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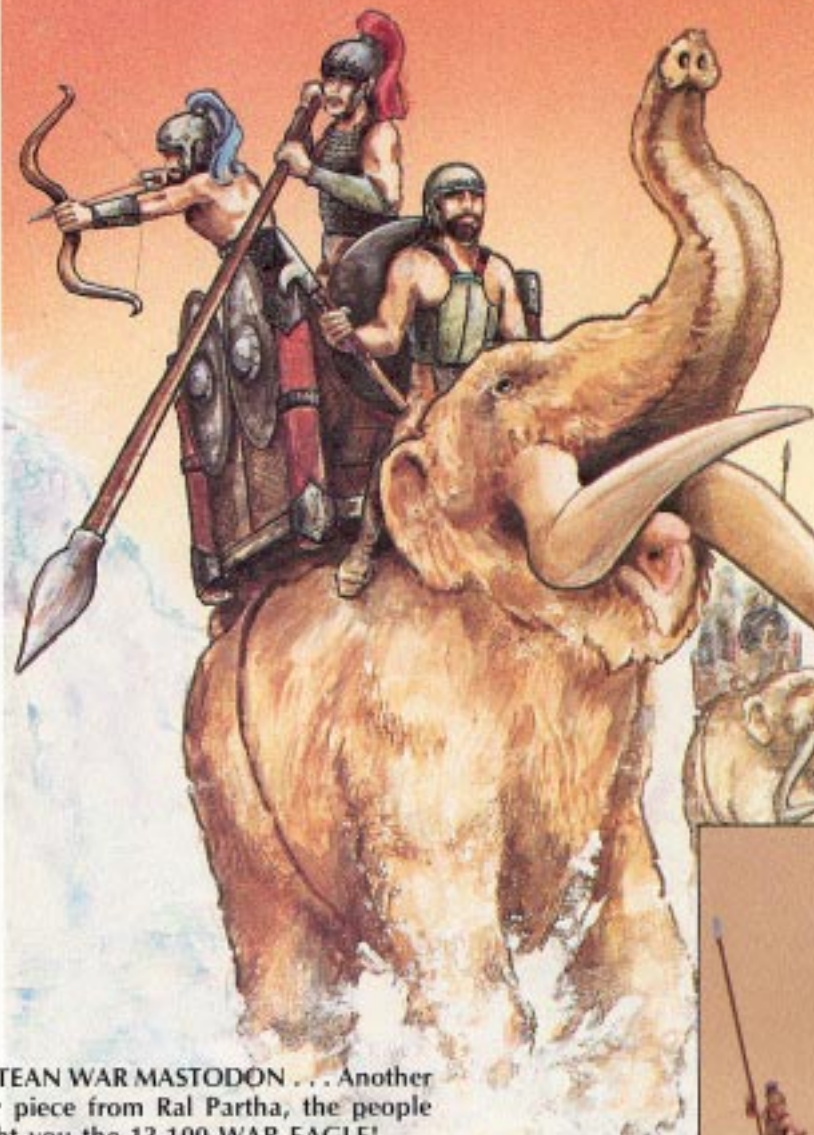
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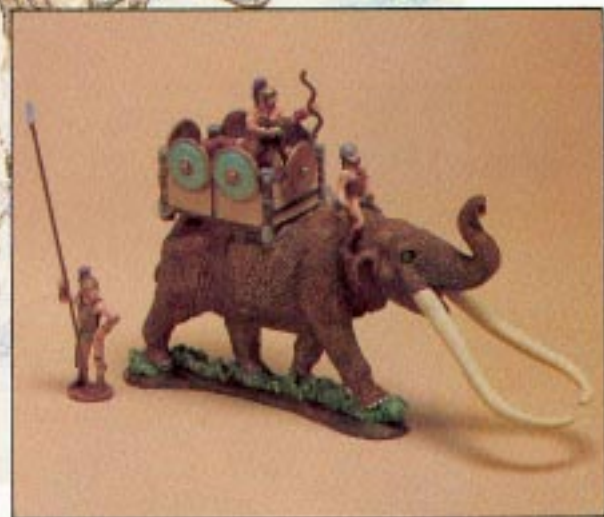


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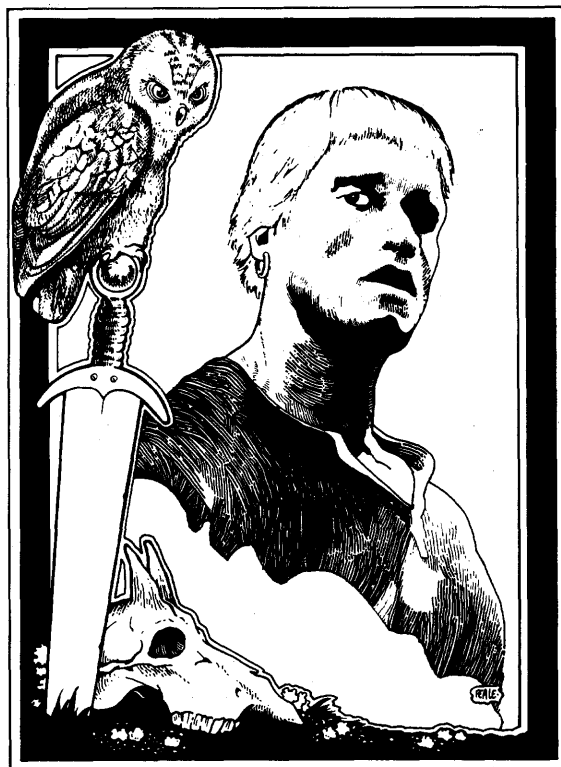
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Contents

Vol. VIII, No. 9

March 1984

SPECIAL ATTRACTION

The Dancing Hut31
*A no-holds-barred challenge
for high-level AD&D™ characters*

OTHER FEATURES

The many facets of gems10
Fact and folklore about snazzy stones

The ecology of the stirge20
It's a bird . . . it's a bug . . .

The test of the twins.26
A DRAGONLANCE™ short story

How to finish fights faster55
Simpler and smoother unarmed combat

A look at AOKs, old and new.60
TOP SECRET® Companion preview

REGULAR OFFERINGS

Out on a Limb3
Letters and answers

Theforum4
Opinions and observations

Convention calendar64

Game review:
Good evening, Mr. Bond.66
Assessing the 007 game system

Gamers' Guide70

Dragon Mirth74

Wormy.75

What's New?76

Snarfquest78

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DRAGON Magazine (ISSN 0279-6848) is published monthly for a subscription price of \$24 per year by Dragon Publishing, a division of TSR, Inc. The mailing address of Dragon Publishing for all material except subscription orders is P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

DRAGON Magazine is available at hobby stores and bookstores throughout the United States and Canada, and through a limited number of overseas outlets. Subscription rates are as follows: \$24 for 12 issues sent to an address in the U.S., \$30 in Canada; \$50 U.S. for 12 issues sent via surface mail or \$95 for 12 issues sent via air mail to any other country. All subscription payments must be in advance, and should be sent to Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 72089, Chicago IL 60690.

A limited quantity of certain back issues of DRAGON Magazine can be purchased from the Dungeon Hobby Shop. (See the list of available issues printed elsewhere in each magazine.) Payment in advance by check or money order must accompany all orders. Payments cannot be made through a credit card, and orders cannot be taken nor merchandise reserved by telephone. Neither an individual customer nor an institution can be billed for a subscription order or a back-issue purchase unless prior arrangements are made.

The issue of expiration for each subscription is printed on the mailing label for each subscriber's copy of the magazine. Changes of address for the delivery of subscription copies must be received at least six weeks prior to the effective date of the change in order to insure uninterrupted delivery.

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Second-class postage paid at Lake Geneva, Wis., and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147, USPS 318-790, ISSN 0279-6848.

A declaration

When in the course of publishing events, it becomes necessary for one magazine to be connected with another, so that the two magazines are no longer separate and equal, a decent respect for the readership of both magazines requires that the publisher should declare the causes which led to the connection of them.

My apologies to Thomas Jefferson, but I decided that "borrowing" the spirit of the first paragraph of the Declaration of Independence was a good way to get into this month's topic. To put it bluntly: TSR, Inc. will terminate publication of ARES™ Magazine after issue #17, scheduled for release in late March. Beginning with the April issue of DRAGON® Magazine, the ARES name will be represented by a science-fiction gaming section inside each DRAGON issue, and this magazine will expand to 96 pages to accommodate the extra material.

We made this decision based on a couple of related facts. First, it had become clear to us that ARES Magazine was not serving its intended purpose, as a vehicle for science-fiction gaming articles and features that would reach a large share of the SF gaming audience. If ARES Magazine had been able to boast a decently large readership and an adequately wide distribution, I venture to say that we would have maintained it as a separate title, because then it would have been performing the service for which it was intended. But it isn't (performing), so we aren't (keeping it separate).

The second fact is that we *can* reach SF gamers with SF articles by incorporating their kind of material in DRAGON Magazine. We know, based on what you've told us about yourselves in past readership surveys, that a lot of you play and enjoy science-fiction games in addition to fantasy role-playing games. By expanding DRAGON to 96 pages, we can include an average of 16 pages per month of SF material, without reducing the amount of non-SF articles, of the sort that DRAGON issues have carried in recent months and which you have come to expect. By putting all of our best stuff in one package, we can reach many times more readers. In terms of "the greatest good for the greatest number," we'll be providing more of the SF gaming audience with more article coverage than ever before.

I've been proud of (and envied, at the same time) ARES Magazine. It's a class act in both editorial content and graphic design. A lot of you who haven't seen it lately will be pleasantly surprised by the new ARES section in DRAGON Magazine, because the section will be put together by the same people who did the magazine for its last few issues. A lot of you who've never

(Turn to page 54)



Simply stated, we've never done an adventure like "The Dancing Hut" before. It is, for purposes of classification, a module for high-level AD&D™ characters. But calling it a high-level module, and leaving it at that, is sort of like calling Ronald Reagan an ex-movie star. That's true, but it doesn't tell the whole story. "The Dancing Hut" is the product of the imagination of Roger Moore, loosely based on an adventure he ran for some unsuspecting participants at last fall's Autumn Revel convention. Roger's advice goes like this: "Tell anyone who takes a character in there not to be too attached to it."

Those of you who liked our last cover painting from Denis Beauvais (issue #78) have already been appropriately awed by his latest work. This one is entitled "Checkmate," and if it isn't the most striking cover painting we've ever published, it's somewhere in the top three.

As a belated followup to an article on gems we published almost a year ago, Mike Lowrey put his research skills to a tough test and came up with "The many facets of gems," a chronicle of the valuable stones listed in the AD&D Dungeon Masters Guide. To show you what some of the more uncommon types look like, Roger Raupp did some research of his own and conjured up the paintings that are displayed on the first two pages of the article.

Our ecology article this month puts the spotlight on that little blood-sucker that nobody likes, the stirge. If you've ever tried to moderate a combat sequence involving a couple dozen of these things, or if you've ever had a character do an impersonation of a pincushion while trying to fight them off, you'll appreciate the "facts" Ed Greenwood has come up with.

In the back end of the book, Mr. Moore makes another appearance with "How to finish fights faster," a suggested revision of the weaponless combat system in the AD&D rules. It will always take longer to play a fight than to actually fight a fight, but we think these rules will cut the time-consuming aspect of unarmed combat down to a minimum.

Secret agents in the crowd (you don't have to raise your hands) will appreciate our second installment of previewed material from the upcoming TOP SECRET® Companion, this time concerning Areas of Knowledge and what an AOK enables an agent to do.

Our fiction feature this month is something different: The first public appearance of a story involving the new DRAGONLANCE™ saga. "The test of the twins" gives you a glimpse into the background and character of two of the central figures in the overall story. We'll introduce you to more of the principal characters in the issues to come. — KM



Psionics revisited

Dear Editor:

Concerning my earlier letter, printed in issue #81, and your response: We are both in the wrong. I misused terms from the psionics appendix in both my letter and my article ("Overhauling the system," issue #78). I did say (and I quote from the published version of the article): "Remember that [25 points for psionic ability] translates into 25 attack points and 25 defense points, as well as 25 points for the powering of devotions." This is virtually the same as a line found, as a paragraph in itself, on page 111 of the Players Handbook: "Note that the employment of these powers (the psionic disciplines — another case where I put the wrong word in the article) costs psionic strength points, the equivalent of 1 point each of attack and defense points." (Emphasis mine.)

The point I was objecting to was the fact that Mr. Collins assumes, for the purpose of all of his articles in the same issue, a modified system of psionic strength/ability point allocation. He admits this on page 9. Where I was attempting to describe relatively minor modifications with the same terminology as found in the PH (with less accuracy than I should have had), Mr. Collins opted to redefine the relationships of the several types of psionic points. The result is that, for the purpose of powering psionic disciplines, the Psionicist is vastly over-powered. And where combat is concerned, one must remember to use half the total ability score he gives for each combat strength category or — else the Psionicist will totally demolish an "ordinary" psionic character.

The ultimate source of this semantic problem is the confusion of terms in the psionics appendix. Perhaps Mr. Collins and I would not have had this conflict if the rules themselves were substantially clearer. As they currently stand, one must usually read the section several times before he can understand it. I know this has been the case with my own players.

Robert M. Schroeck
Princeton, N.J.

Article copies

Dear Editor:

Regarding the problem of readers demanding back issues, has anyone ever suggested offering photocopied reprints of single articles, similar to Reader's Digest? (After all, DRAGON is sort of a role-player's digest . . .) This would be inexpensive, would not lower the value of anyone's collection, and would be much easier than re-issuing entire magazines.

Admittedly, it would be difficult to photocopy and mail thousands of different copies, but some of the more asked-for articles could be offered. The three BEST OF DRAGON collections are great, but there are more articles left out than included in them. The index in issue #76 only serves to show us what is not available. Please

consider this request seriously; it would be a tremendous service to your readers, especially those of us who were not fortunate enough to be around when issue #1 was printed.

Lance J. Purple
Houston, Tex.

I hope that Lance and lots of others will be happy to hear that TSR, Inc., is now offering a service for readers to obtain photocopies of articles from old issues of DRAGON® Magazine. According to Penny Petticord, the head of TSR's Correspondence Department, these are the rules and regulations:

— Photocopies are not available from issues of the magazine that are still being offered for sale through the Dungeon Hobby Shop mail order department, or of any articles that appear in our BEST OF DRAGON® anthologies.

— Your request must be accompanied by a check or money order. The charge for photocopying is \$2.50 per article, plus 40¢ per page. (For an article that runs across six pages in the magazine, the total charge would be \$4.90.)

— If you need a copy of an article you've never seen, and you don't know how many pages are involved, you can find out by calling Penny at the TSR phone number, 1-414-248-3625. (She'll probably also be able to tell you if the issue you want the copy from is still for sale or not.)

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Here's hoping this will help. — KM

Record breaking

Dear Dragon,

In issue #80, you spoke of four guys who played D&D for four days, four hours straight, right? Well, you also said that they took a five-minute break every hour. If so, they didn't play for 100 hours, but 92. How did it go down in the Guinness Book of World Records, as 92 hours, or didn't the breaks count?

Also, how would I go about finding out how to break this record? Who should I contact?

Wendy Wallace
St. Charles, Mo.

As I understand it, the Guinness "rules" for world records allow short breaks of this sort when people are trying to set marathon records. (It would be difficult, to say the least, for anyone to literally remain seated at a table for 100 hours in a row.) We don't know if the record-breaking attempt has been officially recognized by the Guinness people, or if it ever will be; we'll probably all find out one way or the other when the next edition of the Guinness Book of World Records is released.

How to break the record? Well, first get a lot of sleep beforehand....Seriously, I don't know the exact procedure, but anyone who's interested can probably find out by looking in the world record book, or by asking your local librarian. — KM

The forum

Opinions and observations

Some years ago, when creating the first character I would play, a third-level magic-user, I was distressed by how slim his chances of survival were. Then I recalled the "Character With Two Classes" section of the Players Handbook. Suddenly I could create a character with a chance.

However, I still didn't have a character of great power. In "The Forum" of DRAGON issue #81, David Hutton said that by giving a character one level as a fighter, one would get someone who was "staggeringly powerful." I noticed that possibility. However, having been a DM for some time, I realized that such problems might be avoided without a tremendous amount of difficulty.

The key concept in the change of class is the amount of time necessary to spend in training for the new class. (Lenard Lakofka thankfully detailed this in DRAGON #51; hopefully that article will be reprinted in BEST OF DRAGON IV.) It is on the order of years. This tends to keep most characters from switching. Also, with this information the first of David's problems — that a character switching from fighter to another class could cause non-fighters with 18/01 to 18/00 strength — is easily solved. Since no other class has the need for as much physical strength as fighters, the muscles that were carefully honed during fighter training, and vigorously kept up, will go slack, say at a rate of 05 every other month, until finally, after 18/01, a strength of 18 is reached, there to remain. (Certain exceptional individuals might keep their muscles in shape while training for another class, at the DM's

option. Training times would be considerably lengthened.)

David's second problem was that of weapons of proficiency. First, he said that the fighter (first level fighters switching to another class was his main concern) would have four weapons, and then would gain even more upon entering the new class. Again, this is a question of training. Most people won't spend the time and money necessary to learn to use additional weapons (say, darts if becoming a M-U) if they can already wield four weapons (say, a long bow, a mace, a long sword, and a two-handed sword).

He also said that they would ever after fight at -2 for non-proficiency. This is only true to a point. They would fight, as a *first level fighter*, at -2 (assuming they switched from being a first level fighter). As an example, let's take my favorite character, Zephyr, a first level fighter who, after long years as a wizard's apprentice, became a magic-user and then gained three levels (this first/third level human, having never been unnaturally aged — yet — was already almost forty years old). Let us say he found a long sword, with which he was proficient as a (first level) fighter. He could use it as a first level proficient fighter, or as a third level non-proficient mage, at -6 (don't tell me a mage can't swing a sword, albeit poorly). He would, of course, swing as the fighter. Even if it was a bastard sword, with which he was non-proficient in both classes, he would still attack as the fighter.

Now let's say that Zephyr, after many, many

years of adventuring, has become a 22nd level Archmage (he hasn't). Now it is much to his advantage to swing that +3 sword he made, as a 21+ level M-U, at -6 (as opposed to a proficient first level fighter).

David's third problem was high hit point scores. I am not certain if he meant "scores" as in a number of hit points or "scores" as in "hits for damage." The latter would basically rely on exceptional strength, which we've already discussed, so I'll address the former.

As everyone knows, a high constitution can give a character extra hit points (sometimes a lot of extra hit points). Non-fighters can, at most, only get +2 per hit die, but fighters with a constitution of 18 can get +4 per hit die. Add to this the common practice of giving maximum hit points for the first level's hit die (see Len Lakofka's article), and one has problems. Fortunately, one doesn't gain additional hit points after changing classes, until the level of the new class exceeds the level of the old. Second, only the fighter hit dice will get a +4, the others only getting +2. Take the first level/third level fighter/M-U again. With an 18 constitution he would get 14 hit points (maximum 10, +4 constitution bonus) for the fighter level, and 6-12 hit points for the M-U levels (1-4 for each level after the first, +2 con. for each level after the first), for a total of 20 to 26 hit points.

Finally, David wonders what would happen if special "classed" magic items were used by the wrong class, say, monks using wands of fire (because they have one level as a magic-user). The wizard Zephyr wields the very highly enchanted long sword Firefrost — technically speaking, it's an intelligent +5 flaming vorpal frostbrand. And despite all that, he's more likely to hit an opponent with a 2 gp dagger than with Firefrost.

To sum up, the "Character With Two Classes" is not so much a veritable godling (like an "official" bard), but rather is an interesting change from the typical stereotypes (a wizard with a sword — unheard of!) to a more fantastic, more all-encompassing system wherein a character can be what he wants to be.

Scott D. Hoffrage
Miller Place, N.Y.

* * * *

By using Chris Landsea's system ("Taking the sting out of poison," #81), handling poison in my campaign will be much less "painful" than it has been.

Just one comment, however. For a contact poison to work, it must reach a person's bloodstream, right? Once in the blood, the poison can travel swiftly through the body and wreak whatever it havoc it may (even automatic death in the case of a type D contact poison).

As we all know, however, human skin is very resistant to liquid penetration. In fact, it is watertight. Sweat pores allow liquid to escape, but prevent it from entering directly into our tissues. Therefore, it must be extremely difficult for a contact poison to do its job. What am I getting at? Simply, that a contact poison must either cause an immediate burning sensation if it is to have a short "onset time," or require a substantial "onset time" if it is to affect someone without causing this painful feeling. In other words, the shorter the "onset time," the more likely a person is going to feel this substance penetrating his skin. I'm not suggesting this would cause an effect similar to acid; that substance causes damage by dissolving flesh, bone, or whatever stands in its way. But a contact poison would only have to force its way through a victim's skin and a few layers of tissue beneath it to reach a blood vessel.

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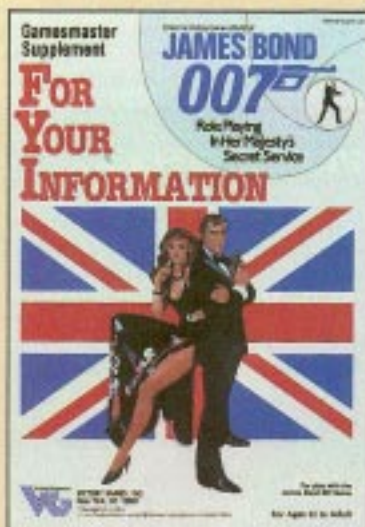
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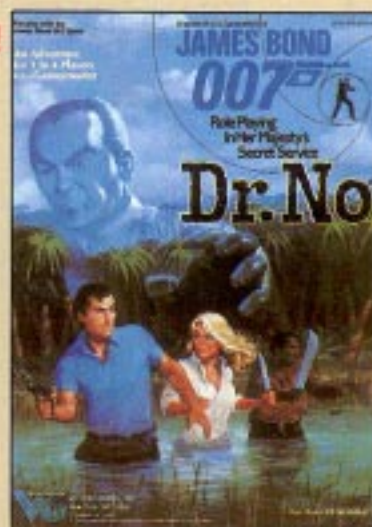
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Since this penetration would be against the natural defenses of the skin and happen fairly quickly, it should be safe to assume that the process would be painful. Upon reaching a blood vessel, the poison would penetrate its thin wall (since this blood vessel is presumably close to the surface of our skin) and be immediately whisked away to other parts of the body.

How can this be incorporated into the rules? The values given under "onset time" for contact poisons need not be altered. However, if an onset time is equal to or less than two rounds, the victim should feel a burning sensation where he contacted the poison. This burning would continue for about three segments, after which the poison would have completely entered the bloodstream. Minor tissue damage would occur, along with a slight hemorrhaging (beneath the skin) of the blood vessels the poison encountered. If a character makes his saving throw, the burning sensation would still be encountered as described.

Of course, this does not apply to type A contact poison, as the intended victim takes no damage and presumably the poison was not touched or simply did not work. An antidote to stop the contact poison while it is busy penetrating the skin and tissues probably would not work, as it would have to be directly applied to the skin that contacted the poison and then itself penetrate the flesh to catch up to the poison — a race it could not possibly win, I believe. However, an ingested antidote would work normally, as it would counteract the poison the bloodstream.

This system gives the AD&D character the chance he deserves to notice his plight and quickly ingest an antidote (so long as he has it very close at hand) for fast-working contact poison before he begins to take any damage. As for the contact poisons that take longer than two rounds to cause damage, better luck next time.

John Lester Jr.
South Dartmouth, Mass.

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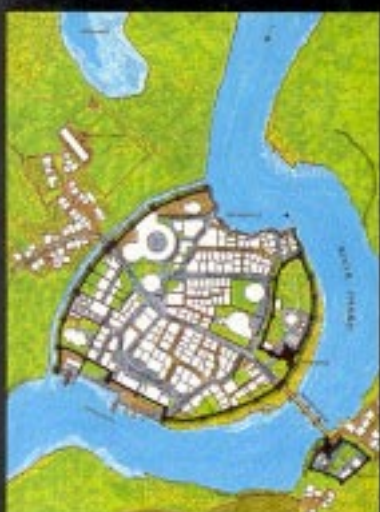
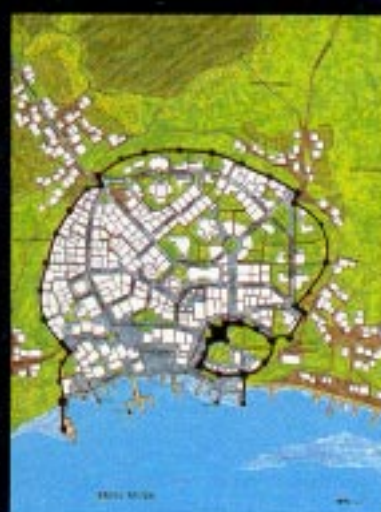
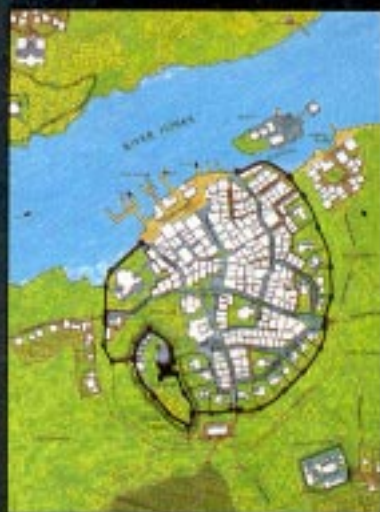
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The many facets of gems

Stories behind the stones listed in the DMG

by Michael Lowrey

Almost all adventurers have had the experience at some time: You've solved the riddling sonnet, defeated the guardians of the treasure, and evaded the clever trap in the lock. You open the age-hallowed coffers and ask, "What do we find?"

The DM consults her records and replies: "The chest contains 3900 silver pieces, 610 gold pieces, and 86 platinum pieces, all of archaic design with inscriptions in a language unknown to any of you — although Dickon the Cutpurse believes it may be an ancient Ogrish tongue — and 23 gems."

"Gems!? Of what sorts?"

"Oh, the usual. Seven hematites, four rhodochrosites, six green spinels, and six pink diamonds."

"What are these hematites?"

"Well, they're these opaque gray-black stones..."

"Yeah, right, but what do they look like?" At this point, your DM begins to lose a little of her legendary icy calm and dignity. "I don't know, Willie, I've never actually seen one. . . ."

And you end up losing a little of that

"willing suspension of disbelief" that makes fantasy gaming such fun.

In order to prevent such distressing situations, the following information has been unearthed regarding the "usual gems," to supplement what may be found in the AD&D™ *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

Gem terminology

First, a few definitions are in order. Most minerals (and gems are usually minerals) are one of two types: either *crystalline*, occurring as single stones or clusters of stones, each with a definite structure that is regularly repeated throughout crystals of the same sort; or massive, occurring as continuous masses of that mineral, having no regular structure that is readily discernible. (But technically, massive minerals are actually composed of a great number of microscopic crystals in most cases.)

Crystalline stones are often *faceted*, a process by which they are flaked or ground into a series of flat faces that together usually form one of several customary *cuts*, in the shape of symmetrical but irregular

polyhedra. Both crystalline and massive stones may be *smooth cut*, which is the act of forming them into regular shapes with flat surfaces suitable for engraving (such as often found in rings). They may be made into *cabochons*, which are oval or round dome-like shapes with one flat side for mounting on various surfaces. They may also be carved into beads, figurines, symbols, and other shapes, or simply polished in the natural shape of the stone. Massive stones are sometimes found in large enough masses to be shaped like one would shape wood or architectural stone; sections may be sawn off a large stone and used decoratively as slabs; or, they may be carved (or even turned on lathes) into jars, bowls, and other functional shapes.

Inclusions are any of the specks of other materials, bubbles, tiny flaws, impurities, and the like which affect the appearance of a stone by their presence. *Cat's-eye* stones, found among many mineral families, are caused by certain patterns of inclusions which, when a stone is shaped properly, present an appearance like the slit-shaped



Opal



Amber (containing insect)



Spinel

Malachite



Alexandrite



Banded agate

Azurite



pupil of a cat's eye. *Star* gems have analogous patterns creating the illusion of a pale, six-rayed star. Both cat's-eyes and stars must usually be cut into cabochons to display these effects (known by the terms *chatoyancy* and *asterism* respectively). The value of a given stone will depend on its size, color, relative freedom from flaws, and the skill with which it has been polished and/or cut.

Those mystical properties associated with the various gems are to be associated with the "classic" form thereof; thus, while topaz exists in blue, colorless, and pink varieties, the mystic properties with which topaz is credited are linked only with the traditional honey-yellow stone (and the similarly colored "oriental topaz"). When stones normally occur in a number of different colors, such as with agate, jade, jasper, and spinel (to name a few), this stipulation does not apply. In the following text, each type of gem mentioned in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* is referenced by at least one of its popular names. The information on gem category (ornamental, fancy, etc.) and base value in gold pieces is taken from the DMG.

Emphatic reminder: Despite any reported mystical effects, the mere possession of gems by characters will not "trigger" such effects — if in fact they exist at all in the particular gem. Rather, these alleged effects are usually only useful as guidelines, indicating certain stones as being suitable for

decorating (or comprising) a magic item, as appropriate ingredients in a magical formula or components for a spell, and so on — *nothing more*. This applies alike to good and ill effects.

THE GEMS

Agate (general notes)

The term "agate" includes the *banded agate*, *eye agate*, and *moss agate* (qq.v.). The sages attribute many virtues to agates. The *Book of Saexan Leechdoms* says, "Of the stone which hight Agate it hath eight virtues for them who hath this stone with them; against thunder, sorcery, fiendish possession, venom, or poison, disease, the evils of strong drink, and outbreaks on the skin." The cleric-chemist Benoni wrote, "The Agate quenches thirst, if held in the mouth, and soothes fever"; Nostradamus claimed it "renders a man eloquent, prudent, amiable, and agreeable"; Gygax notes its value for "restful and safe sleep." It is considered hostile to poisons, and is therefore made into drinking bowls and other such vessels. Another method for securing its protection is to touch all foods and cooking utensils with an especially valuable agate before preparing or serving food; it would seem to be a very suitable *periapt of proof against poison*. According to Pliny the Elder, the ancient Magii taught that storms may be averted by burning agates.

Alexandrite (fancy; 100 gp)

Alexandrite is a unique variety of *chrysoberyl* (q.v.). In daylight, an alexandrite is brilliant green with a vague bluish tint; in magical light it appears yellow or reddish-yellow; and in the light of a flame (candle, lantern, torch) it appears red with a hint of blue. It is normally faceted, although cabochon cat's-eye alexandrites have been reported. Gygax tells us it is a stone of good omens; this would be especially true for those whose colors (personal, religious, or national/tribal) are green and red. It might also be suitable for magics involving shifting and changing colors, such as a *ring of shooting stars*.

Amber (fancy; 100 gp)

Amber is the congealed and hardened resin of ancient giant conifers. It appears as lumps of pale-gold to deep-gold color as a rule, but also ranges from an opaque, frothy white form called "bone amber" to the murky, near-black "bog amber." The most transparent golden pieces are more valuable, and the rarest and most precious of these have bits of plants, or even whole insects, preserved within. Amber is carved into beads and cabochons, and sometimes larger, more intricate shapes. It is quite a brittle material, somewhat flammable, and comparatively soft.

Amber is said to ward off diseases; the cleric-chemist Benoni affirmed that "Amber is curative of sore throat, and glandular

swellings." It is worn in a necklace to cure coughs, to prevent attacks of sore throat in delicate persons, and to preserve young children from evil powers of sorcery and witchcraft. Ground up and mixed with honey (which it resembles in color), it is said to obviate dimness of sight; also, mixed with honey and rose-oil, it is accounted a specific for curing deafness. It has such an affinity for electricity that in some languages (including English) the derivation of the word "electricity" is related to that of the word "amber"; thus, it may be particularly suitable as the tip for a *wand of lightning* and the like.

Amethyst (*fancy; 100 gp*)

Amethyst is the pale- to deep-purple form of transparent crystalline quartz. To be of real value, it should be entirely clear; such stones are faceted. Pale stones, or those with many inclusions, are often polished and used as beads. A massive, translucent-to-opaque form of quartz, often with bands of agate or milky quartz, far less valuable, is made into cabochons and beads, carved into bowls, and so forth; this stone is called "amethyst quartz" to distinguish it from true gem-quality amethyst (see also *oriental amethyst*).

The sages are unanimous in telling us that this is the stone of sobriety and temperance. It prevents drunkenness and druggedness, restrains one from indulging in too much sleep, quickens the wit, and drives vapors from the head. It is much used within temples, for prayer beads and the like, as it is believed to create an atmosphere of mental peace and calm meditation; it is also suited for a *rod of resurrection* and similar clerical magics. If the names of the sun and the moon are engraved upon an amethyst, and it is hung about a person's neck, together with a clump of baboon's hair or a swallow's feather, this is said to act as a protection against witchcraft.

Aquamarine (*fancy/precious; 500 gp*)

The aquamarine is a transparent crystalline stone of a pale blue-green; like the *emerald* (q.v.), it is a species of beryl, but it shows far fewer flaws (as a rule) than an emerald of equal size. It is normally cut as a faceted stone.

Regarded as the sailor's talisman (and thus suitable to decorate a *trident of warning*), the aquamarine is also said to cure liver complaints, and jaundice; to reconcile married folks; and to chase away idleness and stupidity. In the *Magick of Kiram* one may read: "Take an Aqua-marine Stone, and engrave a Crow upon it; and under its feet a Crab; wear it as you will; for Joy, and Exultation, and Acquisition, and Union, and Conjugal Love; and it will make the Bearer cheerful, and Rich . . ."

Azurite (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

Azurite is a form of copper ore, an opaque massive stone of a deep pure blue color, generally uniform but sometimes

slightly mottled. It is polished and cut into beads, cabochons, and similar shapes; a stone of uniform color is more valuable. It often occurs in deposits with *malachite* (q.v.). It is not reputed to have any particular mystic properties.

Banded agate (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

This is the translucent-to-opaque, multi-layered variety of massive quartz. The layers may include brown, black, or white (*onyx*), pale blue (*chalcedony*), red-orange (*carnelian*), and many others, each in a thin layer. It is usually carved into vases, beads, figurines, and so-forth; intaglios and cameos are sometimes carved from pieces with (comparatively) thick layers. Pieces with smoothly concentric bands may be cut into *eye agates* (q.v.); otherwise, banded agate is considered to have the properties common to all *agate* (q.v.).

Black opal (*gem; 1,000 gp*)

Black opal is that variety of *opal* (q.v.) in which the body color is smoke black, deep green, and dark blue, forming an almost opaque background in which its opalescent color play is displayed. It otherwise has the properties of the other forms of opal.

Black sapphire (*gem/jewel; 5,000 gp*)

The black sapphire is a blue-black form of the *sapphire* (q.v.), so dark as to approach translucence. It is usually faceted, or can be cut into a cabochon, especially the *cat's-eye* and star varieties. It has no reputation for mystic properties.

Bloodstone (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

Bloodstone is an opaque massive stone, a form of jasper (q.v.). It is dark green, sprinkled with deep red patches or flecks. It is cut as cabochons, beads, pendants, and the like, or smooth-cut to display the "blood-drops." It is also called "heliotrope."

One sage claims that bloodstone ". . . maketh the water sethe in the vessel that it is in, and resolveth it . . . into mist, and soon after . . . into rain-drops. Also . . . if it be put in a basin with clear water, it changeth the sunbeams by rebounding of the air, and seemeth to shadow them, and breedeth in the air red, and sanguine colours, as though the sun were in eclipse, and darkened." Thus, Gyfax has suggested that the bloodstone is related to weather control. "Magus" claimed that it "makes the wearer constant, renowned, and famous, conducting to long life"; also, "it so dazzles the eyes of men, that it causes the bearer to be invisible; but then there must be applied to it the herb bearing the same name, viz. Heliotropum, or the sun-flower." Note: *Hematite* (q.v.) is sometimes called "blood-stone" as well.

Blue quartz (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

This is the pure, transparent, pale- to medium-blue form of crystalline quartz. Fine specimens are faceted for use in inexpensive jewelry. It has no reputed magical powers.

Cairngorm: See *smoky quartz*.

Carnelian (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

Carnelian is the translucent to near-opaque, yellow-brown to brownish-red variety of massive quartz, often resembling the color of flesh. It is made into rings, bowls, cabochons, small figures, and the like. It is also called "sard."

It is said that carnelian "appeases anger, makes cheerful minds, expels fear, makes courage, destroys and prevents fascinations [i.e., *charms*], and defends the body against all poisons," and generally benefits the wisdom and protects from evil. It is also said to cure tumors, to stanch bleeding, and to heal wounds not made by iron; it would be appropriate as the gem set into a *ring of regeneration*.

Chalcedony (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

This is the translucent-to-opaque, blue-white to pale blue or blue-gray form of massive quartz. It occurs in evenly colored and in banded forms. If evenly colored and translucent, it may be made into cabochons or beads; all sorts are carved into bowls, beads, boxes, figurines, etc.

Chalcedony is said to increase strength, and Gyfax tells us that it wards off undead. The fur seal is said to swallow chalcedony pebbles "with choice thereof, and relish."

Chrysoberyl (*fancy; 50 gp*)

Chrysoberyl is a transparent, greenish-yellow to green, crystalline stone. It also occurs as *cat's-eyes* of a yellow or brownish color, which are sometimes called "precious *cat's-eyes*," since they are quite beautiful and valuable. Occasionally, chrysoberyl crystals will occur in six-fold forms resembling simplified snowflakes. Clear stones are faceted; the *cat's-eyes* are cut as cabochons, and the "snowflakes" are simply polished to emphasize their beauty and symmetry.

This gem is said to be endowed with virtue, assuring wearers of good luck in all their doings. It is believed by some to be the abode of djinns or other beings (thus being appropriate for a *ring of djinni summoning*), and conversely to confer protection from possession upon the bearer (perhaps attackers end up "occupying" the stone instead?). The gem, in whatever form it is employed, is often dedicated to one's deity.

Chrysolite: See *peridot*.

Chrysoprase (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

This is the translucent apple-green, or sometimes darker, form of massive quartz. It sometimes occurs with a brown veining which, though attractive, reduces the value of the stone. It is made into beads and cabochons, and sometimes carved into figures.

Chrysoprase is said to be emblematic of eloquence, and of good luck; Gyfax also associates it with invisibility.

Citrine (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

This is a transparent form of crystalline

quartz, ranging from pale yellow to medium yellow to a clear yellow-brown. Many stones are polished and made into beads, or carved into small cups, figurines, and other shapes; good, clear specimens are faceted. It has no reputation for mystic virtues or powers.

