

The Guildsman #7

Fall 2000

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Spinning in Circles: A History & Analysis of TSR's Copyright Policies

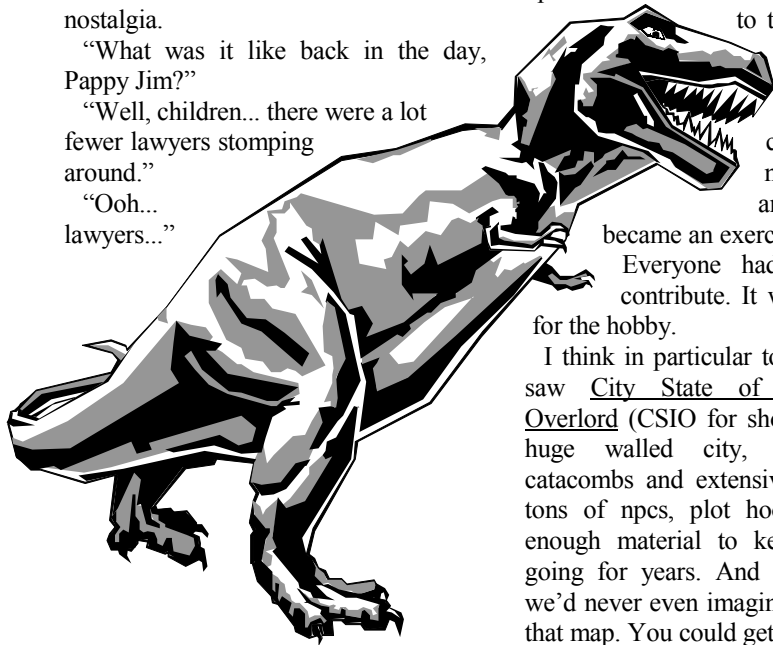
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<http://members.aol.com/jimvassila>

When I look back at my years... er... decades as a roleplayer, the memories come with a certain fond sense of nostalgia.

"What was it like back in the day, Pappy Jim?"

"Well, children... there were a lot fewer lawyers stomping around."

"Ooh... lawyers..."



There's nothing in the American psyche that conjures quite the same sense of dread as the words, "My lawyer will be contacting your lawyer." One might just as well say, "I'm gonna sick my big, hungry Tyrannosaurus on ya, and he's gonna tear yer flea-bitten heart out, chew it up, and then stomp on it a few times just for giggles!" After all, the effect is much the same, only quicker and less painful.

And you know the best thing about the good old days? It was the comparative lack of these fiendish creatures... a general sense that they weren't needed, that their lives and ours needn't ever intersect. Like the terrible lizard, these evil minions called "lawyers" belonged to another world, one quite apart from our own. Oh, those were the days.

Back then, during those first few years, pretty much everyone played D&D (or AD&D as it was later known). For a while there it was the only game in

town, so I suppose it was natural that at the grassroots level there should spring up an assortment of fanzines dedicated to the game and its players.

Finding new spells, new character classes, new magic items and alternate rules

became an exercise in simplicity.

Everyone had something to contribute. It was a great time for the hobby.

I think in particular to the first time I saw City State of the Invincible Overlord (CSIO for short). Here was a huge walled city, complete with catacombs and extensive shop listings, tons of npcs, plot hooks galore, and enough material to keep a campaign going for years. And the map... well, we'd never even imagined anything like that map. You could get lost just looking at it. And to top it all off, CSIO wasn't produced by TSR, the makers of D&D. It was put out by Judges Guild, a 3rd-party publisher, which like so many of that era had just started out as a gaming-group. I had the occasion to ask Bob Bledsaw of Judges Guild about how the whole thing got started, and how things went with TSR. The story he had to tell was pretty typical except in its scope. As with many 3rd-party products, CSIO had its origin in a D&D campaign that Bob had run for a group of wargamers turned roleplayers. What was unusual was the crowd of interested onlookers it conjured.

"I drew up the City State of the Invincible Overlord and, being an avid Tolkien fan, placed it on what was later to be Campaign Map One and created a 'gate' to the ruins of a dead city northeast of the Shire. Soon sessions were attended by as many as thirty spectator college students as I judged

sessions for the original group of six players."

