternative but to go back West to the passage that led off to the North and take that way. Turn to 94.

55

You walk over to the oval mirror and as your reflection comes into view, you see that it is surrounded by a pale green aura of light. Then you experience a sudden, sickening wrenching inside yourself, as if your very soul is being torn from you. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as, or less than your Valour points, turn to 27. If they add up to more than your Valour points, turn to 171.



56

You search for some indication of a secret door, and at length your patience is rewarded when your hand brushes against a hidden trigger. A door opens in the East wall and you step through into what appears to be a large, dark cupboard. A door faces you in the East side of the cupboard, and you push this open and step out into the room beyond – turn to 63.

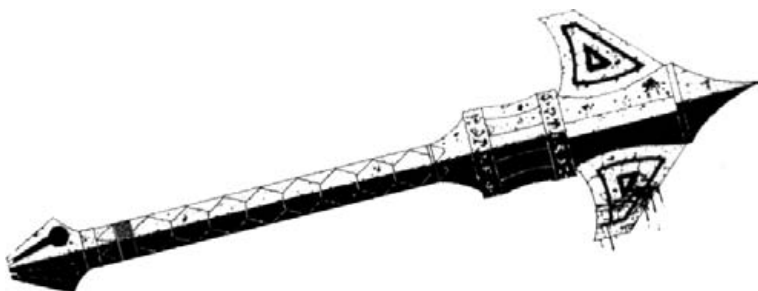
57

| | | |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| BURROWBEETLE: | 8 | 12 |

If at any time, you feel that the battle is going so badly for you that you would rather retreat, turn to 118. If you win without retreating, turn to 38.

58

After a fierce battle, you succeed in disposing of them, and waste no further time in climbing back up to the corridor above. The climb is difficult and you take it painstakingly slowly, but your care pays off and at length you arrive safely at the top of the pit. Turn to 149.



59

You take a deep breath, grasp your sword, and stride out into the dim circle of pale light, cast by the candle around which the figures sit. Three dark hoods look up at you, but you cannot detect any faces within the shadowy cowls. There is an eternal moment of unbearable silence, then the figure nearest to you draws back its hood, revealing the hollow, skull-face of Death.

Tiny points of red fire burn in the empty eye-sockets, and a pale, freezing mist swirls around the richly-embroidered robes. Death carries a jewelled staff, and wears an ornate helmet, and you see a five-pointed star on its breastplate.

“Welcome,” it hisses, “I cannot imagine what you hoped to do with *that*.” It extends a claw-like hand, and your sword evaporates. “Such toys,” it continues, “will be useless to you here.” Turn to 49.

60

If you have a crystal chalice and have filled it with the Water of Purity, turn to 80. If you do not have the Chalice filled with the Water of Purity, turn to 246.

61

In your haste to retreat, you slip and fall flat on your face in the slime, and the Shrieker strikes you again. Lose one Strength point and one Valour point, as you get to your feet and prepare to fight. However, as the Shrieker is relatively weak, though very agile, deduct just one Strength point for each round of battle you lose. Your blows will cause the normal two Strength points of damage.

| | | |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| SHRIEKER: | 12 | 4 |
| | If you win, turn to 81. | |

62

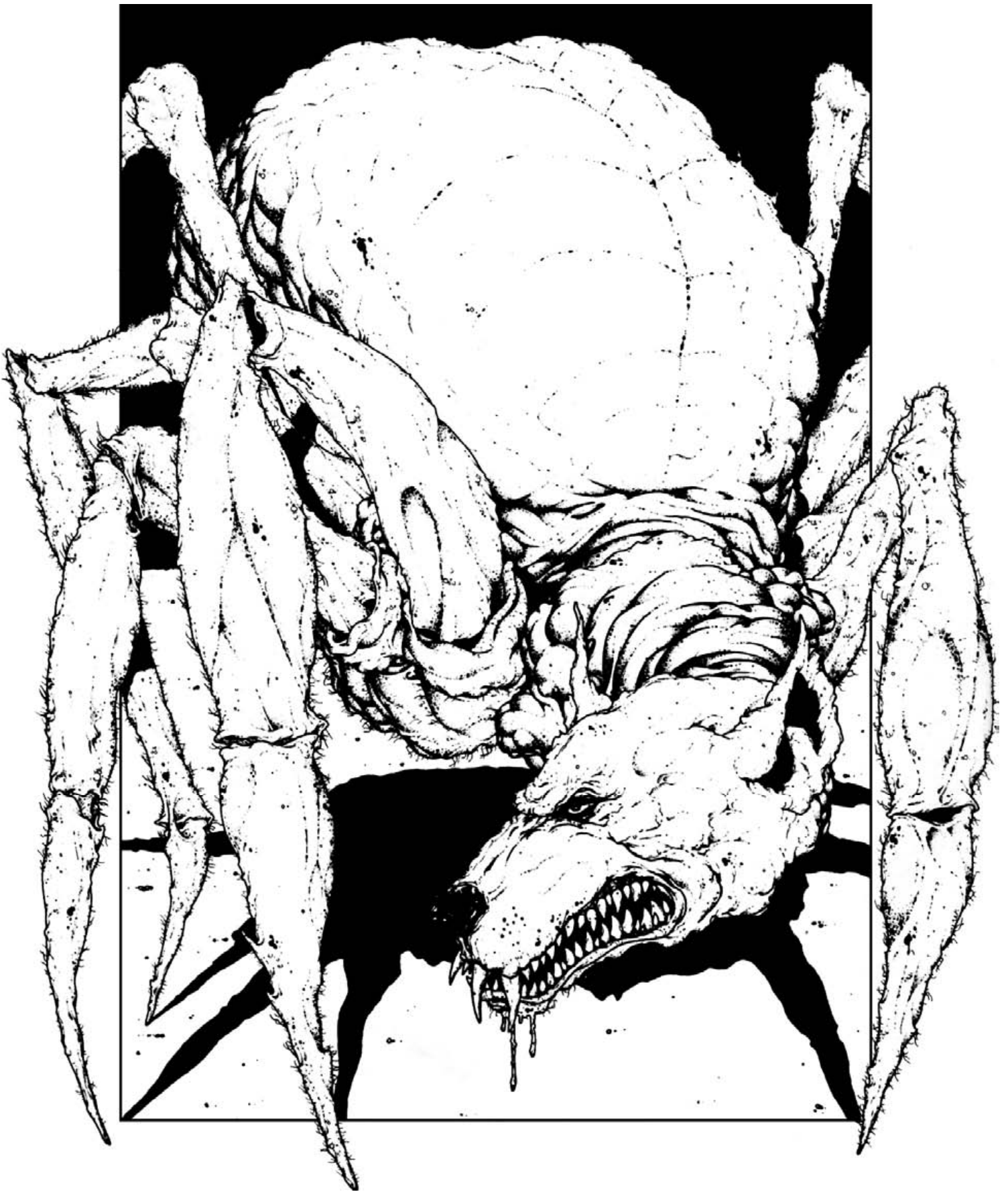
You head West along the passage until it ends at a huge oak door with heavy iron bars set across it. A faint, low rumbling sound comes from the other side of the door, and your curiosity gets the better of you. You draw back the iron bars, and push the great door silently open – turn to 76.

63

You have entered a long room, the walls of which are lined with stone benches. There is a carved door in the North wall, and to either side of this are two tables: one is laden with musty old books, and the other has upon it two flickering candles – but as to who could have lit them, you have no idea. Along the West wall of the room are a number of huge wardrobes.

There is an uncomfortable atmosphere in the room, and you get an inexplicable feeling of dread, as if something terrible is about to take place. Will you examine:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|------------|
| The door in the North wall? | Turn to | 93 |
| The wardrobes? | Turn to | 184 |
| The old books? | Turn to | 163 |



64

Without any warning, a sudden wave of dizziness and weakness surges through you, and you stagger and fall heavily against the nearby wall. Your stomach churns wildly and your throat seems to constrict while your mouth feels dry and swollen. Lose two Valour points.

You push away from the wall and regain your balance, to see three pairs of red eyes staring at you out of the blackness. A shiver passes through you, a mixture of fear and the fever that is coursing through your veins. You swallow nervously, trying to ease the dryness in your mouth, and hold your sword tightly before you as the red eyes edge nearer.

You can now make out that they belong to three large creatures, with swollen, black bulbous bodies and four pairs of legs, reminding you of ugly spiders. Their heads, however, are white and bony and hairless, like skulls, with burning red eyes and jagged razor-sharp teeth. You lick your dry lips and wipe away the sweat that is dripping from your forehead. You feel as if you are burning up, yet you have to fight these creatures or die. Take two Dexterity points from your current score for this battle, and fight the Spider-Hounds one at a time.

| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| SPIDER-HOUNDS: | 8 | 6 |
| | 10 | 4 |
| | 7 | 6 |

If you win, turn to 240.

65

You rush to the door but it is locked and will not budge. There is no escape from this slimy, fungi-covered cave. Your adventure ends here!

66

With swift, sure strokes of the oar, you guide the raft smoothly through the still water in an Easterly direction. Gradually, the lake narrows and curves down to the South, and the cavern walls loom close on either side. Then the walls recede again as the lake turns to the East once more and finally ends in a narrow, rocky cove. You guide the raft onto the sloping rock shore, and notice a narrow cave entrance in the East wall ahead of you. It is a tight squeeze, but you manage to slip through it into a small, foul-smelling cave beyond.

Have you previously receive a small puncture wound in your ankle? If so, turn to 64. If not, turn to 194.

67

You triumphantly shout out the word "Cage!" and at once, a huge, metal cage falls out of the blackness above you to land around the plateau with a deafening clang!

The pedestal, the book and you are all neatly trapped in the centre. Cursing at your foolish mistake, you walk over to test the bars, but they are of solid iron and as thick as your arm. There is nothing you can do to escape, so you decide you might as well try to decipher the other word – GEXMUHSU. If you can translate it, turn to 8. If you cannot, turn to 216.

68

You have hopelessly misjudged the distance and fall helplessly down into the pit. Throw one dice and lose that many Strength points, and also one Valour point. Turn to 47.

69

With great skill and dexterity, you manage to regain your balance and fall back away from the pit. You feel a little way along the pit's edge, but it extends far to your left and right. Since your torch cannot light this enchanted blackness, you decide to leave this room and return West back to the passage off to the South – turn to 119.

70

The faces of the three figures are hidden under their dark cowls, but something about them makes you shudder uncontrollably. Lose one Valour point. You struggle to pull yourself together – they do not appear to have noticed you yet, and if you are going to act, you must do so quickly. Will you draw your sword and confront them? Turn to 59. Or, sneak quietly up on them to study them for weaknesses? Turn to 19.

71

"Fear," Death murmurs in an almost inaudible hiss. You glance apprehensively towards the faceless being, and find that when you try to move away, you cannot. Fear does not try to touch you. It merely turns its empty gaze upon you and the depthless blackness beneath its cowl fills your mind with inexplicable terror. Lose four Valour points.

"Now," Death hisses, "throw the dice again." And you realise you are trapped in this deadly game, which will end only in your death or the destruction of these three creatures. Turn to 100.

72

The Shrieker leaps, and you just manage to duck under its flailing fists, stabbing at it with your sword. For this battle, deduct just one Strength point for each round of battle you lose, as the creature, though immensely fast, is not strong. Your blows will cause the usual two Strength points of damage.

| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|
| SHRIEKER: | 12 | 4 |

If you win, turn to 81.

73

You have almost succeeded in reaching the other side of the pool, when the ledge suddenly collapses! Turn to 43.