Coral (*fancy; 100 gp*)

Coral is the clean, dry skeleton of tropical marine polyp colonies; jewelry-quality coral is exceptionally compact, solid, and free of pores. The chief, "red" variety also occurs in shades ranging from pure white to very dark oxblood red; black and blue varieties also exist. All forms are polished and worn as bangles, or carved into beads, cabochons, figurines, and so forth. The black variety is traditionally used for dagger handles, walking sticks, and the like, usually with additional silver decoration. It is a soft but not brittle "stone," and quite vulnerable to acid.

The black variety is worn in the form of bangles to guard against poison, and to cure gout. The red kind was said by Paracelsus to make "an amulet against fear, and frights, fascinations [i.e., charms], incantations, poisons, epilepsies, melancholy, devil's assaults, and thunder." It is worn as a protection from the evil eye, by females as a cure for sterility, to baffle witchcraft, counteract poisons, and protect from tempests and robbers. The cleric-chemist Benoni affirmed that "the red Coral is a

cure for indigestion when kept constantly next the person"; it is also praised as a purifier of the blood and for use against the black choler, derangements of the liver, and pains of the stomach; and to stanch bleeding. Gygax says also that it calms weather, brings safety in river crossings, and (as Paracelsus implied) cures madness.

Diamond (*gem/jewel; 5,000 gp*)

Diamond is a transparent, crystalline stone, the hardest substance known in nature. The most valued color is a clear bluish-white; most lesser stones are clear white or off-white, but other less valued color varieties are known, among them mauve, pink, peach, and chartreuse. The gem is always faceted.

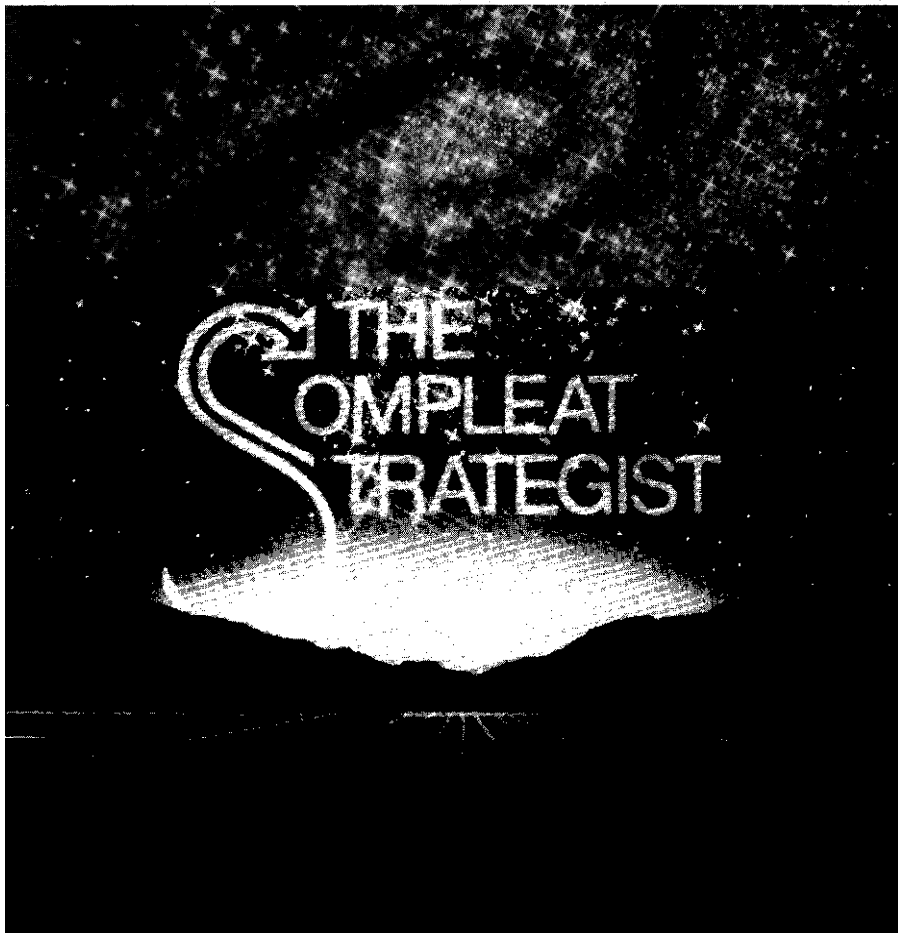
Various sages agree that diamond is supposed to preserve the wearer from various spirits, ghosts, nightmares, and the like; probably from all types of undead. Camillus Leonardus, in his *Mirror of Stones*, wrote that "It is a help to lunatics, and such as are possessed with a devil; being bound to the left arm it gives victory over enemies; it tames wild beasts; . . . makes him that wears it bold, and daring in his transactions." It is said to preserve the wearer from sorrows, and to make him "more fearless than careful" (thus, a *cursed berserking sword* might bear one). The cleric-chemist Benoni wrote that it "impels to all good things . . . [but is] capable of producing somnambulism." Nostradamus wrote that

"the Diamond renders a man invisible"; and it supposedly preserves against lightning. It is said to be an antidote to poisons when worn as a finger jewel; yet for many centuries it was believed to be the most deadly of all substances if swallowed.

Emerald (*gem; 1,000 gp*)

This is a deep bright green stone, transparent and crystalline, always showing a number of inclusions. Usually it is faceted; an occasional stone with a vast number of inclusions will be made into a cabochon, as will the infrequent cat's-eye emerald. A large, comparatively flawless stone will be more valuable than a diamond of similar qualities — and much, much rarer.

Emerald is said to be soothing and refreshing (especially to the eyes); to strengthen and restore the sight (thus, a suitable *gem of seeing*) and memory; to bolster friendship, and constancy of mind. Garcias wrote that "the Emerald takes away foolish fears, as of devils, and hobgoblins, with folly, and anger"; it is believed to "send evil spirits howling into space" (to their home planes?), and to stifle epileptic fits and other ailments. Being linked with fertility, it is worn to ease the pain of childbirth. In the *Magick of Kiram*, this is written of the emerald: "Engrave thereupon the Bird Harpe [i.e., a harpy]; and under its feet a Sea Lamprey; and wear the Stone against disturbance, and dreams, and stupidity. It causes Rest to Lunatics, and to



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them that are troubled with the Cholick; and it is better if the Fat of the Sea-Lamprey be put underneath."

The falling of an emerald from its setting is accounted an extremely bad omen to the wearer. The gem is said to make its owner rich; the tyrant Polycrates of Samos threw his prized emerald signet into the sea as an offering to the gods, for he and his allies feared that he might incur their wrath or resentment with all the good fortune the ring had brought him. But, a few days later, he found the signet ring in the stomach of his freshly caught dinner fish, and he knew his sacrifice had been rejected. And, indeed, Polycrates was soon overthrown.

Eye agate (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

The eye agate is simply a piece of *banded agate* (q.v.) whose bands form a concentric pattern resembling an eye, and which has been cut in a form, such as a circular slice or cabochon, that emphasizes the "eye."

It is worn normally as an amulet to ward off evil, and for protection from spirits; and it is valued more for this than for any of the powers generally attributed to *agate* (q.v.). As such, it is appropriate for an *amulet of proof against detection and location*.

Fire opal (*gem; 1,000 gp*)

This is an orange to orange-red form of *opal* (q.v.), ranging from transparent to transparent with mottled translucence. It does not always have the intricate color play

of other opals; when play is present, the stone is more valuable. If transparent, it is often faceted; usually it is made into cabochons otherwise.

In addition to those virtues normally associated with opals, one may guess that the fire opal is also associated with fire magics, being thereby suited for *flame tongue swords, wands of fire, and the like*.

Garnet (*fancy; 100 gp*)

(*Violet variety: fancy/precious; 500 gp*)

Garnet is a transparent crystalline stone; in addition to the usual orangish- to purplish-red or red-brown, garnets also occur in black, violet, and even green color varieties. The violet form, also called "rhodolite," is the rarest, most prized, and most valuable. Small crystals, the most frequently occurring form, are sometimes drilled and strung into necklaces; larger stones are faceted.

Benoni wrote that "the Garnet preserves health and joy"; Psellus claimed in his *De Lapidus* that if hung around the neck, garnet gave the power of seeing in the dark. Its possessor is (supposedly) likely to be faithful and true (making it appropriate for a *phylactery of faithfulness*); it is said to resist melancholy, cure palpitations of the heart, and stop spitting of blood.

Golden sapphire: See *oriental topaz*.

Green sapphire: See *oriental emerald*.

Heliotrope: See *bloodstone*.

Hematite (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

This is an opaque, gray-black massive stone that when powdered or crumbled shows itself to be made up of minuscule blood-red particles (it is a major iron ore). Gem-quality hematite is deep black, fine-grained, and glossy (it is sometimes imitated with steel). It is made into beads, cabochons, pendants, and the like, or smooth-cut for signet rings (which traditionally depict the head of Athena or some other war deity or warrior).

Hematite is widely believed to stop bleeding, and is considered a warrior's talisman (making it ideal for a *periapt of wound closure*). It is sometimes called "bloodstone" — but see *bloodstone* for details.

Hyacinth: See *jacinth*, and also *zircon*.

Jacinth (*gem/jewel; 5,000 gp*)

The jacinth is the orange to fiery red-orange variety of the hard, transparent crystalline mineral corundum (*ruby* and *sapphire* [qq.v.] are also corundum). It is faceted, except in the case of the rare translucent cat's-eye and star jacinths. It is also known as the "true" or "greater jacinth," the "greater" or "oriental hyacinth," and the "orange sapphire."

It is said to dispel evil spirits from the wearer, and to strengthen the heart, being often worn close to that organ and fashioned in the form of some animal or saint. One

sage called it a "specifick against the Crampe, and Convulsion; . . . hung about the neck, for an Amulet against the Plague; or, set in a Ring." Nostradamus wrote that "the Hyacinth provokes Sleep"; Boetius, in his *De Natura Gemmarum*, agreed, and added that the jacinth "brings honour, riches, wisdom." Gygax mentions also luck in traveling and protection from fire; and in *Natural Magic* by "Magus" was written that it "possesses virtues from the Sun against poisons, pestilence, and pestiferous vapours; likewise it renders the bearer pleasant, and acceptable; conduces also to gain money; being simply held in the mouth it wonderfully cheers the heart, and strengthens the mind." It would seem to make a suitable *periapt of health* or a *jewel of flawlessness*.

Jade (*fancy; 100 gp*)

Jade is a translucent-to-opaque, massive stone with an oily luster. It occurs in several color varieties: shades of green, including the near-transparent bright green "imperial jade" (highly prized) and the rare spinach-green jade with its golden glints; white, waxy-looking "mutton-fat jade," which may have patches of green or (rarely) streaks of carmine; and the uncommon yellow, cinnabar-red, earth-brown, black, and lavender varieties. It has been carved into beads, cabochons, pendants, vases, buttons, figurines, bottles, weapons, musical instruments, and a myriad other forms, for it is hard and dense, and carves well.

Wherever it appears, in any of its colors, jade is respected. In some cultures it is almost venerated, regarded as a diviner of judgments and a charm of happy omen, and esteemed as most precious. (It seems suitable for a *talisman of pure good* or a *holy avenger sword*.) When it is struck, jade is said to give forth a note that floats sharply and distinctly to a distance; thus, Gygax associates it with skill at music and musical instruments.

Jargoon: See *zircon*.

Jasper (*Semi-precious; 50 gp*)

Jasper is an opaque form of massive quartz composed of tiny, interlocking grains and having an oily luster. It occurs in a variety of colors, including blue, black, brown, red, green, and yellow; and in banded, spotted, veined, etc., varieties in almost any conceivable combination (see *bloodstone*). It is carved into beads, cabochons, and the like; it is a traditional stone to smooth-cut for carving signets, seals, and so on.

The healer Galen and others recommended jasper against epilepsy, fevers, dropsy, bleeding, and above all stomach pains; Galen records that King Nechepsus wore a green jasper cut in the shape of a dragon surrounded by rays; when the jewelry was applied over his digestive organs, it was found to be wonderfully strengthening to their function. St. Vincentius wrote that some jaspers were "carved with the figure


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of a man bearing on his neck a bundle of herbs and flowers; with the estimation and value of them noted that they have in them a faculty, or power restrictive, and will in an instant, or moment of time, staunch blood."

Jasper also is esteemed as an amulet against phantasms and witchcraft. The *Lapidarium* of Marbodeus the cleric says: "Again, it is believed to be a safeguarde franke and free, to such as weare, and beare the same; and if it hallowed be, it makes the parties gracious, and mightie too, that have it, and noysome fansies (as they write that ment not to deprave it) it dooth displace out of the mind; the force thereof is stronger in silver, if the same be set; — and will endure the longer."

The stone would be an appropriate ornament for *rings of protection* and *bracers of defense*.

Jet (*fancy; 100 gp*)

This is a glossy black, opaque and massive stone, actually a very hard, dense, compacted form of coal. It is usually faceted, or simply polished, for beads and pendants; it is sometimes carved into figurines and other shapes. The stone is flammable under great heat.

Jet is said to relieve toothache, and serves as an ointment for reducing tumors when it is powdered and mixed with beeswax. Gygax recommends it as a material for creating soul objects (such as an *amulet of life protection*).

Lapis lazuli (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

Lapis lazuli is a dense, opaque and massive stone of a medium to deep blue color (the deeper and more uniform the blue, the more valuable), usually flecked with golden specks of pyrites (fool's gold). It is carved into cabochons, beads, or figurines, and is used in slabs for tables, boxes, etc., and for inlay work. It is a fairly soft stone.

Ancient kings sharpened their weapons on lapis lazuli, believing they (the weapons and the kings) would become invulnerable. One healer advised that "it purgeth chiefly melancholy, cures quartans, apoplexies, epilepsies, . . . and many others from dementia." It is said to give sleep, to relieve asthma, to sharpen the intellect, and relieve anxieties and obsessions (thus, Gyax tells us, it raises morale and courage), and to cure eye troubles and diseases of the spleen.

Malachite (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

This is an opaque massive stone, striated in bands of lighter and darker green. It is carved into beads, figurines, cabochons, and the like, and is also sawn into slabs that are used as inlays or veneers. It often occurs interspersed with *azurite* (q.v.); both are ores of copper.

Malachite is used as a talisman to protect children and expectant mothers, often in a form similar to the *eye agate* (q.v.). Gyax associates it with protection from falling, thus making it appropriate for a *ring of feather falling*.

Mocca stone: See *moss agate*.

Moonstone (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

Moonstone is a white, translucent, massive stone that shows a distinctive white or blue-white play of light, resembling moonlight; there are also greenish, gray, and even red-brown varieties. It is always carved into beads, cabochons, and similar shallow, rounded forms to bring out this effect.

It is said by Pliny the Elder to display an image of the moon, which waxes or wanes according to the state of the moon at the time; in a related vein, Gyax suggests that it may induce lycanthropy.

Moss agate (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

Moss agate is a near-transparent to translucent form of massive quartz with greenish or grayish inclusions resembling tendrils of moss. It may be vaguely yellowish or pinkish, sometimes with a smoky tinge. The most valuable variety is almost transparent with pure green "moss." Smoky stones with brown, gray, or black moss are also called "mocca stones." It is usually made into cabochons, beads, or pendants; sometimes the pebbles are simply polished and strung into necklaces. Moss agate is credited with the mystic properties of all *agate* (q.v.); the finest stones are also associated with plant fertility.

Obsidian (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

This is a volcanic natural glass,

opaque to semi-opaque, that occurs in black, gray, and red-brown varieties, as well as "snowflake obsidian," which is black with whitish specks. It is carved or flaked into figures and ornaments; and, an obsidian blade can be flaked to a sharpness not attainable by any (non-magical) metal edge. (Thus, it would fittingly adorn a *sword of sharpness* or a *vorpal weapon*.) Obsidian tools and weapons are often used in religious rituals, and have been considered by some societies the only tools suitable for carving images related to deities.

Onyx (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

Onyx is a porous and opaque form of massive quartz, occurring in black or white or a black-and-white layered variety. It is made into beads and cabochons; smooth-cut for signets and the like; and carved into bowls and figurines.

It is said to prevent epileptic fits when worn around the neck. The cleric Benoni wrote that "the Onyx is a demon imprisoned in stone, who wakes only of a night, causing terror, and disturbance to sleepers who wear it." The cleric Marbodeus asserted that the wearer is exposed to the assaults of demons, and to ugly visions, by night, besides being plagued with quarrels and lawsuits by day. (Thus, it would seem suited for a *phylactery of monstrous attention* or a *scarab of enraging enemies*.) However, Gyax affirms that it causes discord among enemies (emphasis the author's).

Be Ye Witch, or Be Ye Magistrate, it makes no difference. All are suspect

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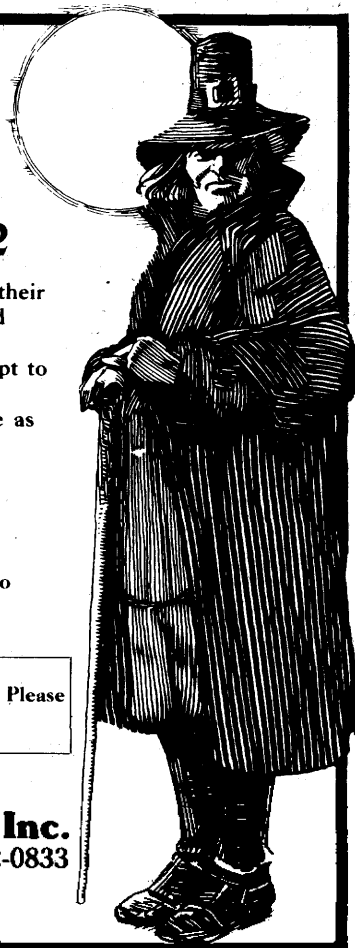
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Opal (*gem; 1,000 gp*)

This is a translucent, massive stone, usually pale blue-white but displaying an array of red, yellow, green, and violet highlights when light is reflected from its surface. Many varieties exist: a mosaic of small colored areas of play is the mark of a "harlequin opal"; near-transparency and a moonstone-like appearance distinguish a "water opal"; near-opacity, paleness, and limited play of color indicate the common "milky opal"; and there are several others (see *black opal* and *fire opal*). It is made into cabochons and other low, rounded forms to best display the play of colors. It is a soft and somewhat brittle stone; and, heated opals may lose part or all of their opalescent color play, and thus much of their beauty and value.

The sage Macer wrote of the opal that "The stone is reported to have as many virtues as it has colours; but what they are authors are something silent about." Its virtue is said to prevail against all diseases of the eyes, to sharpen and strengthen the sight. The cleric Marbodeus tells us it confers the gift of invisibility on the wearer; but the alchemist-cleric Benoni warns that "the Opal is fatal to love, and sows discord between the giver and receiver." The stone seems fitting to use as a tip for a *wand of wonder* or a *wand of illumination*.

Orange sapphire: See *jacinth*.

Oriental amethyst (*gem; 1,000 gp*)

Oriental amethyst is a variety of the hard, transparent, crystalline mineral corundum with a color closely resembling that of the *amethyst* (q.v.). It is normally faceted, except for the rare cat's-eye and star forms. It is also called a "purple sapphire." The stone is generally credited with the same mystic properties as a true amethyst.

Oriental emerald (*gem/jewel; 5,000 gp*)

This is the variety of corundum whose color most closely resembles that of the *emerald* (q.v.). Normally faceted (except for stars and cat's-eyes), it is also known as "green sapphire," and is said to have the same mystic properties as a true emerald.

Oriental topaz (*gem; 1,000 gp*)

Oriental topaz is the variety of corundum whose color most closely resembles the yellow *topaz* (q.v.). Normally faceted (except in the star and cat's-eye forms), it is also called a "golden sapphire," and is alleged to have the same mystic qualities as a true topaz.

Pearl (*fancy; 100 gp*)

(*Black variety: fancy/precious; 500 gp*)

The pearl is the end product of layers of secretion with which certain mollusks surround bits of foreign matter in their shells. When the secretion hardens, it takes on a unique luster which originates in its dispersion of light just below its surface. It occurs in many shapes: round, teardrop, "button" (flat on one side), and the myriad irregular

forms known collectively as the "baroque" pearl. This is generally the order of value as well, with only the most lustrous and largest baroques being treasured. As well as the traditional "pearly white," these stones come in less common color varieties in a range from yellow and pale rose to the rare, lustrous deep black. They are mounted in all sorts of jewelry settings (mountings often use half-pearls), and, being easily drilled, are strung in various ways — by graduated sizes or in a uniform string; in single, multiple, or even braided strands. Fresh-water mollusks sometimes yield pearls, but these are usually of much poorer quality than pearls from a salt-water mollusk.

Pearls are quite vulnerable to acid, fire, and electrical attacks, to crushing blows, and other physical trauma. They may be damaged by sudden changes in temperature, and are alleged to deteriorate if left untouched for *great* lengths of time, although sea water will supposedly negate any such deterioration.

The pearl is said to symbolize innocence, and to preserve virtue and chastity. Many healers and sages commended its use in various powdered mixtures, for clearing the spirit; resisting poison, pestilence, plague, and putrefaction; strengthening the heart; fortifying the nerves; curing weak eyes; and preserving the body from the decay of old age (making pearls appropriate for a *phylactery of long years*). We are also warned by the sages that "pearls portend a torrent of tears," especially when they appear in dreams and prophecies.

Peridot (*fancy/precious; 500 gp*)

Peridot is a transparent, crystalline stone, usually a clear yellow-green, although it can vary from near emerald-green to almost an olive-green. The better stones are faceted; flawed or cloudy stones are polished for beads, or made into cabochons, as are the occasional cat's-eye peridots. The stone is also known as "chrysolite."

Set in gold and worn around the neck or left arm, peridot is said to be a charm against all magic and sorcery. It is credited with the power to dispel night terrors, to cure cowardice, to "cool boiling water, and assuage wrath," to calm anger and madness while being able to brighten the wit. It is said to be "good against hemorrhages, and all manner of fluxes of blood, as likewise to stop bleeding," and also to ward off fevers.

Precious cat's-eye: See *chrysoberyl*.

Purple sapphire: See *oriental amethyst*.

Rhodochrosite (*ornamental; 10 gp*)

This is an opaque stone ranging in color from pale pink to medium red. It occurs mostly in a massive, banded form, and occasionally in single-colored opaque crystals. It is made into beads, cabochons, boxes, vases, and the like. It is a somewhat soft stone, and fairly vulnerable to acid; no mystic or magical properties are attributed to it.

Rhodolite: See *garnet*.

Rock crystal (*semi-precious; 50 gp*)

Rock crystal is the colorless, transparent variety of crystalline quartz. The most valuable pieces are free of inclusions; lesser stones often have needle-like inclusions euphemistically termed "love's darts." The stone is often faceted, or carved into crystal balls or fine sculptures; poorer pieces may be polished for use as beads.

The stone is purported to be superhardened, unmeltable ice; thus, it is said to be able to slake thirst. Round, smooth balls of it are carried to cool the hands or forehead on hot days, and crystal rings are worn for the same purpose. (Because of this property, it might be suitable adornment for a *frost brand* sword or a *wand of frost*). Crystal worn on the finger, as a solid ring or as a stone in a setting, is said to protect the wearer from frostbite as well. Benoni wrote that "the Crystal promotes sweet sleep, and good dreams," and of course real crystal balls are standard for use as scrying devices and the like.

Ruby (*gem/jewel; 5,000 gp*)

The ruby is a moderate-to-deep red, transparent variety of the hard crystalline mineral corundum (*sapphire* and *jacinth* [qq.v.] are also corundum). The finest rubies are absolutely clear and uniformly of that deep red color called "pigeon's blood"; lesser stones may vary from a paler red to a somewhat garnet-like red tinged with purplish-brown. It is usually faceted, but cloudy specimens may be made into cabochons, as may the rare cat's-eye; see also *star ruby*.

The ruby is said to ward off plagues and pestilences, dispersing infectious airs; if the corners of a house, garden, or vineyard are touched with a ruby, they will supposedly be thus preserved from lightning, tempests, and worms. Cardamus wrote that "it has the power of making the wearer cheerful, whilst banishing idle, and foolish thoughts"; the healer Schroder says that "it resists poison, resists sadness, restrains lust, drives away frightful dreams, keeps the body safe."

It is said to give warning if misfortune threatens the wearer, becoming much darker in hue; when the peril or evil is averted or over, it then resumes its former color. It is supposed to prevent loss of blood, and to strengthen the heart; a blood-red stone, held in the mouth, is said to stimulate the mind. When powdered, it is taken to make the body capable of resisting decay; and to "sweeten the sharpness of the humours, to strengthen the vitals, to drive away melancholy, and to restore lost strength." It might appropriately decorate a *defender* sword, for example.

Sapphire (*gem; 1,000 gp*)

This name is traditionally reserved for the moderate-to-deep clear blue tradum, one of the hardest substances in existence; "sapphire" is also sometimes used to refer to other color varieties of corundum, such

this quality. It has no alleged mystic or magical properties.

Star ruby (gem; 1,000 gp)

The star ruby is a translucent *ruby* with a whitish "star" at the center, cut into a cabochon to display the asterism. It otherwise conforms in all respects to the description and properties of *ruby* (q.v.).

Star sapphire (gem; 1,000 gp)

The star sapphire is a translucent, deep blue *sapphire* with a whitish "star" at the center, cut in the cabochon shape to display this phenomenon. Gygax credits the stone with special efficacy as a protection from magic (thus making it suitable as a *scarab of protection*); otherwise, it conforms in all respects to the *sapphire* (q.v.).

Tiger eye (ornamental; 10 gp)

This is a translucent to semi-opaque form of massive quartz, displaying a much richer color and luster than most "cat's-eye" quartz does. It is a rich golden-brown, with the "pupil" a pure yellow-gold color. It is cut into cabochons, pendants, beads, and the like; and the stone in masses is also carved into figurines, bowls, and so forth. It is not alleged have any special mystical qualities.

Topaz (fancy/precious; 500 gp)

Topaz is a transparent, crystalline stone, normally yellow to golden yellow-brown in

color; colorless, pink, and blue varieties are also known. Because it cleaves easily, it is often difficult to cut well; it is generally faceted, but cloudy specimens may be cut as cabochons or pendants. Occasionally, large crystals of startling clarity are discovered.

One writer alleges that topaz wards off evil spells; the *Celestial Intelligencer* contains praise of the "contrariety of . . . the Topaz against spiritual heats, such as covetousness ." It is supposed to cure inflammations, and *The Honest Jeweller* has a claim that "when thrown into boiling water the Topaz at once deprives this of its heat" (thus, it may be set in a *ring of fire resistance*). Powdered, it is said to prevent bleeding, to be favorable against hemorrhages, to impart strength and good digestion; to cure asthma, lack of sleep, and diverse other maladies. It is said to keep the wearer from sleepwalking, and a whole stone applied within or to the side of the nose is said to halt a nosebleed.

Tourmaline (fancy; 100 gp)

This is a transparent, crystalline stone (some specimens are so cloudy as to be nearly translucent). It occurs with fair frequency in a bewildering variety of colors: white, blue, gray, purple, red, orange, yellow, brown, green, near-black; and in combinations of two and even three colors in a single stone. Clear stones are faceted; cloudy ones are cut into cabochons or beads, or carved into figurines. The largest

and cloudiest crystals are often sawn into slices, especially in order to display such color combinations as the "watermelon tourmaline" : deep green exterior, bright red interior. Stones with deep, pure colors are usually more valuable, even when the colors are combinations. Cat's-eye tourmalines occur in all colors and combinations, and are made into cabochons. Tourmaline has no mystic or magical reputation, but it shows an affinity for electricity similar to that of *amber* (q.v.).

Turquoise (ornamental; 10 gp)

Turquoise is a translucent-to-opaque massive stone, blue to greenish-blue in color; it frequently occurs with brownish veining. The most valuable is sky-blue, translucent, and without veining; the least valued (and most common) is green-blue, opaque, and heavily veined. It is usually cut into cabochons, or beads and pendants; large pieces may be cut into figurines, and pebbles of a size may be polished and strung together.

Camillus Leonardus wrote that turquoise is "useful to horsemen; as long as the rider has it with him, his horse will never tire him, and will preserve him unhurt from any accident." Crown Jeweler Ove Dragsted agrees that it is a special talisman for horses, and adds that it is a "stone of victory." Boetius claimed that it "strengthens the eye, and cheers the soul of the wearer; it saves him from suffering a fall [and thus may be an ingredient in *feather fall magics*], by cracking itself instead; it grows pale as the wearer sickens, loses its colour entirely on his death, but recovers it when placed on the finger of a new, and healthy possessor."

Zircon (semi-precious; 50 gp)

This is a transparent, crystalline stone; in addition to the usual pale blue-green and orange-red varieties (these two being the most valued), the stone also comes in brownish-yellow, reddish-brown, green, and purple varieties. It is brittle and difficult to cut, and is traditionally finished as small faceted stones. The orange-red variety is called the "lesser" or "common hyacinth," or the "lesser jacinth"; the smokier form is sometimes called a "jargoan."

The zircon (the pale blue-green kind), it is said, "procures sleep, honour, and wisdom; besides driving away evil spirits." To the so-called "lesser jacinth" are attributed a lesser degree of the properties of the true *jacinth* (q.v.).

ON SAGES AND SOURCES

Unlike the situation with the Tarot or I Ching, belief in the mystic virtues of gems is, if not dead, certainly moribund. The "classic" sources for such information are thus less likely to be available to the ordinary searcher. For example, Fernie (see "Sources") described the *Magick of Kiram*, etc. (q.v.) as "a work much sought after by the learned, but seen by few, and said to be in the Vatican, at Rome" — and that was

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written several decades ago! What I found in my sources was a mass of fragmentary citations and quotations, often very poorly credited (if at all) to the "sages" being quoted.

The following notes on sages may appear skimpy; yet, there were others so inadequately identified that I cannot even cite them by name. Quoted matter in the text that is not attributed to a named sage was generally taken from one or more of the below-named sources, which either did not identify the person being quoted or gave a name which a further search could not turn up in a second source. I trust that Messrs. Dragsted and Gygax will forgive me for numbering them among the sages.

Sages (biographical notes)

Benoni: 14th-century rabbi and mystic; one of the most respected alchemists of his time.

Boetius (Anselme Boece de Boodt): Flemish doctor, court physician to Emperor Rudolf II. His *De Natura Gemmarum et Lapidum Historia* was published in Hanau (Hesse) in 1609.

Book of Saexan Leechdoms, The: Fernie (see "Sources") dates this volume from 1864; I can find no other references.

Cardamus (Girolamo Cardano, 1501-1576): Italian mathematician, physician, and astrologer. His works include *De Subtilitate Rerum* (155 1) and *De Gemmis*.

Dragsted, Ove: 20th-century gemologist; the Crown Jeweller of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Epiphanius, St. (AD 315-403): Judean priest, Bishop of Cyprus. His *De Duodecim Gemmis Quae Erunt in Veste Aaronis* was written about AD 400.

Galen (c. AD 130-200): Greek doctor, physician to the Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. His works on medicine were the standards of both Western and Islamic cultures throughout the Middle Ages.

Garcias (Garcia da Orta): Portuguese traveler, the first Occidental to publish true accounts of Asia's gem trade. His Portuguese original was published in Goa in 1563, and a Latin translation (*Aromaturn*

Historia) in 1579.

Gygax, E. Gary: 20th-century Wisconsinite writer and game designer; author of the **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** game rules, and co-creator of the **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** game rules.

Honest Jeweller, The: A work by a nameless German writer of the 17th century.

Jerome, St. (Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, c. AD 340-420): Pannonian priest and monk. Author of the Vulgate translation of The Bible, and many other works, some of which deal in passing with gems and their properties.

Leonardus, Camillus (Camillo Leonardo): Umbrian doctor, court physician to Cesare Borgia. His *Speculum Lapidum, Cui Accesserunt Metallorum Sympathiae* ("Mirror of Stones"), published in Venice in 1502, was widely translated and sometimes plagiarized.

Macer, Aemilius (died 16 BC): Roman didactic poet; author of *Theriaca*, a poem on antidotes against the poison of serpents.

Magick of Kiram, King of Persia, and of Harpocraton: An English translation of this work was published in London in 1685; see the preceding section of text.

"Magus" (Francis Barrett): English professor of chemistry; his *Celestial Intelligencer* and *Natural Magic* were both published in 1801.

Marbodeus (Marboeuf, 1037-1125): Bishop of Rennes (Brittany); his lengthy poem on gems, the *Lapidarium*, is said to be the first original didactic poem of the Middle Ages.

Nostradamus (Michel de Notredame, 1503-1566): French astrologer and physician; his cryptic prophecies are still discussed. His patrons included Catherine de Medici and Charles IX. His published remarks on gems are merely an approving repetition of the ideas of the 14th-century alchemist Pierre de Boniface.

Paracelsus, Phillipus Aureolus (real name: Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, 1493-1541): Swiss physician and alchemist. After (supposed) extensive travels in the East, he proclaimed various radically new, if logical, theories and prin-

ciples of medicine, angering many in the field. (He died after an attack by a gang of his opponents.) His works include *De Natura Rerum*.

Pliny the Elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus, AD 23-79): Roman scholar and scientist (he died from fumes he inhaled while investigating Mt. Vesuvius). His *Naturalis Historia*, the 37th book of which deals with gems, was a respected authority for more than 1,500 years.

Psellus, Michael Constantius (1018-1110): Byzantine politician and natural philosopher; author of *De Lapidibus Virtutibus* ("Virtues of Stones").

Schroder, Dr. Johann: German physician; author of a scientific work in Latin published in 1660, the English translation of which was entitled *The Compleat Chymical Dispensatory*.

Vincentius Lerinensis, St. (Vincent de Lerins; died 450): Gaulish priest; his *Commonitorium pro Catholicae Fidei Antiquitate et Universitate*, written under the pseudonym "Peregrinus" in 434, includes some remarks on gems.

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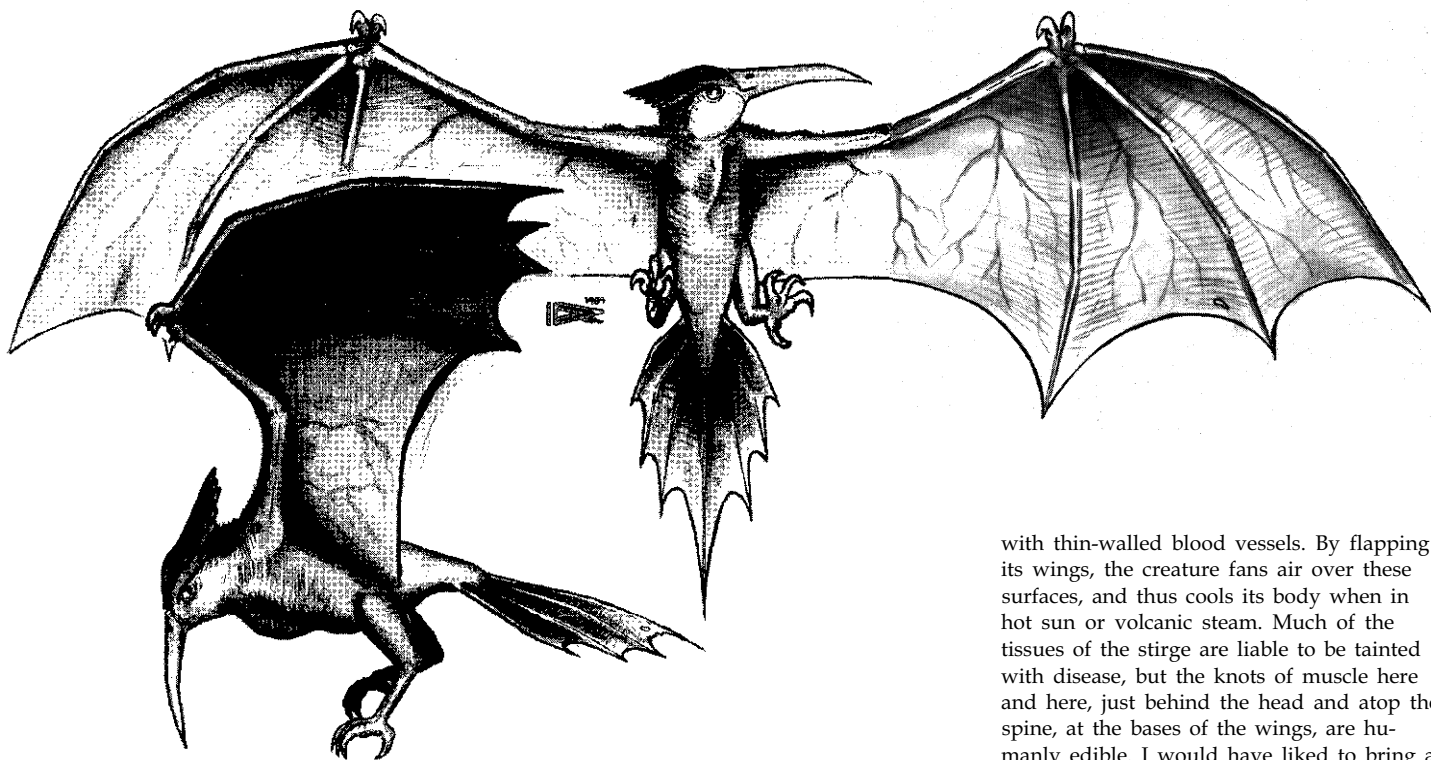
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The ecology of the stirge

by Ed Greenwood

From an address by the naturalist Elm-daerle to the assembled Guild of Naturalists in Arabel:

"... Understandably, little research has been done on the life and habits of that disgusting and dangerous creature, the stirge. I have endeavored to learn what I can of them, and have, as you can see, brought along a specimen.

"No, no, it's quite dead. . . . The stirge, as we all know, subsists entirely on a diet of blood, and will attack all warm-blooded mammals, although it seems to prefer man. Quite often, stirge swarms follow herds of domestic or nomadic animals — cattle, caribou, and sheep being most often afflicted; and where such herds are, one should always expect to meet, and be prepared for, these little fellows. Caravans, traveling pilgrims, and even armed war-bands have been harried through wilderness areas by large flights of stirges; we've all heard the gruesome stories of drained, white victims and a few lucky, narrow escapes. I've studied these creatures for some time, to get at the truth — and the tales and legends, I fear, are not far wrong.

"In flight, the stirge is highly maneuverable¹, and groups of them are capable of cooperative unison attacks and mid-air actions. As you can see, it is really little more than an expandable blood-bag with wings, eyes, and claws — for clinging onto prey — and a long, hollow needle-beak or

proboscis, admirably suited for drawing blood. This specimen appears to be of about average size, measuring just under one foot from top of head to tip of tail, and with a wingspan of just less than three feet. The wings may look unusually large, but if they were smaller, the stirge would not be able to maneuver as well as it does when its body cavity is filled with blood.