As work at his company got tight, and his game kept attracting bigger and bigger crowds, Bob began to wonder if other DMs might profit from his creativity. Like many a first time publisher, he wondered if he just might be able to carve himself a niche.

"I contacted a U of I copyright lawyer/teacher, a local lawyer, and a Wisconsin lawyer with a copy of the City State of the Invisible Overlord plus the original D&D boxed set. They all said 'no infringements or copyright violations'. Putting up the gas money, Bill and I drove up to Lake Geneva on a hot summer day. The whole TSR staff was there for the meeting. Gary's mouth fell open when I brought in three boxes of materials plus the maps for my campaign. Dave seemed very overwhelmed also. I told them I revised their rules to make the game playable and wished to publish a Judges Shield, Dungeon Tac Cards, City State of the Invincible Overlord, and other products as long as there were no legal hassles or royalties necessary. They laughed at me and several seemed to speak at once. 'Games are not copyrightable. You do not need our permission, but you are wasting your money. People buy games not game aids. We are busy doing a real game, Fight in the Skies, and will not waste resources on this silliness. It is not a real game, just a beer and pretzels pastime, fun for one or two sessions only.'"

Indeed! Methinks that at this early stage in the game, TSR didn't have the first clue as to what they had on their hands, so they made no moves to try to "control the market" as it were. However, even if they did know that D&D would soon be selling like hotcakes, would they have started putting up no-trespassing signs? The

statement that is the most illuminating to me is the first thing out of their mouths: “Games are not copyrightable.”

What do they mean, “Games are not copyrightable?” What basis is there for such a statement? Well, actually, there’s a lot of basis for it. A whole heck of a lot. To quote from U.S. copyright statute:

“In no case does copyright protection for an original work of authorship extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle, or discovery, regardless of the form in which it is described, explained, illustrated, or embodied in such a work.”

The question before the court, your honor, is... “What is a game?” Is it the actual text used to describe the game? Or is it the method of play, the procedure outlined in the rules, in short, the system? We call them “game systems” for a reason. If you allow that the ruleset of an RPG is essentially a “system” in the legal sense of the term, then it follows from the statute itself that the ruleset cannot be copyrighted.

Now this is a kick in the butt, isn’t it? Why would our lawmakers do such a thing? The answer is quite simple, actually. Copyright law wasn’t created for the benefit of copyright holders. It was created for the benefit of society at large. If systems could be copyrighted, then (for example) computer operating systems could be copyrighted. That would mean, perhaps, that if you wanted to write a program for use with MS-DOS, you would first have to get Microsoft’s permission before you could sell it. Just imagine how society at large would suffer if this were the case. And as for Bill Gates, he wouldn’t be a mere billionaire... he’d at least be a trillionaire. Fortunately, our lawmakers were smart enough to realize that systems are created to be used by lots of people. Hence, they shouldn’t be allowed the protection of copyrights.

Now if you want to patent a system, that’s another story entirely. You can certainly patent a system. But patents

only last for something like seventeen years at which time the process or invention becomes public domain. Copyrights, on the other hand, last for the full life of the author plus an additional fifty years. Our lawmakers basically said that it’s in the public’s best interests that the protection on inventions and systems be more limited than the protection on mere words.

But what about games? Where do they fall into all this? Are they systems (thus falling under patent law) or are they works of artistic expression (thus falling under copyright

law)?

As might be expected, there is a narrow line that must be drawn. To quote from Patents, Copyrights, and Trademarks by Foster and Shook:

“Interestingly, the courts have ruled that certain parts of a game cannot be copyrighted, including its rules, concept, and name. However, such things as board graphics, cards, and text explaining the rules are copyrightable.”

So you can copyright the text of the rules but not the rules themselves. Of course, things get even more complex when you start looking at character copyrights and SAP (Structure, Arrangement, Presentation) copyrights. There is a modicum of case law to suggest that the situation actually can become quite a bit more complex. But, so far as pertains to roleplaying games, there’s never been a ruling which spells out exactly what is and what isn’t copyrightable with respect to the game engine, the terminology of the system, etc. It is almost as if all these lawsuits we keep hearing about have been exercises in brinkmanship.