74

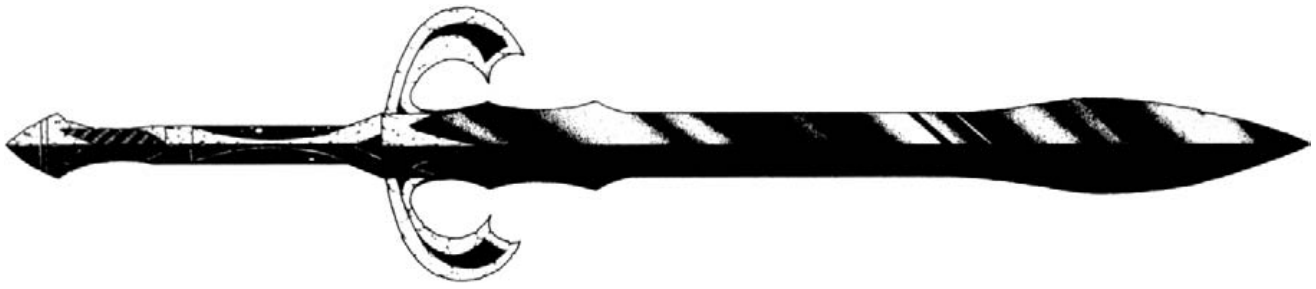
In desperation, you search rapidly through your backpack for the gift of the wretched Knight. Your fingers close around the cloth wrapping, and hastily you draw the small bundle from your pack and unwrap the precious jewel. At once, the pure green light shines forth with a blinding radiance. You shield your eyes with your hands, but through your fingers you can see the spectres shrivel into nothingness in the brilliant rays.

When all the ghostly robes have vanished, you re-cover the jewelled heart and return it to your backpack. Then cautiously, you return to search the wardrobe – turn to 154.

75

You put the precious wafer into your backpack. Turn to 213.





76

You enter a large, round cave, dimly lit by a smouldering red fire-pit in the far South-West corner. The rumbling noise is much louder, and as you peer around to discover its source your blood runs cold at the sight you see. Curled up asleep along the North wall of the cave is a Dragon! Not the biggest Dragon you have ever encountered – this one looks quite a youngster – but you know from experience (and from the large pile of clean white bones before him) that even the youngest of Dragons is a formidable enemy.

Deciding that never again will you let your curiosity get the better of you, you turn around to creep out of the cave. But the door slams to in your face! Evidently the dragon was not as deeply asleep as you thought, and has used his long, agile tail to slam the door shut, imprisoning you in his lair! Gripping your sword tightly, you turn to face your captor. The Dragon opens one sleepy, golden eye, yawns, and slowly runs his long, forked tongue around his quietly smouldering maw.

“Fortunately for you, my friend,” he says, “I’ve just eaten,” and he lazily flicks his barbed tail in the direction of the pile of bones.

After overcoming your initial astonishment at discovering that this is one of those extremely rare dragons who can speak in the human tongue, you politely ask if you may be permitted to leave. The dragon considers your request for a moment, and then replies:

“You may leave if I judge you worthy enough and my equal. I’d never eat a friend, you see. Let us have a test of strength. Not to the death, mind you – just rough each other up a bit. If you win, you can go free, and if I win, I get to eat you. What do you say?”

It seems that you have little alternative, so you

reluctantly agree to the Dragon’s proposal. The Dragon has a Dexterity of 12 and a Strength of 18. You are not aiming to kill him, however, as this is a test of your fighting skills. You must reduce the Dragon’s Strength by eight (i.e. wound him four times).

If you do this *before* he reduces your Strength by eight, turn to **152**. If, however, the Dragon reduces your Strength by eight before you reduce his by that number, turn to **142**. If your Strength is less than 8 to begin with, there is a chance the Dragon may reduce your Strength to zero, in which case you must begin your adventure again from the start.

77

If you originally approached this crossroads from the West, turn to **127**. If you approached it from the South, turn to **195**.

78

The passage leads East for a short distance, and as you venture along it, you become aware of the sound of many voices chanting ahead of you. Quite soon, the passage opens out into a large, dimly lit room. Turn to **177**.

79

To your horror, you find yourself drawn forward and forced to sit cross-legged upon the floor at the feet of the three figures! Turn to **220**.

80

Do you have one or more Golden Wafers? If so, turn to **50**. If you do not have any, turn to **203**.





81

After defeating the Shrieker, you rest a moment to wipe the glowing slime from your body as best as you can. While you are thus occupied, you suddenly notice the glint of some metal object half buried in the slime by the wall. You walk over to discover that the object is an oddly fashioned key, made of some precious silvery metal which you suspect may be platinum, encrusted with diamonds. It is very valuable, and you place it carefully into your backpack.

You see that there is another exit out of the Shrieker's cave in the North wall and decide to leave through this. You enter another cold, rocky tunnel that goes North for a short distance, and then you come across another tunnel branching off to the East. Will you:

| | | |
|------------------------|---------|------------|
| Continue North? | Turn to | 102 |
| Take the new way East? | Turn to | 202 |

82

Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Valour points, turn to **73**. If they add up to more than your Valour points, turn to **52**.

83

If you entered the cave through a door in the West wall, turn to **201**. If you entered through a door in the East wall, turn to **230**.

84

After defeating the Demon Alpha, you walk cautiously through the now open doorway into the room beyond – turn to **35**.

85

You go through the East door into an empty room that is identical in size to the one you just left, and you realise this is the room behind the door to the right of the altar.

There is a door in the South wall and another in the East. You discover that although the South door is locked, the East one is not, so you cautiously open it and go through. Turn to **234**.

86

You try to lift the book from the hollow of the giant hand, but it will not budge. Then to your horror, you realise that your hands are stuck fast to its cover! You try to pull away without success, and in sudden terror you see that the silver-grey mould which coats the book is creeping over your flesh in glinting, silvery tendrils. You can almost feel its tiny, root-like feelers sinking through your skin and you let out a cry of frustration and fear.

Then you notice another word scratched into the leather on the book's cover: "QDKDZRD". If you can translate the word, turn to **225**. If you cannot, turn to **248**.

87

You take a few steps backwards, then run up to the pit and leap out into space. Throw one dice.

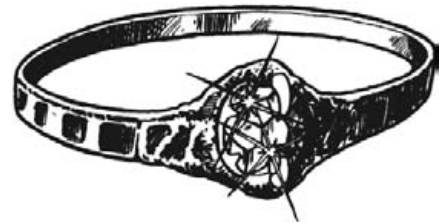
| | | |
|-------------------|---------|------------|
| If you get 1 or 2 | Turn to | 68 |
| If you get 3 or 4 | Turn to | 196 |
| If you get 5 or 6 | Turn to | 109 |

88

Remembering the brilliant light which the powder can produce, you quickly get out the battered snuff box and sprinkle its contents onto your torch flame. At once, there is a violent explosion of light, and your torch now burns blue and brilliant. You peer once more through the black door and see a large room, but with a huge, yawning pit in the floor just beyond the door! A narrow walkway leads around the pit, and you edge along it into the room.

The dark walls are lined with statues and icons worshipped by the Knights of the Jewelled Heart. They form a long aisle which leads up to the North wall, where, upon a marble pedestal, stands the statue of a one-eyed man. Behind him, is a low, arched doorway. Around the cyclops's head is a band of gold and set into this is a milky white, oval gem. You recall the "Eye of Truth" which was mentioned in the inscription at the foot of the staircase when you first entered the catacombs. Could this white stone be it?

You walk down the aisle of silent, watching statues and step onto the marble pedestal. Gingerly, you ease the golden band from the head of the cyclops, sure now that the oval gem is indeed the legendary Eye of Truth. If you are worthy, this jewel will reveal to you the secret of how to destroy the Evil which has held Lllamar in its deadly grip over the centuries. With trembling fingers, you place the band upon your head. Turn to **138**.



89

You instantly recognise these hooded figures as being the three creatures that you saw when you placed the Eye of Truth upon your head. Fear grips your heart, but you struggle to master it. The three beings do not appear to have noticed you yet, but you know you cannot have much time before your presence is revealed. You feel that the Chalice and the Golden Wafers which you also saw in your vision must be the key to the destruction of this triad of Evil – but how? You must do something – but what? Will you draw your sword and confront them? Turn to **59**. Or, sneak quietly up on them to study them for weaknesses? Turn to **19**.

90

You instantly recognise these symbols as representing the crystal Chalice and the Golden Wafers which you saw in your vision. Do you have the crystal Chalice and have you filled it with the Water of Purity? – turn to **80**. If you do not have the Chalice with the Water of Purity, turn to **246**.

91

To your horror, a black mist seeps out of Pain and drifts rapidly towards you. You try to run, but you cannot escape, as Pain's black spirit reaches out and flows into your body. At its touch, the part of you which is your own identity, mind and will is taken over by the spirit of Pain. Your adventure ends here!

92

To your dismay, you realise the pool is much wider than you anticipated and you fall helplessly into its bubbling, acidic depths! Turn to 153.

93

The door is made of dark wood, set into an arch. It is locked with three elaborate but sturdy-looking locks. You must search around for the keys, and decide the most likely place to find them is in the wardrobes. If you entered this room through the door in the South wall, turn to 237. If you entered by another means, turn to 223.

94

You turn into the passage which heads Northwards for quite some time. After a while, you hear the faint sound of lapping water ahead of you, and suddenly the passage widens out into a huge cavern – turn to 214.

95

You triumphantly shout out the word: “Submerge!” and at once, the island begins to sink rapidly into the black waters of the lake.

Realising your terrible mistake, you leap down the rapidly disappearing steps, but see to your dismay that your raft has floated free from the island. It is bobbing wildly on the water, in danger of being sucked under by the whirlpool-like currents caused by the island’s submergence. The raft is your only hope of salvation and you leap into the icy water to try and swim for it. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Valour points, turn to 165. If they add up to more than your Valour points, turn to 135.

96

Suddenly, the floor starts to crumble beneath you and you hastily leap backwards onto firm ground. In front of you, most of the mosaic has fallen into a large pit, about 8 feet wide and 12 feet deep. Will you try to jump across the pit? If so, turn to 87. Or will you return South and take the passage that branched off to the East? Turn to 78.

97

You soon arrive at a large, black door at the end of the corridor. As you reach out to examine it, it swings silently open, revealing impenetrable blackness beyond. You hold your torch higher, but its flickering light cannot penetrate the unnatural darkness. Do you have the Powder of Eternal Light? If you have, turn to 88. If you do not, turn to 9.

98

Throw the dice again. If you get a 6, turn to 160. If you get any other number, turn to 48.

99

Something tugs at your mind, compelling you to walk towards the three figures, but you struggle to resist it – and win! Beads of perspiration stand out on your forehead and your hands are damp and clammy. Can you now attack the figures with your sword? Turn to 110. If you have lost your sword, you can still try to attack them with your bare hands – turn to 169. You can turn around and run – turn to 199. Or you can sit with the three figures, but make it clear you do so of your own free will, and *not* under their control – turn to 236.

100

Roll one dice. If you throw an even number, turn to 190. If you throw an odd number, turn to 180.

101

For a few breathless moments, you think you must have got the order right, but the door refuses to open. Turn to 212.

102

You continue North till the tunnel ends in a T-junction. Will you go:
East? Turn to 200
West? Turn to 62

103

Quite soon, the passage ends at a small door, and since you do not relish the thought of having to cross the pool again, you open the door and step through into the room beyond – turn to 182.

104

Go to 113.

105

Eventually the passage comes to a dead end. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as or less than your Valour points, turn to 56. If they add up to more than your Valour points, turn to 54.

106

You continue North for some time, until the tunnel opens out into a small, square room. Turn to 239.

107

You steer your raft clear of the island, and as you enter the North tunnel, you become aware of a faint roaring sound ahead of you.

Will you continue North? Turn to 157.

Or, turn back towards the island? Turn to 116.



108

You continue Northwards for quite some time, until again you come across a passage off to the East. Will you:

- Keep going North? Turn to **148**
Take the new way East? Turn to **78**

109

You make it safely across and continue on your way North – turn to **219**.

110

Hoping to take them off guard, you leap for the nearest of the three figures with your sword – but you are thrown back by a violent unknown force, landing sprawling on your back. Lose one Strength point. Your sword has mysteriously vanished into thin air, and you get to your feet, deciding against attacking them again. Will you turn and run? Turn to **209**. Or sit with them after all? Turn to **236**.

111

You have not gone far down the tunnel when it ends at a large oak door. Will you open the door? Turn to **22**. Or go back East down the corridor and continue on your way North? Turn to **106**.

112

You set off down the new tunnel, and after going just a short distance, a strange bubbling sound reaches your ears. Cautiously, you advance down the tunnel, and soon discover the source of the noise. The passage ahead is almost completely blocked by a circular pool of bubbling, green liquid. The bubbles give off a foul-smelling gas that catches in your throat, causing you to choke. A very narrow ledge runs around the pool's edge, and if you wish to continue this way, you must decide whether to risk the ledge or try to jump across the pool, which is about eight feet wide.