"The proboscis, properly treated, can serve as a sharp but brittle stabbing weapon, much favored, I am told, by goblins and similar unpleasant creatures. When the stirge is alive, the proboscis contains at its tip a supply of clear liquid, produced in the stirge's body and steadily replenished; this is an anti-coagulant, which mixes with a victim's blood to keep it from clotting in the proboscis or in the stomach where it ends up. The stirge, because of its diet, can transmit diseases — malaria, for instance — from one victim to the next.²

"Ingested blood passes straight into the stomach. This serves as a storage bag which the creature always tries to keep at least partially full. From this reservoir the creature draws small quantities into lesser cavities located just beneath its backbone. There its body processes convert blood sugar into body energy, and ingested blood into plasma balanced for its own bodily use, so that it can replace its own lost blood and hasten its recovery from wounds.³

"The interior of its wings is interlaced

with thin-walled blood vessels. By flapping its wings, the creature fans air over these surfaces, and thus cools its body when in hot sun or volcanic steam. Much of the tissues of the stirge are liable to be tainted with disease, but the knots of muscle here and here, just behind the head and atop the spine, at the bases of the wings, are humanly edible. I would have liked to bring a prepared, sample meal with me tonight, but I was unable to procure fresh stirges — and once a stirge's legs have stiffened after death, no part of its body is safe to eat.

"The creature's claws are not strong enough to be effective weapons for the beast, but they are firmly embedded in its legs and at the midpoint of the leading edge of its wings, and they enable the creature to maintain; tenacious hold once it has attached itself to its prey. The claws serve some cloth-makers and workers for carding wool, brushing away hairs from garments, and so on. They are not strong enough for the fanciful uses attributed to them in the tales of thieves — they are far too brittle and small to serve as grappling hooks for climbing-lines.⁴

"Stirges swarm to attack prey, which is why they are so feared — one can be a formidable foe, but a large group can be deadly to even well-defended creatures. Stirges usually lair in forests, disused castles, or caverns, and may incidentally possess treasure from victims who have fallen to them therein, or from hoards laid down before their arrival, but they are not intelligent enough to value, or bargain with, treasure as we know it. A ranger of my acquaintance tells me that stirges in deep woods like to drive prey into tangled ravines, so that the victims cannot escape readily, or find steady footing, room, and balance to defend themselves properly — and any treasure carried by these unfortunates may well be found among their bones at the bottoms of these ravines.

"Although a thirsty swarm of stirges may seem endless when they're all swooping down at you, typically only three to thirty nest together in a colony, from which they fly out in all directions to find food, usually in groups of three. By means of wagging their proboscis, stirges can communicate that

food or a dangerous enemy has been found, its direction, size or strength, and a degree of excitement or urgency regarding the desired reaction of the whole swarm. If a flight of three stirges finds prey, they will circle to observe it, and then two will harry, chase, or if it is strong merely fly along observing it, while the third stirge flies for home. Its message will spread via all the stirges it meets, and to all who call in home at the nest, and they will gather in a group to seek out the prey and kill it. Small prey is merely attacked by the hunting threesome for their own gain, and they give its location only later, if blood yet remains for their fellows.⁵

"Winter cold does not seem to affect stirges in any way, and they breed freely throughout the year. They reproduce by live birth, in litters of one to three young, with a gestation period of six months. Males and females are outwardly identical in size and appearance to our eyes. The tiny young cannot fly properly, but only glide, and are carried on the mother's back for up to four months, until their blood-drinking from prey⁶ provides sufficient nourishment for them to grow to about half of adult size. Then they can maneuver on their own, and in another three months at most they reach full adult size.

"I suppose that most of you have never seen a young stirge, and I regret that I could not procure one to bring as a specimen. The adults, however, you all should

know: pests feared by man and beast alike. My colleagues Ainsbrith and Bremaerel of Westgate are experimenting with poisoning stirges, but so far report limited success. Just as they are apparently immune to the diseases they transmit, so are they unaffected by the same poisons that harm us; the creatures seem both adaptable and of rugged constitution.

"And that, fellow naturalists, is a brief look at the stirge. As more information becomes available, I will share it with the group, and I will expect each of you to do the same."

Notes:

1. Stirges are flight class A; if their wings are damaged and/or they are fully bloated with blood, and/or they have only 1 or 2 hit points, they may be reduced to Flight Class B or C and 16" or 12" aerial movement rate, at the DM's option. A mother with young on her back (see text and note 6 below) is penalized even further, dropping down one more flight class and another 4" in movement rate, compared to what she would be if she were not so encumbered.

2. Diseases contracted from stirges will almost always affect the "blood/blood-forming organs" of the body (see DMG), and be of the *acute* type. There is a 5% chance for any adult stirge to transmit a disease to its victim on a successful hit.

3. Stirges can always regenerate lost body parts (over a period of 1-3 months) or heal

even the most severe wounds (replacing up to 4 lost hit points every 24 hours), so long as their heads and spines remain relatively undamaged, and food — i.e., fresh blood — is plentiful.

4. Stirge claws resemble the better types of fish-hooks, in that they are both hooked and barbed, curving to a point, which has a side-fin or point projecting backward from its tip toward its shaft, in the same way that the edges of an arrowhead form two points facing back toward the flight-feathers. In a live (un-stiffened) stirge, these barbs are not rigid, but can be retracted into the claw by means of strong cartilage-and-muscle linkages — thus, a stirge can hook itself into a victim through gaps in metal armor or by

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simply piercing leather or lighter clothing, so that it cannot be torn free except by also tearing away parts of its victim's flesh (1-2 points of damage per claw torn out, 4 claws per stirge). In determining whether or not a stirge's attack is successful, consider a missed "to hit" roll as indicating that the creature's claws failed to latch on to the intended victim or victim's clothing/armor. If a stirge hits successfully, it has grabbed on with its claws and struck with its proboscis in the same round; generally, a stirge's proboscis can strike into or through any surface on a victim that its claws can attach to. Immediately after death, a stirge's muscles relax, and it ceases both to drain further blood and to hold its barbs in — but if it is not removed from its victim within 4-6 turns, and is allowed to stiffen while attached, the barbs will have been extended again as the stirge's muscles convulse, and the body of the stirge will then *have* to be torn free of its victim, doing damage as specified above. If it is attached to armor, but not flesh, then the creature will be easily shaken or pulled loose by normal movement when its muscles are relaxed.

5. As many as six stirges can comfortably (for the stirges, that is) attach themselves to the body of one man or other M-sized creature at the same time. Sometimes more than six will do so, but usually only if the entire swarm is very thirsty, if the victim is a solitary creature, and if the victim has enough blood (i.e., hit points) so that each

of the attackers can drain at least a little blood. A charitable DM might rule that each stirge after the third one attacking a single target does so at a cumulative -1 "to hit" (-2 for the fifth, -3 for the sixth, etc.), because the target is, in effect, smaller since other stirges are already attached.

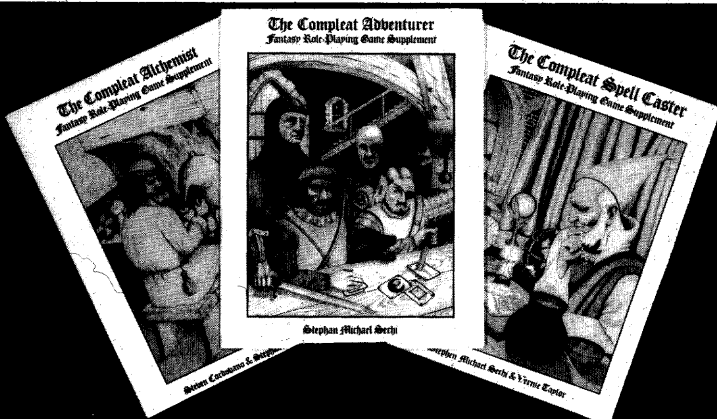
Stirges will attack the trunk of a victim's body in preference to the extremities, since the target area is larger, and those who sink their claws into a victim's back will be virtually immune to counterattack by the victim himself. A companion can try to attack the stirges on a victim's body, but if he misses such an attack and rolls 4 or more under the number needed "to hit," he hits the victim instead of the stirge, and the weapon strike will do half normal damage (round down) to the victim. The first successful attack by a stirge will be upon a victim's back 66% of the time (4 in 6 chance), or else on the front of the torso. If the first attack hits the front, the second successful attack will always be on the back. After that, other stirges will attach themselves to the extremities — but must always hit the victim's original armor class (not AC 10, even if the arm or leg being hit is unprotected). This "hit location" determination is useful in knowing whether a stirge's claws are embedded in armor or flesh.

A stirge filled with its quota of blood can subsist on that nourishment for as long as 72 hours, and can go another 24 hours without food after that before starving to

death. However, stirges will instinctively seek out new prey starting 36 hours after their last "full meal," at which time they will have digested half of their full capacity.

6. Although a litter of young stirges (stirgelings) can number as many as three, a mother can only carry two offspring on her back while they mature. The other one must survive on its own, or perish; other stirges will not transport the young in place of the mother. For every eight stirges encountered in a single group, whether in their lair or otherwise, one of those creatures will be a mother bearing 1 or 2 young on her back. When a mother carrying stirgelings scores a hit on prey, the young on her back can begin attacking on the round following her initial hit. Attacks from young are at -2 "to hit," they do 1 point of initial damage from the proboscis, and drain 1-2 hit points of blood per round on following rounds, becoming satiated at 6 hit points' worth. The mother must be detached (killed) to stop the young from draining. If she drains her full quota of blood, she will remove her proboscis but remain attached to the victim until she feels her young also pull free, signaling that they have also drunk their fill. Stirgelings can easily be torn free from their mother's back, and typically have only 1-4 hit points. Stirges who fall from their mother's back without being slain will die unless they can find food (usually by crawling into burrows to attack young woodland animals). ☒

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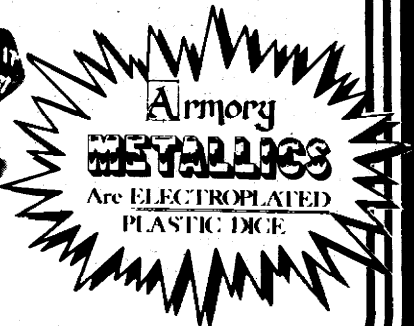
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The test of the twins

Fiction by Margaret Weis



The twins Caramon (left) and Raistlin are central characters in the DRAGONLANCE saga. In this short story, the young mage Raistlin must pass great tests devised by long-dead sages and wizards. The outcome proves devastating for both Raistlin and his brother.

The magician and his brother rode through the mists toward the secret place.

"We shouldn't have come," Caramon muttered. His large, strong hand was on the hilt of his great sword, and his eyes searched every shadow. "I have been in many dangerous places, but nothing to equal this!"

Raistlin glanced around. He noticed dark, twisted shadows and heard strange sounds.

"They will not bother us, brother," he said gently. "We have been invited. They are guardians who keep out the unwanted." He did, however, draw his red robes closer around his thin body and moved to ride nearer Caramon.

"Mages invited us . . . I don't trust 'em." Caramon scowled.

Raistlin glanced at him. "Does that include me, dear brother?" he asked softly.

Caramon did not reply.

Although twins; the two brothers could not have been more different. Raistlin, frail and sickly magician and scholar, pondered this difference frequently. They were one whole man split in two: Caramon the body, Raistlin the mind. As such, the two needed and depended on each other far more than other brothers. But, in some ways, it was an unwholesome dependence, for it was as if each was incomplete without the other. At least, this was how it seemed to Raistlin. He bitterly resented whatever gods had played such a trick which cursed him with a weak body when he longed for mastery over others. He was thankful that, at least, he had been granted the skills of a magician. It

gave him the power he craved. These skills almost made him the equal of his brother.

Caramon — strong and muscular, a born fighter — always laughed heartily whenever Raistlin discussed their differences. Caramon enjoyed being his "little" brother's protector. But, although he was very fond of Raistlin, Caramon pitied his weaker twin. Unfortunately, Caramon had a tendency to express his brotherly concern in unthoughtful ways. He often let his pity show, not realizing it was like a knife twisting in his brother's soul.

Caramon admired his brother's skill as a magician as one admires a festival juggler. He did not treat it seriously or respectfully. Caramon had met neither man nor monster that could not be handled by the sword. Therefore, he could not understand this

dangerous trip his brother was undertaking for the sake of his magic.

"It's all parlor tricks, Raist," Caramon protested. "Riding into that forsaken land is nothing to risk our lives over."

Raistlin replied gently — he always spoke gently to Caramon — that he was determined on this course of action for reasons of his own and that Caramon could come if he so chose. Of course, Caramon went. The two had rarely been separated from one another since their birth.

The journey was long and hazardous. Caramon's sword was frequently drawn. Raistlin felt his strength ebbing. They were near the end now. Raistlin rode in silence, oppressed with the doubt and fear that shrouded him as it had when he first decided on this course of action. Perhaps Caramon was right, perhaps he was risking their lives needlessly.

It had been three months ago when the Head of the Order arrived at his master's home. Par-Salian had invited Raistlin to visit with him as he dined — much to the master's surprise.

"When do you take the Test, Raistlin?" the old man asked the young conjurer.

"Test?" Raistlin repeated, startled. No need to ask which Test — there was only one

"He is not ready, Par-Salian," his master protested. "He is young — only twenty-one! His spellbook is far from complete —"

"Yes," Par-Salian interrupted, his eyes narrowing. "But you believe you are ready, don't you, Raistlin?"

Raistlin had kept his eyes lowered, in the proper show of humility, his hood drawn over his face. Suddenly, he threw back his hood and lifted his head, staring directly, proudly, at Par-Salian. "I am ready, Great One," Raistlin spoke coolly.

Par-Salian nodded, his eyes glittering. "Begin your journey in three months' time," the old man said, then went back to eating his fish.

Raistlin's master gave him a furious glance, rebuking him for his impudence. Par-Salian did not look at him again. The young conjurer bowed and left without a word.

The servant let him out; however, Raistlin slipped back through the unlocked door, cast a sleep spell upon the servant, and stood, hidden in the alcove, listening to the conversation between his master and Par-Salian.

"The Order has never tested one so young," the master said. "And you chose him! Of all my pupils, he is the most unworthy! I simply do not understand."

"You don't like him, do you?" Par-Salian asked mildly.

"No one does," the master snapped. "There is no compassion in him, no humanity. He is greedy and grasping, difficult to trust. Did you know that his nickname among the other students is the Sly One? He absorbs from everyone's soul and gives back nothing of his own. His eyes are mir-

rors; they reflect all he sees in cold, brittle terms."

"He is highly intelligent," Par-Salian suggested.

"Oh, there's no denying that," the master sniffed. "He is my best pupil. And he has a natural affinity for magic. Not one of those surface-users."

"Yes," Par-Salian agreed. "Raistlin's magic springs from deep within."

"But it springs from a dark well," the master said, shaking his head. "Sometimes I look at him and shudder, seeing the Black Robes fall upon him. That will be his destiny, I fear."

"I think not," Par-Salian said thoughtfully. "There is more to him than you see, though I admit he keeps it well hidden. More to him than he knows himself, I'll wager."

"Mmmmm," the master sounded very dubious.

Raistlin smiled to himself, a twisted smile. It came as no surprise to learn his master's true feelings. Raistlin sneered. Who cared, he thought bitterly. As for Par-Salian — Raistlin shrugged it off.

"What of his brother?" Par-Salian asked. Raistlin, his ear pressed against the door, frowned.

"Ah," the master became effusive. "Night and day. Caramon is handsome, honorable, trusting, everyone's friend. Theirs is a strange relationship. I have seen Raistlin watch Caramon with a fierce, burning love in his eyes. And the next instant, I have seen such hatred and jealousy I think the young man could murder his twin without giving it a second thought." He coughed, apologetically. "Let me send you Algenon, Great One. He is not as intelligent as Raistlin, but his heart is true and good."

"Algenon is too good," Par-Salian snorted. "He has never known torment or suffering or evil. Set him in a cold, biting wind and he will wither like a maiden's first rose. But Raistlin — well, one who constantly battles evil within will not be overly dismayed by evil without."

Raistlin heard chairs scrape. Par-Salian stood up.

"Let's not argue. I was given a choice to make and I have made it," Par-Salian said.

"Forgive me, Great One, I did not mean to be contradictory," the master said stiffly, hurt.

Raistlin heard Par-Salian sigh wearily. "I should be the one to apologize, old friend," he said. "Forgive me. There is trouble coming upon us that the world may well not survive. This choice has been a heavy burden upon me. As you know, the Test may well prove fatal to the young man."

"It has killed others more worthy," the master murmured.

Their conversation turned to other matters, so Raistlin crept away.

The young mage considered Par-Salian's words many times during the weeks that followed while he prepared for his journey.

Sometimes he would hug himself with pride at being chosen by the Great One to take the Test — the greatest honor conferred on a magician. But, at night, the words *may well prove fatal* haunted his dreams.

He thought, as he drew nearer and nearer the Towers, about those who had not survived. Their belongings had been returned to their families, without a single word (other than Par-Salian's regrets). For

Dragonlance

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this reason, many magicians did not take the Test. After all, it gave no additional power. It added no spells to the spellbook. One could practice magic quite well without it, and many did so. But they were not considered "true" magic-users by their peers, and they knew it. The Test gave a mage an aura that surrounded him, exuded from him. When entering the presence of others, this aura was deeply felt by all and, therefore, commanded respect.

Raistlin hungered for that respect. But did he hunger for it enough to be willing to die trying to obtain it?

"There it is!" Caramon interrupted his thoughts, reining his horse in sharply.

"The fabled Towers of High Sorcery," Raistlin said, staring in awe.

The two tall stone towers resembled

skeletal fingers, clawing out of the grave.

"We could turn back now," Caramon croaked, his voice breaking.

Raistlin looked at his brother in astonishment. For the first time since he could remember, Raistlin saw fear in Caramon. The young conjurer felt an unusual sensation — a warmth spread over him. He reached out and put a steady hand on his brother's trembling arm. "Do not be afraid, Caramon," Raistlin said. "I am with you."

Caramon looked at Raistlin, then laughed nervously to himself. He urged his horse forward.

The two entered the Tower. Vast stone walls and darkness swallowed them up, then they heard the voice: "Approach."

The two walked ahead. Raistlin walked steadfastly, but Caramon moved warily, his hand on the hilt of his sword. They came to stand before a withered figure sitting in the center of a cold, empty chamber.

"Welcome, Raistlin," Par-Salian said. "Do you consider yourself prepared to undergo your final Test?"

"I do, Par-Salian, Greatest of Them All." Par-Salian studied the young man before him. The conjurer's pale, thin cheeks were stained with a faint flush, as though fever burned in his blood. "Who accompanies you?" Par-Salian asked.

"My twin brother Caramon, Great Mage." Raistlin's mouth twisted into a snarl. "As you see, Great One, I am no fighter. My brother came to protect me."

Par-Salian stared at the brothers, reflecting on the odd humor of the gods. Twins! *This Caramon is huge. Six feet tall, he must weigh over two hundred pounds. His face — a face of smiles and boisterous laughter; the eyes are as open as his heart. Poor Raistlin.*

Par-Salian turned his gaze back to the young man whose red robes hung from thin, stooped shoulders. Obviously weak, Raistlin was one who could never take what he wanted, so he had learned, long ago, that magic could compensate for his deficiencies. Par-Salian looked into the eyes. No, they were not mirrors as the master had said — not for those with the power to see deeply. There was good inside the young man — an inner core of strength that would enable his fragile body to endure much. But now his soul was a cold, shapeless mass, dark with pride, greed, and selfishness. Therefore, as a shapeless mass of metal is plunged into a white-hot fire and emerges shining steel, so Par-Salian intended to forge this conjurer.

"Your brother cannot stay," the Mage admonished softly.

"I am aware of that, Great One," Raistlin replied with a hint of impatience.

"He will be well cared for in your absence," Par-Salian continued. "And, of course, he will be allowed to carry home your valuables should the test prove beyond your skill."

"Carry home . . . valuables . . ." Caramon's face became grim as he considered

this statement. Then it darkened as he understood the full meaning of the Mage's words. "You mean —"

Raistlin's voice cut in, sharp, edged. "He means, dear brother, that you will take home my possessions in the event of my death."

Par-Salian shrugged.

"Failure, invariably, proves fatal."

"Yes, you're right. I forgot that death could be a result of this . . . ritual." Caramon's face crumpled into wrinkles of fear. He laid his hand on his brother's arm. "I think you should forget this, Raist. Let's go home."

Raistlin twitched at his brother's touch, his thin body shuddering. "Do I counsel you to refuse battle?" he flared. Then, controlling his anger, he continued more calmly. "This is my battle, Caramon. Do not worry. I will not fail."

Caramon pleaded. "Please, Raist . . . I'm supposed to take care of you —"

"Leave me!" Raistlin's control cracked, splintered, wounding his brother.

Caramon fell backward. "All right," he mumbled. "I'll . . . I'll meet you . . . outside." He flashed the Mage a threatening glance. Then he turned and walked out of the chamber, his huge battlesword clanking against his thigh.

A door thudded, then there was silence.

"I apologize for my brother," Raistlin said, his lips barely moving.

"Do you?" Par-Salian asked. "Why?"

The young man scowled. "Because he always . . . Oh, can't we just get on with this?" His hands clenched beneath the sleeves of his robe.

"Of course," the Mage replied, leaning back in his chair.

Raistlin stood straight, eyes open and unblinking. Then he drew in a sharp breath.

The Mage made a gesture. There was a sound, a shattering crack. Quickly, the conjurer vanished.

A voice spoke from the nether regions. "Why must we test this one so severely?"

Par-Salian's twisted hands clasped and unclasped. "Who questions the gods?" he frowned. "They demanded a sword. I found one, but his metal is white hot. He must be beaten . . . tempered. . . made useful."

"And if he breaks?"

"Then we will bury the pieces," murmured the Mage.

Raistlin dragged himself away from the dead body of the dark elf. Wounded and exhausted, he crawled into a shadowy corridor and slumped against a wall. Pain twisted him. He clutched his stomach and retched. When the convulsion subsided, he lay back on the stone floor and waited for death.

Why are they doing this to me? he wondered through a dreamy haze of pain. Only a young conjurer, he had been subjected to trials devised by the most renowned Mages

— living and dead. The fact that he must pass these tests was no longer his main thought; survival, however, was. Each trial had wounded him, and his health had always been precarious. If he survived this ordeal — and he doubted he would — he could imagine his body to be like a shattered crystal, held together by the force of his own will.

But then, of course, there was Caramon, who would care for him — as always.

Ha! The thought penetrated the haze, even made Raistlin laugh harshly. No, death was preferable to a life of total dependence on his brother. Raistlin lay back on the stone floor, wondering how much longer they would let him suffer. . . .

. . . And a huge figure materialized out of the shadowy darkness of the corridor.

This is it, Raistlin thought, my final test. The one I won't survive.

He decided simply not to fight, even though he had one spell left. Maybe death would be quick and merciful.

He lay on his back, staring at the dark shadow as it drew closer and closer. It came to stand next to him. He could sense its living presence, hear its breathing. It bent over him. Involuntarily, he closed his eyes.

"Raist?"

He felt cold fingers touch his burning flesh.

"Raist!" the voice sobbed. "In the name of the gods, what have they done to you?"

"Caramon," Raistlin spoke, but he couldn't hear his own voice. His throat was raw from coughing.

"I'm taking you out of here," his brother announced firmly.

Raistlin felt strong arms slip under his body. He smelled the familiar smell of sweat and leather, heard the familiar sound of armor creak and broadsword clank.

"No!" In an effort not to show his belief that he had failed to Caramon, Raistlin pushed against his brother's massive chest with a frail, fragile hand. "Leave me, Caramon! My tests are not complete! Leave me!" His voice was an inaudible croak, then he gagged violently.

Caramon lifted him easily, cradled him in his strong arms. "Nothing is worth this. Rest easy, Raist." The big man choked. As they walked under a flickering torch, Raistlin could see tears on his brother's cheeks. He made one last effort.

"They won't allow us to go, Caramon!" He raised his head, gasping for breath.

"You're only putting yourself in danger!"

"Let them come," Caramon said grimly, walking with firm steps down the dimly lit corridor.

Raistlin sank back, helpless, his head resting on Caramon's shoulder. He felt comforted by his brother's strength, though he cursed him inwardly.

You fool! Raistlin closed his eyes wearily. *You great, stubborn fool! Now we'll both die. And, of course, you will die protecting me. Even in death I'll be indebted to you!*

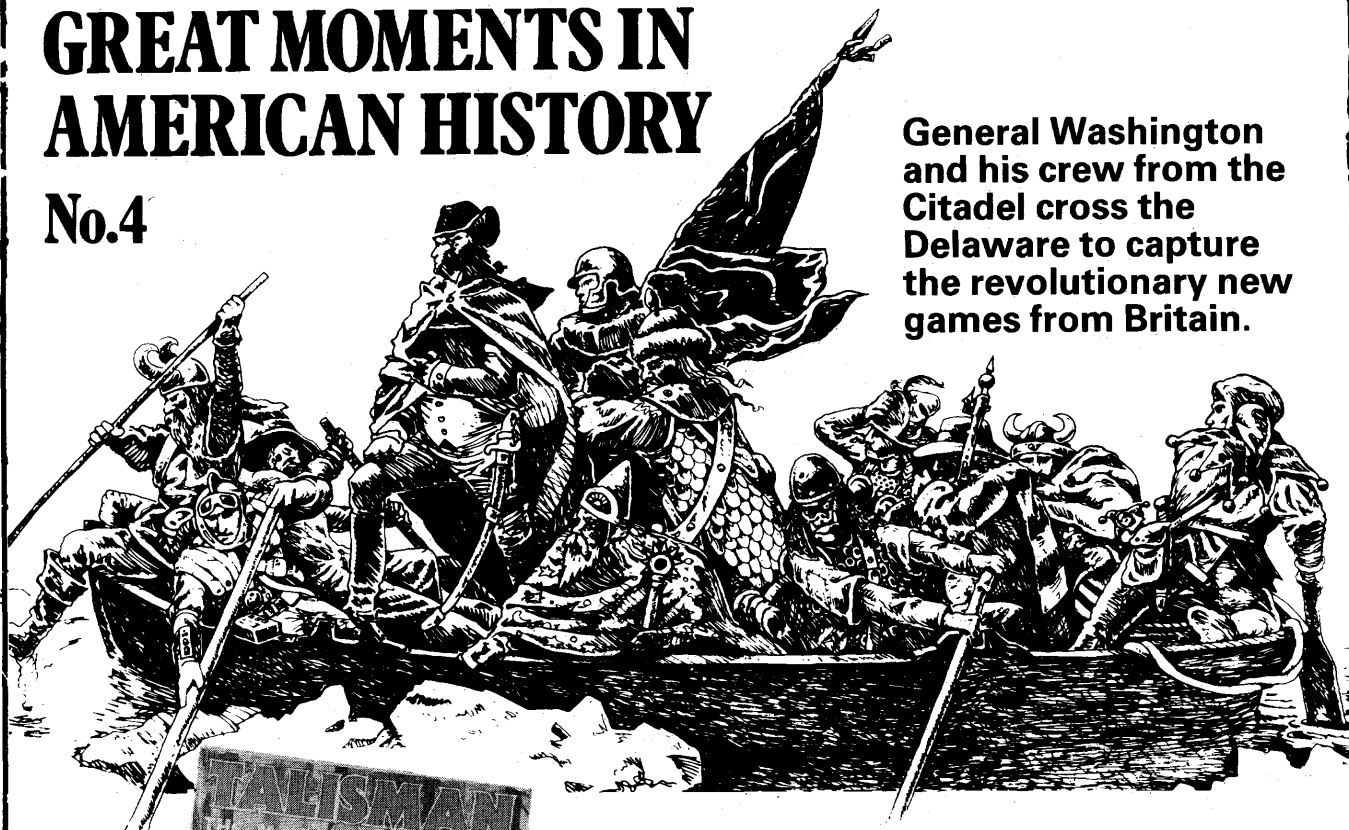
"Ah . . ."

Raistlin heard and felt the sharp intake of

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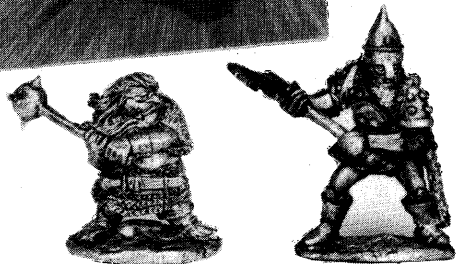
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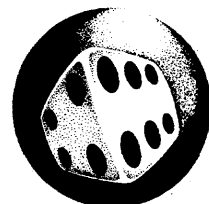
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breath into his brother's body. Caramon's walk had slowed. Raistlin raised his head and peered ahead.

"A wraith," he breathed.

"Mmmmm . . ." Caramon rumbled deeply in his chest — his battle-cry.

"My magic can destroy it," Raistlin protested as Caramon laid him gently on the stone floor. *Burning Hands*, Raistlin thought grimly. A weak spell against a wraith, but he had to try. "Move, Caramon! I have just enough strength left."

Caramon did not answer. He turned around and walked toward the wraith, blocking Raistlin's view.

Clinging to the wall, the conjurer clawed his way to a standing position and raised his hand. Just as he was about to expend his strength in one last shout, hoping to warn off his brother, he stopped and stared in disbelief. Caramon raised his hand. Where before he had held a sword, now he held a rod of amber. In the other hand, his shield hand, he held a bit of fur. He rubbed the two together, spoke some magic words — and a lightning bolt flashed, striking the wraith in the chest. It shrieked, but kept coming, intent on draining Caramon's life energy. Caramon kept his hands raised. He spoke again. Another bolt sizzled, catching the wraith in its head. And suddenly there was nothing.

"Now we'll get out of here," Caramon said with satisfaction. The rod and the fur were gone. He turned around. "The door is just ahead —"

"How did you do that?" Raistlin said, propping himself up against the wall.

Caramon halted, alarmed by his brother's wild, frenzied stare.

"Do what?" the fighter blinked.

"The magic!" Raistlin shrieked in fury. "The magic!"

"Oh, that," Caramon shrugged. "I've always been able to. Most of the time I don't need it, what with my sword and all, but you're hurt real bad and I've got to get you out of here. I didn't want to take time fighting that character. Don't bother about it, Raist. It can still be your little specialty. Like I said before, most of the time I don't need it."

This is impossible, Raistlin's mind told him. He couldn't have acquired in moments what it took years of study to attain. This doesn't make sense. Fight the sickness and the weakness and the pain! Think!

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But it wasn't the physical pain that clouded Raistlin's mind. It was the old inner pain clawing at him, tearing at him with poisoned talons. Caramon, strong and cheerful, good and kind, open and honest. Everyone's friend.

Not like Raistlin — the runt, the sly one.

All I ever had was my magic, Raistlin's mind shrieked. And now he has that too!

Propping himself against the wall for support, Raistlin raised both his hands, put his thumbs together, and pointed them at Caramon. He began murmuring magic words, but different from those that Caramon had spoken.

"Raist?" Caramon backed up. "What are you doing? C'mon! Let me help you. I'll take care of you — just like always . . . Raist! I'm your brother!"

Raistlin's parched lips cracked in a grin. Hatred and jealousy — long kept bubbling and molten beneath a layer of cold, solid rock — burst forth. Magic coursed through his body and flamed out of his hands. He was astonished as he watched the fire flare, billow, and engulf Caramon. When the fighter became a living torch, Raistlin knew from his training that what he was seeing simply could not be. The instant that he realized something was wrong with this occurrence, the burning image of his brother vanished. A moment later, Raistlin lost consciousness and slumped to the ground.

"Awaken, Raistlin, your trials are complete."

Raistlin opened his eyes. The darkness was gone; sunshine streamed through a window. He lay in a bed. Looking down at him was the withered face of Par-Salian.

"Why?" Raistlin rasped, clutching at the Mage in fury. "Why did you do that to me?"

Par-Salian laid his hand on the frail young man's shoulder. "The gods asked for a sword, Raistlin, and now I can give them one — you. Evil is coming upon the land. The fate of all this world called Krynn swings in the balance. Through the aid of your hand and others, the balance will be restored."

Raistlin stared, then laughed, briefly and bitterly. "Save Krynn? How? You have shattered my body. I can't even see properly!" He stared in terror. . . .

. . . For, as Raistlin watched, he could see the Mage's face dying. Then, when he turned his gaze to the window, the stones he looked at crumbled before his eyes. Wherever he looked, everything was falling into ruin and decay. Then, the moment passed, and his vision cleared.

Par-Salian handed him a mirror. Raistlin saw that his own face was sunken and hollow. His skin was a golden color now, with a faint metallic cast; this would be a symbol of the agony he had endured. But it was his eyes that caused him to recoil in horror, for the black pupils were no longer round — they were the shape of hourglasses!

"You see through hourglass eyes now,

Raistlin. And so you see time, as it touches all things. You see death, whenever you look on life. Thus you will always be aware of the brief timespan we spend in the world." Par-Salian shook his head. "There will be no joy in your life, Raistlin, I fear — indeed, little joy for anyone living on Krynn." Raistlin laid the mirror face down. "My brother?" he asked, his voice barely a whisper.

"It was an illusion that I created — my personal challenge for you to look deeper into your own heart and examine the ways in which you deal with those closest to you," Par-Salian said gently. "As for your brother, he is here, safe . . . quite safe. Here he comes now."

As Caramon entered the room, Raistlin sat up, shoving Par-Salian aside. Caramon appeared relieved to see that Raistlin had enough energy to greet him, but Caramon's eyes reflected a certain sadness that comes from learning an unpleasant truth.

"I didn't think you would want to recognize the illusion for what it was," Par-Salian said. "But you did; after all, what magic-user can work spells, carrying a sword or wearing armor?"

"Then I did not fail?" Raistlin murmured hoarsely.

"No," Par-Salian smiled. "The final of the Test was the defeat of the dark elf — truly superb for one of your experience."

Raistlin looked at his brother's haunted face, his averted eyes. "He watched me kill him, didn't he?" Raistlin whispered.

"Yes," Par-Salian looked from one to the other. "I am sorry I had to do this to you, Raistlin. You have much to learn, mage — mercy, compassion, forbearance. It is my hope that the trials you face ahead of you will teach you what you lack now. If not, you will succumb in the end to the fate your master foresaw. But, as of now, you and your brother truly know each other. The barriers between you have been battered down, though I am afraid each of you has suffered wounds in the encounter. I hope the scars make you stronger."

Par-Salian rose to leave. "Use your powers well, mage. The time is close at hand when your strength must save the world."

Raistlin bowed his head and sat in silence until Par-Salian had left the room. Then he stood up, leaning on a wooden staff. He staggered and nearly fell.

Caramon jumped forward. Raistlin met his brother's eyes. Caramon faltered, stopped.

Raistlin sighed. For long moments, there was no sound at all in the room. Then Raistlin felt his strength begin to give way. Pain wracked his body. He grew dizzy, shut his eyes to block their horrible vision. He held out his arms. "Help me, brother," the mage whispered, weeping. "Help me, Caramon."

"I'm here, Raist," his brother's voice was near him, then his brother's arms were around him, supporting him.

"Forgive me," both spoke together. ✕

The Dancing Hut

An AD&D™ game adventure for high-level heroes

Designed by Roger Moore



The Dancing Hut

For the DM's
eyes only

Referee's introduction

High-level adventures are hard to come by. Every month, readers write to DRAGON® Magazine asking for modules in which powerful characters can test their skills against powerful enemies, but settings like that are uncommon.

High-level characters often run into high-level magic items, and the most powerful magic items are relics and artifacts. What follows is a description of one of the most famous of all artifacts: The Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga. This magical hut serves as its own high-level adventuring environment, and the material below suggests some scenarios for this setting, too.

Before running an AD&D™ adventure using this material, the referee should read through this module carefully and be as familiar with it as possible. He should pay special attention to the Dancing Hut's peculiar construction. Because all referees handle high-level adventures differently, and because this magazine has space limitations, Baba Yaga's Hut is presented here in general form. Specific details on the exact contents of the Hut's rooms and inhabitants should be filled out by individual DMs, so that no two versions of the Dancing Hut need look exactly alike.

The Dancing Hut is designed to challenge high-level characters to the limits of their ability; characters below 9th level should not go adventuring in this module. The referee should try to avoid having adventurers arbitrarily killed off. On the other hand, adventurers shouldn't receive "Monty Haul" rewards, either.

A final note: Baba Yaga and her Dancing Hut have been previously described in issues of DRAGON Magazine and the Dungeon Masters Guide; this adventure setting, however, contains a version that differs from each (influenced by the author's research on Baba Yaga).

Adventuring scenarios

Baba Yaga's Dancing Hut may be introduced into AD&D campaigns in a variety of ways, depending on the goals and temperament of the players and characters. The scenarios below may be elaborated upon by the Dungeon Master as desired.

1) Baba Yaga was known to raid the countryside around her Hut in search of people to eat; she would kidnap them and escape, taking the victims to her magical Hut where she would have them prepared for her dinner. Player characters may find that one of their number, or a close ally and friend, has been captured by the witch and carried off. A rescue mission may be launched, though no one may know at first that Baba Yaga is the one responsible (a rude surprise indeed!).

2) Rumors are heard that some magical

item the characters are seeking (a magical sword, a piece of the *Rod of Seven Parts*, etc.) was taken by an ugly old woman who rode in a huge iron kettle that skimmed over the ground. The woman disappeared with the item into a dark wood and has not been seen since. Local people can point out the way the old woman went, though characters will have to search before finding the Hut itself. The PCs may try stealing the item or may bargain for it.

3) Adventurers may have heard of Baba Yaga's Hut, and they may wish to find and possibly seize it. The Hut doesn't remain in any single location (see below); it can wander the planes freely. There might, however, be certain places where characters are likely to discover it. The referee decides where these places are, though they should be located far from civilization and in relatively dangerous wilderness areas. If this scenario is used, the referee should prevent Baba Yaga's death at the hands of the PCs if possible; she can then harass the characters for many games to come.

4) Adventurers may need to consult Baba Yaga for advice, or perhaps for a special conjuring spell. They may seek an enchantment, a cure, or some other form of assistance. Baba Yaga is evil, but the characters don't have to be evil to consult her. See the character description of Baba Yaga for more information. The Hut becomes the starting point for a series of other tough adventures.

A good DM will play Baba Yaga well to keep her alive for many adventures. She is a rare and valuable NPC.