Personally, I didn’t know the first thing about copyright law, or patent law, or trademark law for that matter, until around 1994. That was really a landmark year for this hobby, because that was the

year that TSR got on the Internet. But let me go back even a few more years... to 1990 or thereabouts.

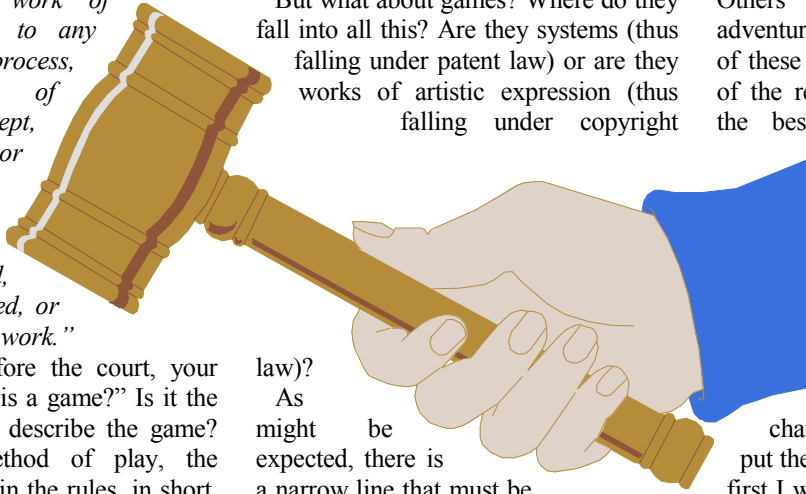
When I first got online, I was pretty amazed by what I found in the rec.games.frp newsgroup. It seemed to me much like a campfire with a bunch of gamers kicking back telling stories about their campaigns. Some people would share new monsters, spells, etc. Others would write full-scale adventures. I began collecting a number of these posts and, with the permission of the respective authors, put some of the best into The Guildsman, the Internet’s first RPG magazine.

At first, I sent the magazine out via email, but that proved to be too troublesome. You try manually emailing a hundred different people whose addresses are constantly changing. So somebody suggested I put the magazine up for FTP. FTP? At first I was mystified. I had never heard of this “FTP” thing before.

As it turned out, FTP stood for File Transfer Program. The basic idea was that there were all these FTP sites all around the world. Back then, 90% of Internet sites were educational... mainly colleges and universities. The U.S. government was “bootstrapping” the internet via these institutions, and every college or university could set up an area on its computers which was public-access. People could visit and upload some interesting files while others could drop by later and download those files. It was a great way to share large documents as well as archive material for public access.

Once I learned about it, I thought FTP was the greatest thing since sliced bread. I also discovered that I wasn’t the only gamer archiving material for free public distribution. There were a lot of people out there. Gamers truly love to share.

By 1994, when TSR got online, there was a heck of a lot of fan-authored material online. And... I guess their eyes just bugged out. “Why,” they must have wondered, “would anyone buy our stuff if there’s all this free stuff available?” And that’s when the excrement hit the proverbial rotor blades.



Date: Thu, 28 Jul 94 17:28:59 -0400
From: TSRInc@aol.com
To: postmaster@rigel.cs.pdx.edu
Subject: TSR Copyrighted Material

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR:

Your site was recently included in a list of noted FTP sites for DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS and ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS gaming material. You should be aware that DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS and all related marks and properties are copyrighted by TSR, Inc. of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

You should also be aware that any items created without a specific license are infringements of TSR copyrights. Such items include (but are not limited to) any software, net.books, modules, tables, stories, or rules modifications which contain elements from our copyrighted properties, including characters, settings, realm names, noted magic items, spells, elements of the gaming system, such as ARMOR CLASS, HIT DICE, and so forth. To date, TSR has not licensed any of these net publications.

On behalf of TSR, Inc. I ask that you examine your public net sites at this time and remove any material which infringes on TSR copyrights.