If you decide to return to the junction and continue North, turn to **124**. If you wish to risk the ledge, turn to **82**. If you would like to try to jump over the pool, turn to **33**.

113

This wardrobe is filled with musty-looking monks' robes with large, cowl-like hoods – no doubt worn at times by the Knights of the Jewelled Heart. You reach out to search amongst the robes, but as you do so, the empty, black gowns rise up and begin to float silently out of the wardrobe!

You stare in utter astonishment as they glide out into the room, but then your feelings change to apprehension as you realise they are surrounding you. You notice something suspiciously like two red eyes glittering in the depths of the dark cowl nearest to you, and in desperation, you slash at the black spectres with your sword. It is useless, however, for even though your blade slices ragged strips from the robes, they seem totally unaffected by your attempts, and press even closer towards you. One touches your shoulder – lose two Strength points and one Valour point. They will suck your life from you unless you can think of something!

Do you have a Jewelled Heart or the Powder of Eternal Light? If you have a Jewelled Heart, turn to **74**. If you have the Powder of Eternal Light, turn to **144**. If you have neither of these items, turn to **44**.



114

After defeating the Demon, you pause for a moment to recover your breath after the fierce battle, and then decide to search the side doors to try and find a key to the box. Will you examine the door on the right side of the altar? Turn to **231**. Or the door on the left side of the altar? Turn to **185**.

115

You turn West into a low tunnel, and you have not gone far before you glimpse a white flicker in the blackness ahead of you. You hesitate, then hold your torch higher, and slowly advance. Turn to **132**.

116

You steer the tiny raft back down the tunnel to where the lake widens out again. Will you now, if you have not already done so, investigate the island? Turn to **189**. Or, explore the Eastern side of the lake? Turn to **66**.

117

Will you try to decipher:
"XZTV"? Turn to **147**
"GEXMUHSU"? Turn to **243**
If you cannot decipher either of the words, turn to **158**.

118

Deciding that the odds are against you, you turn around and run back West to the crossroads; lose one Valour point.

You arrive back at the crossroads running at full pelt, and have no time to ponder about which direction to take. You quickly pick a direction at random: North, and with the hissing of the Burrowbeetle still echoing in your ears, you set off that way – turn to **159**.

119

You venture South for quite some time, and as you proceed along the passage, you become aware of the faint chanting of many voices ahead of you. Eventually, the passage opens out into a large, dimly lit room. Turn to **177**.

120

"Ah, Pain," Death hisses. Then to you he says: "Do not worry. It will not last long."

You swallow in nervous apprehension as the being with your face leans over to touch your shoulder. You try to pull away, but find that you cannot move. At Pain's touch, you are racked by excruciating agony. Lose six Strength points. If you are still alive, Pain withdraws its hand, and you sag forwards, weak and drained.

"Now, throw the dice again," Death instructs you, and you realise you are trapped in this deadly game, which will end only in your death or the destruction of these three creatures. Turn to **100**.



121

You have no choice but to fight the Soul Eater with your Sword. If you throw 12 when calculating the Soul Eater's *Fighting Power*, turn to **130**.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| SOUL EATER: | 8 | 10 |
| If you win, turn to 141 . | | |

122

You go through into a North-heading corridor. Quite soon, another corridor branches off to the East. Will you:

- Continue North? Turn to **124**
- Take the new way East? Turn to **112**

123

If you were going East down the tunnel when you met the Vampire, turn to **24**. If you were going West, turn to **34**.

124

You continue North for a short distance, and then the passage turns to the East. Quite soon, you come upon another passage that branches off to the North again. Will you:

- Continue East? Turn to **105**
- Take the new way North? Turn to **94**

125

You head Eastwards along the tunnel until it comes to an end at a wooden door. Cautiously, you push the door open and go through – turn to **239**.

126

The book is so old and damp, most of the pages have stuck together and rip into mouldy pieces when you try to force them apart. One page near to the back, however, is readable. It is entitled "WORDS OF COMMAND", beneath which is written: "Great care must be taken so that the words are understood and pronounced correctly." Following this are two words, printed clearly in dark red ink: "XZTV", and "GEXMUHSU".

If you wish to try to crack the code and decipher one of the words, turn to **117**. If you cannot decipher the words, turn to **158**.

127

Will you now go:
South? Turn to **226**
North? Turn to **159**

128

As the Eye of Truth touches your bare forehead, the room around you fades into total blackness. Then before your eyes appear the images of a beautiful crystal Chalice with a golden lid, and three Golden Wafers, each about the size of a small coin, beautifully fashioned and paper thin.

These images then fade away to be replaced by three, dark, hooded figures. As you watch in horrified fascination, the figure nearest to you lifts skeletal hands to draw the black cowl back from its skull-like face, and you feel as if you are looking into the eyes of Death.

Then the second figure draws back its hood, and beneath the cowl is an empty nothingness which is somehow even more terrifying than the skull face of Death. You are unable to shut out the vision as the third figure peels back its black hood, and your whole body trembles as its identity is revealed: it is yourself, pale and drawn, your eyes filled with unbearable pain! Lose two Valour points.

As if from a great distance, you hear your voice screaming – and suddenly you are back in the statue-filled hall. You tear the Eye of Truth from your head and cast it aside. You are still shaking violently and your one thought is to get out of the hall. You run to the North door, fling it open and stumble out into the passage beyond – turn to **150**.



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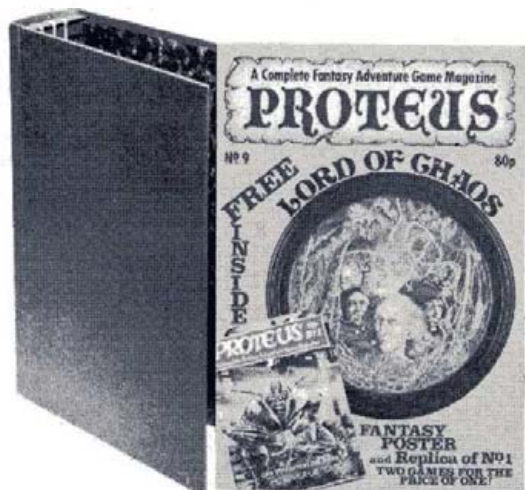
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129

The room beyond is dark and cold. You slip through the door and quietly close it behind you. In the centre of the room, three shadowy figures are sitting around a low table, bent over something which absorbs their complete attention. Have you ever placed the Eye of Truth on your forehead? If so, turn to 89. If you have not, turn to 70.

130

This maximum score means that the Soul Eater has succeeded in grasping you firmly with its suckered fingers, and so draws your soul from your body, killing you instantly. Your adventure ends here!

131

You stagger back from the Dragon's body, tired and streaked with blood. Then, after wiping clean your sword, you search around the cave, hoping to discover the treasure that Dragons such as this always hoard. To your intense disappointment, however, all you find are three copper pieces and a tarnished silver snuff box. The box must be worth something though, so you put it in your backpack and leave through a door in the North wall – turn to 122.

132

Your stomach knots with fear as a translucent, deathly-white face comes into view; framed by lank black hair, it opens its mouth to reveal long yellow fangs dripping blood, and opens its arms to you in an embrace of death. You are face-to-face with a Vampire!

Avoiding its hypnotic gaze, you draw your sword. You know that Vampires are notoriously difficult to kill; however, they can be defeated at least for a while, and you close in with both sword and torch.

| | | |
|----------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| VAMPIRE: | 9 | 10 |

If you defeat the Vampire, turn to 123.

133

You realise you have placed the pegs in the wrong holes, as it is not the safe door that opens, but the door in the East wall. Through it charges a huge, man-like beast, covered in shaggy fur, with two black horns curving out from its forehead. Its paw-like hands end in curving, blood-stained talons, and as its flaming eyes fall upon you, it emits a deafening roar. You reel back from the foul stench of its breath, as it bellows out the awful words:

"I am the Demon Omega, the Devourer of All Life. I will suck the blood from your veins and feast upon your tender flesh!" Lose one Valour point.

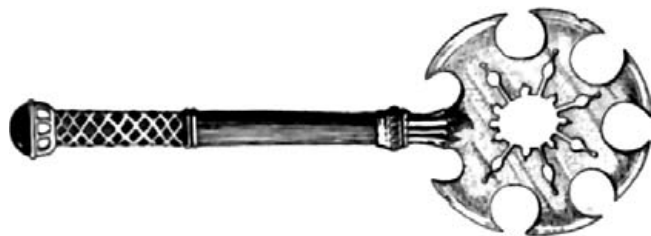
You raise your sword to defend yourself as the beast rushes towards you!

| | | |
|--------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| DEMON OMEGA: | 10 | 12 |

If you win, turn to 14.

134

The current is now swift and fiercely strong, and try as you might, you cannot turn the raft against it. The distant thunder increases into an angry, deafening roar, as the water plunges down into a bottomless black chasm ahead of you. In desperation, you drop the oar and cling like a limpet to the tiny raft, but you know in your heart that you are doomed. Your screams are drowned by the waterfall's angry roar, as you are carried helplessly over the edge of the chasm. Your adventure ends here!



135

Although you struggle frantically against the fierce current, it is to no avail and you feel yourself being dragged under by the whirlpool that surrounds the sinking island. Your adventure ends here!

136

Throw one dice three times. As soon as you throw a 1 or 6, turn to 96. If you throw the dice without getting 1 or 6, turn to 109.

137

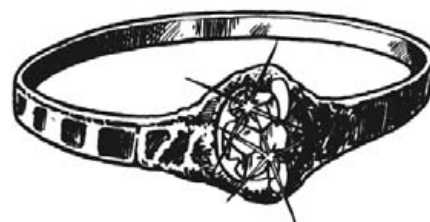
You scoop up a palmful of the water and sip it from your hand. It has a strange taste and you suddenly feel a little dizzy, but when you try to swallow it, your throat inexplicably constricts and you are forced to spit it out.

With sudden inspiration, you realise that this must be the Water of Purity, which according to legend, is a powerful weapon against evil. You give a small smile of triumph, and bending down, you splash the water vigorously up at the Cuckuroo. Turn to 167.

138

The Eye of Truth is a magical item of great power, and you must be of strong body and mind to endure the shock and strain of the knowledge and power which floods through you. Throw two dice and add this number to your current Valour points. This is the amount of psychic energy which your body and mind can endure.

Throw two dice. Add six to that number. This is the psychic power of the Eye of Truth. If your psychic power is the same as, or greater than that of the Eye of Truth, turn to 128. If, however, the Eye of Truth's psychic power is greater, turn to 197.



139

You leave through the South doorway and enter a narrow passage which after a short distance turns East. As you round the corner, you see the red-robed youth running up the tunnel towards you, accompanied by a crowd of the black-robed figures who almost succeeded in sacrificing you a little while back. There are far too many of them for you to deal with, and remembering how easily they overwhelmed you last time, you turn around and run back into the small room with the table. You rush across the room and out through the North doorway with the sound of your pursuers ringing in your ears – turn to 198.



140

Death gives a hiss of triumph.

“You lose,” he says, though whether he is speaking to you yourself or his companions, you cannot be sure.

“The touch of Death is always a release,” he tells you, “so do not be afraid.” Then he leans over and places his bony hand upon your shoulder. At his touch, you are filled with a mixture of peace and utter weariness of life. You fall soundlessly to the floor and do not rise again. Your adventure ends here.

141

As you deliver the final death stroke, the Soul Eater utters an unearthly shriek and dissolves into a pool of stinking, black slime. The pool rapidly evaporates until nothing at all is left. Turn to 151.

142

Lose one Valour point.

“I win!” the Dragon cries. “Now, will you wait meekly for death, or give me some sport with which to work up an appetite?”

Determination and anger boil inside you at the Dragon’s words. You are not one to give up your life so easily, and you have fought and defeated dragons before now! Deciding that this monster needs a lesson in humility, you raise your sword and charge!

| | | |
|---------|------------------|---|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| DRAGON: | 12 | 18 |
| | | (minus any damage you have done previously) |

If you win, turn to 131.

143

You have nothing in which to safely keep the fine powder, and so have no alternative but to leave the cave. Turn to 83.