The Hut's location

According to the Russian folk tales of Baba Yaga's Hut, this dwelling may appear almost anywhere one could imagine. It has been seen in tangled swamps, dark woodlands, open fields, and even underground in huge caverns. Usually the Dancing Hut appears near a thick forest or in a clearing within it.

All normal wildlife within a five-mile radius of the Hut will soon flee, leaving only certain magical creatures living in the Hut that directly serve Baba Yaga. Baba Yaga will tolerate no strong evil rivals around her, and most intelligent beings come to fear her more than death itself. Legends about Baba Yaga are found across dozens of alternate Prime Material planes. Normal humans, demihumans, and humanoids may flee if they are aware that she and her Hut have arrived in the area.

The Hut's appearance

Baba Yaga spent much of her early life constructing the Dancing Hut, which now serves as her mobile fortress, home, and helper. The Dancing Hut is a small, windowless log cabin, hexagonal in shape, with

a decorated wooden roof. Only 15' wide and 12' high at the peak of the roof, with a small chimney on top, the Hut does not appear very impressive — except for the 12' long chicken legs coming out from the bottom.

When first sighted, the Hut will usually be "dancing" by spinning about rapidly on its feet. The Hut will make about one revolution every six or seven seconds, with the feet stamping the ground every half second. If someone is entering or leaving the Hut, the legs will fold up into a 2-foot-deep crawlspace beneath it, so that the Hut rests on the ground.

If so commanded by Baba Yaga, the two huge legs can move the Hut at a very rapid pace (48" over smooth ground, 36" over rough terrain or swampland, 24" through woods and mountains). About 2' thick, the legs are treated as AC -2 and may only be struck by magical weapons. Each leg has 45 HP, and if damaged by weapon blows will regenerate 3 HP per round. As noted below, the legs are immune to all magic.

When attacking (if commanded to do so, if attacked, or under other conditions described below), the legs strike as 10 HD monsters, once each per round, for 4-24 HP damage. If a leg catches a victim with a score of 4 or more over the roll needed to hit, the victim's arms are pinned by the claws, and the attacker may be crushed to the ground for 4-40 HP damage (40% chance), or hurled 20-120 feet away for 1d6 damage per 10' thrown (60% chance). Thrown characters must make a saving throw vs. paralysis or be stunned upon impact for 2-12 rounds, unable to move, attack, or defend themselves. Crushed characters will be hurled away in the following melee round.

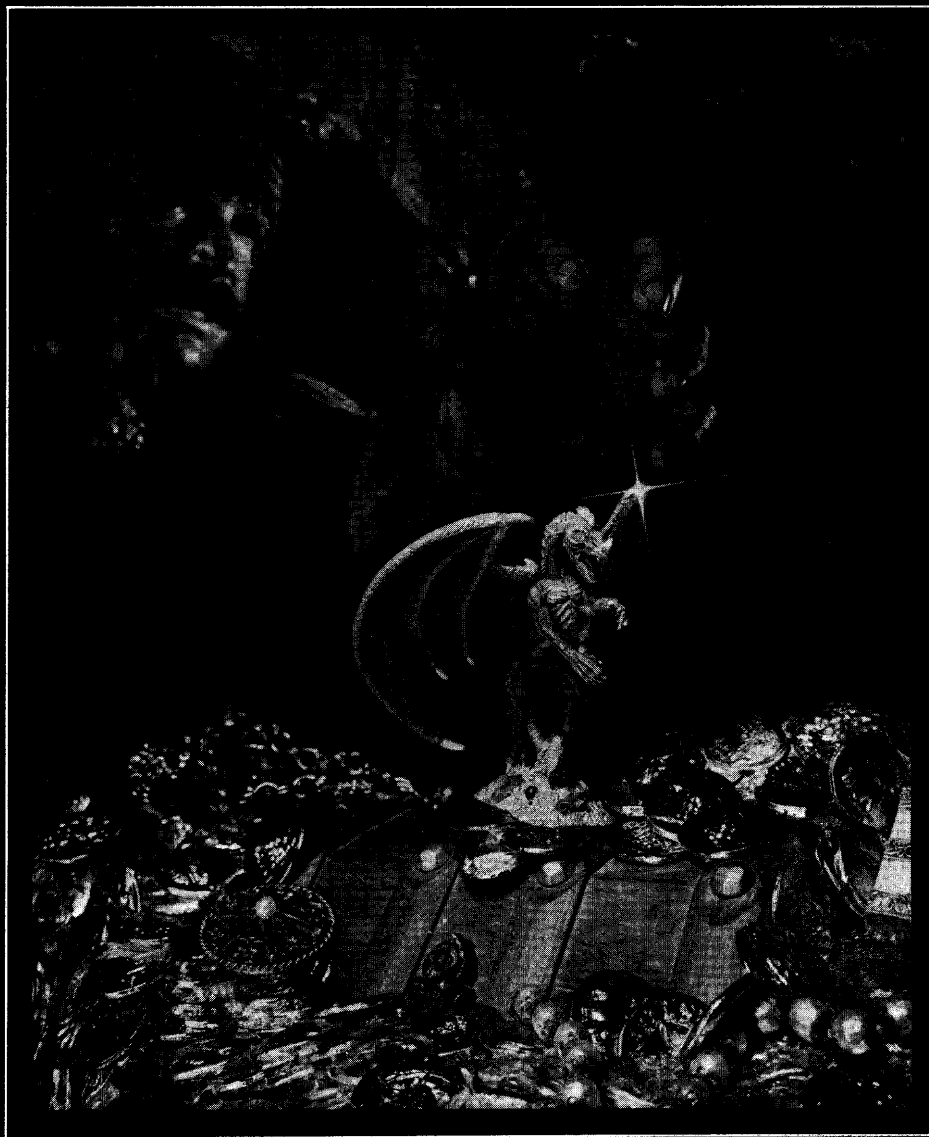
No matter whether the Hut is spinning, fighting, or running, the interior will remain stable and calm, because of its extraplanar construction. Other powers of the Hut may be used under Baba Yaga's direction, and they are described in area 46 below.

The Hut itself is powerfully enchanted. Close examination will show fine magical runes covering every square inch of its outer surface. The Hut's exterior (including the legs) is not affected by any magical spell, and it will reflect spells cast directly upon it (such as *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, or *magic missile*), inflicting them on the caster. Area-effect spells not centered on the Hut will not be reflected back, but they will not affect the Hut, either. Though the walls are made of wood, the Hut is immune to all forms of fire, acid, cold, water, and lightning. Physical attacks have no effect upon the cabin section of the Hut.

No form of divination spell, not even a *wish*, will reveal the Hut's current location

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(its protection resembles that offered by an *amulet of proof against detection and location*). "You'll find it when you see it," say the sages.

The Hut's environs

Once she has arrived on a new world or land, Baba Yaga will quickly set about constructing an enclosure to set off "her" territory from everyone else's. Within a week, she will have finished work on the enclosure. For as long as she plans to stay, she'll regard it as her home. If the Hut is encountered, refer to the material below, which describes the usual environs.

Surrounding the Hut in a 45' wide circle is a "picket fence" of twenty-four sharp stakes, each about 5' tall, with a human, humanoid, or demihuman skull resting on the spike. The skulls are enchanted with *magic mouth* spells (see below). When the sun disappears in the evening, a magical flame appears within each skull that illuminates as a *light* spell.

A number of special magics have been cast around the Hut to encourage polite visitors to enter, while preventing rude guests from leaving. A squeaky gate about 4' high and 4' wide, made of human bones, is set in the row of stakes around the Hut. The gate has a low intelligence and is aware of living beings within 10'. It will swing outward to open, allowing anyone who approaches to enter, but it will not open to permit anyone to leave. If someone tries to leave while the gate is opening to let someone else in, the gate will bang shut, knocking both people down on the inside of the "picket fence" and automatically doing 1-6 HP damage to each of them. Anyone who oils the gate's hinges, however, will be allowed to enter and leave as he likes.

If someone begins to pass between the skull-topped stakes (a logical move, since the stakes are set about 6' apart), the two skulls closest to him will suddenly animate, speaking harshly in the local "common tongue." They'll warn the character to enter or leave only through the gate. Anyone who continues to pass between the two skulls after this warning will be struck suddenly by a special form of the *burning hands* spell from each skull; each spell does 25 HP of damage. Each skull may use this power three times per day, at a 6' maximum range. The skulls may be struck and broken by normal weapons; they are AC 2, taking 10 HP each, but they will use their spells to defend themselves.

Attacking the skulls at long range will provoke them into launching fireball spells at their attackers. These *fireballs* have a range of 350 yards and effects (damage, etc.) as if they were cast by a magic-user of 25th level. Each skull may launch two such *fireballs* per day, but only one skull may fire per round at any one attacker. Bystanders will not be fired upon, though they may be caught in the area of effect of a *fireball* blast.

A character who *teleports*, *levitates*, *flies*, or otherwise manages to "illegally" get past

the skulls will have other problems. The moment the character touches the ground inside the fence, the grass under the character's feet will come to life and attack the character as if an *entangle* spell were cast. Bushes, weeds, and even trees will join in the attack. The Dancing Hut will then walk over and attack immobile characters at +4 "to hit," and slowed characters at +2, attempting to throw them out of the "yard." Fire-based spells will kill the grass, though anyone caught in the grass will also be subject to damage from such attacks.

Entering the Hut

Once someone has made his way past the gate (and/or the animated vegetation and the skulls), there comes the problem of how to get the Hut to stop spinning and settle down to the ground. The command phrase needed to enter Baba Yaga's Hut can be found by the casting of a *divination*, *legend lore*, *limited wish*, *alter reality wish*, or *vision* spell. The character will then know the command phrase: "Little hut, little hut, turn your door to me!" The command can be spoken in any language; the Hut will understand immediately. The Hut will stop, turn its door to the speaker, and settle to the ground.

Unfortunately, the wooden door to the Hut is *wizard locked* at the 25th level of ability, though it may be opened by the usual methods (note that the effectiveness of *dispel magic* is reduced for all lower-level characters). The door cannot be broken by any force or power. Characters will quickly note that the door frame is composed of bones, and the hinges are made from human hands.

A mouth full of sharp teeth will appear in the center of the door when anyone gets within 10' of it. The mouth will tell the characters (in their common tongue) to act with proper courtesy while in the Hut and to mind their own business. "Spies and thieves will be eaten," it adds. The mouth cannot be dispelled, and it has no other powers.

From 5-20 minutes after a character or party enters the front door, the Hut will rise to its feet and begin "dancing" again. Characters inside the Hut may stop the "dancing" and leave the Hut again by the methods described in area 1 below.

The Hut's interior

The layout of the rooms within Baba Yaga's Hut is highly peculiar, and may disrupt most mapping attempts after the first few minutes of movement. Baba Yaga constructed the Hut around a tesseract, a four-dimensional figure composed of eight normal cubes joined together along their faces.

The floors within the Hut lie along the different sides of the tesseract, producing seemingly impossible (at least, from a three-dimensional point of view) room connections within the Hut. However, it is not necessary for referees to have a working knowledge of four-dimensional geometry in

order to run characters through the Dancing Hut. Each area of the Hut that rests along a face of the tesseract is described separately from all the others. Notations show which other rooms can be reached from each area, and each exit (doorway, stairwell, and so forth) is marked accordingly on the accompanying maps.

Spell alterations

Aside from the Hut's immunity to and partial reflectivity of magic, the interior of the Hut produces some unusual alterations in magical spells. To begin with, no magical spell, spell-like effect, or psionic discipline will function beyond the range of a single area within the Hut's tesseract. A spell cast from area 1 toward area 2 will vanish in the doorway between the two areas. However, a spell can be cast from room to room if both rooms lie in one area of the tesseract. If the door is open to the outside in area 1, any spells cast outside the Hut to the inside (or vice versa) will be dispelled the instant they enter the doorway.

However, spells cast upon one's person or upon an object will continue to function if the person or object is taken from area to area within the Hut. Thus, a mage with *invisibility* would still be invisible after going from area 1 to area 2.

The ranges of all divination-type spells cast from within the Hut are restricted to the area where the spells are cast; other areas cannot be so examined. Peering into other planes from within the Hut is not possible, except within certain areas as noted. The Hut cannot be "spied on" from any source external to it, and is not open to the Astral and Ethereal Planes, again except within certain areas.

In addition, anyone who casts a divination-type spell or uses a psionic power within the Hut will be cursed in a special way. Baba Yaga hates snoops, and has cast magic spells that will cause an invisible brand (shaped like a chicken's track) to appear on the face of anyone using divinatory powers within her Hut, whether from spells, psionics, or a magic item. Anyone may see the brand using a *detect magic* or *detect invisibility* spell, but it may only be removed by a *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell (against 25th-level magic) cast by a spellcaster of 16th level or higher. If Baba Yaga sees someone with such a brand, she will feel instant hatred for that person and will do all she can to have him slain and cooked for dinner.

Clerics and druids will not be able to recover any spells above the 2nd level of power while they are within the Hut, because of its extra-planar construction (cutting the cleric/druid off from his deity). Magic-users and illusionists can recover their spells normally.

A number of spells will not function or will have altered effects if cast within the Hut. Below is a list of unusual spell effects produced within the Hut, with brief notes on why the alterations occur.

A letter in parentheses after a spell name

The Best of Ral Partha



10-304 Dungeon Fiends

Bellicose, The Dark Hero; "Gooseflesh Gus" the Ghoul; ShiraRatu the Liche; Sargoth, The Greater Demon; Bugbear; Skeleton; Lodoc, The Lesser Demon; Hecatron; Wraith; Gremlin

10-305 Adventure Fellowship

Cleric; Dwarven Warrior; "Cutpurse"; Dark Lotus; Elvin Hero; Atvar the Berserker; Bil the Halfling Burglar; Half Orc Thug; Chevalier; Footfall, the Tracker; Magician

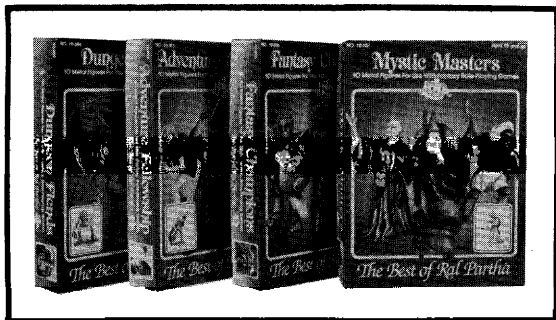
10-306 Fantasy Champions

Swordsman of Khaldir, Super Hero; Champion; Vortex the Barbarian Lord; Paladin; Farkirk, The Dwarven Myrmidon; Merri Thyme, Halfling Rogue; Shield Maiden; Half Orc Warrior; Knight-Ranger; Adrian, Guardian of Good

10-307 Mystic Masters

Simon, Patriarch of Law; JuWana Onot, Witch Doctor; Half Elf Conjuror; Arch Mage; Mierra the Witch; Warlock; Dwarven Curate; Artimus, High Priest of Chaos; Half Orc Priest; Illusionist

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indicates that the spell's normal effect is totally or partially negated, for a certain reason:

(A) indicates the spell will not work against any "animal" found within the Hut, since these animals possess magical or paranormal powers and are technically considered to be "monsters." Spells that specifically work against "monsters" or fantastic creatures in general (*hold monster*, for instance) will work against these beings.

(H) indicates the spell will not work if cast upon any stone, metallic, or wooden part of the interior of the Hut that is an integral part of the Hut's construction (floors, walls, ceilings, and doors). However, loose items such as weapons, knick-knacks, furniture, and so forth may be affected.

(E) indicates that no natural environment exists within the Hut (i.e., there are no normal animals or insects that can be summoned, no weather to be controlled, etc.), thus the listed spell will not function.

(P) indicates the spell will not work because no contact with or travel across other planes can be performed while in the Hut, unless the spell is cast within certain areas detailed below. Contact with deities is not possible for this reason.

Other spell alterations specific to certain areas of the Hut are given in the area descriptions. The descriptions of Baba Yaga and her two "daughters" should be consulted to determine the effects of spells cast against them, either within or outside the Hut.

Cleric spells

Aerial servant - (P)

Animate object - (H); objects found within the Hut may be animated, but will never obey anyone but Baba Yaga and will never attack anyone unless Baba Yaga so commands them.

Astral spell - (P)

Commune - (P)

Conjure animals - (E)

Control weather - (E)

Detect evil/good - The Hut has no alignment, though the inhabitants do.

Detect magic - The entire Hut radiates magic so powerfully that even non-magical or weakly magical items will show up as "strong" sources of magic, making this spell useless.

Dispel magic - This will function normally, though it will not affect the powers of the Hut itself. Spells cast by characters within the Hut may be dispelled. Check Baba Yaga and her "daughters" for the appropriate spell levels they operate at.

Divination - (P)

Earthquake - (H)

Exorcise - Has no effect upon the Hut, though it may break charms, curses, and the like cast upon characters.

Find the path - This spell will produce meaningless results if cast with the intent of finding something in any area of the Hut from anywhere outside that area. The reverse, *lose the path*, functions normally.

Find traps - All doorways leading from one area of the Hut to another (crossing faces in the tesseract) will be detected as traps by this spell (as *alteration magic*).

Gate - If cast within the Hut, and if Baba Yaga is present, it will alert her to the presence of the spellcaster and his exact location instantly. Baba Yaga will not be summoned to the caster, but will come on her own to investigate, fully prepared.

Holy/unholy word - This spell will not cast anyone back to his home plane, though it works normally otherwise; it will affect opposite-aligned beings just as it does every-one else.

Insect plague - (E)

Know alignment - See *detect evil/good*.

Locate/obscure object - See commentary on *find the path*.

Plane shift - If cast within the Hut, the *plane shifted* character(s) will be randomly transported to one of the 48 areas across the tesseract in the Hut. The area arrived at may be determined by rolling a d4 and a d12. If the d4 rolls a 1, the characters arrive at room 1-12; if a 2 is rolled on the d4, room 13-24, and so forth, rolling the d12 to select the exact room. The exact point within an area at which the characters arrive may be chosen by the referee as desired.

Speak with animals - (A)

Spiritual hammer - (P)

Stone tell - Any stone that forms a part of the interior of the Hut will refuse to cooperate with characters who request information from it, instead insulting them intolerably and calling for help from Baba Yaga for the spell's duration, unless otherwise dispelled.

True seeing - No ethereal, out-of-phase, or astral beings or objects will be seen, since the Hut does not connect to those planes.

Word of recall - (P)

Druid spells

Animal friendship - (A)

Animal growth/reduction - (A)

Animal summoning (any) - (A)

Animate rock - (H); see cleric spell *animate object*.

Anti-animal shell - (A)

Call lightning - (E)

Call woodland beings - (E)

Chariot of Sustarre - (P)

Charm person or mammal - (A)

Commune with nature - (E)

Conjure earth elemental - (E)

Conjure fire elemental - (E)

Control weather - (E)

Creeping doom - (E)

Detect magic - See cleric spell.

Detect snares & pits - This spell will only locate simple pit traps within the Hut (if any are present).

Dispel magic - See cleric spell.

Heat metal - (H)

Hold animal - (A)

Insect plague - (E)

Invisibility to animals - (A)

Locate animals - (A)

Pass plant - (P); works only if transport-

ing within an area in the Hut, not intending to leave it.

Predict weather - (E)

Speak with animals - (A)

Stone shape - (H)

Summon insects - (E)

Transmute metal to wood - (H)

Transmute rock to mud - (H)

Transport via plants - (P); see *pass plant*.

Turn wood - (H)

Warp wood - (H)

Weather summoning - (E)

Magic-user spells

Animal growth/reduction - (A)

Anti-magic shell - Will not prevent any functions of the Hut from working (i.e., walking, attacking, etc.); in addition, if this spell's area of effect touches a doorway leading to another face of the tesseract, the doorway vanishes completely for 2-24 hours, replaced by an impenetrable gray wall. The doorway will reappear after the 2-24 hours.

Astral spell - (P)

Bigby's hand (any) - The *hands* will be dispelled if they are made to cross a doorway from one area of the tesseract into another.

Blink - (P)

Cacodemon - (P)

Cloudkill - This spell will not spread into any other areas in the Hut except for the one in which it is cast. The cloud cannot cross into other faces of the tesseract.

Conjure elemental - (P)

Contact other plane - When cast, this spell will drive the spellcaster instantly insane with a random insanity from the DMG; unless given a *remove curse* spell, the mage will be insane for 4-48 weeks. Nothing else will be gained from this spell. Baba Yaga may use this spell normally in the Hut.

Control weather - (E)

Detect evil/good - See cleric spell.

Detect invisibility - See cleric spell *true seeing*.

Detect magic - See cleric spell.

Dig - (H)

Dimension door - (P)

Dispel magic - See cleric spell.

Distance distortion - (P); spell requires an earth elemental.

Drawmij's instant summons - (P)

Duo-dimension - (P)

Enlarge/reduce - No effect upon the Hut.

Erase - No effect on the runes on the outside of the Hut or on Baba Yaga's skin.

Find familiar - No response will come to this summons if cast in the Hut.

Gate - See cleric spell.

Hold portal - No doorway within the Hut will accept this spell from anyone but Baba Yaga; attempts made by other people will fail.

Identify - If this spell is cast upon the Hut itself, the mage will receive but one bit of information: this is indeed Baba Yaga's Hut. Nothing else will be learned.

Imprisonment – (P)

Incendiary cloud – See *cloudkill*.

Invisible stalker – (P)

Legend lore – See *identify* and note about finding command words to enter Hut; aside from this, nothing else will be learned.

Leomund's secret chest – (P)

Locate object – See cleric spell.

Magic mouth – If cast upon a wall, ceiling, or floor within the Hut, the *magic mouth* will verbally abuse the caster, continuing to do so for one round. Baba Yaga may use this spell normally within the Hut.

Maze – This spell will randomly shift the victim to one of the 48 areas within the tesseract, as per the cleric spell *plane shift*. The victim will be left in the new area after the spell's duration ends.

Monster summoning (any) – If any *monster summoning* spell is cast within the Hut, the spell will bring one of the following beings from the listed area of the Hut.

I – Manes demon (from 33)

II – Lemure devil (from 33)

III – Vladimir the giant cat (from 1)

IV – Harginn grue (from 22)

V – Piscodaemon (from 34)

VI – Annis (from 36)

VII – Night hag (from 19)

None of the above summoned beings will be well disposed to the summoner, and are not under any compulsion to obey his orders. All beings except Vladimir will attack at once; Vladimir will flee.

Mordenkainen's faithful hound – The hound so summoned will begin barking at the player-character party, attempting to summon Baba Yaga or her minions (the essence of the phantom hound is drawn from the Hut, and thus serves the Hut's builder). It will obey Baba Yaga's every command. Anyone turning his back to the hound will be attacked. If the mage who summoned the hound passes through a doorway from one area (face) of the tesseract to another, the hound will be dispelled immediately. The hound can be dispelled by normal means, too.

Move earth – (H)

Passwall – Will allow movement through interior walls of an area, but won't permit movement from one area of the Hut to any other area if travel across tesseract faces is involved. The user cannot leave any mapped area.

Phase door – See *passwall*.

Power word (any) – Will not affect inhabitants of any other area (face) of the tesseract but the area it was cast in.

Prismatic sphere – The violet globe will send those touching it to another of the 48 areas within the tesseract, determined as per the cleric spell *plane shift*.

Project image – Will not form an image in any area of the Hut other than the one the spellcaster is in.

Rope trick – This spell will create a temporary opening into a random area of the Hut, determined as per the cleric spell *plane shift*.

Spiritwrack – Will function against

certain extra-planar inhabitants of the Hut if true names are known, but not against Baba Yaga.

Stinking cloud – See *cloudkill*.

Telekinesis – If an item is *telekinised* across a doorway leading to another area of the Hut (in a different tesseract face), then the spell's effect on the object ceases.

Teleport – See druid spell *pass plant*.

Tenser's floating disk – The disk will be dispelled the moment it or the spellcaster crosses a doorway leading from one area (face) of the tesseract to another one.

Transmute rock to mud – (H)

Unseen servant – The servant will not obey any commands of the caster, instead pushing against the caster as he moves (adding an extra 400 gp worth of encumbrance to him) for the duration of the spell (see *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*). The servant may be dispelled. Baba Yaga may use this spell normally.

Vanish – (P)

Wall of iron/stone – If the wall created is larger than the dimensions of the room in which it was created, the wall will not appear and the spell will be lost.

Wizard eye – This spell will be dispelled if made to cross a doorway from one area of the Hut to another.

Wizard lock – See *hold portal*.

Illusionist spells

Astral spell – (P)

Conjure animals – (P)

Detect invisibility – See m-u spell.

Detect magic – See cleric spell.

Dispel illusion – Check Baba Yaga's spell level (as per *dispel magic*) if this is used against her magic.

Fog cloud – See m-u spell *cloudkill*.

First level magic-user spells – See the appropriate spell descriptions.

Magic mouth – See m-u spell.

Maze – See m-u spell.

Prismatic spray – The violet ray will hurl affected characters at random to one of the 48 areas within the Hut, as per the cleric spell *plane shift*.

Prismatic wall – The violet curtain will work as per the note under *prismatic spray* (see also m-u spell *prismatic sphere*).

Rope trick – See m-u spell.

Second level magic-user spells – (P)

Vision – See m-u spell *contact other plane*.

Wall of fog – See m-u spell *cloudkill*.

In addition to the above, any new spells being used in a campaign should be evaluated by the DM to determine any changes in their effects prior to running this adventure, using the above spell effects as a yardstick. Past issues of DRAGON® Magazine have presented new spells for the various classes, but these will not be detailed here.

The Dancing Hut cannot be destroyed by any magic the player characters bring against it. Even powerful items like a *rod of cancellation* or *sphere of annihilation* should have a limited effect against the Hut or any of its innate powers, as long as Baba Yaga is alive. The Hut was built to last.

Magic item alterations

Potions: Magical potions will have the same effects in Baba Yaga's Hut as the equivalent spell or psionic power (for example, *oil of ethereality* and a *potion of animal control* would generally be useless).

Treasure finding potions will not detect the presence of the Hut at all, and the drinker will be branded with a "chicken track" stigma as well (see spell alterations).

Scrolls: All scroll spells function the same as the spells they are drawn from. *Protection from magic* scrolls will affect the Hut as the magic-user spell *anti-magic shell*, though they may deactivate a certain item within it or on the party and burn out (see effects of *rod of cancellation* on doorways in the Hut, described below).

Rings: Those rings duplicating spell effects produce the same result as the spell itself. *Djinni summoning* rings will not work, as per the various *summon elemental* spells, and a *ring of shooting stars* will not function within the Hut, since there is no "night" inside. Re-roll all malfunctions of a *ring of spell turning* so that the wearers do not fall into the Positive Material Plane.

Rods, staves, & wands: Devices duplicating spell effects will produce the same results as the spells themselves. A *rod of cancellation* has no effect upon the Hut other than eliminating doorways that temporarily lead from one tesseract area to another. (And in the process, destroying the *rod*; see magic-user spell *anti-magic shell*.) A *rod of cancellation* will work against mundane magical items, though. A *rod of lordly might* cannot use its direction-finding or depth-finding abilities. A *wand of negation* has no effect upon the Hut.

Weapons, armor, & protective devices: Generally, no alterations of the powers of these items will occur, unless otherwise implied by the above magical changes (for example, *plate mail of ethereality* will not allow the user to go ethereal).

Miscellaneous magic items: Many devices will become useless when brought into the Hut or will have altered powers. Items duplicating spells or psionic powers will produce effects as described elsewhere. Those items which make use of extra-dimensional spaces to store things (e.g., a *bag of holding*) will not function – except for a *portable hole*, which will open into a random section of the tesseract (see above for cleric spell *plane shift*). A *mirror of life trapping* will not function. A *cubic gate*, *amulet of the planes*, *well of many worlds*, or similar device will shift characters elsewhere within the Hut, as described above.

Items that establish contact with one's deity, or that require such contact to function (*incense of meditation*, *necklace of prayer beads*, *candle of invocation*, etc.), will not work. A *talisman of pure good* (or *ultimate evil*) will not produce any effects. If a *book of infinite spells* is left on the Prime Material Plane while the user goes into the Hut, the user cannot use the spells in it.

If a *sphere of annihilation* is brought near the Hut, the Hut will automatically back

away from it at maximum speed once the *sphere* gets within 24". The Hut can detect the presence of the *sphere* in various ways and will seek to avoid contact with it if possible. If contact cannot be avoided, the Hut will attempt to *plane shift* to another universe, if under Baba Yaga's command (see area 46); if not under her command, the Hut is allowed a saving throw (of 3 on a d20) against the *sphere* to avoid destruction if it is touched; a successful save means the *sphere* was cast into another universe, *plane shifted* away.

Psionic alterations

Baba Yaga's Hut produces alterations in psionic powers as well as magical ones. And, to make matters worse, the Hut attracts cerebral parasites as a side effect of its planar travel capabilities. Any psionic character within 120' of the Hut who uses a psionic talent (attack/defense mode or discipline) will immediately attract 2-20 parasites to him per round. Any method used to get rid of the parasites will last only one round, and more will come after that. (Assume there are hundreds hovering around the Hut at any time, as well as dozens within each area inside it.)

As long as characters are able to use psionic abilities, here are the alterations that will occur within the Hut to such talents:

Animal telepathy — Generally ineffective; all encounters within the Hut are with "monsters," except for those described as exceptions.

Astral projection — (P)

Clairaudience — Not effective if attempting to "spy" through doorways into other areas in the tesseract.

Clairvoyance — See *clairaudience*.

Detection of good/evil — See cleric spell *detect evil/good*.

Detection of magic — See cleric spell *detect magic*.

Dimension door — (P)

Dimension walk — Use of this power will cast the psionic into one of the 48 areas of the tesseract at random (see cleric spell *plane shift*), but will also stun the psionic for 2-8 rounds, leaving him helpless.

Etherealness — (P)

Molecular agitation — (H); can only be used within one area of the tesseract.

Molecular manipulation — (H)

Molecular rearrangement — (H)

Object reading — Same result as m-u spell *identify*; use of this talent will cause the psionic to be marked with the "chicken track" stigma noted above, producing a very unfavorable reaction from Baba Yaga.

Probability travel — Same effect as cleric spell *plane shift*.

Sensitivity to psychic impressions — Any use of this talent within the Hut will cause the psionic to gain the "chicken track" stigma mentioned above. The only vision gained will be of Baba Yaga herself, staring into the psionic's eyes; the psionic must save vs. will-force spells (wisdom bonus included) or be affected as if by a *scare* spell (all races can be so affected).

Telekinesis — See m-u spell.

Teleportation — See druid spell *pass plant*.

Wandering encounters

Random encounters with inhabitants of the Hut are possible as the party wanders through. The DM should design a "wandering monster" table that includes most beings that might be met in the Hut in general. Note that areas 12 (any room but A and B), 14, 17, 33 (lab only), and 46 should have no random encounters other than those listed for them. Wandering encounters should be rolled for at the start of every game turn (10 rounds), with a roll of 1 on a 6-sided die indicating an encounter will take place.

Dungeon Masters may give some of the encountered beings magical items, and otherwise adjust the "wandering monsters" to suit their campaign. Some suggested encounters (only briefly outlined) follow. DMs should take the time to work out encounters in detail before an adventure begins. At the DM's option, certain encounters (particularly the annis maids and various daemon servants) may be considered "extra" beings not otherwise listed in the area descriptions below.

Possible encounters:

1-4 annis maids on an errand, from 41.

1 arcanadaemon with 1-2 yagnodaemon assistants, visiting the Hut on business with Baba Yaga.

1-4 derghodaemons from 48, carrying heavy crates full of treasure or garbage.

4-16 diakka, summoned from Hades, holding brooms and dustpans (cleaning the Hut).

1-3 greenhags from 11, taking a stroll through the Hut.

1 night hag, visiting Baba Yaga from Hades, with 2-8 hordling servants.

1-4 lost and demoralized captives, who escaped from an annis guardian. Most of them will be O-level humans; some might be adventurers.

Natasha the Dark, with 3-6 Type III demons as servants, from 15.

Elena the Fair, from area 17; 50% chance she is wandering alone, and 50% chance she is with Vladimir the giant cat (from 1).

Baba Yaga: 50% chance she is alone, 30% chance she is with a nycadaemon, 20% chance she is advising a lich, mage, or archmage visitor.

Area descriptions

Following are descriptions of the 48 different areas within the Hut's tesseract; each area may contain one or more separate rooms, and each room may be of wildly variable size and shape. Though a tesseract has faces of equal size, Baba Yaga's use of teleporters within the tesseract allows this variability. Gravity is normal in all rooms.

Each area is connected to other areas by special trans-planar gates. Most of these gates look like normal doorways, though some are built into staircases going up and down between areas. Unless certain spell

effects tell them otherwise, characters will probably not know when they are crossing from one area to the next. If Baba Yaga, her cat or servants, or her two "daughters" approach any doorway in the Hut, the door will automatically open for them and close one segment after they pass. All other beings (including characters) must force the doors open using normal strength rolls.

In certain areas, secret doors have been built into the floors and ceilings. Many of these open directly into other areas, though no ladders or stairways are around. These portals are enchanted so that if Baba Yaga, her servants, or her two "daughters" call out a command word ("Up!" or "Down!") when standing next to the portals, they will receive a *levitate* spell for 1 round that automatically takes them up or down safely to the next floor. However, this will not work for any other characters.

Regardless of the weather conditions outside, the interior of the Hut (in all areas, unless otherwise stated) is pleasantly warm and dry. Unless stated otherwise, most rooms in the Hut appear to have walls made of dark, stony material. The DM may add extra details as desired.

The following abbreviations are used in the room descriptions: CH = ceiling height; IL = illumination; CL = *continual light* (magic-user spell, 25th level); ND = effect cannot be dispelled. Many area descriptions contain map references as capital letters; the referee should use the text and the map simultaneously to get the fullest possible understanding of the appearance or configuration of an area.

1) Hut — CH, 7' flat; IL, oil lantern on table.

The first room entered in the Hut resembles an old peasant woman's hovel; the floor is packed earth, with wooden walls and ceiling rafters. A small wooden table with one chair sits in one corner of the hexagonal room with a washbasin beneath it; a wood-burning stove (A) with a chimney rising to the center of the ceiling rests in the opposite corner. Near the stove is a small straw-filled mattress with a worn quilt over it. Clothes pegs, shelves, bread boxes, combs, eating utensils, and sewing supplies complete the room's contents.

A secret door on the floor is covered by the washbasin under the table; wooden stairs lead down to a cellar (area 19). A wooden ladder (B) is fixed against the wall next to the table, apparently leading up to an attic. If someone climbs it, however, he will pass through a gateway and come out through the floor in area 7. On the wall of the Hut opposite the front door is another door made of old wood; it leads into area 2.

Several peculiar things will be noticed if characters take the time to explore this area. The stove automatically *reduces* all non-living materials placed inside it to one-fourth normal size, until the material is removed. A basket next to the stove contains charred goblin, elf, and human bones jumbled together; all have marks on them

as if a creature with sharp teeth gnawed away what meat they had.

The only live encounter here is with Baba Yaga's cat, a large gray tabby named Vladimir (treat as an 18 HP giant lynx, neutral alignment). Vlad uses limited *telepathy* to communicate with intelligent beings within 10' of him, and can *detect lie* with 99% accuracy. He can *hide in shadows* and *move silently* with 99% success, and can surprise opponents on a roll of 1-5 on d6. Vladimir will speak only to those who treat him well, and will ignore all others. He can offer limited advice to the PCs (as much as the referee wants to impart).

If not forcibly held open, the front door will shut on the round after the last character enters, and will be *wizard locked* again. Any successful attempt to open the door from the inside after this will cause the Hut to stop "dancing" (if it had started) and lower to the ground in the same round the door was opened.

2) Entry Hall — CH, peaked roof along long axis of room, 60' high at center, 30' at sides; IL, 3 CL spaced evenly along roof.

The walls, floor, and ceiling in this grand room are made from fine oak, with four 15' x 30' tapestries hanging from the walls. The tapestries are woven from gold, silver, brass, platinum, mithral, copper, and adamantite wire, depicting scenes of great palaces from other worlds and lands. The value of each tapestry is staggering (40,000 gp each). Two circular stairwells descend to area 38; the four doors here connect to areas 1, 3, 5, and 6.

Six translucent, glass-like colored statues stand near the doorways in this area. All of the statues will animate if any attempt is made to steal the tapestries (and they can also animate upon Baba Yaga's command). The statues are AC 0, 9 HD, 40 HP, MV 12", and may strike once per round at opponents. The attacks differ from statue to statue, duplicating the effect of a *prismatic sphere* spell according to the each statue's color. Statue A is red, B is orange, C is

yellow, D is green, E is blue, and F is indigo; thus, a strike from C would do 40 HP damage, one from D would cause the victim to save vs. poison, etc. The statues are immune to all magical spells except the spells that negate the effects of the individual colors of a *prismatic sphere*, and if a statue is struck by the right spell, it is destroyed. Statue A would be destroyed by a *cone of cold*, for instance, but this spell would not affect any other statue. Unless Baba Yaga commands them to do so, the statues will not leave the room.

Attempts to remove the tapestries from the walls will cause them to unravel and be destroyed. Roll a bend bars/lift gates chance for each character trying to pry a tapestry free; if the roll succeeds, the tapestry leaves the wall and falls apart in 1-4 rounds. The value of the unravelled wire is 5,000 gp per hanging. Only if a *mending* spell is cast upon a tapestry while it is unravelling will it be preserved.

3) Audience Chamber — CH, 20' over square floor, 15' over throne level; IL, wall behind throne radiates red light (ND).

This chamber is used by Baba Yaga when hearing petitions from mortals who are not spellcasters of "name level" (11th level for magic-users, 12th level for druids, etc.). Being exceptionally cautious (and somewhat paranoid), the witch has placed a magically enlarged trapper on the square floor before her throne. The trapper covers 2,500 square feet, but is otherwise like others of its kind; it has 83 HP. It will only attack on Baba Yaga's command, unless an offensive spell or physical attack is directed against it.

Stairs lead up to the throne level, 5' above the floor. The throne is made of a solid block of red quartz, extensively engraved with runes and symbols of magical power. The throne is immune to blows and magic, and is fixed to the floor as well, so treasure hunters cannot take it. The wall behind the throne is red crystal glassteel, and radiates light from its surface.

Flanking the throne on either side are two

animated hill giant skeletons (HD 9, HP 40 and 52, 2-16/attack, otherwise as normal skeletons) at the two points labeled B. The skeletons cannot be turned by clerics, because of Baba Yaga's enchantments, and will only obey her. The skeletons, however, are not the major guardians of the throne: polymorphed into the forms of two ivory statues at the points labeled A are two mezzodaemons (85 and 97 HP) that will attack anyone who attacks Baba Yaga; the daemons will use *levitation* to avoid being caught by the trapper if necessary.