Our intention is to find a way to license these and future creative efforts. In the meantime, remove them from your sites without delay.

Please feel free to contact me with comments or questions. I will refer any pertinent queries to our legal department as soon as I receive them.

Rob Repp, Manager, Digital Projects Group, TSR, Inc.

I tell ya, some days it just doesn't pay to get out of bed. What we have here, my friends, is a serious case of assholism.

When I first saw this, I had to check the date-stamp to make sure it wasn't April 1st. Were they actually serious? What in Thor's thunder could provoke such an email?

Okay... so I was a bit naïve. I thought that everything had been going fine. You write stuff for use with a given RPG and more people will likely play that RPG. It's a vicious cycle, except that it works to the benefit of the RPG. So why complain about it!? I was simultaneously shocked, disgusted, perplexed, disgusted, relieved (that the email wasn't written to me personally), and did I mention disgusted? Yes, I was disgusted. How dare they?! Here we've been, writing stuff for this game for years and years, and all of a sudden they want to shut us down? How dare they?

I don't know about the other FTP administrators who received this email, but Trent (he was the guy up in Portland who received this particular copy) was similarly outraged. He intended to fight. What a guy. If I ever have the pleasure of meeting him in person, he's due one fierce handshake.

Seeing that Trent wasn't about to budge, Rob Repp went up the chain of command to Trent's boss.

"Mr. Fiarito," he wrote, *"I connected to jove.cs.pdx.edu today, and was dismayed to find that your administrative staff has still not removed several files which infringe on TSR*

trademarks and copyrights. Further, I found a notice which states the administrator's intention to keep and disseminate several of these files. I must warn you that these files clearly contain infringements, and that they cannot lawfully be published from your site."

Now, just put yourself in Trent's shoes for a minute. You're a system administrator at the local university. The computer science department needs you there, because, naturally, none of the computer science professors know how to operate an actual computer. They can talk your ear off about the theory behind it, but they don't have the first clue what to do when the printer breaks down. So you're there, and you're a really valuable employee. Without you, the whole place would come crashing down. But if you're doing your job really well, and you do, then they never even notice you.

Incidentally, you also happen to be a gamer. So anyway, you get this dastardly email, thumb your nose at it, print it out just so you can have the pleasure of using it for toilet paper, and then what's the bozo do? He writes your boss and carbon copies half the people in the university administration.

I never queried Trent as to exactly what happened, but it's not hard to use one's imagination.



"Let me get this straight," the dean of the college leans over her paper-stacked desk. "You've been using the campus computers to house collections of documents related to some fantasy game... Dumbtats & Doldrums?" "Uh, it's called Dungeons & Dragons, ma'am."

"Whatever! In the first place, those computers are strictly for educational purposes... not fun and games. In the second place, don't you realize we could get sued?!"

All I can say, friends, is that I'm glad I wasn't in Trent's shoes that day. First he's got to explain to multiple people in the college and university administrations what D&D is all about. Then he's got to explain why it's worth the risk of being sued. Forget about intellectual freedom. Universities will run like babbling idiots at the first suggestion of lawsuit. We're talking budgets, public money, and careers. Nobody is going to risk their precious hide over some game.

Needless to say, those files finally came offline. Rob Repp had won. TSR had won. Now there was just one more step to complete victory.

From: mobius@Mercury.mcs.com (Rob Repp)
Newsgroups: rec.games.frp.announce
Subject: GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENT
Date: Tue, 06 Sep 1994 16:15:40 -0500
Organization: TSR, Inc.

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION - PLEASE REPOST

Recently, TSR, Inc. issued a policy statement regarding the unlicensed use of TSR owned trademarks and copyrights in several creative efforts published on the Internet. TSR's policy remains unchanged regarding these infringements. We generally ask that you do not publish materials which incorporate our trademarks and copyrights. However, we believe we have a working solution for gamers who wish to exchange via the Internet any gaming material they have created.