144

In desperation, you wave your torch at the dark spectres, and they back off slightly, giving you time to search hastily through your backpack for the snuff box containing the Powder of Eternal Light.

The ghoulish robes are almost upon you again, when at last you find it, flip open the lid and cast some of the powder onto your flickering torch. At once, there is a blinding flash of light, and you throw the torch from you to shield your eyes with your hands. Gradually, the light dims, and you peep out to see that the robes have completely vanished. Much relieved, you return cautiously to the wardrobes – turn to 154.

145

You put the precious wafers carefully into your backpack. Turn to 213.



146

By sheer luck, you manage to steer the little raft into a lull in the strong current, and paddle frantically back South towards the island. Turn to 116.

147

If you think this word begins with “B”, turn to 28.

If you think it begins with “C”, turn to 67.

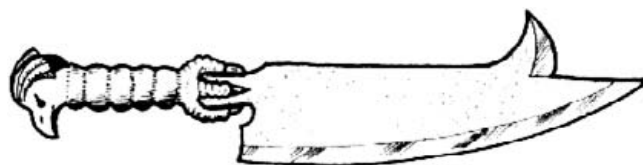
If you think it begins with another letter, turn to 46.

148

As you walk North along the passage, you begin to notice a change in your surroundings. The terrible cold which makes your bones ache, lessens slightly, as if the air here is a little warmer. Also, the walls of the corridor are decorated here and there with crumbling mosaics, and these increase in number the further North you go.

Then you see that part of the floor ahead of you is also covered in a faded mosaic and to each side of this, a dimly flickering torch is set into the wall. Increasingly wary at this recent sign of life, you venture onto the mosaic-covered floor, which now looks most unsafe.

Will you try to cross the mosaic to continue North? Turn to 136. Or, return South and take the passage that branched off to the East? Turn to 78.



149

You make your way North, as the way South is now blocked by the large hole in the mosaic. Turn to 219.

150

The passage leads you North for a short distance, then turns West and ends at a large, black door. Cautiously, you push the door open and peer inside – turn to 129.

151

You suddenly notice something glitter on the floor where the Soul Eater had stood, and cautiously, you step forwards, to discover that it is a tiny silver key. If you wish to take the key, you may put it in your backpack, and then examine the room for another exit.

You discover that there are three doors in the room: one in the East wall, another in the West and a third in the North. The East and West doors are identical and featureless, with no handle, lock or key-hole, so you turn your attention to the door in the North wall. It has an elaborately decorated metal plate set into it, in the centre of which is a large key-hole. You realise that the metal plate is made of platinum, decorated with diamond studs. Do you have a platinum key? If so, turn to 170. If not, turn to 181.



162

As you rest for a moment at the edge of the pool, you are alarmed to see the water begin bubbling and frothing, as a huge head appears. The beady eyes fix on you as the Bilebeast hauls itself from the steaming pool, its powerful beak snapping. You prepare for a bitter fight as the creature approaches, the acidic fluid dripping over its tough scales as it raises its mighty claws.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| BILEBEAST: | 9 | 12 |
| If you win, turn to 172 . | | |

163

The books are extremely old and faded, and contain mostly prayers and passages copied from ancient religious texts. One passage in particular catches your eye:

“I am Alpha, the First, the Beginning. All things come from me.

“I am Omega, the Last, the Eternal Night. I shall cast the world into Oblivion.”

You shudder at the awful finality of these words, and quickly place the book back onto the table. Will you now examine:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| The wardrobes? | Turn to 184 |
| The North door? | Turn to 93 |

164

The boxes are made of thick, clear glass and there appears to be no way of opening them. You have no idea as to the nature of the coloured lights, nor how they came to be inside the glass boxes. You stare at them for some

time, almost hypnotised by their eternal flickering dance. Then you shake yourself and tear your eyes away.

Will you now look into the mirror? Turn to **55**. Or leave this room? Turn to **224**.

165

By some miracle you manage to reach the little raft and haul yourself up out of the black water. You grasp the oar and with great effort, manage to row away from the sucking whirlpool into calm waters. There you pause to regain your breath and turn to see the island sink completely beneath the foaming water.

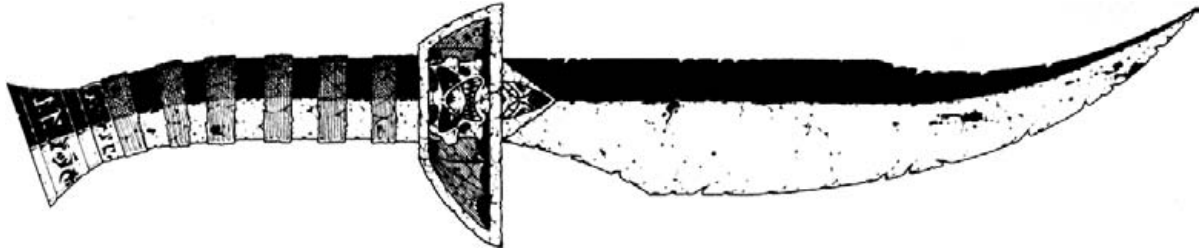
Will you now explore the East side of the lake? Turn to **66**. Or, if you have not already done so, investigate the North tunnel? Turn to **107**.

166

You walk South for some time until you come across another passage off to the East. You feel that you have gone far enough to the South, as you do not want to go in pointless circles and return to the areas you have already explored. You therefore take the new way East – turn to **176**.

167

As soon as the water touches the Cuckuroo, they emit an unearthly screech of anguish and collapse lifeless at the rim of the well – but at last they have been released from the evil spirits that possessed them. This is indeed the Water of Life which you can use to counteract the Dark Forces. Do you have a crystal Chalice with a golden lid? If so, turn to **227**. If not, turn to **207**.



168

You triumphantly shout out the word: "Submerge!" and immediately, the island begins to sink rapidly into the black water! At once, you realise your terrible mistake – you cannot escape and soon will be forced underwater by the cage in which you are imprisoned. You call out frantically for rescue from this dreadful fate, but only the echo of your dying screams answers your cry. Your adventure ends here.

169

Hoping to catch them off guard, you leap for the nearest of the three figures, but are thrown back by a violent, unknown force to land sprawling on your back. Lose one Strength point. You decide against attacking them again, so will you turn and run? Turn to **199**. Or sit with them after all? Turn to **236**.

170

You take the key from your backpack and find that it fits the lock perfectly. The door swings easily open, and you walk through into the corridor beyond – turn to **12**.

171

You fall to your knees and let out an agonised moan of pain. The mirror has captured your soul, and you are dimly aware of the green aura around you seeping into the mirror's dark surface and then reappearing in one of the empty glass boxes behind you. Your body collapses lifeless to the floor, and your life-force is eternally imprisoned. Your adventure ends here!

172

You quickly decide against lingering further by the pool, and strapping on your backpack, you set off down the tunnel East – turn to **103**.

173

To your relief, all three keys fit the three locks correctly, and the door swings smoothly open. Turn to **35**.

174

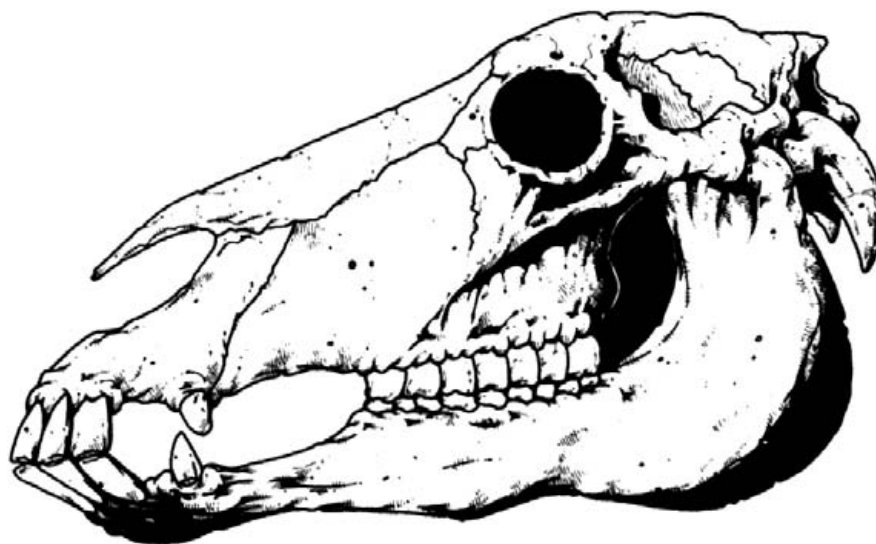
After defeating the Demon, you venture cautiously into the room beyond the East door, but find that it is empty. You realise this must be the room behind the door to the right of the altar. There are two other doors in the room, one in the South wall and another in the East, and you discover that although the South door is locked, the East is not. Cautiously, you open the East door and walk through – turn to **234**.

175

You steer the raft Westwards, making slow but steady progress using the single oar provided. The lake gradually curves North into a low tunnel, and you have to duck your head to avoid scraping it against the rough, rocky ceiling.

The tunnel then widens out again into another vast cavern, and you see a tiny island of rock jutting up out of the black water ahead of you. Beyond it, you can faintly see that the lake continues into another low tunnel, and the water also extends far into the blackness to your right.

Will you examine the tiny island? – turn to **189**; continue North into the low tunnel? – turn to **107**; or make your way Eastwards to see what lies in that direction? – turn to **66**.





176

The new passage leads East for a short distance, then turns North. You can hear the faint sound of many voices chanting ahead of you, and this sound gets louder the further North you go. At length, the passage opens out into a large, dimly lit room. Turn to 177.

177

The room you have entered is huge and filled with black-robed, hooded figures, who stand motionless, quietly chanting in perfect unison.

There is something uncomfortable about the sound, as if the words they speak were never meant to be uttered by human tongues. They are all facing a large, stone altar by the East wall, behind which, with its arms raised high, is a figure robed in white. Behind the figure, upon the East wall, is a large painting of a jewelled Heart pierced by three black swords.

Abruptly, the chanting stops. The white figure lowers its arms and prepares to speak. You are overcome with curiosity, and perhaps against your better judgement, you decide to stay to listen, hidden in the shadows at the back of the room.

“Devoted followers,” the white-robed man cries in a shrill, wild voice. “I have looked into the fires, and there is anger in them. A stranger defiles our sacred domain. Such a creature cannot be allowed to live – and at this, the appointed hour, the stranger’s life shall end! The fires demand a sacrifice to placate them and the defiler shall provide it. Behold!”

At once, everyone of the hooded figures turns around to gaze upon you and you find your hiding place flooded with brilliant white light. You turn to flee, but are grasped by a multitude of icy cold hands and dragged, struggling before the stone altar. You are lifted helplessly onto the altar and bound there with iron straps, fitted specially for the grisly purpose. The white-robed figure raises a wicked, curving blade and with a cry of triumph, plunges it down towards your heart! Throw one dice. If you get a 6, turn to 98. If you get any other number, turn to 48.

178

Quickly, you jump over the low wall and hurry down the steps, still unsure of what you will do once you reach the bottom. The Cuckuroo reach the wall, but do not try to follow you, and merely cluster around the rim like monstrous vultures.

Why will they not enter, you wonder? Could it be because of the water? It seems unlikely such creatures could be afraid of a little water.

Will you try to drink a little of the water? Turn to 137. Or splash the Cuckuroo with it to see if it has any effect? Turn to 167.

179

There is a feeling of movement, and you experience a pleasant floating sensation, as though you were swimming through the air. Beneath you, you have a brief impression of a mosaic-covered passage, as you continue drifting to the North and West, over another tunnel, until you come to rest on a low table in an unfamiliar room. You are vaguely aware of a strange mumbling. Not the contorted chanting of the black-robed figures, but a hastily whispered incantation of some kind. Your body tingles from head to toe, and when you open your eyes, all you can see is a weird, silver shimmer. You close them again until the tingling stops, then open them to see a red

hooded youth peering anxiously down at you with a confused expression upon his face.

“Where have you come from?” he asks.

Of all the things you might have expected a person to say to you in such a situation, this is probably the least likely!

“I’m not supposed to have summoned you,” the young man complains. “Why do I never get it right?”