If Baba Yaga is not present, there is a 60% chance that one of the mezzodaemons will have polymorphed itself into her form and will be sitting upon the throne. It will act like her until attacked, and will generally hear petitioners out, tell them to go back to area 1, and then leave the throne room and report to Baba Yaga.

The three doorways in this room connect to areas 2, 4, and 6.

4) Art Gallery — CH, each room (A-I) is domed, 20' high at center and 10' on sides; IL, 1 CL in ceiling of each room.







Numerous works of art from different universes hang or stand in the nine chambers in this area. Chambers A-H each contain 2-7 paintings or tapestries, and 1-4 statues (most of human subjects, but a few of nonhuman races). Some of the paintings and statues have magical powers, and may be developed by the DM as desired (some might be NPCs affected by *flesh to stone*). The large chamber, I, has 16 paintings and six statues, some magical (as noted above).

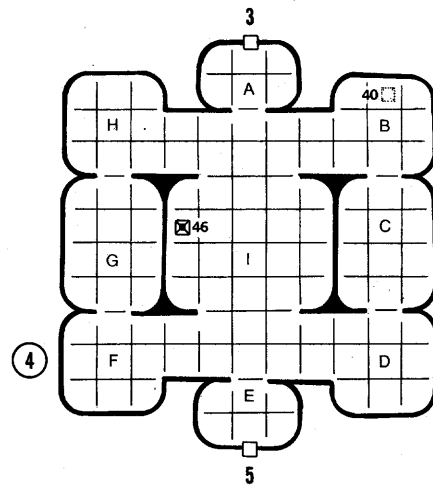
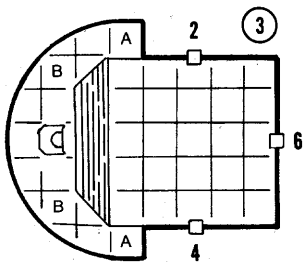
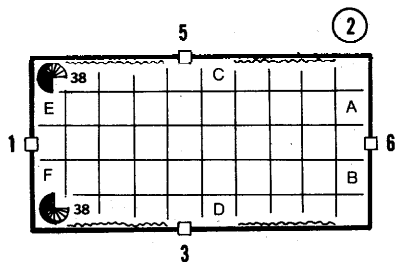
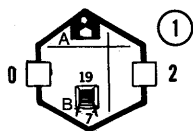
Wishing to use guardians that would not damage the artwork, Baba Yaga has caused four spectres (HP 36, 38, 41, and 47) to be forever bound to this area; they cannot leave it, and will attack anyone except the residents of the Hut (Baba Yaga, her "daughters," and her servants) and creatures from the Lower Planes like night hags.

Aside from the doors to areas 3 and 5, two secret passages are present here. Chamber B has a secret door in the ceiling that may only be opened if a *passwall* or *phase door* is cast upon it; the door is detectable only using magical means (*true seeing* or

Key to maps

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

-  Teleport points
-  Circular stairs (down/up)
-  Secret door (in ceiling)
-  Secret door (in floor)
-  Wall of force
-  Illusionary wall



true sight spell, gem of seeing, etc.). The door leads into area 40.

A concealed door is hidden in the floor under an iron statue of the Hut in Chamber I. The statue weighs several hundred pounds, and requires a bend bars/lift gates roll to push aside. The statue will animate and step aside if Baba Yaga commands it, but if anyone else tries to move it, it will attack as an iron golem in every respect (AC 3, MV 6", HP 80, kicking once per round for 4-40 damage, and pouring gas from the Hut's doorway every seven rounds). The door drops into area 46.

5) Recreation and Dance — CH, each room (A-E) is domed, 15' high in center and 10' high along walls in rooms A-D, 25' hemisphere over E; IL, 1 CL centered in ceiling in each room.

Each room in this area is devoted to a different form of game or hobby. Room A contains sewing materials and a small loom; B has assorted card and trinket games; C is a dressing room for dancers and actors, and D contains various musical instruments. Room E has a lowered floor in the center, 3' down, for dancers and actors to perform upon. The entertainers who perform here are usually ones who have been kidnapped by Baba Yaga, and they must please her with their performances in order to be released (poor performers are eaten).

The curtains that separate each room are enchanted to deaden all sounds passing through them, effectively isolating the rooms during musical performances or dances. Several magical items collected from various planes and worlds may be found here, but when rooms A, B, and D are not in use, permanent illusions are cast over them, making them appear to be storage rooms with nothing valuable in them. If she hasn't been encountered elsewhere, there's a 20% chance of meeting Elena the Fair (see area 17) in room D; she will be friendly, but won't permit the theft of any items.

The normal doorways here lead to areas 2, 4, and 6; a secret door detectable by normal means is in the ceiling in room C, and leads to area 33.

6) Grand Throneroom — CH, vaulted ceiling 60' high along long axis, down to 20' high at sides, supported by pillars; IL,

none except for 1 CL (red) over throne, 30' above floor.

The Grand Throneroom is an awe-inspiring structure, with floors and walls composed of black marble with veins of gold. The pillars lining the room are clear purple glassteel. The dark, starry ceiling is made of lapis lazuli, and has gems worked into fine gold decorations around it. Doorways to areas 2, 3, and 5 lead out from it.

At the head of the room is a raised dais 5' high, upon which four titanic human skulls, each 10' across, rest facing the opposite end of the hall. The skulls are made from carefully fitted sections of ivory, rendered hard as steel through enchantments. Centered between the skulls is the great throne of Baba Yaga, rising an additional 10' above the dais, reachable by a staircase.

The giant skulls are each AC -2 and have 40 HP apiece. Upon Baba Yaga's command, each may fire a ray of paralysis (as the wand) up to four times per day. In addition, once per day each of the two skulls closest to the throne may form a symbol (as per the magic-user spell) on its forehead, visible to anyone within 60'. One of the skulls has a secret door set in its side; on the floor inside the skull is another secret door, detectable only by magical spells or devices. This door drops down into area 12.

The throne is composed of a single block of black jet stone encrusted with rubies and amethysts; its value is beyond reason or counting. The throne is raised an additional five feet above the dais level, with a series of steps leading up to it. Baba Yaga's name appears on the throne in letters made from large rubies, each worth tens of thousands of gold pieces. The throne, however, cannot be damaged and the stones cannot be removed; anyone attempting to damage the throne must make a saving throw vs. death magic or die instantly.

The throne has other powers that can be activated by Baba Yaga's command. Three times per day it can generate a globe of invulnerability at the 25th level of power, and it can generate a prismatic sphere once per week upon command. The throne may cast fear (as the wand) once per turn, and rulership (as the rod) once per day. If anyone but Baba Yaga sits upon the throne, he will be instantly inflicted with megalomania and paranoia (as per the descriptions in the DMG insanity rules), and will receive 5-30

HP of damage as well (saving throw for half damage; insanity comes regardless).

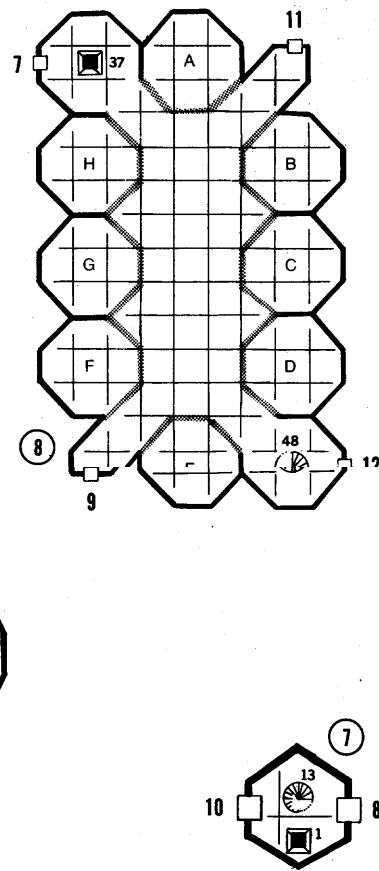
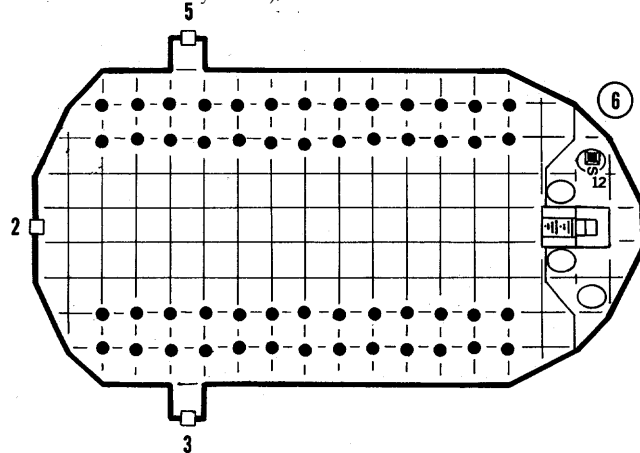
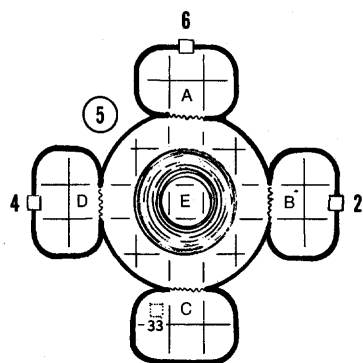
7) "Attic" — CH, 8' flat; IL, none.

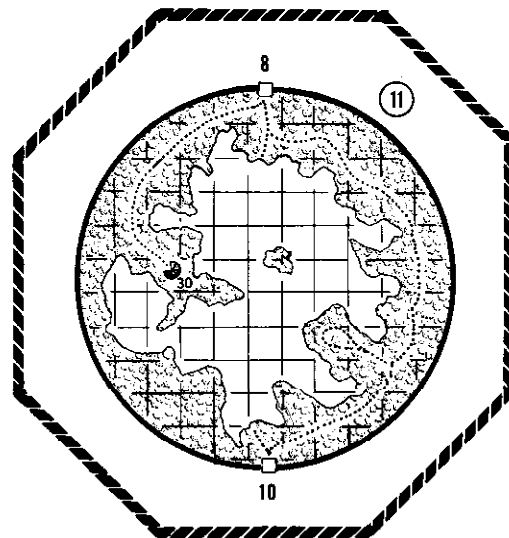
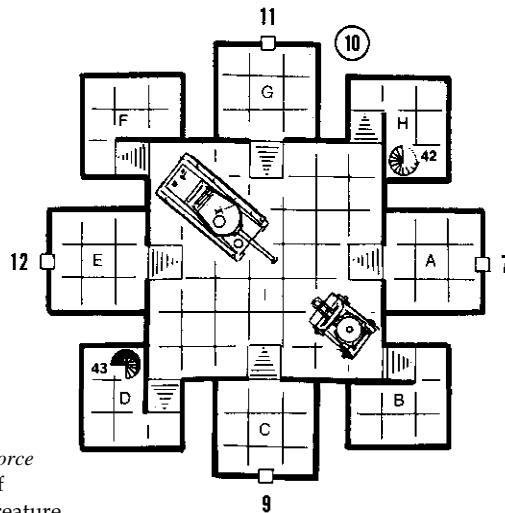
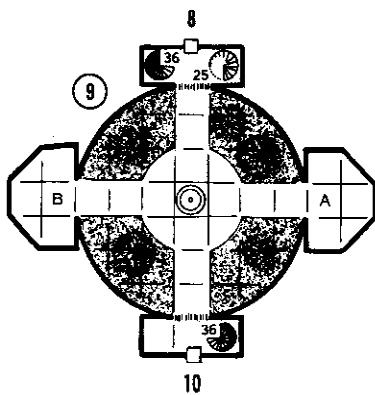
The attic looks very much like what one would expect to see, except that no chimney rises through it from the stove (the chimney is in area 1's part of the tesseract), and the ceiling isn't pointed like the roof of the Hut. Scattered about the floor of the attic are trunks, chests, and boxes full of old clothing, used-up wands and burnt-out amulets, and the other useless paraphernalia that an ancient witch might accumulate. A spiral stair leads up to area 13, a trap door leads down to area 1, and normal doors lead to areas 8 and 10.

One of the trunks has a guardian familiar upon it which has received several extra enchantments. It will fight at a hasted speed if it attacks, always doing the maximum possible damage; it receives maximum hit points in all incarnations; and it can see invisible objects. The trunk it guards contains 20-80 gems, 20-50 jewels, and three magical items (of the DM's choice). Beneath this treasure is a silk cloth covering up a symbol of insanity inscribed on the trunk's bottom.

8) Bestiary — CH, 10' flat; IL, ceiling gives off soft light (as light spell) over area for 12 hours/day, then drops to almost total darkness for 12 hours (ND).

Eight octagonal cages are in this room, each separated from the other and from onlookers by walls of force that complete





their octagonal shapes. The *walls of force* may be removed or raised with a brief command phrase, which names the creature to be captured or freed; however, only magic-users of 12th level or higher will be able to use such commands successfully.

Each cage will magically create food and drink for its inhabitants, freshen their air, and otherwise keep the creatures alive. These cages may be used as prison cells, of course, whenever necessary. Most creatures are gotten in and out of this room by *reduce* spells or other magical means.

The DM should determine the contents of each cage (A-H), with an eye toward making the creatures caught here extraordinary in the extreme.

Doors connect to areas 7, 9, 11, and 12. A spiral staircase rises to area 48, and an elevator-like platform, clearly marked on the floor next to the door to area 7, will lower anyone who stands upon it to area 37 in one round. It rises to area 8 again once the person has stepped off; people in area 37 can command it to lower to bring them up.

9) Fungus Gardens — CH, hemispherical dome over circular portion 35' high at center, 10' ceilings over side rooms; IL, none in side rooms, but see below for central chamber

This area may be entered through doorways from areas 8 and 10, by one stairway down from area 25, or by two stairways coming up from area 36. The entrances to this area are screened by illusionary walls, which may be detected as secret doors or traps. Beyond the illusions is a large domed room; intense violet and ultraviolet light shines from the ceiling over a garden of fungi, mushrooms, and other bizarre plant life. Few of the plants are ambulatory, many are poisonous if eaten, and a few (by DM's whim) may have special properties.

The garden is quartered by four paths that meet at a small circular plaza, in the center of which is a fountain. Anyone who drinks from the fountain will experience some strange effects with each drink; the DM can invent a random-roll table of peculiar effects, most of them harmful.

The level of ultraviolet light in the room will cause characters to suffer visual problems if they stay there for long; for every five rounds spent in this room at one time, a character will gain a cumulative penalty of

-1 on his "to hit" roll, which will last for a cumulative duration of one turn — beginning as soon as the character *leaves* the room (because it will take a while for one's eyes to readjust to normal light). Thus, a character who spends ten minutes searching the room will have a -2 penalty "to hit" for 20 minutes after leaving the room. The ultraviolet light cannot be dispelled.

Rooms A and B are filled with gardening tools, biological experimentation equipment, tables, and botany notes. Room B has a large culture of green slime in a stone jar, with a *permanent illusion* cast upon it to make it appear to be a pile of gemstones.

10) Grand Museum — CH, rooms A-H have 10' flat ceilings, and room I has a 30' ceiling; IL, each room A-H has 1 CL in ceiling, while room I has 4 CL's in ceiling.

Numerous relics, few of them magical in nature, occupy the various rooms of the Grand Museum. All of the items here are trophies of Baba Yaga's wanderings, some taken in battle and some by stealth and magic. The hides of demons, devils, and dragons hang beside broken weapons taken from champions who opposed her in ages past. The largest items are two huge metallic vehicles in room I; one of them is a Soviet JS-1 tank she picked up while visiting Earth during the Second World War, and the other is a steam-powered war cannon made by dwarves from an alternate universe. Neither device is operable (even with a *wish*), and should serve only to confuse the characters. The tank and dwarven cannon weigh 43 and 25 tons respectively.

Additional items may be invented by the DM as desired; few trophies in the museum should be immediately recognizable for what they are, since Baba Yaga has a taste for the strange and unusual. A few trinkets may still possess their powers.

Inter-area doorways connect to areas 7, 9, 11, and 12 from here. Staircases rise to area 42, and descend to area 43.

11) The Lakeland — CH, hemispherical dome 275' high; IL, dim, equals twilight or overcast day (see below; ND).

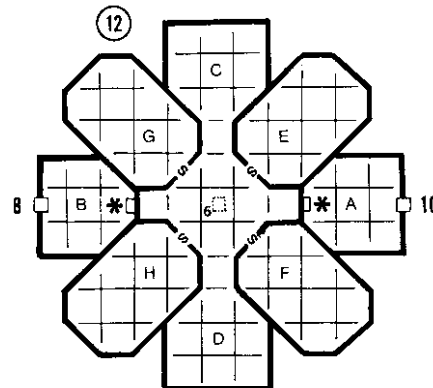
Characters entering this enormous area

from 8, 10, or 30 may at first believe they are outdoors. The Lakeland area is an enormous circular domed room 550' in diameter, with a shallow lake in the center of it surrounded by dense forestation. The lake itself is swampy and no more than 15' deep at the most, with algae and leafy plants covering much of its surface. Narrow footpaths wind their way around the lake shore from doorway to doorway, and over to a circular staircase hidden among the trees, leading down to area 30. The trees reach 20'-80' in height. The diffused light shines from the dome itself.

The lake is the home of three greenhags (HP 46, 52, and 61) who are close friends of Baba Yaga; the witch often turns captives loose in this chamber for the greenhags to feed upon. A fair amount of treasure (determined by the DM) has been accumulated here by the greenhags, kept well guarded on the lake bottom near their lair.

12) The Vaults — CH, 20' flat overall; IL, rooms A, B, and center chamber have 1 CL each in ceiling, all other rooms are dark.

Characters entering from area 8 or 10 will see only a bare room (A or B) with a door on the opposite wall. Walking through the door at the other end of the chamber (marked "**") normally *teleports* characters directly across to the opposite room (from A to B, or B to A), unless the character casts a



dispel magic successfully at the door against 25th level magic, or uses an *anti-magic shell* spell or scroll of *protection from magic* field that crosses the doorway. If this occurs, the *teleport* effect is dispelled for 7-12 turns, and the characters may walk directly into the center chamber. A secret door, detectable by normal means, is set in the ceiling of this chamber.

Rooms C and D are storage areas for unusual minor treasures that Baba Yaga has picked up; some are worthless except as souvenirs, while others are rather valuable (items of jewelry and the like). From 2-5 magic items may be found in each of these two rooms; some of the items may be cursed or trapped in unusual ways.

The four major treasure vaults are rooms E, F, G, and H. The entrances to these rooms are not detectable without magical means (a *gem of seeing*, a *true sight* or *true seeing* spell, and so forth). Each secret entrance also bears a special curse, as determined by the DM. Any character attempting to open one of the doors could be *polymorphed* into a giant rat, *paralyzed* and rendered *invisible*, made *gaseous* for 2-8 hours (without equipment, and unable to cast spells of any sort), or cursed to see their allies and friends as deadly enemies. Baba Yaga will not be affected by these curses.

Anyone who gets past a door will find that each of the vaults has a guardian inside. Room E is home to a greater basilisk (65 HP), F has four slicer beetles (33, 35, 40, and 47 HP), G has a dracolisk (45 HP), and two flesh golems guard room H. The exact treasure in each room is left to the DM, though it should be emphasized that despite the size of the vaults, they will not be stuffed with magical items or gold. Room E, for instance, might have three major magical devices, a small chest full of antique platinum coins, a rare magical tome, and several items of jewelry and rare tapestries set in cases on the walls.

None of the guardians will attack Baba Yaga because of her enchantments upon them, but they will attack anyone else who enters the chamber they occupy.

13) Abyss Hall — CH, 60' flat ceiling over walkway; IL, none.

This central hall has a cross-shaped 10' wide walkway running along what appears to be the edge of a great abyss. Anything that falls off the walkway will drop for a full round at ever-increasing speed, and will then suddenly be cast out of the Hut through a one-way magical *gate* into a random section of the Astral Plane. Because the *gate* effect lasts for only a moment, this section of the Hut is not considered open to other planes, and spells that won't function because they require contact with other planes will also not function here. No guardians usually patrol this area. Note the potential use in this area, for or against the party, of spells like *push* and *telekinesis*.

Doors lead out from this area to areas 14, 15, 16, and 17, and staircases connect with areas 19 (above) and 7 (below).

14) Baba Yaga's Chambers — CH, 10' flat in room A, 40' peaked ceiling in room B, 20' flat in rooms C-F; IL, see below.

Anyone passing through the doorway from area 13 to area 14 will find himself in a stony, octagonal room which contains nothing at all. Only magical devices like a *gem of seeing* or spells like *true sight* or *true seeing* have a chance to detect the secret door on the opposite wall. Even if it is detected, the secret door will only open if a *passwall* spell or a *wish* is used on it. It automatically opens at Baba Yaga's touch. One guardian resides in room B: a farastu demodand (64 HP) that has made itself *invisible* and will attack anyone but Baba Yaga, her servants, or her "daughters."

Baba Yaga's personal chambers are dimly lit by small candles set upon tables, chairs, wall mountings, and elsewhere. Room B is rather spacious, and contains only a few articles of furniture (a workbench, several chairs, a writing table with chair, and several small bookshelves). Nothing appears to be of any value here, at first glance. Doors lead to areas 15, 17, and 18. A secret door in the floor, covered by a rug but detectable by normal means, leads to area 40. A *rug of welcome* that appears shabby and faded rests on the floor by the door to area 18.

The side chambers are screened by thick curtains; if anyone but Baba Yaga touches them, the curtains will animate and fold out

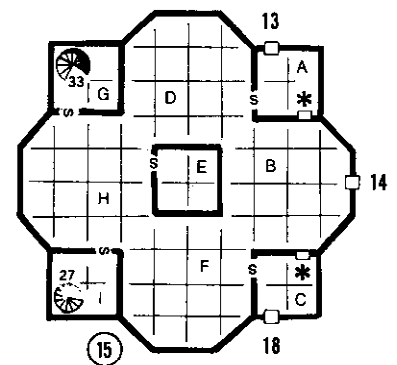
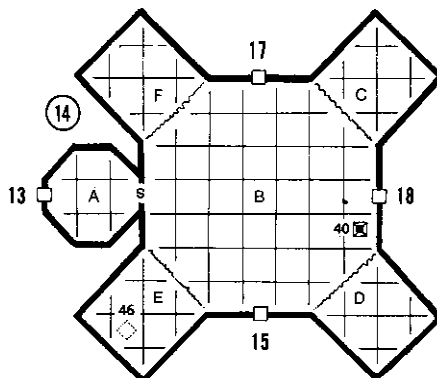
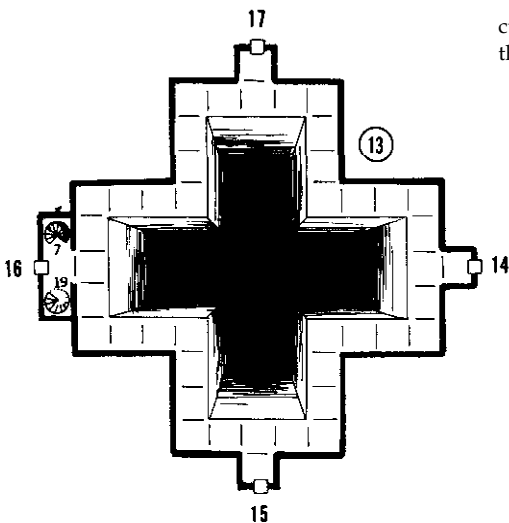
over the toucher like a lurker above (use all statistics for the lurker above, except that the curtains do not normally move about, and each has 55 HP). Room C is Baba Yaga's sleeping chamber, D and E have equipment that she uses when manufacturing magical items, and F contains a loom and assorted items for sewing and making woven items. Few magical devices will be found, most of them relatively minor in nature (a *wand of magic missiles*, for instance). Room E has a secret door in the ceiling which can only be detected and opened in the same manner as the ceiling trap door in area 4 (leading to area 40). The ceiling door here leads to area 46.

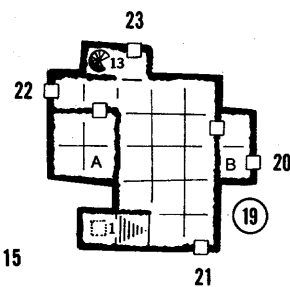
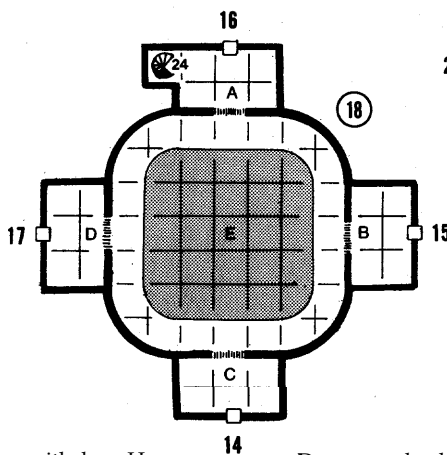
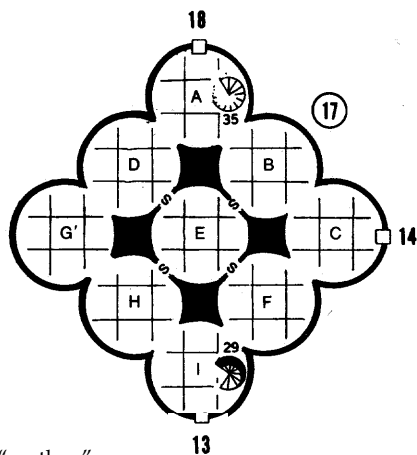
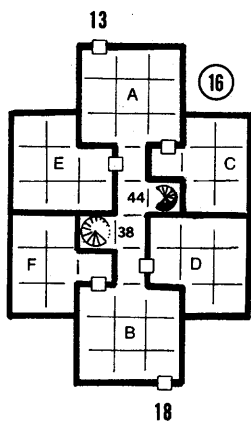
15) Natasha's Chambers — CH, rooms A, C, E, G, and I have 10' flat ceilings, and all other rooms have 10' tall walls with square-domed ceilings up to 15' high; IL, all rooms (A-I) have 1 CL in ceiling each.

Anyone entering from area 13 or 18 will find himself in a small room (A or C) that connects with its counterpart through a *teleportation* door. This allows pedestrian traffic to avoid Natasha's rooms, a feature that was devised because of her extreme dislike of interruptions during her relaxation time. Secret doors in rooms A and C are normally detectable, and lead directly into the main area. Rooms G and I hold stairwells to areas 33 and 27 respectively, and a doorway connects directly to Baba Yaga's chambers (area 14).

Natasha the Dark is an adopted human "daughter" of Baba Yaga who was influenced by the witch to take up her sorcery and use it for dark purposes. A beautiful woman with smoky black hair and alabaster skin, Natasha enjoys manipulating demons, and uses them frequently as servants and guardians. She is jealous of her "sister" Elena (see area 17), and despises her goodness, but will never cause Elena harm.

Natasha is a chaotic evil dual-classed illusionist/magic-user, 7th/15th level (HP 43, S:9, I:18, W:12, D:17, C:15, CH:16) who wears a variety of magical protective devices (such as *bracers of AC 2*, a *brooch of shielding*, and two random *ioun stones*). She carries many offensive spells in her head. Materialistic and vain, she collects magical items and jewelry, and displays them for all to see. She may be further outfitted by the DM as desired.





Being as paranoid as her "mother," Natasha has few valuable items lying around in her area. Rooms B, D, F, and H contain only mundane but costly furniture. Most of her valued items are contained, and her private research is conducted, in area 33, the stairway to which is within room G. The secret doors in rooms G and I are detectable by normal means. Inside room G are a pair of invisible stalkers who guard the entrance to Natasha's laboratory; they will attack anyone but Natasha and Baba Yaga.

16) Hades Guestrooms — CH, 10' flat overall; IL, see below.

These chambers are primarily used by night hags who are visiting Baba Yaga from Hades (having gated in through other areas inside the Hut). Rooms C, D, E, and F have dim light emitting from their ceilings (ND); special enchantments will negate any light or continual light spells cast within them. Night hags cannot astrally project themselves from these rooms. Each room C-F has a 20% chance of a night hag occupying it; unoccupied rooms have a 20% chance of containing an annis maid who is fixing up the chamber for new guests.

Doorways lead to area 13 and 18, and stairs lead down to area 44 and up to 38. Though completely dark, entry rooms A and B are kept free of obstructions and furniture. The walls there are decorated with paintings showing various grotesque scenes from the local landscapes in Hades.

17) Elena's Chambers — CH, 8' flat overall; IL, all rooms have 1 CL in ceiling each, except room E (no light).

Another foster "daughter" of Baba Yaga is Elena the Fair, who, unlike her "sister," turned out to be lawful good in nature. She has learned magical arts from her "mother" but uses her powers for good causes. Baba Yaga found Elena outside her Hut one day and, being unwilling and perhaps unable to slay her (for reasons given in the witch's character description), kept her as a house servant. No one came to claim the girl, and soon she became a powerful sorceress. Though she is disliked by all other beings who come to the Hut, no one dares harm her, and all treat her with the greatest respect (if somewhat begrudgingly).

Elena is a 16th-level magic-user (HP 39, S:11, I:18, W:17, D:16, C:10, CH:17) who

carries no magical items with her. Her repeated exposure to illusionary displays has finally rendered her immune to all illusion/phantasm spells, regardless of level, and she cannot be affected by them. If she encounters any characters of good nature, she will become very friendly with them, but will not allow any harm to come to inhabitants of the Hut if she can help it. Elena likes to use *polymorph other* and *polymorph self* spells, and will not use any illusion/phantasm spells.

Elena's rooms contain mundane (though highly valuable) articles of furniture, as well as trinkets from a dozen universes that she has collected. A few of these items have magical powers of an unusual nature (possibly a lamp with the powers of a *wand of illumination*, or a wastecan that *disintegrates* all materials dropped into it); the DM may use his imagination to the fullest. At most, five such items will be found. Elena's chambers are warded by non-lethal magical traps of various types (*symbols of sleep* or *stunning*, or an activated *Bigby's grasping hand* that holds thieves for 16 minutes).

Room E can be entered only through secret doors, all normally detectable (though protected as noted above). Inside Room E are Elena's bedchambers, which are dark.

18) Bath — CH, rooms A-D have 10' flat ceilings, central pool room has 25' ceiling; IL, rooms A-C have dim red light coming from whole ceiling, D has bright white light from ceiling, pool room has variable light (see below; ND).

The four small chambers surrounding the large central pool each contain dressing facilities and other odds and ends for bathing. Because some of the visitors in area 16 are night hags, the pool isn't always filled with pure water, and bathing equipment varies. The pool is only five feet deep throughout. Illusionary walls screen the pool from rooms A-D. The pool room, E, is dimly lit, equivalent to late twilight, but the brightness can be increased to full daylight with a command word ("Light!"). Other command words will cause the pool's waters to become either pure or foul, depending upon the preference of the bather (only Elena and Natasha have a liking for pure bathing water).

Doorways lead to areas 14, 15, 16, and 17, and a stairway in room A descends into area 24 (so beings may wash up after visiting the stables).

19) "Cellar" — CH, 10' flat overall; IL, torch on wall near door to B.

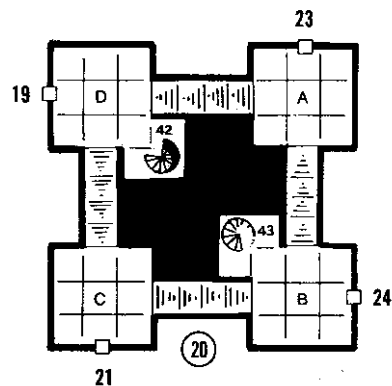
The walls of the "cellar" are made from packed earth, but very little can be flaked off or dug away; like all other walls in the Hut, these are immune to spells like *dig* or *disintegrate*.

The musty "cellar" serves as a dumping ground for items newly brought in from one of Baba Yaga's trips around the land, as well as a sort of trash bin for unwanted nonmagical refuse. Few things found here will have any real worth, though some may prove interesting as curios.

A single torch burns on the wall near the interior door leading to room B. Room A is filled with skulls and bones of adventurers who fell victim to the Hut or its guardians — perhaps seventy creatures of various races are represented. Room B is empty, but has a large executioner's hood (6+6 HD, 49 HP) that hides in a niche in the ceiling, covered by an illusion to further conceal it. It will attack anyone who enters room B other than Baba Yaga or other full-time inhabitants of the Hut, going for the intruder's head.

20) Wine Cellars — CH, 10' flat in rooms A-D; IL, none..

Rooms A, B, C, and D each hold numerous kegs, barrels, and bottle-filled shelves containing the finest alcoholic beverages that twelve universes have to offer. Room A



contains fine wines, B holds brands of vodka, C has assorted beers, meads, and ales, and room D is filled with exotic fruit drinks. Some of the drinks (20%) will infect the imbibers with *dipsomania*, as per the DMG, due to their quality and certain special enchantments.

Characters will soon discover that one can go continuously downstairs from room to room in this area, thanks to a peculiar warping of space that cannot be negated by magical or physical means. Hiding behind one of the wine barrels is Ivan, a giant mouse who can communicate telepathically with beings up to 10' away from him (like the ability of Vladimir the giant cat, from area 1). Ivan is one foot long (AC 6, MV 12", HD 1+1, HP 9, bites for 1-4 HP) and is very intelligent; he can learn and cast spells like a 4th-level magic-user. Ivan has chaotic good alignment, and a bad case of dipsomania; he will befriend anyone who offers him alcoholic drink, and (like Vladimir) he may be willing to offer limited information about the Hut.

21) The Warded Caverns — CH, 10' overall; IL, none.

The Warded Caverns have numerous magical spells cast within, to confuse all who pass through, except for Baba Yaga and her "daughters" and servants. If one of them enters this area, all magical effects in the caverns will cease for the time the inhabitant is in the corridors, and will reactivate as soon as the inhabitant leaves.

To begin with, a *guards and wards* spell of permanent duration (except as noted above) fills the entire cavern area. Visibility is reduced to 10' at best, all interior doors are *wizard locked* (25th level) and covered with illusions to appear like wall sections. *Webs* fill the stairways, but not the spiral staircases. *Stinking clouds* fill areas G and H.

In addition, six teleportation doorways have been added that exactly resemble the inter-area doorways. These doors, labelled A-F, will randomly teleport anyone who passes through one of them to a different teleporting doorway. (The character will reappear inside area 21, facing the doorway to which he has been teleported.) The doorway teleported to is determined by rolling a 6-sided die (1=A, 2=B, etc.); if the same

doorway is rolled that the character just entered, then the result is re-rolled. This process is repeated each time a character enters a doorway.

Four normal inter-area doorways connect to areas 19, 20, 22, and 23. Circular stairways join with areas 30 (above) and 31 (below).

22) Smithy and Toolworks — CH, 30' flat (20' over D, 10' over E); IL, only from fires and furnaces, as noted below.

The walls, ceiling, and floor of this room are constructed of a special metal that does not conduct heat; no heat radiates away from the smithy, and it can become extremely hot when heavy work is going on.

Baba Yaga has enslaved some beings from the Elemental Plane of Fire, and here forces them to forge magical weapons and devices for her. Three azer, a salamander, and a harginn grue labor for hours on end at the furnaces. Currently they are forging a two-handed sword that Baba Yaga hopes to turn into a *cursed berserking sword*, which she will then give to some enemy of hers.

Two furnaces provide dull red light in this area, from the places marked A on the map. A toolroom is present at B. The main floor of this area is C, though there are two elevated places; D is 10' above the main floor, and E is 20' above the level of C. Both of the elevated sections are set off by railings. The heat in this entire area is so intense that unless someone has some form of protection from heat and fire, he will take 1 HP damage per round that he is in the area. The inhabitants of the room will ignore anyone who enters here, unless he crosses the main floor (C) and is seen to be an "outsider" i.e., not Baba Yaga, her "daughters," or servants). The workers will then attempt to capture or slay the intruder(s), preferring to hold them for Baba Yaga (if possible) in an attempt to win her favor.

Inter-area doorways lead to areas 19, 21, 23, and 24; circular stairwells rise to area 37 and drop to 48. Note that the heat from this room, like magical or magic-like effects,

does not enter other areas through the open circular stairs.

23) Armor Museum — CH, 15' flat overall; IL, rooms A-D have 1 CL each, and room E has 4 CL's on ceiling.

The armor, shields, and helmets of great champions who once served Baba Yaga, or who opposed her, are kept in these chambers as mementos. The central chamber, E, contains equipment from dozens of alternate universes, of many makes and compositions. Some of the suits are magical, and a few are legendary in nature (once having been worn by famed warriors). Details of these exhibits are left to the individual referee to develop.

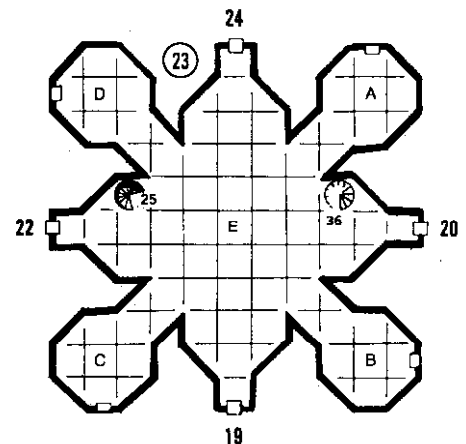
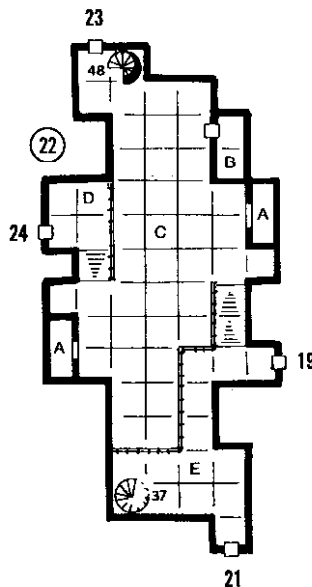
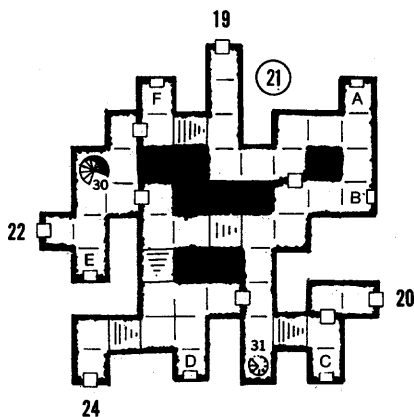
Rooms A, B, C, and D contain equipment from four universes of particular interest to Baba Yaga, since she has relatives who live in them. One room is devoted to armor worn by men destroyed by three of Baba Yaga's sons, who are aquatic hydras. No further information on them can be found here.