TSR is pleased to announce a licensed Internet FTP file server. MPGN's site (ftp to ftp.mpgn.com) will carry a license that allows your creations to be shared with the world via the Internet. In order to distribute your texts, software and message digests via this server, you must include the following disclaimer:

This item incorporates or is based on or derived from copyrighted material of TSR, Inc. and may contain trademarks of TSR. The item is made available by MPGN under license from TSR, but is not authorized or endorsed by TSR. The item is for personal use only and may not be published or distributed except through MPGN or TSR.

In text files, this text must be placed at the top of the file where it will be seen immediately. In message logs from list servers, a file containing this text should be added to the archive file with the message texts, or be placed at the top of a compiled text file. For software distribution, a file containing this text should be added to the archive file with the software if the software has already been compiled, or added during development to a prominent display seen by the user when the software is launched.

If you add this text to your work and upload it to ftp.mpgn.com, you can share your effort with the rest of the Internet. It does not give you permission to upload your creative effort to any unlicensed sites. Please note that you are not assigning any property rights to TSR, Inc. by uploading your work to this site.

At this time, there is only one licensed site for distribution of these materials on the Internet. Presently, there are no mirrors being made available. We are aware of several requests for overseas and duplicate domestic sites. We are working to fulfill these requests. Also, several of the commercial online service providers are working with us to develop online forums which can carry these files.

Thanks for your continued interest in our games.

Rob Repp, Manager, Digital Projects Group, TSR, Inc.

As one might expect, most AD&D players on the Internet were not terribly pleased by all this. Many of us figured that TSR was only one step away from charging gamers to access the archived material which we formerly could download for free. Thus began the TSR/Copyright debate of 1994, which dragged on into 1995, and then 1996, and... well, it was the thread that wouldn't die. I began collecting an archive at:

<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Starship/8023/debate.htm>

Do check it out if you have an interest in the details of this discussion. One thing that I can never get over when it comes to Usenet is that no matter what question you have or what sort of problem comes up, the information you are seeking is out there, and somebody (often several people) will come forward

to help. This was very true of this debate. We had law students and lawyers come forward. By and large, the general consensus was that TSR had stepped over the line between the protection of its copyrights and the harassment of its fans.

Of course, TSR's in-house lawyer, Connie Lindman, didn't see things that way. Here's what she had to say:

From: mobius@Mercury.mcs.com (Rob Repp)
Newsgroups: rec.games.frp.dnd
Subject: Re: A WARNING TO WRITERS (was Re: .sig free Announcement)
Date: Tue, 20 Sep 1994 10:40:16 -0500
Organization: TSR, Inc.

From our legal department. Enjoy:

Saying that "TSR owns this stuff" does not create a protective spell or duck the issue of authorized use. For example, an unauthorized adventure (derivative work) set in TSR's FORGOTTEN REALMS adventure world (underlying work) infringes TSR's copyrights. Acknowledging TSR's ownership of the underlying work and your unauthorized use does not make you a hero-wizard (it does not exonerate the infringement).

Before you hire a lawyer, here's some copyright law regarding protection (this holds true for all companies): Court decisions on copyright law have held that game IDEAS are not protected by copyright, but the EXPRESSION of those ideas is protected. Thus, the idea of a maze-chase game, or an asteroid game, or a space ship with attacking aliens game is not protected. However, the concrete details of those games are protected.

Here, the idea of a fantasy role-playing game in which players play characters in a fantasy world run by a game master and use dice to determine various aspects of the game is not protectable. The existence of numerous unique fantasy role-playing games is testament to the fact that there are many different ways of expressing the idea of a fantasy role-playing game (*Broderbund v. Unison*). TSR's particular expression of that idea, the AD&D game mechanics, is protected under copyright. The fact that the game mechanics may be described as a "system" is immaterial (*Lotus v. Borland*).

Several people have asserted that a case brought by Palladium against Wizards of the Coast prevents TSR from asserting copyright protection for its game mechanics. In fact, there was no such decision in that case because it was settled before trial. The only order by the court in that case was against Wizards of the Coast on its summary judgment motion.

The whole question as to who's right and who's wrong comes down to where the notion of "idea" ends and where "expression" begins. If the game mechanics of AD&D are an expression, then she's right. If they're a system (in the legal sense of the word), then she's wrong.