At this moment, you are extremely happy that the boy has got it wrong, for his mistake has just saved your life. You get up off the table which you have been lying on, and at once the youth backs away warily, but you assure him you mean him no harm. He evidently is not convinced, for he suddenly bolts for a doorway in the South wall and vanishes down the tunnel beyond. There is another doorway in the North wall, and apart from the table, the small, square room which you are standing in is empty. Will you leave through:

- The North doorway? Turn to 198
- The South doorway? Turn to 139

180

The three figures lean forwards with horrible anticipation as you roll the other dice.

- If you throw 1 or 2 Turn to 140
- If you throw 3 or 4 Turn to 120
- If you throw 5 or 6 Turn to 71

181

You can now either try to break the door open by charging at it with your shoulder – turn to 191; or risk hacking the platinum lock from the door with your sword – turn to 210.

182

You enter a huge, circular cave, the walls and domed ceiling of which seem to be crystal, veined with a thousand silver-grey, glittering stars. In the centre of the cave stands a crystal pillar about three feet high, on the top of which burns a dim, blue flame.

You notice that some parts of the cave’s floor are streaked with fine, silver-grey dust, and just as you are wondering if it is the same substance that veins the walls, a tiny shower of the silver grains falls from the domed ceiling. It glistens and sparkles in the blue light as it descends, and although most of it lands on the floor, a few glittering grains fall onto the blue flame. At once, the flame explodes into a brilliant white light, and the room is filled with a multitude of dancing rainbow colours, reflected off the crystal walls. Then abruptly the flame dies back and after waiting for your eyes to adjust, you see the cave is exactly as it was when you first entered.

Do you wish to scoop some powder from the floor of the cave and try to repeat the explosion of colour? If so, turn to 211. If you would rather leave the cave, turn to 83.

183

You are disappointed to discover that the centre wardrobe is completely empty. Will you now choose:

- The right-hand wardrobe? Turn to 104
- The left-hand wardrobe? Turn to 113

184

If you entered this room through a door in the South wall, turn to 237. If you entered by another means, turn to 223.

185

This door is unlocked and you walk through into a small room. As soon as you have passed through it, the door slams shut behind you, and you can find no way of opening it on this side, but you console yourself with the fact that there is another door out in the East wall. Then you notice a strange, star-shaped device set into the North wall, and you walk over to investigate. Turn to **36**.

186

You decide against the Southern doorway, as it would lead you back in the direction of the entrance, so you walk over to examine the North door – turn to **156**.

187

You succeed in safely reaching the ceiling, to see that it is made up of a thin, clay mosaic. The mortar between most of the pieces is missing, allowing the dim torchlight above to filter through. You reach out and push up against the ceiling, which crumbles easily at your touch, until you have broken away a hole big enough to climb through. Then, with great care, you haul yourself up through the hole out into a dimly lit North-South passage. Turn to **149**.

188

You make your way East, and as you do so, the rock walls become smoother and more circular, so that the ceiling forms a curving arch above you. Soon you are walking down a completely circular tunnel, which gets lower and narrower by the minute. Then, there is the sound of grinding rock beneath your feet, and a shower of tiny pebbles shoots up from the ground, forming a small hole.

Two huge serrated claws, each as long as your leg, emerge, to be followed by a massive flat head and body, protected by a shining carapace. The Burrowbeetle moves swiftly towards you, and you must decide whether to fight, or run for it. If you choose to fight, turn to **57**. If you make a run for it, turn to **118**.

189

You guide the raft up to the jagged island of black rock, and jumping ashore, haul the raft up out of the water. The sides of the rock thrust vertically upwards but seem to level off about eight feet above you, forming a small plateau on the top. You are surprised to discover that steps have been cut out of the side of the rock to form a rough stairway, and so you begin to climb.

You soon come to the top and step onto the plateau which is unnaturally flat and smooth, apart from a slender column of rock at its centre. It stands about three feet high and you walk over to discover that the top of the column has been carved into the shape of a giant clawed hand, nestling in the palm of which is an old, leather book. The book has no title upon the cover, and is coated by a thin layer of mildew. Do you wish to open it? If so, turn to **126**. If not, turn to **158**.



190

Roll the other dice.
If you throw 1 or 2 Turn to **39**
If you throw 3 or 4 Turn to **10**
If you throw 5 or 6 Turn to **30**



191

You step well back from the door and then charge straight for it, throwing your full weight against it. It flies open, and you stumble out into the corridor beyond – but you have badly bruised your side and so must lose three Strength points. Turn to **12**.

192

You open the door and go through into a low tunnel which leads you Eastwards. You have gone just a little way down the tunnel when you see a white flicker in the blackness ahead of you. You hesitate and hold your torch higher, then slowly advance – turn to **132**.

193

To your disappointment, the lake soon comes to a dead end at the towering cavern walls. You turn the raft around and are about to set off back West, when a slimy, black tentacle slides out of the water and wraps itself around your ankle! You act at once, and, drawing your sword, slice through the tentacle in one swift movement. The owner of the tentacle does not reappear, so you carefully unwind the severed limb from your ankle and cast it into the water.

You notice, however, a small puncture hole in your boot, and when you examine your leg, you discover a tiny, red pinprick by your ankle. Lose one Valour point. It itches somewhat, but other than that you feel fine, so you replace your boot and set off West. Turn to **175**.

194

You hold up your torch to light the cave better and experience a sudden cold shiver down your spine, as you see three pairs of red eyes staring at you out of the blackness. You raise your sword before you as the eyes edge closer, and you can now make out that they belong to three large snarling creatures. They have swollen, black, bulbous bodies and four pairs of legs, reminding you of ugly spiders, but their heads are white, bony and hairless, like skulls, with burning red eyes and jagged, razor-sharp teeth. An instant later, they are upon you! Fight them one at a time.

| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| SPIDER-HOUNDS: | 8 | 6 |
| | 10 | 4 |
| | 7 | 6 |

If you win, turn to **240**.

195

Will you now go:

- West? Turn to **115**
- North? Turn to **159**

196

Although you arrive safely upon the far side, your backpack was dislodged by the jump, and has fallen to the bottom of the pit. Lose one Valour point.

Cursing at your misfortune, you peer down the pit and notice that rough hand and foot holes have been gouged out of the pit's rocky walls. You heave a sigh of resignation, and lower yourself down. Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as, or less than your Dexterity score, turn to **16**. If they add up to more than your Dexterity, then turn to **217**.

197

The enormous power of the magic which courses through your body is too much for you to bear. Your brain explodes in a brilliant burst of agonising pain and

blinding white light, leaving you mindless and half dead. What is left of your body twitches feebly a few times and then collapses. Your adventure ends here.

198

You enter a low corridor that leads North, then East and ends at a large, black door. Cautiously, you push the door open and peer inside – turn to **129**.

199

You back slowly away from the three figures, then suddenly turn and bolt for the nearest door – but you never reach it. You are suddenly stricken with unbearable pain and collapse, gasping, to your knees.

“Do as I say or we shall destroy you,” Death hisses.

Will you agree to do as he asks? Turn to **228**.

Or struggle to reach the door? Turn to **209**.

200

You go East along the tunnel and quite soon come across another passage off to the South. You decide against going that way, however, as you do not wish to head back in the direction you came from. You therefore continue on your way East – turn to **125**.

201

There are two other exits from the cave: a door in the East wall and an open doorway in the North. Do you wish to go:

- East? Turn to **192**
- North? Turn to **53**

202

You have not gone far down the tunnel when it ends at a large oak door. Will you open the door? Turn to **22**. Or go back West down the corridor and continue on your way North? Turn to **102**.

203

Without the Golden Wafers you cannot defeat the triad of evil. The Water of Purity alone is not sufficient to destroy them, for the three have combined their strengths, and as long as there are three, they can draw upon each other's powers.

You have lost the game and now you will lose your life. Your adventure ends here!

204

Will you leave through:

- The West door? Turn to **232**
- The North door? Turn to **156**

205

You reach about half way when your foot slips and you crash back down to the floor! Roll one dice and lose that many Strength points. If you are still alive, you are still determined to scale the walls, and begin the ascent again. Turn to **187**.

206

You have not translated the word correctly – turn to **216**.

207

To your dismay, you realise that you have nothing in which to keep the sacred Water, and so you have no alternative but to leave the well – turn to **249**.

You make your way West for some time, and then the passage turns to the North. After a short distance, it opens out into a small room. A hooded figure in red robes is bending over a long, low table, which is enveloped in a weird, silvery shimmer. The figure does not seem to have noticed you, and is mumbling something under its breath. Keeping in the shadows by the doorway, you strain to make out the words:

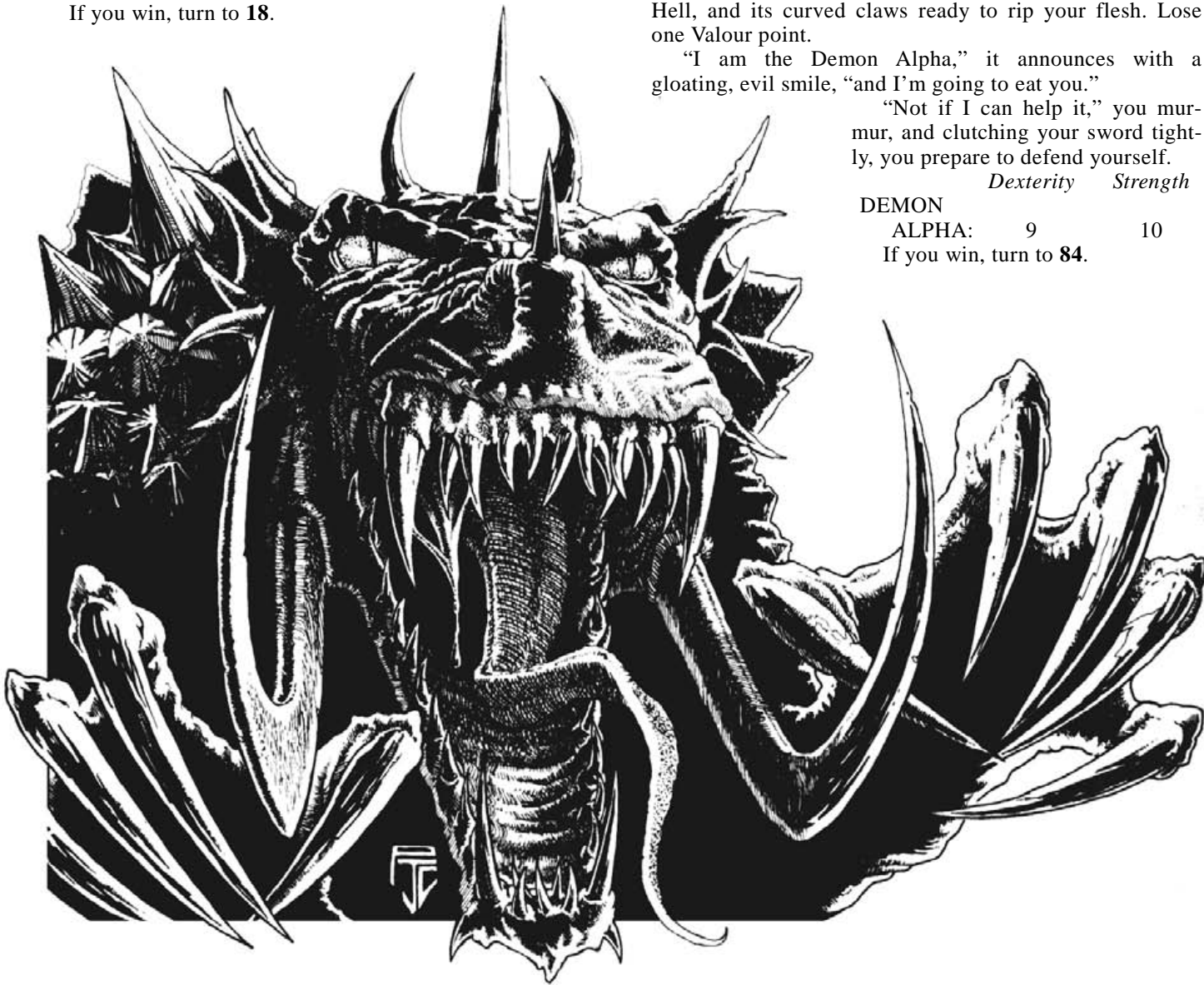
“By the Demons of the Ninth Dimension, why can I never get it right?” The figure pounds the table with a bony fist, heaves a deep sigh, straightens, and begins some kind of weird incantation, apparently not for the first time today.