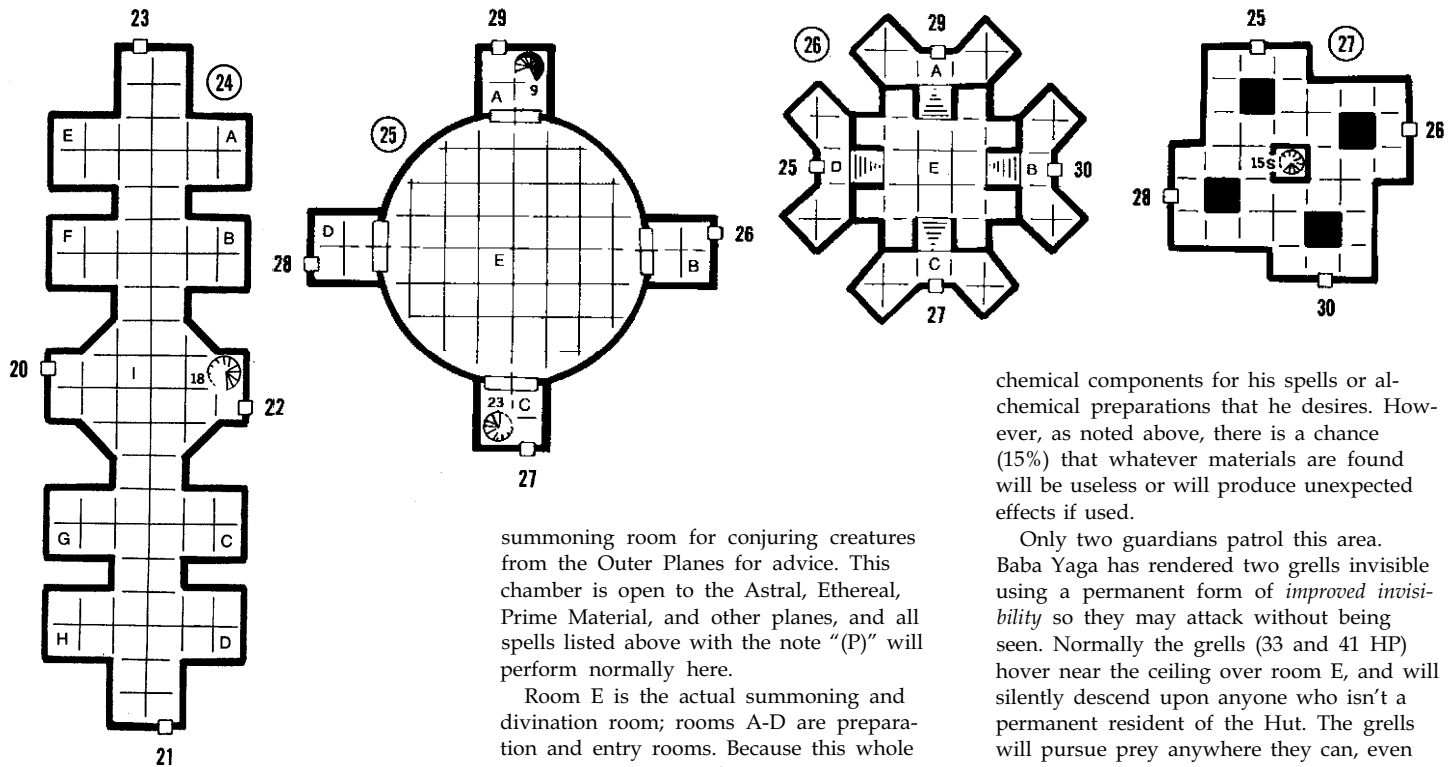
The staircases lead up to area 36 and down to 25; four doorways connect to areas 19, 20, 22, and 24. There are four teleportation doors in the side chambers that operate like the ones in area 21, except that each doorway sends a character to another specific doorway: A leads to B, B to C, C to D, and D to A. Only one character can enter any doorway at one time.

24) Stables — CH, 10' flat, with 15' square-domed ceiling over section I; IL, 1 CL over section I.

This is one of the few areas in the Hut with connections to the Astral and Ethereal Planes. Also, the Prime Material Plane, Negative Material and Elemental Planes, and one Outer Plane (Hades) may be reached from here by spells. Because it has these special properties, this area is kept heavily guarded. All spells and powers which have a spell effect listed above of (P) will function here normally.

Stabled here are three nightmares at A, C, and F (39, 43, and 46 HP respectively), watched over by four diakka, two tall ones (41 and 49 HP) and two broad ones (55 and 61 HP). The diakka are overseen by a barbed devil (63 HP). The devil and the





diakka dislike each other, but will cooperate to remove intruders from this area.

The nightmares will attack any humans and demihumans who enter the stables (they are not restrained). The devil and diakka will stay out of the way until after the tight, unless they feel they can join in without serious risk to themselves.

In stall G is a large iron mortar and pestle, 4' tall, with a broom inside the container as well. The mortar may be summoned by Baba Yaga when she is outside her Hut, by simply whistling for it to appear; the mortar, pestle, and broom are enchanted to serve as an overland vehicle for her. The mortar *levitates* one inch above the ground upon utterance of a command word, and can carry up to 500 lbs. inside it. Baba Yaga sits inside the mortar and poles it along the ground using the iron pestle. The maximum speed one can attain using this device equals twice the "driver's" strength score in tens of yards per minute; thus, Baba Yaga can move at 40" per round, or about 13.6 mph. Percentile scores for strengths higher than 18 are ignored for purposes of this calculation. It takes one round for the mortar to reach full speed.

The broom is enchanted to cover all traces of the mortar's passing over the ground, as per the druid spell *pass without trace* with a permanent duration. Baba Yaga can manipulate both the mortar and the broom simultaneously.

25) Divination Chamber — CH, 10' flat in chambers A-D, and 40' hemispherical dome over E; IL, 1 CL over room E, all else dark.

The Divination Chamber is used by the Hut's inhabitants to cast divination-type spells such as *contact other plane* and *legend lore*, as well as serving as an alternate

summoning room for conjuring creatures from the Outer Planes for advice. This chamber is open to the Astral, Ethereal, Prime Material, and other planes, and all spells listed above with the note "(P)" will perform normally here.

Room E is the actual summoning and divination room; rooms A-D are preparation and entry rooms. Because this whole area is open to transplanar powers, two mezzodaemons (103 and 115 HP) patrol these rooms to protect them from invaders or spies. Anyone entering here who is not recognized as an inhabitant of the Hut will be attacked at once, though the daemons will not leave this area to pursue invaders. The stronger of the two mezzodaemons keeps a vigil in room E, while the other guard roams between rooms A-D, visiting each small area once every four turns.

Areas 26, 27, 28, and 29 connect to this area by doorways, and areas 23 and 9 connect to this area by staircases going up and down, respectively. The giant double doors leading into rooms A-D are so massive that a bend bars/lift gates roll is required to open them. A character who knocks on one of these doors from within the small room will quickly attract the attention of at least one of the guards.

26) Alchemical Storage — CH, 10' flat overall; IL, rooms A-D each have 2 CL's, one in each corner, and room E has 4 CL's, one at the top or foot of each stairway.

The walls in this area are lined with shelves and boxes full of alchemical materials used in the preparation of magical potions, poisons, inks, medicines, and chemical substances. Many of the materials have deteriorated from age and disuse, and some will now produce altered effects if used in magical rituals or experiments. The contents of these rooms came from numerous worlds, and most of them are labelled as to their origin. Room A contains various acids and caustic liquids; B has an assortment of solid components; C has biological supplies; and room D contains gems and unusual materials (demon ichors, devil scales, and so forth).

If a magic-user or illusionist looks long enough here, he will probably find any

chemical components for his spells or alchemical preparations that he desires. However, as noted above, there is a chance (15%) that whatever materials are found will be useless or will produce unexpected effects if used.

Only two guardians patrol this area. Baba Yaga has rendered two grells invisible using a permanent form of *improved invisibility* so they may attack without being seen. Normally the grells (33 and 41 HP) hover near the ceiling over room E, and will silently descend upon anyone who isn't a permanent resident of the Hut. The grells will pursue prey anywhere they can, even through other areas.

The doors in this area lead to areas 25, 27, 29, and 30.

27) Magic Item Storage — CH, 10' flat overall; IL, *en tire ceiling radiates light as a CL spell* (ND).

Material components not of a chemical nature (metallic items, miniature figures, and so forth) may be found on the marble shelves lining the walls of this large room. Materials to be used in manufacturing magical items, such as staves, wand sticks, platinum rings, and scroll papers, may also be found here. However, few completed items are in this area; they are either in use by the Hut's inhabitants or stored elsewhere.

Anyone who looks over this area's contents will notice that the metallic items have been placed in sealed stony crates or glass jars, or have been set high on the shelves; wooden items are also protected or hidden. The reason for this is that the room's guardians are three rust monsters (29, 34, and 39 HP). They feed freely on iron items that Baba Yaga and the others toss to them, and have been trained not to approach Baba Yaga or her "daughters." They will happily go after anyone else they can, however. To make them more difficult to slay, each rust monster has been outfitted with a collar enchanted to cause any wooden item touching the monster to warp, as per the spell *warp wood*. Magic wooden items get no saving throw vs. this effect.

A secret door is set in the room's central 10' x 10' pillar, leading to a spiral stair that descends to area 15. Doors lead off to areas 25, 26, 28, and 30. Anyone who attempts to open the secret door besides Baba Yaga or her "daughters" must save vs. spells at -4 or be permanently *feebleminded*. This trap will only function once.

28) Room of Conjuring — CH, 10' flat in rooms A and C, 15' flat in room B; IL, 1 CL on ceiling of room A, dark elsewhere.

This area is open to other planes, and spells that normally won't function because of the Hut's extra-planar construction (those marked (P) in the lists) will all work here. Room A contains a few tables and chairs, with exits to areas 25, 27, 29, and 30, as well as stairs down to area 45. Curtains separate this room from B, the actual conjuring room.

One-way illusionary walls allow viewers in rooms A and C to look into B without being seen; from B, these illusions appear to be normal walls. A protective diagram is drawn in B, beside a special trap door 10' across upon which a conjuring pentagram is inscribed (as per the spell *cacodemon*). Anyone who conjures a being into this room will have it appear within the pentagram, and may then use spells similar to *spiritwrack* or *cacodemon* to get concessions or quests from it. It is possible to cause the trap door to lower into area 45 at a word of command, and cause the summoned being to be trapped within the "prison" there. The trap door will *teleport* back to its former position as soon as it touches the floor, leaving the unbound being in the *wall of force* cage in area 45.

Room A is a sort of guard room; an old shator demodand spends his time here as a guardian of this area, preventing intruders from getting any further into the complex. The shator has 104 HP, and obeys no one but Baba Yaga herself.

29) Grand Library — CH, 15' flat in each room; IL, each room has 5 CL's, one in center and one in each corner.

The library is divided into five chambers (A-E), each having numerous volumes and tomes filling the shelves that run along their walls. The spell books of ancient mages lie here beside texts discussing the nature of magic and the universe, and volumes covering hundreds of other topics. Exits to areas 25, 26, 28, and 30 are here, and a staircase in room A rises to area 17. DMs may determine the contents of rooms A-E as desired.

Numerous creatures and beings use these chambers to further their own knowledge of the sorcerous arts, and the temptation to steal a book or two is strong. Baba Yaga,

however, has caused three rakshasas to serve as guards here. The rakshasas (39, 42, and 50 HP) use their illusionary powers to appear to be studious mages, of a temperament friendly to whoever else is using the library. If they catch anyone stealing or damaging books (using their *ESP* powers to help in this detection), then they will attack at once to capture or slay the offender.

Note that though rooms C and E seem to be on a different level from B and D, anyone walking in a circle through these rooms using the outer corridors will believe he is on the same level all the time. This area, like area 20, was built around a section of warped space.

30) Alchemical Laboratory — CH, 10' flat overall; IL, 1 CL centered on ceiling.

The alchemical laboratory is outfitted with most of the standard equipment that one would expect to find here (lab tables, shelves full of glassware, retorts, etc.). Explorers will find 3-12 potions here; some of them poisonous or cursed, but all completely indistinguishable from one another. Rare powders, liquids, and devices may also be found here, though unless one knows what to look for, most of this material will be ignored.

Only one creature normally inhabits this room, a kobold (4 HP) that Baba Yaga has permanently *charmed* and made her servant. The kobold has only one type of offensive weapon: three small tubes full of magical dusts. One contains *dust of stunning*, which has the same effect as a *symbol of stunning* upon those affected; *dust of sneezing and choking*; and *dust of hopelessness* (as per the *symbol*).

The kobold wears a *ring of invisibility*, and has been given the power to *detect invisibility* naturally, by Baba Yaga's magic. He will use the *dusts* on anyone who enters the lab invisibly. When it blows through a tube, the kobold causes the dust in that tube to scatter through the room, affecting everyone inside except himself (Baba Yaga's magics having rendered him immune to their effects). The kobold will then summon help from one of the rakshasas in area 29 to capture or dispatch the intruders. Only

Baba Yaga and her "daughters" may use this area, though other inhabitants of the Hut may pass through it to get elsewhere.

Doorways here connect to areas 26, 27, 28, and 29, and stairways climb to area 11 and drop to area 21.

31) Prison — CH, 10' flat, except in cells (6' flat); IL, none in room A, 1 CL in rooms B and D each.

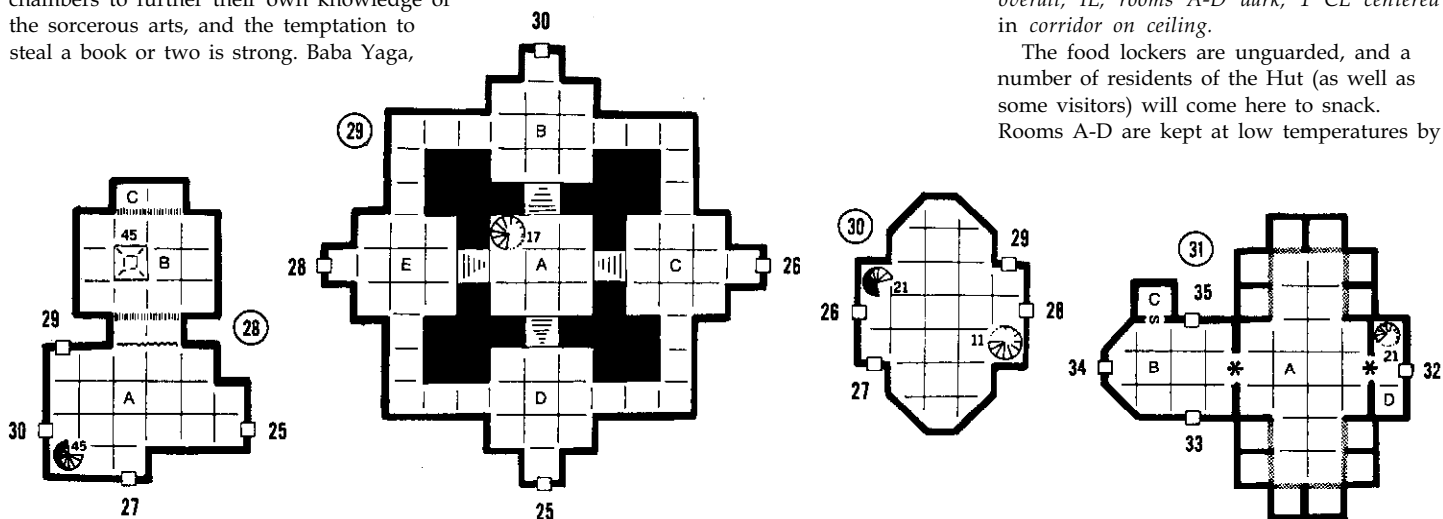
This area is reserved for those captured trying to steal from or invade the Hut, as well as for regular enemies of Baba Yaga. Room A includes 12 prison cells, each shut with a *wall of force*. The walls may only be dispelled using *disintegrate*, or by command of Baba Yaga herself; each cell must be opened or closed separately from all others. To guard the prisoners, a Type V demon (55 HP) has been forced to serve in this room. The demon hates its servitude, and this has given it an especially foul disposition (+1 "to hit" and damage on all attacks). Anyone entering this area except for Baba Yaga and her daughters will be attacked at once; the demon carries six broadswords.

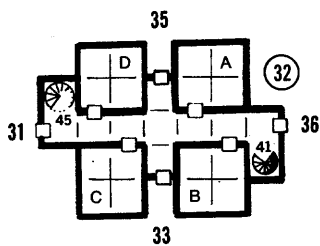
Rooms B and D are generally empty except for pedestrian traffic. If anyone crosses the open doorways from B or D into room A, without first casting a *dispel magic* at the doorways, a special teleporter goes into effect and casts the person into one of the unoccupied cells in the prison. All non-living equipment the person is wearing or carrying is *teleported* at the same time into room C. If all the cells in room A are full, then prisoners will be dropped into occupied cells, doubling up until they have to be tripled up, and so forth. There is no saving throw against this *teleport* effect. Only 1-2 prisoners will be present in the cells to begin with, their characteristics, levels, and reasons for imprisonment being left to the DM's imagination.

Room C has no guards inside, but the door to it is detectable only by using a *gem of seeing* or a *true sight* or *true seeing* spell. A *passwall* or *phase door* spell will open it. Room B contains exits to areas 33, 34, and 35; D has an exit to 32 and stairs up to 21.

32) Food Storage Lockers — CH, 10' overall; IL, rooms A-D dark, 1 CL centered in corridor on ceiling.

The food lockers are unguarded, and a number of residents of the Hut (as well as some visitors) will come here to snack. Rooms A-D are kept at low temperatures by





magical effects, and different sorts of meats are hung out in them. Rooms A and B contain meat from normal animals, C contains meat from monsters, and D has meat taken from other sentient beings (elves, gnomes, dwarves, etc.).

Areas 31, 33, 35, and 36 may be reached by inter-area doorways. Spiral stairs reach up into area 45 and down into area 41.

33) Natasha's Laboratory — CH, 10' flat in room A, 15' flat in room B; IL, 1 CL in rooms A and B each.

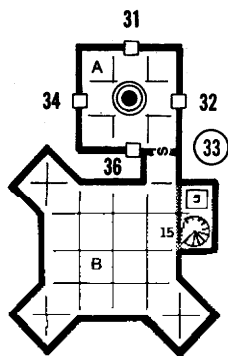
Anyone entering here from area 31, 32, 34, or 36 will at first see only a 30' square room with a circular well 10' in diameter set in the center of the room. The well is filled with green watery fluid to the brim, and seems to have no bottom. If someone casts a *lower water* spell upon the water, it will not be affected; however, a secret door will open in the room, leading to the laboratory of Natasha the Dark. The secret door cannot be opened by any other means, though it may be detected normally.

Natasha's laboratory (room B) is fairly standard, and contains much the same equipment and treasures (2-8 potions, some cursed) as the alchemical laboratory in area 30. Two manes (8 HP each) and two lemures (18 HP each) serve as assistants here, moving into one of the side chambers when not needed. If anyone but Natasha or Baba Yaga enters this area, the manes and lemures will attack at once.

An illusionary wall on one side of the room covers a *prismatic wall* that has been made permanent by various spells. Only Baba Yaga and Natasha are able to pass through the wall without ill effects. The wall cannot be detected from inside the small chamber, either, since an illusionary wall covers it from that side as well. The wall hides a stairwell going up to area 15, and a trap door leading down to area 5.

34) Guardians and Servants — CH, 10' flat overall; IL, see below (ND).

This area is filled with a luminous, humid fog kept at a warm temperature; the visibility is only 10'. Living within this area are nine piscodaemons who serve Baba Yaga, though unwillingly, when she requires minor errands or tasks to be performed. The piscodaemons (29, 31, 34, 37, 38, 39, 43, and 46 HP) will not leave this area unless commanded to do so by Baba Yaga or her "daughters," and will fight anyone else who tries to enter (even the other servants). Inter-area doorways lead from these rooms to areas 31, 33, 35, and 36; stairwells drop to area 47 and rise to 39. The fog will



not leave this area and enter any other area. These piscodaemons are permitted to have some treasures (DM's choice), which they guard cautiously.

35) Fountain of Life — CH, 10' over the small exit rooms and stairwell down, with a 35' hemispherical domed ceiling over fountain chamber; IL, see below.

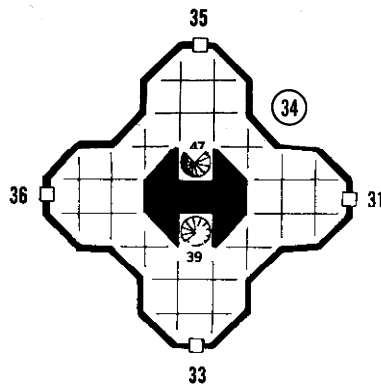
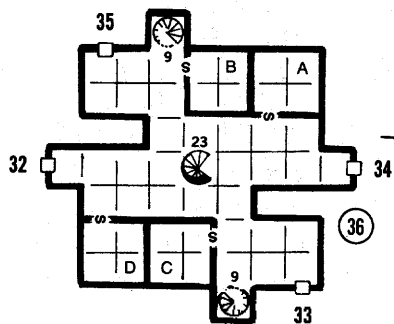
No illumination is needed in this chamber, since the waters themselves give off light. A huge cross-shaped fountain is centered in this area, with doorways leading off to areas 31, 32, 34, and 36 around it. A spiral staircase drops to area 17.

If anyone drinks from the fountain, a number of beneficial effects may be gained. One drink will have the same effects as one application of *Keoghtom's ointment* (curing 9-12 HP of damage and either curing a disease or removing poison from the drinker). The magical effects of the water, however, will not last more than one round if it is taken out of the pool. No magical power can cause the water to keep its effects if it is stored in any container. No magical spell will destroy the fountain or the powers of the water within it.

This area is not guarded. Anyone, even Baba Yaga herself, may drink from the waters and be healed.

36) Servants' Chambers — CH, 10' flat overall; IL, 4 CL's, one over each exit.

This area is the servants' quarters for Baba Yaga's annis maidservants. Rooms A-D each have beds and furniture to indicate that two annis live there; there is a 20% chance that one annis (of random HP) will be encountered in each room, resting from her chores. All annis will fight any intruders in their area to the death. Each room has some treasures that the maids are allowed to



keep, though no treasures are of extraordinary power.

Exits lead off to areas 32, 33, 34, and 35 from the hallways. Two staircases rise to area 9, and one descends to area 23.

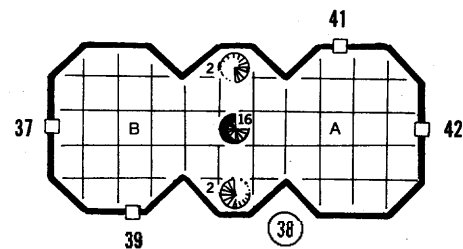
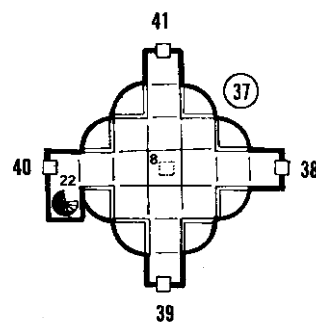
37) Food Storage — CH, domed ceiling, 25' at center; IL, four torches, one on the wall between each pair of food bins.

All foods besides meats and beverages are stored here in eight special containers set against the walls. The food bins will cause perishable foodstuffs placed inside them to be preserved and replenished indefinitely, so that vegetables, grains, breads, pies, eggs, fruits, and vegetable oils may be taken from the bins without needing to refill them. There are no guards here, but there is a 30% chance of an encounter here, since snacking is a common pastime among the Hut's inhabitants.

Exits lead out from this area to areas 38, 39, 40, and 41; a stairway takes characters down to area 22. In the center of the ceiling is a clearly marked square — the platform from area 8 lowers down into this area. A word of command ("Down!") will cause the platform to descend into the chamber.

38) Meeting Hall — CH, 15' flat overall; IL, 1 CL over central stairwell.

This huge auditorium is used only rarely, when Baba Yaga desires to call together a



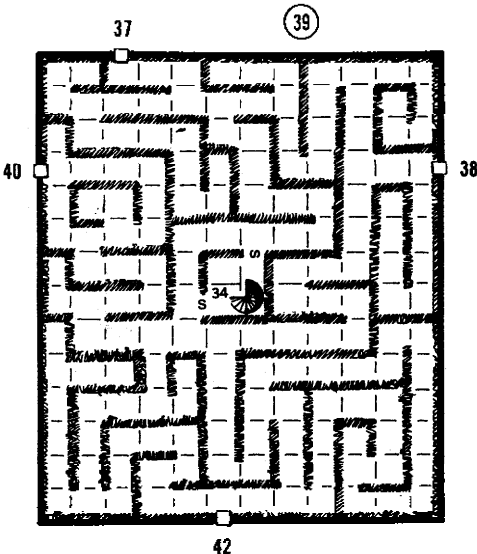
large group of night hags for special meetings. Usually it is kept empty (the chairs and tables needed are created on the spot using various magical spells). The walls are engraved with detailed pictures showing the history of Baba Yaga and her Hut, the many battles they've fought (and won), and the champions they've fought against. There is a 10% chance of encountering a lone diakka (45 HP) sweeping the floor or polishing the walls here.

39) "Outdoor" Garden Maze — 10' flat overall; IL, ceiling illuminates room (see below; ND).

This unusual area appears to be an outdoor hedge maze; a false "sun" appears to shine overhead, though it is only an illusion and the ceiling is as high as the hedge-tops. This maze connects with rooms 37, 38, 40, and 42. In the center of the maze is a stairway leading down to area 34. One foot of earth covers the floor, but it cannot be affected by spells or dug completely away.

The hedges appear to be a strange combination of thornbushes and fruit-bearing plants; large red berries the size of apples grow upon it in a few places. Each character has a 10% chance per one round's worth of normal movement (see below) through the maze to see 1-2 of the berries. The berries can be taken from their branches, but will lose their special properties within one day after they are removed from the area of the maze. If a berry is eaten, there is a 90% chance that it will act to *dispel exhaustion* (at the 6th level of power) on the consumer; the other 10% of the time, the eater will be *deluded* (as per a *potion of delusion*) into thinking that his wounds are cured when they haven't been.

If anyone moves through the maze who is not a regular inhabitant of the Hut, the maze will come to life and attempt to slow the intruders by *entangling* them. The thorns on the bushes will do damage equal to a character's armor class in each round the character is *held* or *slowed* (characters with AC 0 or better take no damage). Normal movement through this area is at underground scale; that is, 10' per 1'



movement rate per round, so a character moving at 6" should go 60' per minute. *Slowed* characters move at half the normal rate (and have half the normal chance to find berries).

The plants in this room are not affected by fire, cold, lightning, or poison gas. *Entangle*, *locate plants*, *warp wood*, and *turn wood* spells have no effect on the vegetation. If someone changes into a plant, using *polymorph self polymorph other, tree*, or the like, the plants will cease to attack. *Plant growth* and *wall of thorns* will cause the hedges to do double damage to victims, and will slow movement to one-quarter normal through the pathways. *Charm plants*, *hold plant*, *speak with plants*, and *anti-plant shell* will all cause the hedges to cease bothering beings within the area of effect. *Plant door*, *pass plant*, and *transport via plants* all function normally.

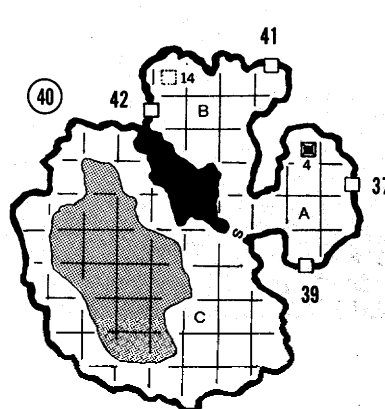
Any attempt to chop at the plants will be frustrated, since they repair damage to themselves within seconds. Attempting to push through a hedge wall, even with giant strength, will cause the character to suffer damage as if trying to push through a wall of *thorns*, and the attempt will not succeed.

40) Crystal Grotto — CH, variable, up to 15' in chambers A and B, and up to 36' in chamber C; IL, 1 CL in chambers A and B *apiece*, see below for chamber C.

This area is divided into two cavern-like chambers. Doors in sections A and B connect to rooms 37, 39, 41, and 42, while secret doors join with areas 14 (above) and 4 (below).

One spot on the wall between A and C has runes written in the stone; anyone who attempts to read them will activate the *symbol of insanity* placed there. The *symbol* may be dispelled normally. If a *phase door* or *passwall* spell is cast upon this part of the wall, a secret door will open into room C, a large enclosed area containing a shallow pool of water.

The pool functions in all ways as a *mirror of opposition* if anyone glances into it. However, Baba Yaga is able to look into the pool and call up a single duplicate of herself, equally powerful in all respects, that will function for one day before disintegrating. Baba Yaga often uses these duplicates to further her ends in other universes, where they can accomplish a short mission



and then report back before falling apart. Duplicates of Baba Yaga are completely under her control, though there is no other way to tell a duplicate from the real being.

41) Kitchens — CH, 15' flat overall; IL, see below.

The fiery kitchens of Baba Yaga's Hut are manned by 3 annis servants (42, 44, and 47 HP) who labor constantly to produce enough food to feed the Hut's inhabitants. Other annis servants stream in and out of the kitchens, bringing foods to be cooked and dinnerware to be washed. Careless intruders in this area may wind up as a dinner special; however, the cooks will rarely bother anyone who simply passes by, even if the visitor is obviously not a regular inhabitant of the Hut.

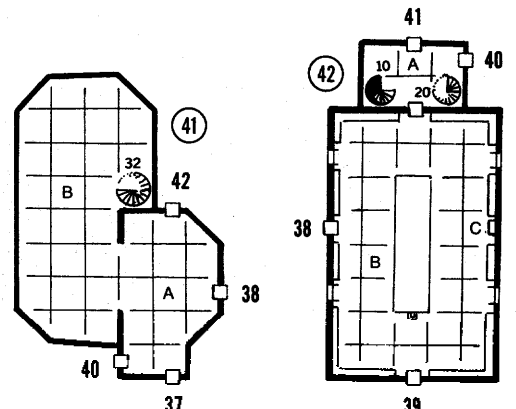
Room A is kept reasonably clear of furniture and loose items, so the annis won't trip on things when moving around. Doorways here join with areas 37, 38, 40, and 42. A thick aroma of cooking meat may be detected here at any time.

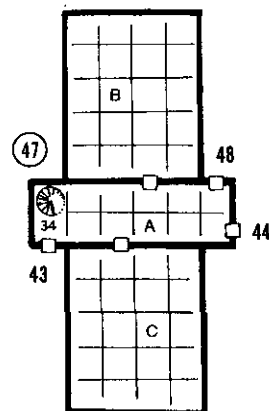
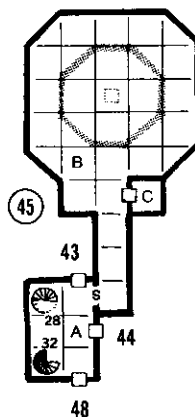
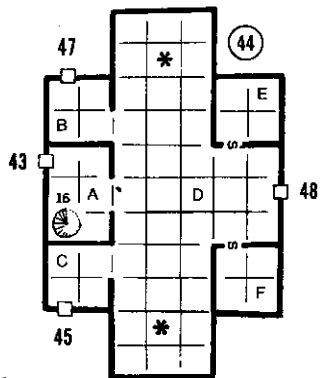
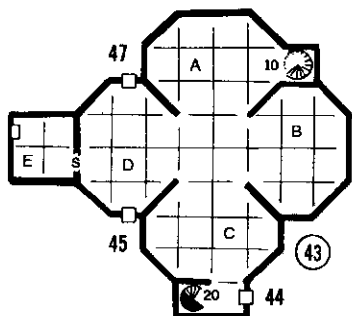
The kitchen itself is room B; the dim light here comes from the wood-burning stoves and a few candles on the shelves. A stairway rises to area 32 from this room. Little treasure may be found here, except what is carried by the cooks themselves as protection from flame (e.g., *rings of fire resistance* or similar devices). A deadly array of cutlery, ranging from knives to sword-sized cleavers, lies around this area, and an angry annis may be moved to hurl a pot full of boiling water (can be thrown 30', doing 3-12 HP damage to all targets along a 10' wide path).

42) Formal Dining Hall — CH, 10' flat in room A, 20' in room B; IL, 1 CL in room A, see below for room B.

This area is divided into two rooms, a small entry chamber that connects to areas 40 and 41, with stairs to 20 above and 10 below, and a large, formal dining hall that connects to areas 38 and 39.

Room B is lined with bookcases, containing volumes on mundane topics like politics, geography of mythical worlds, etc. It is lit by an enormous chandelier made from yellow *glassteed* glass, worth 10,000 gp, but weighing seven hundred pounds. The chandelier may be taken apart and reassembled, but each process takes 7-12 hours.





Four false windows in the room have illusions cast on them to make it appear that the viewer is looking out over a pastoral countryside from the dining hall, with bright sunlight shining down and a gentle breeze blowing through windows that are half open.

One of the doors (C) in room B is a trap. If opened, it appears to lead out into the countryside, thanks to a *permanent illusion* cast within it. However, anyone who steps through the doorway will be destroyed instantly as if he had walked into a *sphere of annihilation*; no saving throw is allowed.

Only one chair sits at the huge dining table here, obviously meant for Baba Yaga herself. Anyone else who sits in this richly furnished chair will be cursed (saving throw vs. spells applicable) to want to go out through door C to see the countryside.

43) Curio Rooms — CH, 15' flat overall; IL, 1 CL in each room A-D, none in E.

The Curio Rooms are four chambers (A-D) containing various animal and monster skeletons that Baba Yaga has slain or gathered from different planes and worlds. The DM may decide which beasts are represented here, and whether or not any of them have magical powers from being *animated* or being set up to serve as guardians. Each chamber will contain 1-2 huge skeletons and 3-6 smaller ones.

Doorways lead off to areas 44, 45, and 47 from here, with stairways dropping to area 20 and rising to area 10. A secret door, normally detectable, is in room D; behind it is a room in which assorted skeletons lie in pieces or are boxed in crates. A door is set in one wall of this room, but it leads nowhere. Anyone who opens it will be struck by a *prismatic spray* launched from the blank wall behind it.

44) Hall of Gateways — CH, 20' flat overall; IL, see below.

The doorways in this area connect directly to areas 43, 45, 47, and 48; a stairwell climbs to area 16 from room A. All of the walls, ceilings, and floors in this area shine with a dull blue light, distorting normal color vision considerably.

This area holds two magical gateways that lead directly to the Outer Planes. The gateway closest to rooms C and F will send anyone walking upon it to Hades, at a place where a night hag colony resides. The other gateway (near rooms B and E) may be adjusted to connect with any plane desired;

all one has to do is speak the name of the plane to be traveled to while standing on the gate point (indicated by the asterisk mark on the map). Up to four people at a time may be transported to another plane. Note that any Prime Material Plane may be traveled to, as well as the Elemental Planes, Ethereal Plane, Astral Plane, and Positive or Negative Material Plane.

Because of the open gateways, this area is one in which all spells or powers labelled as (P) above will function normally. The guards kept here are among the most powerful to be found in the Hut, and they will attack anyone entering this area other than a regular inhabitant of the Hut (unless the visitor is escorted by Baba Yaga herself). Two nycadaemons (111 and 129 HP) stay in rooms E and F, each of which has a secret door not detectable without magical means. The walls between rooms D and E, and between D and F, are constructed so that anyone in E or F may see out into room D but cannot be seen in turn. From within E and F, the nycadaemons monitor those who come and go. The daemons may enter or leave their rooms at will, and will take orders only from Baba Yaga.

45) Holding Room — CH, 10' flat in A and C, 20' in B; IL, 1 CL in A, 4 CL's (one in each corner) in B.

Room A appears to be nothing other than a nexus point, with doorways going off to areas 43, 44, and 48, and stairways up to area 28 and down to 32. A secret door, detectable by normal means, lies against one wall of the room. The door has a magical trap upon it that causes anyone attempting to open it (other than Baba Yaga or her "daughters") to be struck deaf and blind (save vs. spells at -4) permanently.

Room B is a holding area for summoned beings that Baba Yaga or her associates wish to study. A trap door in the ceiling (leading to area 28, the Room of Conjuring) will deposit the summoned being into a cage made from *walls of force* in the shape of an octagon. Vocal communication is possible with trapped beings, though they cannot escape unless a *disintegrate* spell is used upon the *walls*. Once the study of a particular creature is completed, a ritual summoning is performed in area 28, causing the creature to appear there once more, to be sent back to the being's home plane.

Usually no guardians patrol this area, unless someone is studying something kept down here. Often captured specimens are left here by themselves; few have ever been able to escape, however.

46) Control Room — CH, 10' overall; IL, see below.

This tiny room is the control center for the Hut. It looks rather unremarkable, having a wooden ceiling and walls, and a stony paved floor. In the middle of the room is a 5' square rug, with no magical powers, upon which Baba Yaga sits. Against one of the six walls of this room is a large mirror that completely covers the wall. Secret doors in the ceiling and floor lead to areas 4 and 14, respectively.

When Baba Yaga is seated here, she can command the mirror to look into any other room in the Hut as if looking directly through its walls. She can also command the mirror to show her what the environment outside the Hut looks like, and can cause the mirror to transmit normal sounds such as conversation along with the picture it shows.

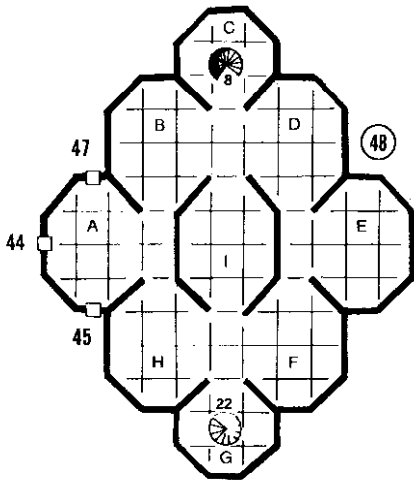
The Hut has several additional powers to those mentioned earlier. It can be commanded to *plane shift* once per day from this room, by Baba Yaga alone, and can *teleport* itself three times per day at her command. Baba Yaga can make the Hut attack or move as she wills it when concentrating on the mirror. The Hut itself is not sentient; it has a few "programmed reflexes" (such as against *spheres of annihilation*), but cannot think for itself.