At length, the strange mumblings cease and after a breathless pause, the figure begins to mutter once again about endless failures. Then suddenly, a smoky shape begins to form upon the table’s shimmering surface. The red-robed figure gives a yelp of triumph, but as the shape begins to solidify, he backs away warily, and you can vaguely detect an expression of growing consternation upon his shadowy face.

The shape on the table is now clearly about to form into some kind of monstrous lizard, and the red-robed figure makes a sudden bolt for a doorway in the North wall.

With an almighty roar, the lizard creature leaps from the table and its gaze immediately falls upon you! It stands about 10 feet high, with a black, scaly hide, huge, curving horns and flesh-raking talons. You have no chance for retreat, as the enraged creature is upon you!

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| HORNED LIZARD: | 7 | 12 |
| If you win, turn to 18 . | | |



Determined not to give in, you struggle onwards towards the door, but the pain becomes more intense with each step you take. You cannot stand against Death, Pain and Fear in this way, and inevitably, you collapse lifeless to the floor. Your adventure ends here.

210

Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as, or less than your Valour points, turn to **221**. If they add up to more than your Valour points, turn to **229**.

211

You scrape a few grains from the cave floor and, standing well back, cast them onto the blue flame. Once again, it leaps up into a pillar of brilliant light and the air is filled with dancing rainbows. A sudden thought strikes you: could this be the Powder of Eternal Light, mentioned in the inscription at the foot of the spiral staircase? You are certain that it is – but how are you to carry the precious grains?

You cannot simply drop a few into your backpack as they are too fine and powdery. Do you have a tarnished silver snuff box? If so, turn to **222**. If not, turn to **143**.

212

Unfortunately, you have put the keys in the wrong locks and the door is suddenly flung open from the other side! A huge, black winged creature bursts through the doorway before you. It stands twice your height, its skin black and reptilian, its eyes burning like the red fires of Hell, and its curved claws ready to rip your flesh. Lose one Valour point.

“I am the Demon Alpha,” it announces with a gloating, evil smile, “and I’m going to eat you.”

“Not if I can help it,” you murmur, and clutching your sword tightly, you prepare to defend yourself.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| DEMON | | |
| ALPHA: | 9 | 10 |
| If you win, turn to 84 . | | |





213

You decide to investigate the two doors on each side of the altar. Will you examine:

The right hand door? Turn to **231**

The left hand door? Turn to **185**

214

The rocky floor of the cavern slopes steeply downwards into glinting, black water which laps gently near your feet. This underground lake stretches for as far as you can see to your right and left, but you can faintly make out the rock of the opposite shore across the water to the North. To your surprise, you see that there is a small raft tied up at the water's edge. You cannot turn your back on such an opportunity for exploration, especially when the raft is so conveniently moored by your side.

You step aboard the tiny vessel and cast off. Will you head:

East? Turn to **193**

West? Turn to **175**

215

You make your way Eastwards down the tunnel, which at length ends in a small circular room with very high walls. The ceiling, about 12 feet above you, is covered in a network of tiny cracks, through which seeps dim, yellow light. Then you notice rough hand and foot holes have been gouged out of the rock walls, and so you gingerly begin to climb.

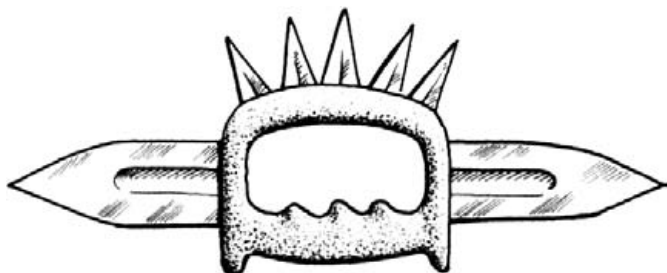
Throw two dice. If the numbers on both dice add up to the same as, or less than your Dexterity score, turn to **187**. If they add up to more than your Dexterity, turn to **205**.

216

You are doomed to remain trapped here until you die in this cage of rock and iron – your adventure ends here!

217

You reach about half way, when you suddenly lose your footing and crash down to the bottom of the pit – lose three Strength points. Cursing again, you retrieve your backpack and strap it firmly onto your shoulders. Turn to **47**.



218

You set off East down the corridor and soon come upon a passage off to the South. Will you:

Continue East? Turn to **97**

Take the new way South? Turn to **119**

219

Quite soon you come upon a narrow line of luminous blue stones set across the floor in front of you. You tentatively poke one with your sword, but there is no effect. You do not wish to return South, so gingerly, you step across the line, but still nothing happens. You shrug your shoulders in bewilderment, and continue on your way North – but you have only taken a few more steps when a huge, iron portcullis falls behind you with an earth-shattering clang! Now you have absolutely no choice at all and must continue North. You have an uncomfortable feeling that you are walking into a trap. Turn to **235**.

220

“Let me introduce you to my companions,” Death hisses, and as he speaks, the figure next to him slowly draws back its hood. You shudder when you see the face revealed beneath the cowl, because it is yourself, pale and drawn, your eyes filled with unbearable agony!

“This is Pain,” Death announces, “a close friend of mine. And another close friend,” he motions to the third figure, “is Fear.” The last being draws back its hood slightly, and to your horror you see that there is nothing beneath it but an empty blackness. Unknown Fear is the worst terror anyone can endure, and you cannot gaze upon that awful emptiness for long.

“We are enjoying a small game of chance,” Death continues. “You will join us.” This is not a request, but you nod your agreement nevertheless. “If you win,” Death explains, “you may continue to live. But if you lose . . .” His voice fades away but the unfinished threat needs no explanation. If you lose, you will die.

They are playing with two bone dice, covered in strange symbols. Turn to **100**.



221

You succeed in hacking the lock from the door, and with a firm shove, the door flies open. You also have the added bonus of being able to take the platinum lock with you, and it is worth many gold pieces. Turn to **12**.

222

You take out the snuff box, and carefully scrape the fine powder into it. Then you shut the box tightly and return it to your backpack. Turn to **83**.

223

You know that nothing lies within the centre wardrobe, as that was the means by which you entered the room. Will you now therefore look in:

- The right-hand wardrobe? Turn to **104**
- The left-hand wardrobe? Turn to **113**

224

If you entered through the South doorway, turn to **204**.
If you entered through the West doorway, turn to **186**.

225

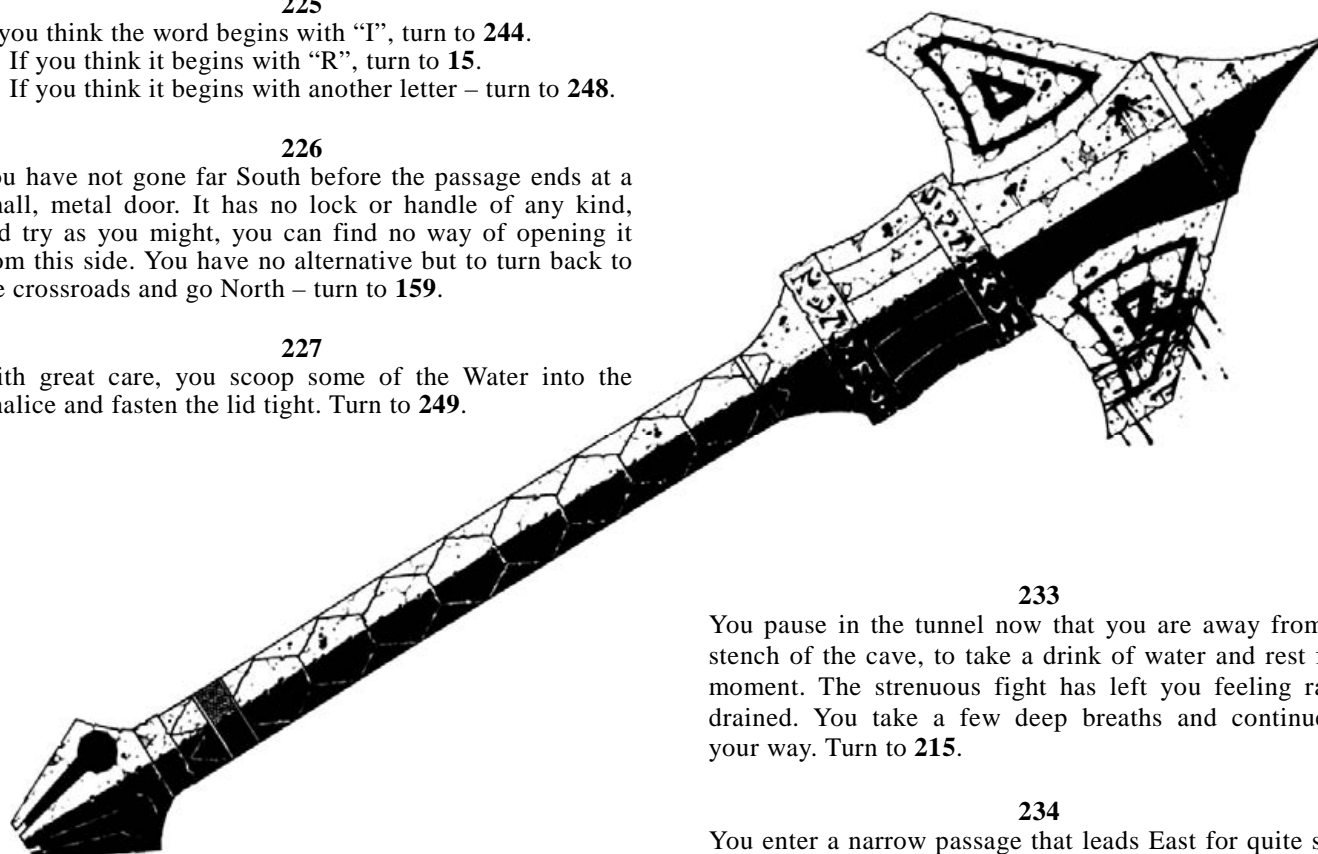
If you think the word begins with "I", turn to **244**.
If you think it begins with "R", turn to **15**.
If you think it begins with another letter – turn to **248**.

226

You have not gone far South before the passage ends at a small, metal door. It has no lock or handle of any kind, and try as you might, you can find no way of opening it from this side. You have no alternative but to turn back to the crossroads and go North – turn to **159**.

227

With great care, you scoop some of the Water into the Chalice and fasten the lid tight. Turn to **249**.



228

You nod your head weakly, and the pain vanishes at once. Turn to **236**.

229

To your dismay, the tip of your sword snaps off as you try to hack the lock from the door – lose one Valour point. Fortunately, this has not affected the amount of damage that your sword will inflict in battle, but you decide not to risk your blade further. You have no alternative but to try to break open the door with your shoulder. Turn to **191**.

230

There are two other exits from the cave: a door in the West wall and an open archway in the North. You decide that you prefer the open archway as you can see what lies beyond it. Who knows what may lurk behind closed doors in such a place as this? You therefore leave through the North doorway – turn to **53**.

231

The door on the right is locked and you can find no way of opening it, so you turn to the door on the left – turn to **185**.

232

You go through the West door into a low, icy tunnel. You follow it West for a short distance, and then come upon another tunnel off to the South. You decide against taking it, as it would lead you back towards the entrance, so you continue on your way West – turn to **42**.

233

You pause in the tunnel now that you are away from the stench of the cave, to take a drink of water and rest for a moment. The strenuous fight has left you feeling rather drained. You take a few deep breaths and continue on your way. Turn to **215**.