If anyone but Baba Yaga sits in this room and attempts to control the Hut, he will be stricken with a permanent *feeblemind* spell that can only be removed by a *wish*.

47) Guest Rooms — CH, 15' flat overall; IL, 1 CL (violet) centered in A, rooms B and C are dark.

These two large rooms house daemons and other monstrosities who are stopping over in the Hut from the Lower Planes. There is a 10% chance that one of the rooms will be occupied; the DM may use his discretion to determine what is present.

Doorways in the entry hall lead to areas 43, 44, and 48, and a spiral stair rises to area 34.



48) **Servants' Quarters** — CH, 15' flat overall; IL, dim light radiates from ceiling (equivalent to a very cloudy day).

This area is the lair of five dergho-daemons (70, 76, 79, 85, and 91 HP) who act as heavy guards and workers for Baba Yaga; they obey her and no one else (though they will not harm anyone else who is a permanent resident of the Hut). These daemons have littered the floor of their room with trash, bones, and other debris; anyone who moves about in here must roll his dexterity or less on d20 in each round he moves faster than 6", or else fall down and be unable to attack or defend himself for 1 round afterward.

The daemons have some treasure hidden under the debris in several of the rooms, which may be determined by the DM. Exits lead off to areas 44, 45, and 47; stairs rise to area 22 and drop to area 8.

BABA YAGA

FREQUENCY: *Unique*

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: 6"

HIT POINTS: 135

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-8/3-8/5-20

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Assassination; crushing; horror; magic spells*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Fire, magic, and poison resistance; illusion, psionic, and limited spell immunity; special detection powers; regeneration; magic item and spell-produced defenses; acute senses and godlike intelligence and wisdom*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%

SIZE: M (5' tall)

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral evil*

CLERIC/DRUID: 14th level druid (see below)

FIGHTER: 16+ HD monster

MAGIC-USER/ILLUSIONIST: 25th level magic-user / 15th level illusionist

THIEF/ASSASSIN: See below

MONK/BARD: Nil

SAVING THROWS: 3 in all categories (cannot be reduced further)

PSIONIC ABILITY: VI (see below)

S: 20 (+3/+8) I: 25 W: 23

D: 18 C: 21 CH: -1



Baba Yaga is perhaps the most famous of all legendary witches, and her powers are described well in Russian folklore and literature. Said to be related to the various races of night hags, annis, and greenhags, with extraordinary powers in addition, she is a supernatural being on the level of the quasi-deities of Greyhawk (see DRAGON® Magazine #71) and saints (as described in DRAGON issue #79). Her wanderings have carried her far from her old home, and she wanders still on visits to monstrous relatives or on quests for rare treasures or living victims for her dinner. Since she eats as much per day as ten men, she searches for prey quite often.

In appearance, Baba Yaga is a man-sized, horrifyingly ugly old woman who walks crouched over. Her limbs are almost skeletal and are covered with hard gray-brown skin, upon which magical runes have been tattooed. She has a long, warty nose and a protruding chin, with ice-cold black eyes framed by her thin white hair. Stony teeth filed to points and iron claws on her fingers further emphasize her non-humanity.

She possesses the *horror* power from her negative charisma as per the DEITIES &

DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia, but can cause those so affected to be able to act if she so commands it. Any creature or character of 1 HD (or level) or less will never attack her, and will obey her every command out of fear for her power.

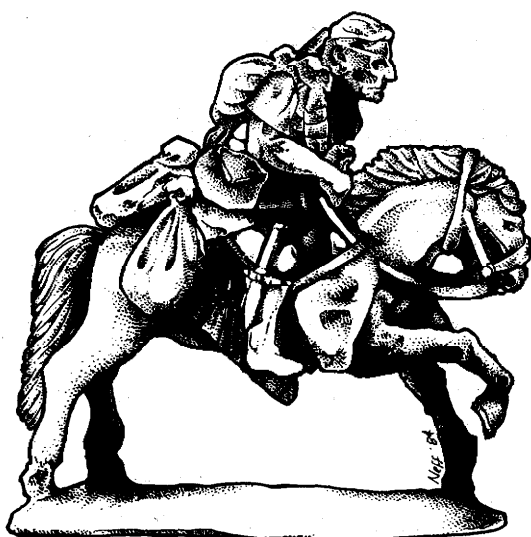
Baba Yaga is immune or resistant to many natural, magical, and psionic forces. Her godlike intelligence renders her immune to all illusion/phantasm spells, and her high wisdom grants her additional immunity to many will-force spells (as per the DDG Cyclopedia, p. 7). Though not psionic, she possesses the equivalent of a permanent *mind bar* science, operating at the 20th level of mastery, and cannot be affected by psionic attacks. Aging — natural or magical — has no effect on her.

The incredible constitution and the non-human makeup of this ancient witch gift her with additional immunities. She resists heat and flame as if wearing a *ring of fire resistance*, and poisons that would kill others do only 3-12 HP of damage if she fails to save against them. She regenerates lost hit points at the rate of 3 per round, whether the loss was caused by regular damage (wounds), fire, or acid. If one of her limbs or her head

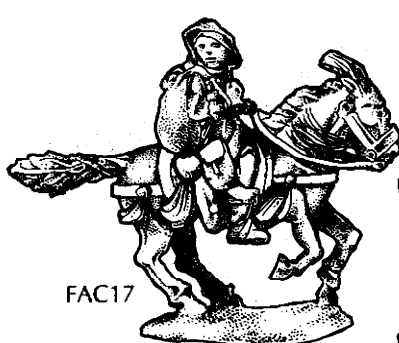
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is severed, she is not slain; she can fight on and reattach the severed parts during or after the battle.

Baba Yaga can only be struck by magical weapons (+1 or better). She is immune to *cause wounds, harm, destruction, slay living*, and similar or related spells. As a non-human, she is also immune to spells like *charm person, hold person, animate dead*, and so forth. Because she cannot be summoned, *dispel evil* won't affect her, and *protection from evil* won't prevent her from clawing at victims (though it may reduce her attack effectiveness).

The following spell-like powers may be used by Baba Yaga at the rate of one power per round, at will: *comprehend languages, detect magic, fear* (as the wand), *read magic*, and *tongues*. Note that she easily sees all invisible beings because of her high intelligence (since the spell is an illusion/phantasm). She automatically sees any "chicken track" stigma that a character or creature may have (see the section on spell alterations). She has normal infravision, plus ultravision to a range of 120'.

Baba Yaga's druid abilities, in every way like those of a 14th-level druid, are not gained through divine intervention. She has learned the spell powers as a magic-user, and recovers her druid spells by studying her spell books and tomes.

She has an 80% chance of knowing an adventurer's nationality from his smell (it may remind her of someone she once ate

from that place). Baba Yaga cannot be surprised at any time, and will know just by looking at a character what class, race, and approximate level the character is.

Despite her alignment and actions, Baba Yaga is more than just an "evil monster." Magic-users, sages, and heroes appeal to her for guidance and knowledge, and quasi-deities and great heroes of all sorts have come to her to ask for her aid in solving problems.

So long as characters are polite, they may receive help (she prefers to be called "Little Grandmother"). She will ask characters their names and their reasons for coming to her, automatically detecting all lies or distortions of the truth. If the characters are honest with her (unless they confess they came to kill her), she will be relatively pleasant and helpful, though abrupt in her actions and somewhat cruel in her choice of words. She often acts in a bizarre manner, and has been known to lie on the floor and meditate on problems for days.

If she decides to help, she will *geas* the characters in payment for her assistance. Usually she will ask for some unusual magical item to be recovered for her, or for an enemy of hers to be slain or driven away. She always sets tasks that are nearly impossible to accomplish, and offers as a reward the characters' lives (which become forfeit if the task isn't finished to her satisfaction). Sometimes she will offer a rich reward, but not very often. Careful reading of the Rus-

sian folktales about her will give a better impression of her personality.

For some reason, though they are the most vulnerable to her, good-aligned beings that have 1 HD (or level) or less will not be harmed by Baba Yaga. She believes this would bring a great curse upon her from all good-aligned deities who protect the weak and good, and she instead sends such beings away. Many tales are told of good children who were abandoned on the doorstep of the Hut, to be taken in as servants for a short time before being sent away. Oddly, the children (nearly always young girls) benefited from the experience in various ways; Baba Yaga often rewarded good performance from such children with great gifts, possibly to appease the deities that were looking out for the youngsters.

Referees should determine what spells she will possess at any given time, keeping these guidelines in mind: Baba Yaga trusts no one, and particularly not other evil characters; she relies heavily on defensive spells; and she prefers to summon demons, devils, daemons, demodands, etc., for assistance and to do her fighting for her. She does not draw protective circles or pentagrams when conjuring aid, since no creature from the Outer Planes or Elemental Planes would dare try to challenge her, out of fear of her and what she can do. The conjured being will fulfill her commands for the duration of the summoning spell or until Baba Yaga dismisses the servant, whichever comes first. Take note of the spell alterations within the Hut when assigning spells to her.

Though Baba Yaga can use most weapons, she prefers to attack weaker beings with her claws and teeth. If she catches someone with both of her claws, she has a chance of killing the victim instantly, as a 9th-level assassin (using the assassin's tables in the DMG). Inanimate objects must save vs. crushing blow if she bites them or grasps them roughly, and her claws and teeth can destroy wooden materials up to 1' thick.

Interestingly, Baba Yaga is completely familiar with gunpowder technology (having seen it used on her home world), but scorns it and all "higher" technologies completely. She believes in the powers of magic, and will never use weapons other than swords, scimitars, and the like.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to John Helle ("Put a boalisk in there, those things are neat!"), Jim Ward (How about a casino room run by a night hag, where she's got this magic roulette wheel . . ."), Penny Petticord ("I always thought Baba Yaga had a nice personality"), Chuck Ramsay ("Those Josef Stalin tanks were pretty common back in '43", Roger Raupp ("I just don't know about the Russian tank; why not put an aircraft carrier in the big lake, or a MiG-25 with big nukes all over it . . ."), Andria Hayday ("It's . . . interesting"), and Will Lonergan ("It's deviant"), whose help and commentary made this module horrifying.

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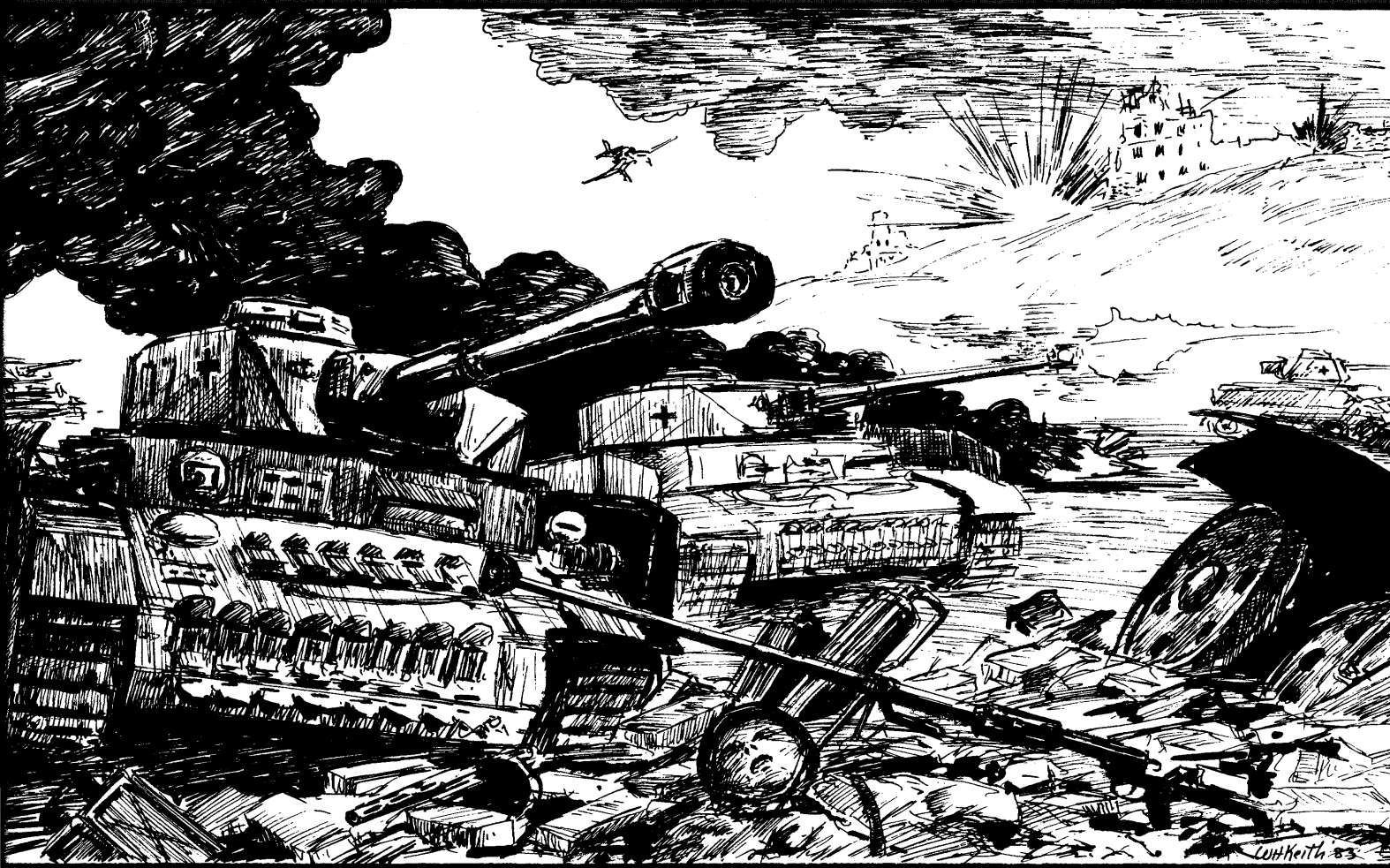
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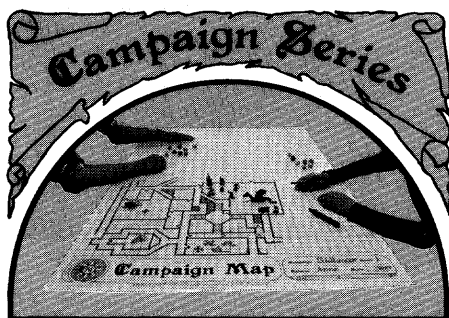


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seen ARES Magazine at all should take the opportunity to introduce yourselves by reading the section for a few issues. We're the first to admit that we can't cover all of science-fiction gaming every month in "only" 16 pages, but as time goes on we hope to examine as many facets of that hobby as we can.

Our decision won't affect the readers of DRAGON Magazine nearly as much as it affects the people who subscribed to ARES Magazine; it's not easy to disappoint someone who has shown faith in you, and all of us here regret this decision for their sake. All the subscribers were contacted individually, before the last issue of ARES Magazine went to press, told what was happening,

and offered a choice of redeeming their subscriptions for equal-value subscriptions to DRAGON or STRATEGY & TACTICS® Magazine, or getting a cash refund for the dollar amount of their unfulfilled subscription issues. That's not something we had to do; lots of times when magazines stop publishing, they also stop paying their debts. But we tried to do the best we could. And that's what we'll be trying to do next month when the ARES section makes its debut. Be there.

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How to finish fights faster

A suggested simpler system for unarmed combat

by Roger Moore



... I do have one severe problem with my own game system. I got talked into doing the complicated and time-consuming series for grappling, pummeling, and overbearing in a weak moment. I have regretted them ever since. I tend to use a very simple system which we initially developed for such close-quarters combat in about 1974. . . .

— E. Gary Gygax
DRAGON® issue #67, p.66

The rules for weaponless combat in the AD&D™ game system are difficult to use and time-consuming. This opinion is shared by many people, including the person who created the game system. Many players skip over them or develop their own systems for unarmed combat. Part of the problem is with the methods for determining hits, damage, and subdual damage, which often require players to calculate percentage differences in opponents' heights and weights, and so forth. This is confusing and somewhat daunting to players and Dungeon Masters alike.

Following is a suggested alternative to the weaponless combat system in the Dungeon Masters Guide. It divides such combat into three attack modes: pummeling, kicking, and grappling. Any character can use these attack modes except monks, who are given special training in open-hand attacks and are treated as per the Players Handbook.

None of the three modes of weaponless combat may be combined with any weapon attack, spell attack, or psionic attack, but a psionic defense mode and a weaponless combat mode may be used at the same time. A character who can make more than one weaponless attack per round is also able to switch modes between those attacks, as long as each opponent is not attacked in more than one way. In other words, any character fighting a single opponent cannot change from one attack mode to another during a round. Anyone can change attack modes from one round to the next. (Obviously, circumstances may sometimes make it impossible to follow these guidelines.)

In an attack by an unarmed character against an opponent with a weapon, the armed opponent generally gains a +3 on initiative die rolls to reflect the longer reach of the weapon. This does not apply when the opponent is armed with claws or dagger(s), in which case the reach of the weapon is minimal and initiative is determined as usual.

These rules were meant to apply only to combat between opponents who are man-like in shape (see the list given in the pummeling rules). Only very rarely does unarmed combat occur with other types of

opponents. And often, only a monk character would stand a chance to harm an opponent like a bear, for instance, using unarmed combat techniques. Everyone else — that is, anyone who uses the "regular" weaponless combat system instead — must use a weapon to inflict damage on an opponent in such cases.

Only barbarian characters (see issues #63 and #65 of DRAGON Magazine) can use unarmed combat to harm monsters who are otherwise hit only by magical weapons, provided that the barbarian is of sufficient level to do so.

To use unarmed combat, a player simply indicates his or her character's intention to do so at the start of a melee round, and the DM then follows the directions in the appropriate section (pummeling, kicking, or grappling). This system has been made as simple as possible without sacrificing game "realism," and at the same time staying in accord with the spirit of the AD&D game combat rules.

PUMMELING

1. Two pummeling attacks may be made per round by members of non-lighter classes, humanoid monsters (those listed below), and by lower-level members of the fighter class (fighters and paladins of levels 1-6, rangers of levels 1-7, and barbarians and cavaliers of levels 1-5).

Three pummeling attacks may be made per round by fighters and paladins of levels 7-12, rangers of levels 8-14, and barbarians and cavaliers of levels 6-10.

Four attacks per round may be made by fighters and paladins of level 13 or higher, rangers of level 15 or higher, and barbarians and cavaliers of level 11 or higher.

Any attacker must have at least one hand free to pummel.

2. The attacker makes a normal roll to hit against the opponent, applying strength bonuses as well as armor class adjustments to hit for a fist or open hand against the armor type the opponent is wearing (for these, see this article's appendix). The

opponent gets armor class adjustments for high or low dexterity as usual.

Add a further +1 to hit if the attacker is using a dagger pommel to strike with, or +2 to hit for an attacker using metal gauntlets or cesti. (These two bonuses are not cumulative.) The attacker may also be eligible for these bonuses to hit: +2 vs. an encumbered opponent, or on an attack from behind (but thieves and assassins, of course, strike from behind at +4); or, +4 against opponents who are prone, *slowed*, partially bound, or stunned. Any pummeling attack automatically hits an opponent who is immobile (e.g., asleep, *held*, or paralyzed).

If the attacker is charging, the *first* pummeling attack is made at +2 to hit, but no other unarmed attack during the melee receives the same bonus. Also, note the penalties to armor class for a charging attacker, as outlined in the Dungeon Masters Guide, p. 66.

3. If a hit is scored, determine damage according to this table:

Attacker strength	"To hit" modifier	Pummel damage	Chance to stun
3	-3	1	0%
4-5	-2	1	0%
6-7	-1	1-2	0%
8-9	+0	1-2	01%
10-11	+0	1-2	02%
12-13	+0	1-2	04%
14-15	+0	1-2	07%
16	+0	1-3	10%
17	+1	1-3	13%
18	+1	1-4	16%
18/01-50	+1	2-5	20%
18/51-75	+2	2-5	25%
18/76-90	+2	3-6	30%
18/91-99	+2	4-7	35%
18/00	+3	5-8	40%
19	+3	6-9	50%
20	+3	7-10	60%
21	+4	8-11	70%
22	+4	9-12	80%
23	+5	10-13	90%
24	+6	11-14	100%

Bonuses to damage: +1 for pummeling with a dagger pommel, or +2 for pummeling while wearing metal gauntlets or cesti.

Note: Strengths higher than 18/00 are given for characters using magical potions or effects to increase their strength to giant levels (see *girdle of giant strength*, DMG p. 145).

The chance of stunning an opponent with a given blow is equal to one's chance to bend bars/lift gates. A stunned combatant is disoriented for the remainder of the current round and all of the following round, during which time his attacks are made at -1 to hit, and he loses the benefit of any dexterity bonuses to armor class. In addition, any character attacking a stunned opponent does so with a +4 bonus to hit — unless the attacker is also stunned, in which case the -1 penalty to hit applies instead.

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The effect of consecutive or close-together stunning blows is not cumulative; a combatant cannot be stunned when he is already in that condition. However, it is possible for an attacker to (in effect) keep an opponent continually stunned by winning the initiative in every odd-numbered round and landing a stunning blow on the first pummeling attack that follows in that round. Monks are immune to this stunning effect, as are all tighter-class characters (including paladins, rangers, etc.) who are high enough in level to get three or more pummeling attacks per round.

Pummeling damage is considered "real" damage, and may be healed the same as any other sort of damage (by the use of spells or potions, by resting, etc.). When a victim takes enough damage from a particular pummeling attack to bring that character to zero hit points, the victim falls unconscious for 1-4 turns. He is left with zero hit points during this time; points of damage that would have brought his hit point total to less than zero are simply dropped. This allows captives to be taken, and reflects the generally non-lethal nature and intent of weaponless combat. However, damage taken from a monk's open-hand attack is treated like any other attack damage, and can kill opponents.

4. If an attacker is using the pommel of a magical dagger, the "to hit" and damage bonuses of the dagger may be applied to pummeling attacks as well.

5. Hard armor (AC 5 or better) is bad news for bare-handed attacks. A character who attempts to pummel someone wearing hard armor will take 1 point of damage himself on every strike. Using a dagger pommel or a rock, or wearing metal gauntlets or cesti, will prevent this damage.

6. All of the player character races — humans, dwarves, elves, half-elves, half-orcs, gnomes, and halflings — may make pummeling attacks. Monsters of man-like shape and size (up to the height of an ogre) may also make pummeling attacks. Note that some monsters, like quaggoth and trolls, do not pummel because they have effective claw attacks instead.

If the strength of a pummeling combatant is not known, use the following list as a guideline to the average strength for a member of the character or creature's race:

- 8 — halfling*
 - 9 — kobold, skulk, tasloi, xuart
 - 10 — gnome*, goblin, human*
 - 11 — frost man, gibberling, half-elf*, spriggan (small), svirfneblin
 - 12 — derro, duergar, elf*, half-orc*, half-elf*, orc
 - 14 — dwarf*, norker
 - 15 — grimlock, hobgoblin, gullan
 - 16 — gnoll, half-ogre*
 - 17 — bugbear, flind
 - 18 — cyclopskin, ogre (no percentile roll)
 - 18/01 — ogrillon
- * — average NPC value

Leader types and chieftains of these races will be somewhat stronger than average, as a rule, and females will generally be somewhat weaker. Ogrillons are exceptional in two ways: their tough fists and high strength enable them to deal 2-7 points of damage on a pummeling attack (the only way an ogrillon fights), and, unlike "normal" pummeling attacks, damage from ogrillon blows can kill.



KICKING

1. Members of the fighter class (or one of its subclasses) may attack by kicking twice per round. All other characters and creatures can attack by kicking once per round. To make even a single kicking attack, both feet must be unchained or otherwise unencumbered and free to move.

2. A kicking attempt is resolved by making a normal "to hit" roll (including strength bonus or penalty, if any), but incorporating the adjustments for armor class as if the attacker was using a club. Barefoot kicking is done at -1 "to hit," but the attacker takes no damage from kicking hard armor, unlike pummeling. Bonuses apply to the chance to hit against opponents hampered in some way, as per the pummeling rules. The attacker gets +2 "to hit" when making a charge, but only one kick can be made in the first melee round immediately following the charge.

3. If a hit is scored, use the pummeling table to determine a base figure for damage according to strength. A kick attack gets a +2 bonus to damage if the attacker is wearing hard or metallic boots, or +1 to damage if the attacker is wearing soft boots or is barefoot. Also, a kick made at the end of a charging run is +2 to damage over and above these standard bonuses.

The chance to stun an opponent by kicking is the same as for a pummeling attack, dependent on strength. Damage taken from kicking is treated the same as any other damage; unlike pummeling damage, kicking damage can kill by reducing the victim's hit points to below zero.

A kick results in a *knockdown* any time the maximum possible damage is rolled on at attack. If this occurs against an opponent that is no more than 1½ times the height of the attacker, the opponent must save vs. paralyzation or be knocked down. The victim of a knockdown loses any further attacks in the current melee round and automatically loses initiative in the following round.

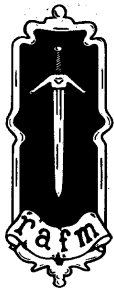
4. Monsters will use kicking attacks only in the rarest circumstances, such as when the monster is cornered and has no other way to attack. But even in those cases, the monster will generally attempt to pummel before trying to kick.

GRAPPLING

1. No character or monster can make more than one grappling attack per round. The attacker must have both hands free and cannot be holding something in one or both of them.

2. A character or monster attempts a grappling attack by making a normal "to hit" roll and incorporating adjustments for hampered opponents and for charging, as given in the pummeling rules. No armor class adjustments are used, unlike pummeling and kicking. However, each type of grappling attack carries a penalty "to hit" according to its difficulty and complexity. Likewise, damage varies from one attack form to another. The following list gives each attack form, its "to hit" penalty in parentheses, and notes on damage and other details.

A: Pin one arm and hold (-2) causes 1 point of damage when the pin is applied and another 1 point for each round the hold is maintained. The opponent can break the pin immediately (but not negate the initial 1 point of damage) by making a successful roll to open doors in the same round. If the pin is not broken, it can be maintained from round to round if the attacker continues making the required roll "to hit" and if the opponent continues to fail his roll to



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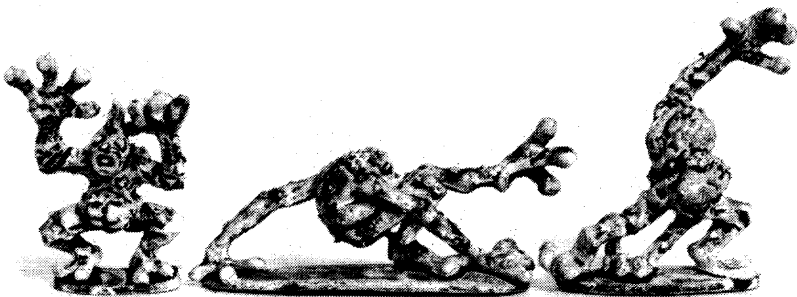
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01-114

A look at AOKs, old & new

Another preview of the TOP SECRET® Companion

by Merle Rasmussen

This section of the upcoming TOP SECRET® Companion introduces five new Areas of Knowledge, corrects one of the originals, and defines all AOKs.

The new Areas of Knowledge are Anthropology, Business/Industry, Linguistics, Naval Science, and Philosophy.

The correct name for Social Sciences should be Social Sciences/Sociology.

To include the five new Areas of Knowledge, use the Superior Area of Knowledge list given here instead of the list in the Basic Rulebook.

AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE

01-02 Agriculture	45-46 Geography
03-04 Animal Science	47-48 Geology
05-06 Anthropology	49-50 Home Economics
07-08 Architecture	51-52 Law
09-10 Arts and Crafts	53-54 Linguistics
11-12 Astronomy/Space Science	55-56 Literature
13-14 Biology/Biochemistry	57-58 Mathematics/ Accounting
15-16 Botany	59-60 Medicine/Physiology
17-18 Business/Industry	61-62 Metallurgy
19-20 Chemistry	63-64 Military Science/ Weaponry
21-22 Computer Science	65-66 Naval Science
23-24 Ecology/Earth Sciences	67-68 Philosophy
25-26 Economics/Finance	69-70 Photography
27-28 Education/ Indoctrination	71-72 Physical Education
Engineering:	73-74 Physics
29-30 Aeronautical	75-76 Political Science/ Ideology
31-32 Construction/Civil	77-78 Psychology
33-34 Electrical	79-80 Religion
35-36 Hydraulic	81-82 Social Sciences/ Sociology
37-38 Industrial	83-84 World History/ Current Affairs
39-40 Mechanical	85-00 Player's choice
41-42 Transportation	
43-44 Fine Arts	

Knowledge potentials

A character's Area of Knowledge value indicates the character's ability to apply the knowledge in a game situation. If the Area of Knowledge value is 01 to 33, the character has heard of subjects related to the AOK. If the value is 34 to 50, the character knows related subjects well enough to discuss them briefly. If the value is 51 to 70, the character knows about related subject areas and can converse about the subject as well as someone with a related hobby. If the value is 71 to 130, the character knows the subject well enough to get a job in a related field and operate most job-related equipment and processes. If the value is 131 or higher, the character is an expert in the subject. He can operate successfully all related processes and equipment 99% of the time, and can teach others about the subject or related processes and equipment.

Use of abilities

When a character tries to apply knowledge, his chance of success is equal to the character's Area of Knowledge value (to a maximum of 94%). For example, a character with an Anthropology value of 51

wants to figure out where a small bronze statue was made. The character has a 51% chance to recognize the culture that made the statue. The player rolls percentile dice and gets 36, so the referee tells him the statue is a Hindu fetish, probably cast in the Kashmir district in the late 1800s.

If a character's Area of Knowledge value is 95 to 130, he has a 95% chance to operate a process or piece of equipment successfully. If the character's Area of Knowledge value is greater than 130, the chance is 99%. There is no sure thing.

An agent's chance to identify, duplicate, or invent a particular process or piece of equipment is equal to the appropriate Area of Knowledge value minus 100. For example, a Technician is asked to identify and duplicate a strange behavior-modifying drug. The Technician has a Chemistry value of 124. Given the proper equipment and time, the chance that the drug can be identified is $(124 - 100 =) 24\%$. The chance to duplicate it also is 24%.

Explanations

The following Area of Knowledge definitions outline what a character with an AOK value of 100 knows and is able to do. Admins can use these guidelines to decide what a character with an AOK value above or below 100 knows. (Passages in quotation marks are from *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, copyright 1976).

AGRICULTURE: Character knows "the science, art, and business" of farming. The character knows how to cultivate the soil, produce crops, and raise animals useful to humanity. Aquaculture, hydroponics, and cosmoculture (farming in space) are included.

ANIMAL SCIENCE: Character knows how to care for, train, and breed domestic animals. The character also understands the behavior of wild animals. Zoology ("the biological science of animals") and paleontology ("the study of fossils and ancient life forms") are included in Animal Science. The character can identify a particular geographical area of the world by the animal life living there.

ANTHROPOLOGY: Character has studied the "origin, physical, social, and cultural development and behavior of humanity." This knowledge overlaps into archaeology ("the systematic recovery and detailed study by scientific methods of material evidence remaining from humanity's life and culture in past ages"). Given an artifact, the character can recognize the approximate date of manufacture and the culture that produced the artifact. The character can identify a particular geographical area of the world by the culture of the people and the artifacts of the people living there.

ARCHITECTURE: Character knows "the art and science of designing and erecting buildings." The character can see what a building was designed for and how it is being used.

ARTS & CRAFTS: Character knows the arts of decorative design and handicraft concerning useful objects. These arts include book-binding, weaving, needlework, beadwork, leatherscraft, woodworking, metalworking, pottery making, and general ornamentation. The character can work in each of the listed areas.

ASTRONOMY/SPACE SCIENCE: Character knows "the scientific study of the universe beyond the earth." The character, has studied "the observation, calculation, and theoretical interpretation of the positions, dimensions, distribution, motion, composition, and

evolution of celestial bodies and phenomena." With the proper equipment and conditions, the character can tell time by the sun and stars and figure out his position on the earth. The character has a good knowledge of the details of astronaut and cosmonaut training, including exobiology, space medicine, weightlessness, and spacecraft. The character can operate most space vehicles and telescopes.

BIOLOGY/BIOCHEMISTRY: Character knows "the science of life and life processes." This includes "the study of structure, functioning, growth, origin, evolution, and distribution of living organisms." The character also knows "the chemistry of biological substances and processes." The character can tell what types of creatures frequent the immediate environment by physical evidence such as seeds, tracks, and waste products.

BOTANY: Character knows "the biological science of plants." The character can tell whether a plant is harmful or helpful, edible or inedible. The character also can identify a particular geographical area of the world by the characteristic plant life found there.

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY: Character knows how to manage personnel, materials, equipment, and procedures intended for the commercial production of products or services. The character knows how to buy raw materials for business use. The character can manage a business, exact type determined by the character's other AOKs.

CHEMISTRY: Character knows "the composition, structure, properties, and reactions of matter, especially of atomic and molecular systems." The character can tell the purpose of a chemical lab.

COMPUTER SCIENCE: Character knows "the construction, operation, and programming of computers." Given access, the character can operate most computers.

ECOLOGY/EARTH SCIENCE: Character knows "the science of the relationship between organisms and their environment." Charac-

ter knows "any of several essentially geologic sciences concerned with the origin, structure, and physical phenomena of the earth." This includes seismology and meteorology. The character can recognize useful or dangerous plants and animals. Given the proper equipment, the character can predict weather and seismic activity.

ECONOMICS/FINANCE: Character knows "the science that deals with the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities" in a country, household, or business enterprise. Character also knows "the science of the management of money or other assets" of an individual, corporate body, or government. After a discussion about economics, the character can tell what another character's Economic Alignment is. The character can disguise his own Economic Alignment value by adding to it or subtracting from it an amount equal to or less than his Economics/Finance value.

EDUCATION/INDOCTRINATION: Character knows "the act or process of imparting knowledge or skill" — teaching. The character also knows how "to instruct in a body of doctrine" or "to teach to accept a system of thought uncritically." The character can determine what another character's Knowledge value is, and can disguise his own Knowledge value by adding to it or subtracting from it an amount equal to or less than his Education/Indoctrination value.

ENGINEERING, AERONAUTICAL: Character can apply "scientific principles to practical ends" in "the design, construction, and operation of efficient and economical" aircraft "structures, equipment, and systems." The character can fly most air vehicles.

ENGINEERING, CONSTRUCTION/CIVIL: Character knows how to apply "scientific principles to practical ends" in "the design, construction, and operation of efficient and economical" buildings, "structures," public works, "equipment, and systems." This includes bridges, dams, tunnels, arches, towers, aeriels, roads, and rail embankments. The character can operate most heavy construction equipment, forklifts, and elevators.

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ENGINEERING, ELECTRICAL: Character knows "the scientific technology of electricity." This includes "the design and application of circuitry and equipment for power generation and distribution, machine control, and communications." The character can operate most electrical equipment and devices.

ENGINEERING, HYDRAULIC: Character knows how to apply scientific principles toward "the design, construction, and operation of efficient and economical structures, equipment, and systems" involving fluids under pressure, especially water. The character can operate most hydraulic devices.

ENGINEERING, INDUSTRIAL: Character can apply scientific principles toward "the design, construction, and operation of efficient and economical structures, equipment, and systems [involving] the commercial production and sale of goods and services." If the character knows what is being shipped into an industrial area, he can predict what is being built or set up in that area, and vice versa.

ENGINEERING, MECHANICAL: Character knows how to apply scientific principles toward "the generation and application of . . . mechanical power [and] the design, production, and use of machines and tools." The character can use most machines and tools.

ENGINEERING, TRANSPORTATION: Character knows how to apply scientific principles toward "the design, construction, and operation of efficient and economical structures, equipment, and systems [involving] the business of transporting passengers, goods, or materials." The character can drive most land and sea vehicles.

FINE ARTS: Character is familiar with "art produced or intended primarily for beauty alone rather than utility." This includes "sculpture, painting, drawing, drama, music, and the dance." A character may have a separate score for each of these art forms. Roll percentile dice to find an initial value for each. The value of any one area can be increased by 5 for each point the character's Fine Arts value is increased. The character can sculpt, paint, draw, act, dance, sing, and play an instrument, with the expertise in any specific skill variable dependent on the percentile dice roll for that skill.

GEOGRAPHY: Character knows "the study of the earth and its features (and) the distribution on the earth of life, including human life and the effects of human activity." The character can identify a particular part of the world by the geographical features of the area.

GEOLOGY: Character knows "the scientific study of the origin, history, and structure of the earth." The character can identify a particular part of the world by the geological evidence in the area.

HOME ECONOMICS: Character knows "the science and art of home management, including household budgets, purchase of food and clothing, child care, cooking, and nutrition." The character can cook nutritious meals, manage a home, and care for children.

LAW: Character knows "the body of rules governing the affairs of humanity within a community or among states." The character knows the laws of the land and the general laws of a region.

LINGUISTICS: Character knows "the science of language." This includes "the study of the nature and structure of human speech." A linguist overhearing a conversation can identify the family of the language being spoken. He may be able to identify the precise language or dialect, even if he cannot speak or interpret that language himself. Roll percentile dice and compare the roll to the character's Linguistics value. If the number rolled is less than or equal to the value, the name of the language is known. If the number rolled is greater, the specific language remains a mystery, but the language family is known.

LITERATURE: Character is familiar with "the body of written work produced by writers, scholars, or researchers." The character is familiar with the activity or art of imaginative or creative writing.

The character can write creatively and report factually. The character also can identify quotes from great authors.

MATHEMATICS/ACCOUNTING: Character knows "the study of number, form, arrangement, and associated relationships, using rigorously defined literal, numerical, and operational symbols." The character also knows "the bookkeeping methods involved in making a financial record of business transactions and in the preparation of statements concerning the assets, liabilities, and operating results of a business." A character with sufficient time can look at ledgers or other financial records and determine how funds have been used and if funds have been misappropriated.

MEDICINE/PHYSIOLOGY: Character knows "the science of diagnosing, treating or preventing disease and other damage to body or mind [through] treatment by drugs, diet, exercise, and other nonsurgical means." The character also knows "the biological science of essential and characteristic life processes, activities, and functions." The character can apply first aid for minor injuries and illnesses. Given the proper equipment and time, most characters could successfully perform surgery.

METALLURGY: Character knows "the science or procedures of extracting metals from their ores, of purifying metals, and of creating useful objects from metals." The character can identify the metals in an object, and ore being brought from a mine.

MILITARY SCIENCE/WEAPONRY: Character knows the "methodological activity, discipline, or study" of soldiers, is familiar with most combat equipment, and knows how to act like a soldier.

NAVAL SCIENCE: Character knows the "methodological activity, discipline, or study [of] the equipment, installations, personnel, or customs of a navy." The character knows how to act like a sailor.

PHILOSOPHY: Character knows the "science comprising logic, ethics, aesthetics, metaphysics, and epistemology." The character can speak or write abstractly and philosophically. After an interview, the character can tell what another character's Political Change Alignment value is. The character can disguise his own Political Change Alignment value by adding to it or subtracting from it an amount equal to or less than his Philosophy value.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Character knows "the process of rendering optical images on photosensitive surfaces." The character can use most cameras and develop film, given the proper conditions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Character knows "education in the care and development of the human body, stressing athletics and including hygiene." After an examination or workout, the character can tell what another character's Physical Strength and Coordination values are. Also, the character can disguise his Physical Strength or Coordination values by adding or subtracting an amount equal to or less than his Physical Education value.

PHYSICS: Character knows "the science of matter and energy and of interactions between the two, grouped in traditional fields such as acoustics, optics, mechanics, thermodynamics, and electromagnetism, as well as modern fields of atomic and nuclear physics, cryogenics, solid state physics, particle physics, and plasma physics." The character can recognize what a physics laboratory is set up for.

POLITICAL SCIENCE/IDEOLOGY: Character knows "the study of the processes, principles, and structure of government and of political institutions; and of political campaigns and interactions. The character understands "the body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of an individual, group, class, or culture." After a political conversation with another character, the political expert can tell what the other character's Political Alignment is. The character can disguise his own Political Alignment by adding to it or subtracting from it an amount less than or equal to his Political Science/Ideology value.

PSYCHOLOGY: Character knows "the science of mental processes and behavior." After an interview, the character can tell what another character's Willpower value is. The character can disguise his Willpower value by adding or subtracting an amount less than or equal to his Psychology value.

RELIGION: Character knows the expressions of humanity's "belief in and reverence for a superhuman power recognized as the creator and governor of the universe." After an interview, the character can tell what another character's Courage value is. The character can disguise his Courage value by adding to it or subtracting from it an amount less than or equal to his Religion value.

SOCIAL SCIENCES/SOCIOLOGY: Character knows "the study of social behavior; especially . . . of the origins, organizations, institutions, and development of human society." After a conversation, the character can tell what another character's Charm value is, and can disguise his Charm value by adding to it or subtracting from it an amount equal to or less than his Social Sciences/Sociology value.

WORLD HISTORY/CURRENT AFFAIRS: Character knows "the branch of knowledge that records and analyzes past events" of the earth. The character also knows of any noteworthy event that is now in progress, and is in touch with the public news of the world.

Sign language and lip reading

Sign language may not be a native language, but may be an additional language. It is usable only when contacts are within short range. The speaker must have at least one arm free to send messages with. If a character is fluent in signing in a certain language, this language is listed with the tag word "sign" directly following the spoken language on the character record sheet. For example:

1. (Native) English
2. English, sign
3. French
4. French, sign

Lip reading (or speech reading) is possible only after learning to speak or sign that language, even for a native language. Language usually is acquired by hearing, and when this sense is impaired, language must be learned by observing, by reading speech on the speaker's lips, by reading, and through intensive study. A character must know a language before learning to read speech in that language. Although speech reading is a skill, it can be listed as a separate language on the character record. Speech reading is universal, so a character with this skill can lip-read any language he knows. Anyone can learn sign language or speech reading.

To read speech, the speaker's face must be visible (at least in profile, if not full view) to the "listener," and the speaker must be at short range. Binoculars and scopes can bring the image of a speaker into short range; divide the actual distance to the speaker by the power of the scope.

Only 26 percent of speech is visible on the lips, so even the best lip readers cannot read everything that is said. Being able to read lips does not allow an agent to speak silently to someone who is not trained to read speech. Anyone can communicate generally by using universal body language, gestures, and facial expressions. Such communication should be role-played with a high chance of NPCs misunderstanding PCs.

It is assumed that if a character can speak, sign, or speech-read a language, the character can write and read it, too. To be literate in Braille, a character must designate it as an additional language after mastering the parent language. For example:

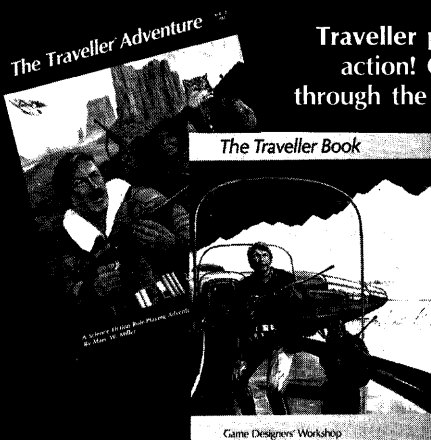
1. (Native) English
2. English (Braille)

A character who can read Braille with his fingertips can read it by sight also. Such skills may prove invaluable if, for example, characters are trapped in a dark elevator, blindfolded, or temporarily blinded. Some languages, such as Chinese, Hebrew, and ancient Egyptian, do not have raised dot alphabets. In these cases, even raised or inscribed hieroglyphics may be impossible to read by touch. Agents probably should concentrate on Indo-European languages that are used by a great many people. ❧

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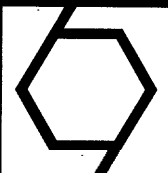
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SF/gaming convention calendar

GEN CON® SOUTH VIII GAME CONVENTION, March 16-18

All aspects of contemporary hobby gaming will be featured at this event, co-sponsored by the Crawford Dragoons and TSR, Inc., to be held at the Thunderbird Resort Hotel in Jacksonville, Fla. For details: GEN CON South Information, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

MIDSOUTHCON 3, March 16-18

Guests of honor at this SF/fantasy convention will include author C. J. Cherryh, Margaret Middleton, artist Steven R. Dodd, and toastmaster Daluan Coger. Memberships are \$10 through Feb. 1, \$15 after that date, and \$8 at the door. This convention will be held in Memphis, Tennessee, and will feature a masquerade, video room, art show, auction, and a 24-hour convention suite. Send all inquiries to: Midsouth Con 3, c/o Richard Moore, Jr., 1229 Pallwood, Memphis TN 38122.

ORCCON 1984, March 16-18

Touted as one of Southern California's largest strategy gaming conventions and expositions, this event will take place at the Sheraton-Anaheim Hotel, located next to Disneyland in Anaheim, California. Wargame, science-fiction, fantasy, sporting, and family-oriented game tournaments will be featured. Also, industry exhibitors will be there, and many special events will be offered. Prepaid admission to the convention is \$15.50 for all three days; prices at the door are \$17 for the entire weekend and \$13 per day. For further details about the convention, write to: STRATEGICON PR Dept., P.O. Box 2577, Anaheim CA 93804.

SIMCON VI, March 16-18

This sixth annual convention will be staged at the University of Rochester River Campus. A wide spectrum of events will include tournaments, demonstrations, and films about strategy, fantasy, and miniature gaming. Featured will be US Army training games, a miniatures clash with over 1000 pieces, a major FRP tournament, as well as the films *Wargames*, *Twilight Zone*, *Das Boot*, and a "Star Trek" episode. Admission is \$4.00 in advance, or \$7.00 at the door. Dealer inquiries welcome! For further details, please contact: SIMCON VI, P.O. Box 29142, River Station, Rochester NY 14627.

TRI-CON II, March 16-18

This science-fiction/gaming convention will be staged at the North Carolina State University campus in Raleigh, N.C. For more information about this event, please send a SASE to: North Carolina State Gaming Society, P.O. Box 37122, Raleigh NC 27627.

ALASCON V, March 17-18

The organizers of this convention call it the biggest and best gaming convention in Alaska. A tournament dungeon, miniature painting contests, and more will be featured at the event. The convention will take place at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks campus. For more information, write: ALASCON V, c/o Ken Mayer, P.O. Box 82374, College AK 99708.

MUGG-CON I, March 23-25

A benefit SF/gaming convention to be staged at the Interlaken Lodge in Lake Geneva, Wis., sponsored by the Multi-Universal Gamers' Guild (MUGG). An AD&D™ tournament, nearly 100 other gaming events, and other special attractions are on the schedule. All proceeds from the convention will be turned over to the American Red Cross. For more information, send a business-size self-addressed, stamped envelope to MUGG-Con Convention Committee, c/o Jan Carlson, P.O. Box 265, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

NEOCON III, March 23-25

This third annual gaming convention will be staged at the Gardner Student Center at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio. Over a hundred events will be offered, including fantasy and science-fiction role-playing, board games and miniatures. Registration is \$10 for the weekend, \$4 for Friday attendance only, \$5 for Saturday, and \$6 for Sunday. For further information, contact: NeoCon III, POB 7411, Akron OH 44306, or call (216)724-0592.

STELLARCON 9, March 23-25

A science-fiction and gaming event to be held at the University of North Carolina's Greensboro campus. Contact: the Science Fiction and Fantasy Federation, Box 4, Elliott University Center, UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro NC 27412.

NOVA 9, March 24-25

Free movies, gaming, an art show and auction, a costume party and contest highlight this convention, to be staged on the campus of Oakland University in Rochester, Mich. For registration information and other details, send SASE to: The Order of Leibowitz, P.O. Box 61, Madison Heights MI 48071.

NORTHQUEST '84, March 23-25

This gaming event will be held at the Boise Basque Center, 6th and Grove Sts., and will run for 48 continuous hours. Role-playing tournaments, free movies, an art contest, a costume party, and a release of the new game "The Dark Rage" will be featured. Special guests will be Ian Lungold and Wolfgang Trippe. For further details,

write: Northquest '84, P.O. Box 633, Boise ID 83701, or call (208)343-5627.

AGGIECON XV, March 29 - April 1

This science-fiction convention, featuring L. Sprague de Camp and Catherine de Camp as guests of honor, will be held on the campus of Texas A&M University. Among the other personalities scheduled to be present are Don Maitz, James P. Hogan, and Wilson "Bob" Tucker. For further information about this convention, write to AggieCon XV, P.O. Box J-1, College Station TX 77844, or call (409)845-1515.

CAPCON' 84, April 6-8

This seventh annual gaming convention will be staged at the South Terrace of the Ohio Union on the Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio. Cost is \$2, for Saturday and Sunday only. Events include miniatures battles, and fantasy and historical gaming. Contact: Paul T. Rigel, c/o War Games Designs, 6119 E. Main Street #202, Columbus, OH 43213, or call (614)863-6635 between 2 p.m. and midnight.

CAROLINA CON, April 6-8

This event will be held at Russell House University Union, USC Campus, Columbia, South Carolina. These three days will include fantasy, science-fiction, historical, and adventure gaming. For information, contact: USC Wargamers, Box 80138, USC, Columbia SC 29208.

GICON II, April 6-8

This gaming convention will be staged at the Conestoga Mall in Grand Island, Nebraska. Preregistration costs are \$7.50 for the entire weekend or \$3.00 for single-day attendance. For additional information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: GICON II, 644 Faidley Pl. #2, Grand Island NE 68801.

NORTHEASTER 2, April 6-8

Sponsored by Rutgers University Gamers, this second annual event will be held at the Rutgers University campus in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The convention will feature fantasy role-playing, wargames, boardgames, miniatures, and other gaming events. To run a gaming event or attend as a participant, send all inquiries to: NORTHEASTER 2, Box 101, R.U. Student Center, 126 College Av., New Brunswick NJ 08903. Inquiries from hobby dealers are invited.

GLENCON II, April 14

To be held at Glenbrook South High School in Glenview, Illinois, admission to this convention is \$3.00. For more information, contact: Steven Silver, 3207 Maple Leaf, Glenview IL 60025, or call (312)564-0688. ✕

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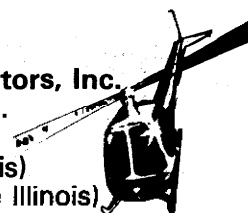
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Good evening, Mr. Bond

The 007 role-playing system reviewed

For some jobs, there is only one man. If the fate of the world is in question; if the circumstances require fast thinking and incredible performance against impossible odds; if the man must shoot to kill one moment and womanize in the next — then there is only one man.

Good evening, Mr. Bond.

And good evening to the JAMES BOND 007 role-playing system presented by Victory Games. It was certainly a good evening for me. I enjoyed this game and was thrilled with it — not because it was a careful simulation of real life (it isn't and doesn't pretend to be), but because it captured, for me, the essence of James Bond.

The world of James Bond is, as the Basic Game book explains, "certainly close to our own, but a bit more fantastical. The men are always handsome, the women always beautiful, and the villains always evil." Exotic cities in faraway countries are always full of danger and clues. Around every corner waits a car full of assassins or a beautiful spy. The action is fast and the stakes are high. These elements are all part of the flavor of Bond's world. Without them, Bond would be just another government agent.

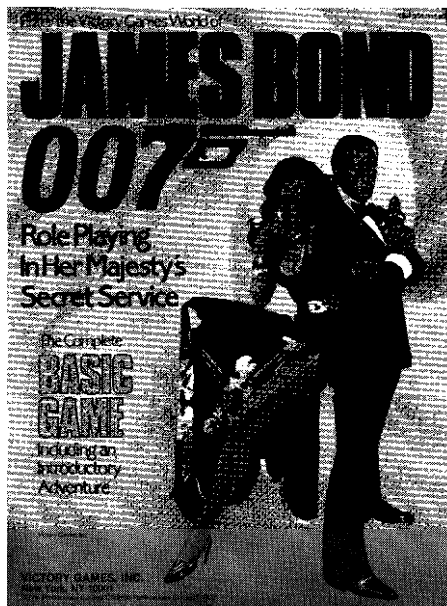
While trying to recreate James Bond's world, Victory Games had a lot to overcome. The flavor of 007 has become a familiar taste to most of us. We expect and demand the same flavor in anything connected to Bond; anything less won't do.

Also to be tackled was the problem of different Bonds — not the different film actors who have portrayed 007, but the different treatment of the Bond character in different media. The James Bond of Ian Fleming's novels is certainly different from the Bond character in the movie "Moonraker," for instance. The novels portray a great, if sometimes flawed, agent while the movies have in more recent years given us something of an adventuring superhero, presented in something close to comic-book fashion.

Can a role-playing game on James Bond meet and overcome the obvious obstacles? Well . . .

Basic Bond

. . . Gerry Klug's design seems to have risen to the task. When I examine the manuals and play the game, I get the *feeling* of James Bond. It's the feeling I was looking for and expecting, and I wasn't disappointed. The size of the soft-cover, perfect-bound (no staples) books may seem intimidating when you look at them on the shelf. The Basic Game book is 160 pages (and the Q Manual isn't far behind at 138). Between the covers of the Basic Game book,



however, you will find a very readable text in an innovative layout which puts player information and gamesmaster rules clarifications side by side. The art of role-playing is presented and explained up front (for those new to such games), as is the explanation of the game's central system. Nearly every concept and mechanic you need to know to play the game is in the first 17 pages of the rule book. The rest of the book presents applications of the system.

None of that is to say that the presentation is perfect. I noticed some editorial errors in the text, perhaps caused by the rush in which the game was brought onto the market. Considering the total-package, however, such errors were easy to forgive, and I'm sure they will be cleared up in future editions.

The game system is at once simple and diverse. All actions that James Bond characters would like to perform, from brawling to boating, shooting to seduction, are resolved through the same two tables. Players describe their actions to the gamesmaster, who then assigns an Ease Factor to the action and decides which skill would apply. An action with an Ease Factor of 10 wouldn't put a crease in Bond's brow; but doing something with an Ease Factor of 1/2 would make him sweat bullets. The first chart consulted is really just an aid; it multiplies the Ease Factor the gamesmaster has assigned by the Primary Chance the character has of performing the act. The resulting number is the Success Chance. Then the player uses the second table, called the Quality Results Table. The proper Success Chance is found among one of the number ranges listed in the left-hand column. The player rolls percentile dice and checks across

the proper row to find out which of five possible results occur: "Excellent," "Very Good," "Good," "Acceptable," or failure, which means that whatever you tried simply didn't work. If the result is one of the first four, the rules give a reference directing the gamesmaster to one of a large number of charts and tables to determine just what the difference is between, say, an "Excellent" shot at Oddjob and one that was merely "Acceptable."

This system impressed me greatly for how quickly it can be learned, and for how much ground it seems to cover. In the Goldfinger module, a golf game is simulated using the same central game charts, with as much ease as combat and with very few additional rules. I have yet to find any situation that the basic system could not handle cleanly and quickly.

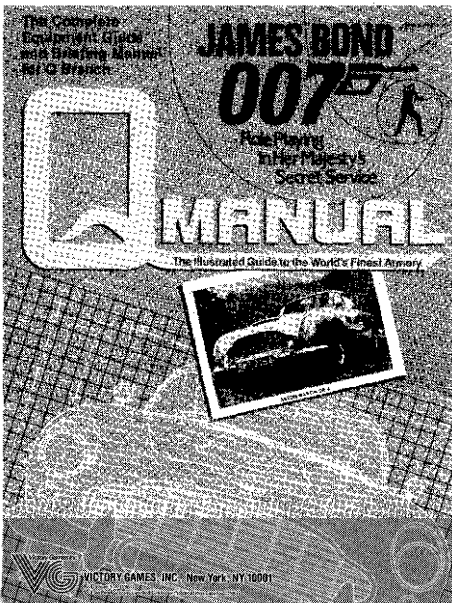
While the system is good, do not expect great accuracy of simulation out of it. To a very great extent, the fantasy world of James Bond has the sizzle of reality without its meat. The game system is the same way. If you are looking for a role-playing game that has the accuracy and feel of the "real world" of espionage, I wouldn't suggest this one. It is a credit to the game that it does not pretend to be a simulation of anything more than James Bond fantasy.

One inherent drawback of the system is its lack of definition in results — but this quality is admittedly a two-edged sword. One might argue that leaving the exact results of an action open to gamesmaster and player interpretation lets the participants take a more active and imaginative role in the game. On the other hand, I often found myself working pretty hard "filling in the holes." In a car chase, the Aston Martin tried to "Force" my Lotus. The Aston Martin succeeded with a Quality Rating of 2, and I botched the Safety roll for the Lotus with a Quality Rating of 3. That meant my Lotus had a "Mishap" and suffered "Incapacitating Damage." It was up to me to translate this as, "You swerve your Aston against the side of my Lotus. You see the face of the driver just as the Lotus careens over a low wall and blows its engine." Getting the details out of the results can require work and imagination.

But. . . I have to admit that this lack of definition actually helped in some ways. Such rather touchy subjects as seduction, interrogation, and torture were handled with tact and taste. Just what a Quality Result of 1 really means on the last stage of the seduction sequence (listed as "When and Where" with an Ease Factor of 4) is left up to the player's own imagination. I get the feeling that I am watching James kiss a gorgeous starlet — followed by a quick

dissolve to the next scene, in which Bond has the information he wanted. This puts the moral control of the game in my hands. I like that.

James Bond always worked alone or with only a few helping hands to get him through the task. The game actually works well as a one-on-one game, and can function with up to four characters at one time. This is a smaller limit than most role-playing games suggest; I haven't tried the game with more than three players, but I suspect the system could handle it well.



The Q Manual

What 007 lacked in luck, he could make up for with gadgets. These were always invented by the mysterious Q Section. I loved the widgets and doodads that James Bond always had on hand at just the right moment. Victory Games published the Q Manual as a supplement to the James Bond 007 role playing game — but even without the game, the Q Manual is a treat.

In truth, the same information given in the manual offers little insight into the equipment itself. The 007 role playing system was not designed, as far as I can tell, to be highly accurate in its simulation of the real world. The game statistics are useful for general comparisons, but do not give any detailed insights. However, this game information generally only represents about a third of each of the entries.

The attraction of this book, other than as a game aid, is the almost conversational way that each piece of equipment is discussed. Each entry starts with a few well-phrased paragraphs generally describing the object and its capabilities. This text is followed by a "Q Evaluation," wherein one of the fictional staff members of the Q branch offers a commentary on the merits or faults of each piece to the espionage community. These commentaries are charming and seem to reflect individual personalities of the Q branch staff.

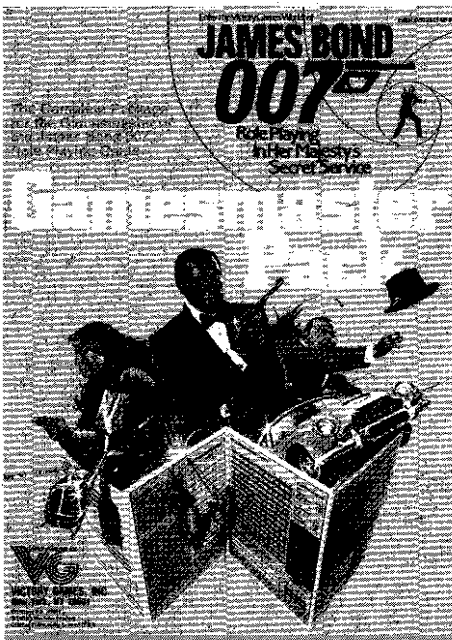
If you play any type of espionage role-playing game, the equipment descriptions

in this book will be a valuable resource. And with headings for weapons, vehicles, security devices, and exotic devices, this is a great daydreaming book for any Bond fan. It may not be the most detailed game aid ever, but I found it one of the most interesting to read.

The Gamesmaster Pack

Bond is very visual, so it is not surprising that Victory Games addressed this ingredient of the "Bond flavor" right away. The Gamesmaster Pack for the James Bond system fills the bill neatly.

This product, unlike a rule set or a module that's "only" a book, has some loose components — and that leads to one problem, not with the product but with its presentation. The Gamesmaster Pack comes in the same open-topped, 1/2-inch-deep box used as packaging for the other Bond supplements. (The "top" of the box is formed by the plastic wrapping around the product.) The packaging is slick and classy, and as a consumer I like the feeling of extra value I get when I purchase a supplement in a box. However, anyone who likes this game is going to quickly find himself with lots of game components and nowhere to store them. I don't have the boxed version



of the Basic Game, but I hope it has room for modules and accessories. Perhaps Victory Games went a little too far in trying to make every penny count.

I only say "perhaps," because the Gamesmaster Pack is certainly a valuable tool. Inside the cover is a heavy, full-color Gamesmaster Screen holding 8 pages (four pages on a side) of all the charts either player or referee will need during play. A pad of character record sheets is a nice inclusion, although I would have liked some of them preprinted to use for my favorite Bond characters.

The high point of the package for me was the heavy cardboard characters. These are mounted on plastic stands (included) so that

they stand upright. And, the cover sheet of the supplement folds out to become a blue display field with a white grid on which the cardboard characters may be placed.

At first look, I really didn't think the cardboard characters would be much help. Yet in the playing of the game, these counters were so easy to use and added such a great visual element to the game that their value could not be questioned.

Farewell, Mr. Bond

As a game designer, the James Bond game made me sit up. I guess I'll have to work a little harder. As a game player, I decided this game fills the bill. With a rule book that is easy to digest and use, the game system conveys all the sizzle of 007's world. Don't expect this game to be anything more than James Bond fantasy — but be assured that you're getting nothing less.

— Reviewed by Tracy Raye Hickman

* * * *

Curtain call

In a press release received by DRAGON® Magazine on Feb. 1, Victory Games announced the imminent release of two additions to the James Bond 007 line: *Dr. No*, an adventure module, and a game-master supplement entitled *For Your Information*. (Two other modules, *Goldfinger* and *Octopussy*, were already on the market.) The company said that other products in the line would be released in 1984. ☒

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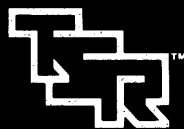
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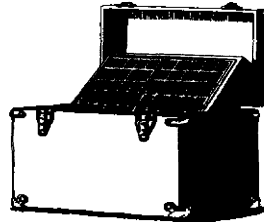
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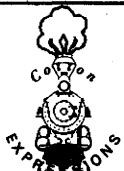
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Compleat Strategist, The.....	13
Diamond Dice.....	4
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Dunken Co., The.....	4
Entertainment Concepts, Inc.....	Inside back cover
Fantasy Games Unlimited.....	21, 73
Game Designers' Workshop.....	63
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Gamers' Guide.....	70
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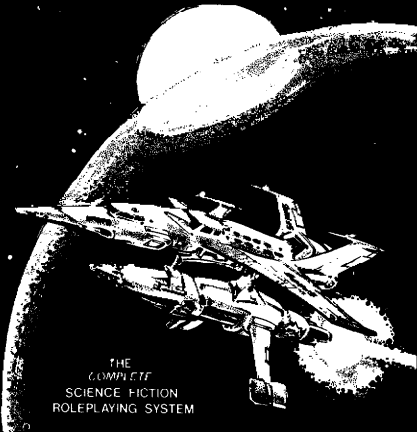
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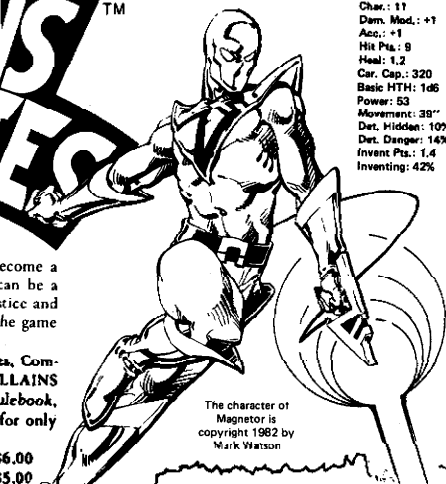
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Powers:
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2. **Magnetic control:** once achieved, lasts 12 turns.
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4. **Magnified Senses Device:** Nightvision goggles, full detection across in darkness.

Wt.: 180 lbs.
Str.: 14
End.: 13
Aglit.: 12
Int.: 14
Char.: 11
Dem. Mod.: +1
Acc.: +1
Hit Pts.: 8
Heal.: 1.2
Car. Cap.: 320
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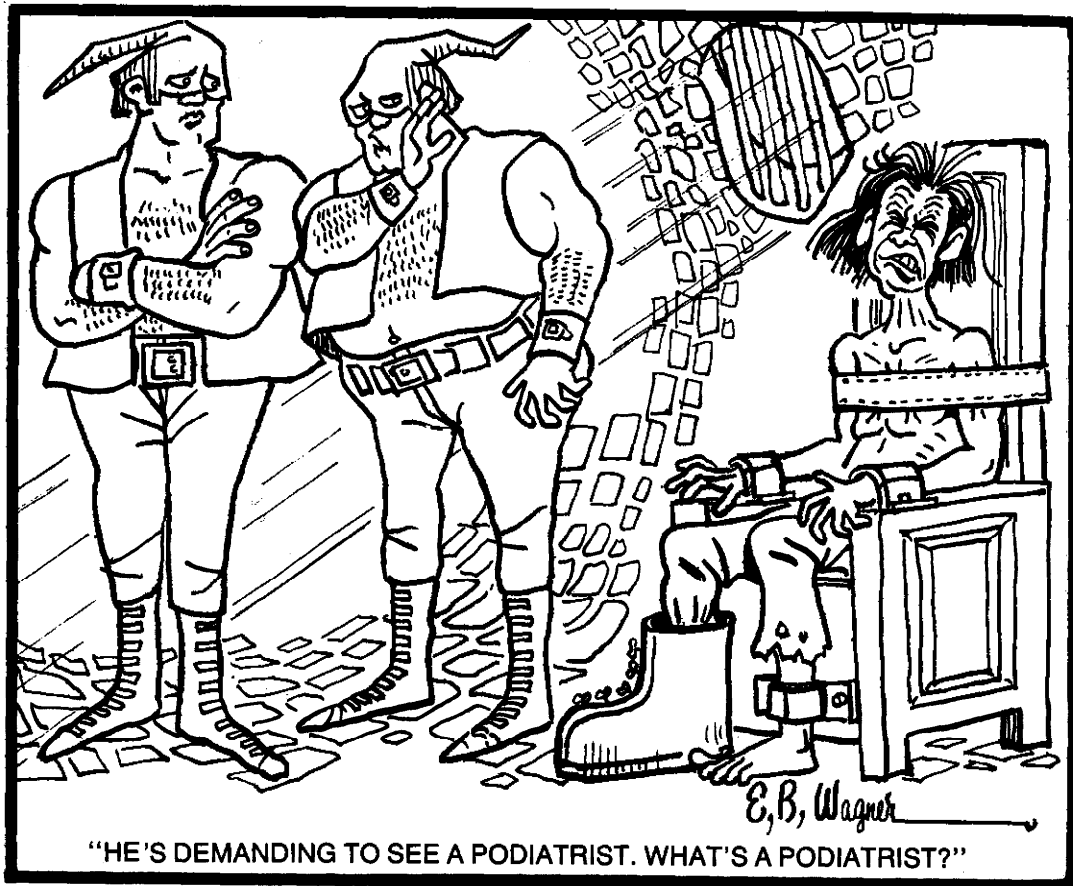
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Dragon March



"HE'S DEMANDING TO SEE A PODIATRIST. WHAT'S A PODIATRIST?"

Tal Alan

In which Tal and Alan go to a wargaming convention

Wait! I can't find my electric dice thrower!

Kurt by Erichsen #2

Cons are fun, but six hours is sure a long drive.

It'll go by in a flash this time, Alan.

I've installed a computer in my car!

So we won't have to stop for a byte on the way?

No, so we can play Monsters and Misanthropes.

Here we are in the seventh level below Castle Dunderslush.

Hey, here comes a troll.

Uh... Tal...

A big, fat, mean one with 17 hit points of ugly.

Ha! Got him right through the gall bladder! Hey, he had six gold pieces and a plus-three dagger...

Tal, watch the road! You're supposed to be driving!

LIMA TEXAS MILAN FLORIDA RUSSIA WAPAKONETA

3 7 11 14 23

WOOSH!

Tal— look out! Here comes a twelfth-level semi!

Twelfth level?

Wow, that calls for my magic wheel of steering!

gack

MOO HAUL

DANCING COW TROUPE

ZIP!

Kurt by Erichsen #3



WHAT'S NEW?

RING! HELLO?... I KNOW I SOUND AWFUL... I HAVEN'T SLEPT... YES... EVER SINCE SHE BECAME HUMAN AGAIN... THAT'S NOT FUNNY, KIM... I'M TRYING TO DO THIS MONTH'S STRIP...



Hello!

OH NO, SHE'S **BACK!**... NO! KIM... DON'T HANG UP! I... STOP LAUGHING- THIS IS SERIOUS!... I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS!!



BROUGHT YOU SOMETHING...

A CLERIC?

NO... DINNER!

NOT OYSTERS AGAIN.



DIX... I DON'T NEED TO EAT, I NEED TO SLEEP!

AW, YOU CAN SLEEP ANYTIME. BUT NOW YOU HAVE TO EAT TO KEEP UP YOUR STRENGTH.

SLEEP! LET'S TALK ABOUT SLEEP!



© P. P. Polio-84

SLEEP HAS ALWAYS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN FANTASY~ AND IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN MANY A STORY.

... AND THEN SHE WILL PRICK HER FINGER - AND SLEEP FOR 100 YEARS!

COULDN'T YOU MAKE THAT MORE LIKE **TWO HUNDRED YEARS?**

FATHER!

HUSH, MY CHILD. YOU NEED ALL THE BEAUTY SLEEP YOU CAN GET!



SOME MYSTICS, WHEN ASLEEP, ARE ABLE TO SEND FORTH ASTRAL FORMS TO RANGE FAR AND WIDE AT THEIR BIDDING.

... 2 BLEU CHEESE/BACON BURGERS WITH KETCHUP, AN ORDER OF FRIED ZUCCHINI, AND A BAT WING SHAKE.

BOB'S ALL NITE



BOB'S ALL NITE!	DRINK
BURGER — \$1.50	SODA
CHEESEBURGER — \$1.25	BLQZ

SLEEP IS ALSO THE TIME WHEN PEOPLE ARE MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO SUCCUBI, INCUBI, GHOSTS, VAMPIRES, DEMONIC POSSESSION, AND THINGS UNDER THE BED.



TAKE A NUMBER
17

THERE ARE THOSE WHO EXPERIENCE AN ENTIRE CHANGE OF LOCATION WHEN THEY SLEEP - IN EFFECT LIVING TWO LIVES.

I DON'T MIND WORKING TWO JOBS, OR HAVING TWO FAMILIES, BUT PAYING TWO SETS OF TAXES...



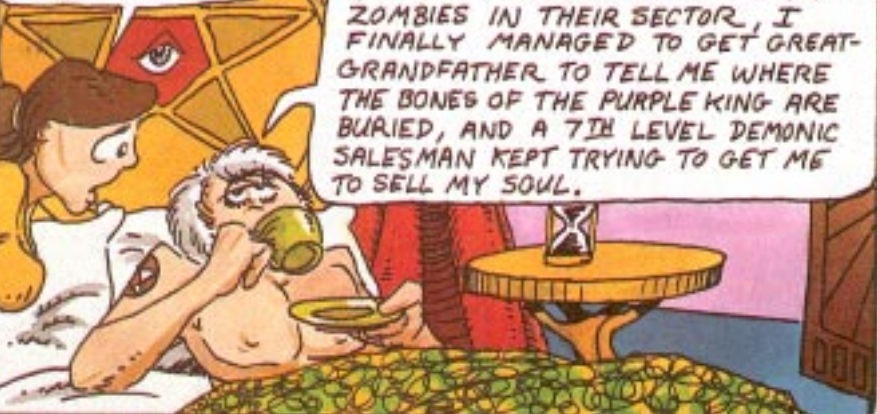
DREAMS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IMPORTANT. THEY CAN BE HARBINGERS OF THE FUTURE, THO THEY TEND TO BE ANNOYINGLY VAGUE.



DREAMS CAN ALSO BE USED TO COMMUNICATE WITH SPIRITS, DEMONS, OR OTHER SENSITIVES WHO LIKE TO "CALL WHEN THE RATES ARE LOW". THIS CAN BE A PROBLEM...

YOU LOOK EXHAUSTED, DEAR - ANOTHER BUSY NIGHT?

AYE, IPSWITCH AND LORD FUBBLE WANTED ADVICE ON AN INVASION OF ZOMBIES IN THEIR SECTOR, I FINALLY MANAGED TO GET GREAT-GRANDFATHER TO TELL ME WHERE THE BONES OF THE PURPLE KING ARE BURIED, AND A 7TH LEVEL DEMONIC SALESMAN KEPT TRYING TO GET ME TO SELL MY SOUL.



... BUT AN EASILY SOLVED ONE.

HELLO - THIS IS THE WIZARD OF THE WHITE SEA. I'M IN REM SLEEP NOW - BUT IF YOU CARE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE...



SLEEP HAS ALSO BEEN USED AS A WEAPON. A HUMANE WAY OF QUELLING ENEMIES.

THE SPELL WORKED! THEY'RE ALL ASLEEP - JUST BY TALKING TO THEM!

SO THIS IS WHAT BEING A POLITICIAN IS LIKE!



AND FINALLY, SLEEP HAS LONG BEEN CALLED THE ULTIMATE RESTORATIVE, ALLOWING THE BODY TO RENEW AND RE-ENERGIZE FOR THE NEXT DAY... OR NIGHT.

ALL RIGHT, YOU, GET ON 'OME AND SLEEP IT OFF!



SNARFQUEST

#8

BY ELMORE

WONDER IF I
COULD GET ONE
OF DESE WANDS
TO WORK FOR ME?

GEEZEL
FOUND US A
BIG BAG.

GIVE ME GOLD...
GOLD-
GOLD-
GOLD!

STOP FOOLING
AROUND, SNARF.
LET'S LOAD UP
AND GET OUT.

GIVE ME DIAMONDS...
DIAMONDS-
DIAMONDS-
DIAMONDS!

DIS ONE'S
NO GOOD.

WHOA! A WAND OF LIGHT...
AN' IT WORKED FOR ME.
I'LL SUS' KEEP
DIS ONE.

SUTHAZE IS
GONNA CATZHUS.

COME ON SNARF... I'VE GOT ALL
THE WANDS - GET YOUR PACK ON
AND LET'S GO.

LET ME A GET
LITTLE LOOT
FIRST.

GOLD\$-
\$JEWELS
RICHES!
\$ \$ \$

COME ON SNARF,
WE'RE LEAVIN'
RIGHT NOW...
THAT'S
ENOUGH!

GEETHEL, ... I'M A REAL
BIG DUCK AN' I THINK
I NEED A BIGGER
BOWL TO STHWIM IN.

COME ON
SNARF...
WE'RE
GONE.

WE WILL GET YOU
A BIG BOWL TOMORROW,
ME PROMISE, YES
ME DO...

I HEAR SOMEONE COMING...
SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE!

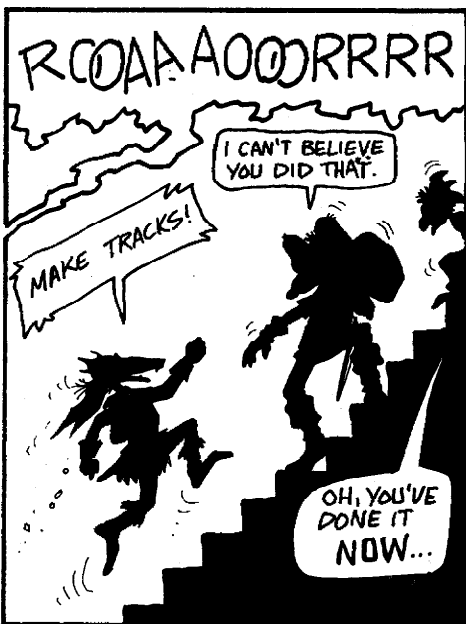
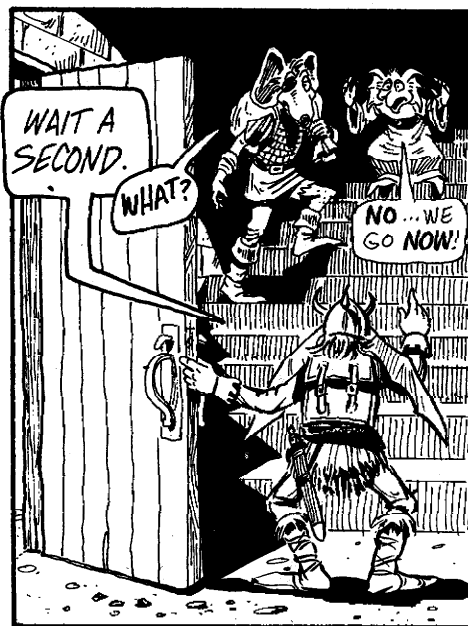
OH GAAA... IT'S
SUTHAZE AN'
ALL DA GUARDS.

MAN, I DIDN'T GET
HALF DA TREASURE
I WANTED.

SO LONG WILLIE,
YOU STUPID
DRA... AH-
DUCK!

QUACK,
BYE.

© 84 ELMORE





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