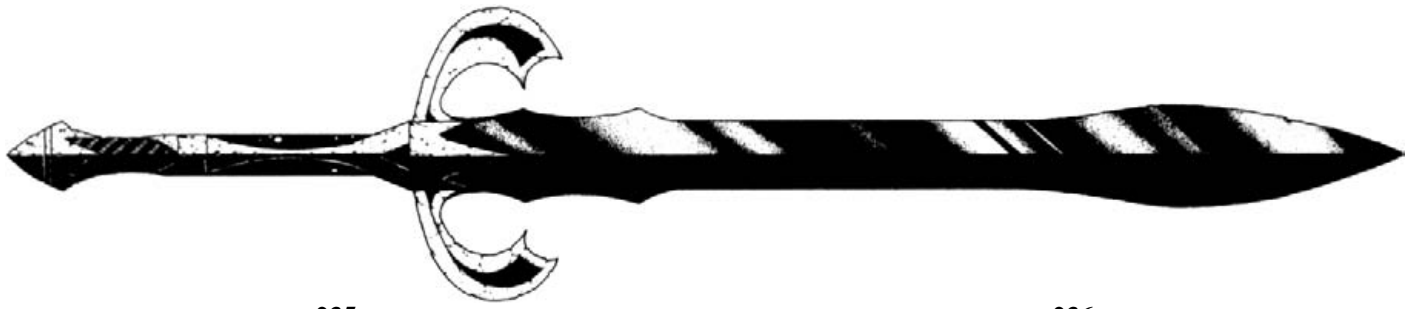
234

You enter a narrow passage that leads East for quite some time and eventually ends at a small, low door. You push it open with difficulty, for it is very stiff, as if some force is resisting your attempts to open it. At length you manage to squeeze through it and it immediately slams shut behind you, leaving no indication of its presence in the wall on this side.

You find yourself in a North-South corridor, with a passage branching off to the East opposite you. Will you go:

- North? Turn to **148**
- South? Turn to **166**
- East? Turn to **78**





235

Quite soon, the corridor opens out into a large, airy hall. Set into the walls are a great many niches, every one of which contains the statue of a giant, hunchbacked beast, vaguely man-like, but with the cruel beak and talons of a bird of prey. There is a low, circular wall in the centre of the hall and as you walk towards it, every one of the grotesque statues begins to lurch towards you, forming a menacing circle all around you. Lose one Valour point.

In a flash, you recall the legend associated with Lllamar which speaks of the Cuckuroo, fantastical creatures which serve the Knights of the Jewelled Heart. But these Cuckuroo have been possessed by the evil forces of Darkness and now destroy all those who stand for Good. They are not truly statues, but mythical beasts whose flesh resembles stone. You do not relish the thought of having to fight so many of them, however, so in desperation you run to the low, circular wall. It surrounds a well of crystal clear water, with steps inside which lead down to the water's edge. Will you go down the steps? If so, turn to 178; or turn and fight the Cuckuroo? Turn to 241.

236

You cautiously approach the three figures, and sit yourself down upon the floor by the low table. Turn to 220.

237

There are three wardrobes lined up against the West wall. Will you open:

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| The right-hand wardrobe? | Turn to 104 |
| The centre wardrobe? | Turn to 183 |
| The left-hand wardrobe? | Turn to 113 |

238

Since you have no key, you try to force open the lid of the box. But as you do so, a heavy steel cage crashes down around you and the altar, imprisoning you! You explore the bars for any weakness, but to no avail, and at length, disheartened, you sit down upon the altar to contemplate a means of escape.

Abruptly, there is a flash of red light, accompanied by a strong smell of sulphurous smoke, and before you stands a huge, man-like creature. His scaly body is wrapped in a



deep red cloak, from out of the back of which protrudes a slender, forked tail. Two black horns curve up out of his forehead, and below these his eyes glitter at you like black jewels. Lose one Valour point.

"I am the Demon Lambda," he announces, and from out of his robes, he draws a large, iron key. You realise with some surprise that he is going to release you, but with his next words, the reason for his actions becomes clear:

"Caught like a rat in a trap! We have something special reserved for little thieves like you." Then the Demon grins, revealing two rows of needle-sharp teeth. Whatever he has planned, it is certainly not something pleasant, and you draw your sword to meet him as he unlocks the cage.

| | | |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| DEMON LAMBDA: | 10 | 8 |

If you win, turn to **114**.

239

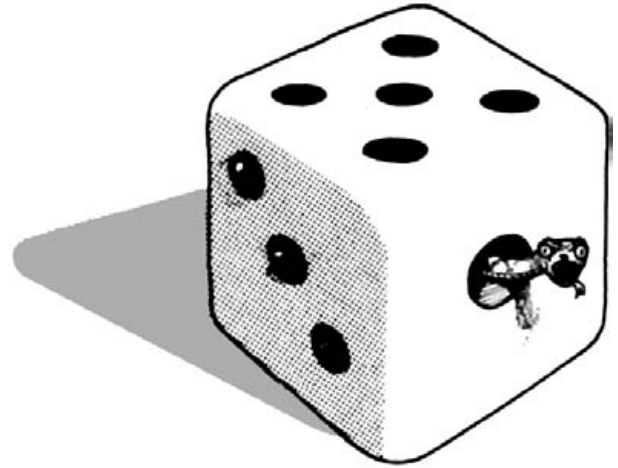
You are standing in a small room. There is a large, oak door in the North wall and a smaller door in the West. To the South is an open doorway. The East wall of the room is completely lined by rows and rows of glass boxes, piled up on top of each other, and within nearly every box flickers a coloured light. The lights vary in intensity, from brilliant flares to the dimmest of glows, and there is a wide variety of colours and shades.

Upon the West wall, a little to the left of the door, is a large, oval mirror set into a black frame which is engraved with runes. Will you look into the mirror? Turn to **55**. Examine the boxes more closely? Turn to **164**. Or, leave the room undisturbed? Turn to **224**.

240

After a fierce struggle, you succeed in disposing of all three, and search around their cave but find nothing of interest. There is another narrow exit in the East wall, and you slip through it into a low tunnel. If you are suffering from a fever, turn to **233**. If you are not, turn to **215**.





241

As soon as you begin the battle, you realise that your situation is hopeless. There are far too many of the Cuckuroo, and they continue to fight even though you slice the limbs from their bodies. You strike off the head of one of them, but to your horror, its body continues to fight with a nauseating mindlessness. Unlike you, the Cuckuroo cannot die. Your adventure ends here!

242

As you open the East door, there is a horrific roar that freezes you in your tracks. In the room beyond the door crouches a huge man-like beast, covered in shaggy fur with two black horns curving out from its forehead. Its paw-like hands end in blood-stained, curving talons, and as its flame-red eyes fall upon you, it emits another deafening roar. You reel back from the foul stench of its breath, as it bellows out the awful words:

“I am the Demon Omega, the End of All Things. I will suck the blood from your veins and feast upon your tender flesh!” Lose one Valour point. You raise your sword to defend yourself as the beast rushes towards you!

| | | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Dexterity</i> | <i>Strength</i> |
| DEMON OMEGA: | 10 | 12 |
| | If you win, turn to 174 . | |

243

If you think this word begins with “S”, turn to **95**. If you think it begins with “H”, turn to **28**. If you think it begins with another letter, turn to **46**.

244

You have not deciphered the word correctly. Turn to **248**.



245

You are standing in a North-South passageway, and as you pause, undecided as to which way to take, you hear the faint sound of lapping water to the North. Curiosity gets the better of you, and you set off Northwards. Very soon the passage opens out into a huge cavern. Turn to 214.

246

Without the Water of Purity, you have no hope of defeating the triad of evil. You have lost the game, and now you will lose your life. Your adventure ends here.

247

You enter an East-West corridor. Will you go:

- East? Turn to 218
- West? Turn to 208

248

The slimy mould continues to ooze steadily and purposefully over your flesh, and its touch drains all feeling of warmth and life from your body. You cannot escape this creeping death, and your adventure ends here!

249

You climb up out of the well and leave the hall through a door in the North wall – turn to 247.

250

Victorious, but feeling oddly ill-at-ease, you make your way back through the catacombs, until you eventually emerge again from the mountain entrance. A light, chilly mist swirls around, as you take several deep breaths of the refreshing air. Birds wheel and call in the clear sky, and the plants are flecked with dew. There is no-one to congratulate or reward you, but you feel a deep satisfaction at your triumph over the three evils that haunt all mankind.

You climb gingerly down the mountainside, disturbing small animals and birds; their presence lightens your step, and you are soon in the foothills, heading for the warmth and comfort of home. None but yourself may ever know what you have achieved – but you have defeated the triad of evil, and – for the moment – that is enough.



MERKIN



MESSAGES from BEYOND

Dear PROTEUS,

I think that the adventures in your magazine are really good, but a problem arises when battles are to be fought. If I am fighting a creature high in Strength, and I bring it down to a low Strength score, its Dexterity remains the same.

To solve this problem, I have devised a new combat system:

The Player Character -

For every three points of Strength lost, deduct one Dexterity point and bring the Strength up to its starting quota.

Using this rule, and applying it slightly changed to other creatures, would mean that as they got weaker they would not be able to move around as well, as would happen in a real fight.

Spencer Jackson,
Steeple Bumpstead,
Essex.

This would certainly lead to drawn-out battles. And a zero Dexterity score would then mean death. Also, we do vary the scoring system within the text.

Dear PROTEUS,

I have just completed my third and ultimately successful attempt at PROTEUS NO. 8, so I've turned to Messages from Beyond. Seeing D. J. McKinnie's and K. Puttick's letters. I have only one thing to say - don't you bl**dy dare mates!

Science Fiction is based on science. Everything that happens within this genre is explained scientifically. Fantasy, on the other hand, is based on magic either performed by mortals or the gods. Therefore, if you publish a Sci-Fi adventure you can no longer claim to be "A complete fantasy adventure game magazine". If I wanted Sci-Fi, I would buy a Science-Fiction magazine. However I want fantasy, hence I purchase your magazine.

Regarding the ongoing debate on methods of improving your magazine, may I suggest a short story section? I am an aspiring author of works within the fantasy genre. Enclosed is a sample of my work, which I have written as art of my University Studies here in Australia. I eagerly await your reply.

Garry Pryde,
Brisbane,
Australia.

Believe it or not, we quite liked your stories! We accept your point about S-F: however, to what genre does Science Fantasy belong?

Dear PROTEUS,

After reading many issues of your magazine, I found that the same comments were made in every letter in Messages from Beyond. I know that all you guys and gals want the same things to happen and a revolutionary magazine to come out, but repeating the same old information can get boring.

Anyway, I agree with all that has been said about starting clubs etc., but once they have been mentioned, try to organise things like a pen-pal column, as I live in South Africa, and the only correspondence I get is through magazines like yours.

Michael Sporen,
[Address removed - Ed.]
South Africa.

We're developing the mag in response to what readers tell us they want. We're always interested to hear any other more general points on fantasy role-playing.

Dear PROTEUS.

I bought your mag. as a change from *Fighting Fantasy* books because: (1) They're pretty

expensive at around £2.00 each, and (2) If you want to collect them, there's about 24 now!

Anyway, I love the posters: keep them coming.

In reply to a couple of Messages from Beyond -

(1) Love the idea from Antony Erly (No. 8) - tell us how to make up our own adventures!

(2) Fantasy hols - brilliant idea! I'm 16, and also know someone who is 19/20 and would be interested.

(3) In answer to David McKinnie, I ♥ SCI-FI!

And yes, believe it or not, I am another fantasy-mad female! My mates think I'm daft - they're probably right.

Love the mag. - brilliant.

Jackie Clewlow,
Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffs.

The S-F debate continues!

Dear PROTEUS,

I am writing to congratulate you on PROTEUS No. 9, with its free copy of issue 1. I loved the size of it, and I think you should make all copies in this and the original size.

The riddle in No. 9 was rather harder, but I soon sussed how to work it out. Please, please keep up this standard of riddles in future issues, and I will keep on buying your mag.

P.S. I enclose some of my work.

Jarrod Graham,
Rushden,
Northants.

Your pic is reproduced below, so if you haven't carried on buying the mag, you won't see it!



Dear PROTEUS,

Hi, please print my letter and drawing. I really love PROTEUS, and I think you should make some books. The artists are great, and I especially like the free posters.

I also love fantasy figures, and if my letter is printed, please would people write to the address below.

Russ Russell,
Abingdon,
Oxon.

We've printed your pic below. Pen-pals, please write direct to the address above.



Dear PROTEUS,

Your magazine is great but could be better. How about more pages to fit in extra features like a page for readers' art, and game-book reviews with tips? I'm sure no-one will mind if the price has to go to about a pound.

The art is a little disappointing, isn't it? Perhaps your artists could put in a little more effort.

You should include competitions, and maybe a small prize for the best letter.

Dolan Cummings,
Glasgow.

We will be introducing book reviews in future. Meanwhile, let us know which are your favourite (and least favourite) role-playing books, and why.

Dear PROTEUS,

I would like to comment on the cartoon, 'Merkin': I think it's brill, we should have more of these kinds of things in your fab mag. I have not been too well lately, and I find it's very nice to sit down and read one of your mags. I have just one problem - I can't seem to do "Treasures of the Cursed Pyramid". I keep getting buried alive in sand, or going down a chute and ending up outside again.

I have all your brill mags, except one. I play lots of role-playing games, such as D&D, T&T, Maelstrom and Dragon Warriors. Me and my brother are even making our own role-playing game.

I think a questionnaire would be brill, Justin Francis; and I can't say enough about the work and effort put into this mag.

Gareth Morewood,
Denbigh,
Clwyd.

Merkin is proving very popular. We hope readers like our new cartoon, 'Quazi-Do-Do', just as much.

Dear PROTEUS,

I have just failed for the third time to solve the quest in Issue No. 9 - never mind, I'm sure I'll get there in the end. Besides, the more I fail, the more chances I get to prolong the excitement.

I have written to you before, and you published a letter and drawing I sent - thanks. The ideas that you've incorporated into your mag are good. I enjoy the cartoon and reading the points highlighted by other readers - those with which I agree and disagree. One point I disagree with concerns the artists' efforts in interpreting the story. I would suggest to anyone who has no artistic bent to try to appreciate the work that goes into such illustrations. I will concede that a small number are, to say the least, a bit 'rushed-looking'. However, I feel it necessary to stand up for the artist and his work. More power to your 'Rotring Pen Boys'.

How nice it is to read that although I'm 28, I'm not the only oldie who enjoys this magazine. I intend to collect every issue (except No. 1, which you keep telling us is sold out), and keep them for my young son's entertainment. The free posters already

adorn his bedroom. A poster by Boris Vallejo would be fantastic.

Please, please, NO SCIENCE FICTION. I agree totally with James Jordan of Dublin.

An artists' page for readers would be nice, it's great to see people drawing from the inspiration your mag gives them.

I'm happy with the storyline; but do make it harder. Thank you for your free issue facsimile of Issue No. 1. It's a marvellous idea for those of us who missed it first time round.

P.S. I like Mark Dunn, but my current favourite is Paul Campbell, especially the Marsh Monster - ACE!

S. J. Stebbings,
Uansamlett,
Swansea.

We'd like to know what other readers feel about storylines. Too easy? Too hard? Boring? Different settings? More/fewer pics, puzzles?

Dear PROTEUS,

My dad painted a picture on our bedroom wall - he copied the picture from Dave de Leuw's poster in Issue 4. I enclose a photograph of the finished product.

I really enjoy reading PROTEUS, I wish it was thicker. I have every issue except No. 1 - I wish I had it. I'm sure it would be good.

Steven Lewsey,
Dunbartonshire,
Scotland.

You should by now have a replica of No. 1, free with Issue 9. We've printed your photo below - congrats to Dad!



DEEP WITHIN THE AUDIENCE CHAMBER OF THE FORTRESS VOIDINESS.

QUAZI-DO-DO



PHEW!

I KNOW MORIBUND THAT FOR THE RIGHT PRICE YOU WOULD EAT YOUR GRANDMOTHERS.



I HAVE MILORD BILBON BURP!

EAT MY GRANNY THEN AND YOU SHALL HAVE WHATEVER I WANT.



IS THERE A CHANCE OF HORRIBLE DISFIGUREMENT?!

I MAKE NO PROMISES CAN YOU DO IT?!



HA! NINJA ASSASINS SABRE TOOTH TURTLES, KILLER DUCKS, FLYING PIRAHNAS, SCIMITAR, WIELDING PIXIES!

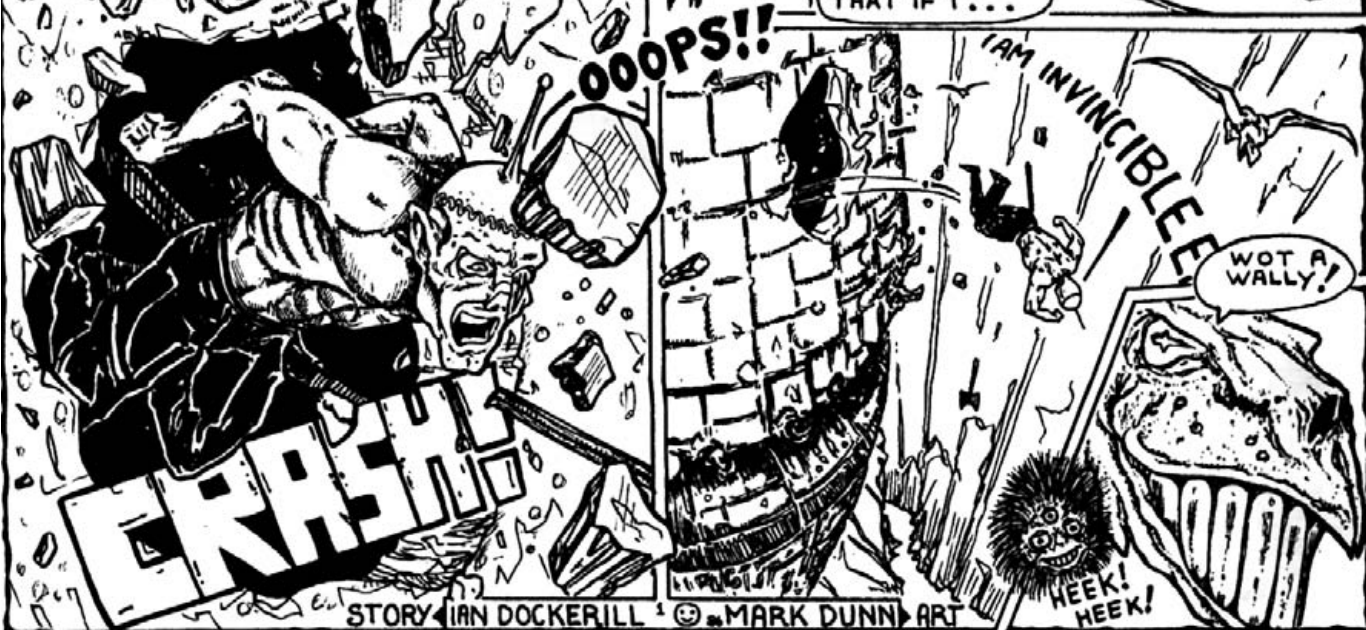


SHEESH! I GET THE PICTURE.



OBSERVE THEN MY SUPERIOR POWER, MILORD.

I WOULDN'T DO THAT IF I...



OOOPS!!

I AM INVINCIBLE

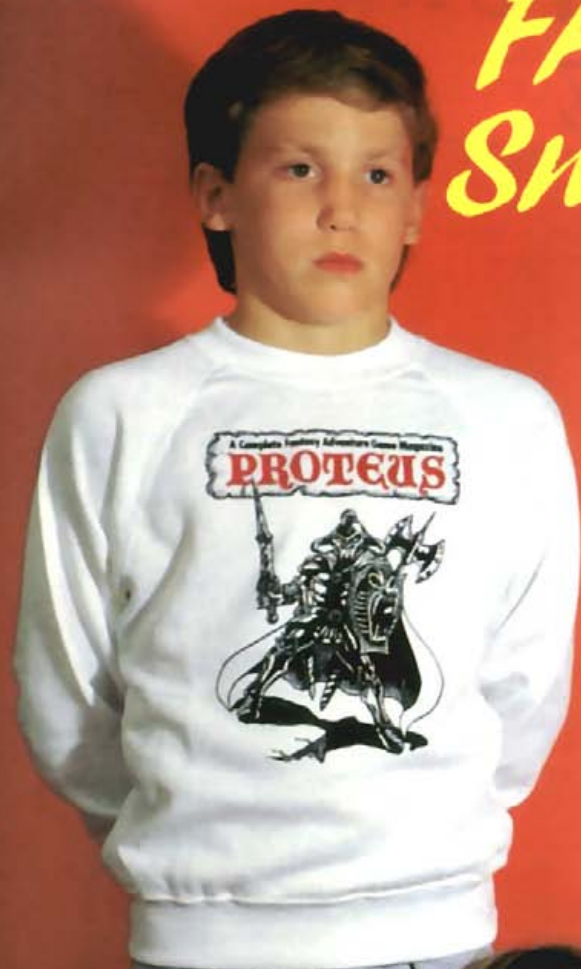
WOT A WALLY!

HEEK! HEEK!

STORY IAN DOCKERILL © MARK DUNN ART

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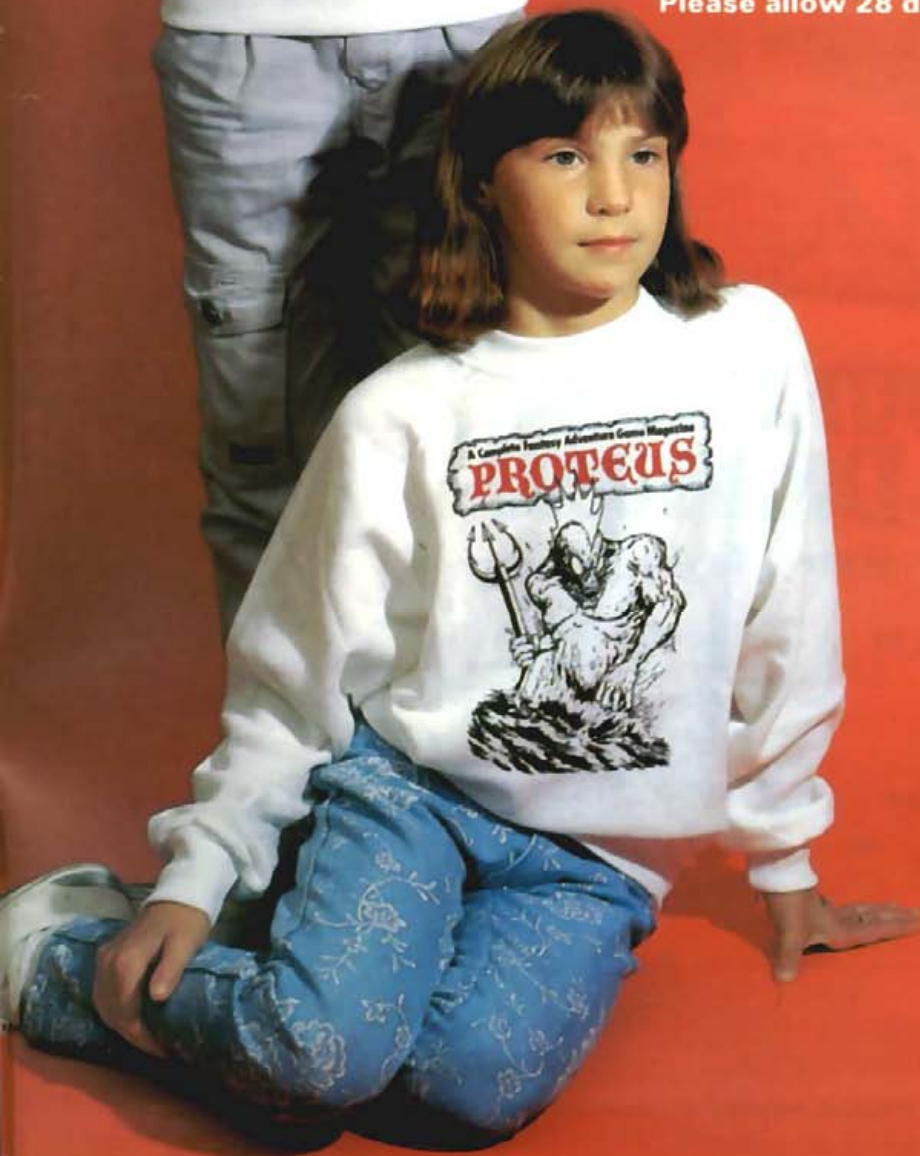
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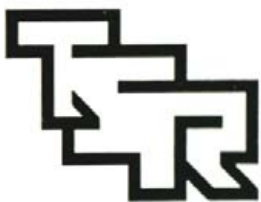


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