That said, there was little point in debating her. I think Shawn Garbett said it best when on 27 Sep 1994 he wrote:

"Does writing an adventure and just including stats at the end that could be used with a game constitute a derivative work? Do you have the legal funds or disposable income to find out? TSR has drawn a line in the sand that would cost a small fortune to find out if it's real. The fact that it would cost someone to find out how real it is makes the line quite real to most everyone. They could arbitrarily draw these lines anywhere and it would be just too damn expensive to cross them for most of us. That's modern law, that's ancient law, money talks."

Thinking back to Judges Guild, I recall that at some point in their product line, Bob stopped using the term "HP" (hitpoints) and began using "HTK" (hits to kill). Perhaps as far back as the early 80s, TSR was quietly breathing down his neck. I don't really know. But to counter the notion that terminology is key, the judge in the case of *Crume v. Pacific Mut. Ins. Co.* wrote:

"To hold that an idea, plan, method or art described in a copyright is open to the public, but that it can be used only by the employment of different words and phrases which mean the same thing, borders on the preposterous. It is to exalt that accomplishment of a result by indirect means which could not be done directly."

In short, the judge seems to be saying that what terminology you use is unimportant. If what you are describing is simply an adaptation of another prior work, then what you are doing is bogus, and the courts shouldn't reward it.

However, that still begs the question, how is writing up a monster a derivation of D&D? TSR is claiming that if you use their stats, then your work is derived from the game. However, in the legal sense of the term, to "derive" one work from another is to "adapt" or "translate." Jeff Kesselman, one of the leaders of the debate during its early months, stated it best on 21 Oct 1994 when he wrote:

"TSR has stretched the concept of 'derivative copyright' to the point of absurdity, claiming that even the use of such words as ARMOR CLASS or HIT POINTS violate their copyright. Not only are these not significant enough to be considered breaches, but their entire argument is a fallacy, based as it is around the idea that the rule books and campaign guides are novels. They are not. They are 'works of utility' as recognized by the courts as early as 1878."

What in Tiamat's unholy name is a work of utility? Well, utility is just another word for use. If you can use it, it has utility. If you can't, then it doesn't. Back in the olden days (I'm talking the late 1800s here), there was a copyright lawsuit involving a book on accounting techniques. The plaintiff sued because the defendant had copied a form from his book (essentially a page which had lines drawn across it marking off columns). The defendant printed lots of copies and sold them. The court decided that because the book, and in particular, the form, was a work of utility, it could not be copyrighted. The judgement set two important precedents for copyright

law. First, it established that forms could not be copyrighted, since they are works of utility (in filling them out, you are using them, which is their intended purpose). Secondly, but even more fundamentally, there was suddenly this distinction between using a copyrighted work and "explaining" it. In the words of one legal scholar:

"Where the use of the art, i.e. the idea, which a copyrighted work explains (or embodies) necessarily requires a copying of the work itself, then such copying will not constitute an infringement of copyright. However, if such copying occurs not in using the art, but rather in explaining it, then such copying will constitute an infringement."

This is crucial to the question of RPGs, because what the case seems to be telling us is that it's okay to copy to the extent that copying is required in order to use the work for its intended purpose. TSR would likely argue, "Well, sure we created this format for describing monsters and spells and so forth, but we never intended for you to create your own much less distribute your work. That's something that you guys did on your own. We didn't give you license. That wasn't the intention of our work. Our intention was just to allow you to use our spells and monsters... not each others."

To which we might reply, "Hey, you guys certainly didn't lift a finger to stop us while the game was still young and catching on. You knew full well that it was the spirit of openness and cooperation which was driving the popularity of the game. Besides, what is it to you if we want to expand the game to our own tastes, adding features that you may have never even considered and sharing our ideas as we see fit?"

These arguments can go back and forth until the stench-kows come home. Realizing that, I finally decided in 1995 that it was time to act, and so I offered myself up as a legal guinea-pig on the theory that public pressure could force TSR to agree to take the whole issue before a judge.

What am I talking about here? Well, I keep going back to Shawn's statement, *"TSR has drawn a line in the sand that would cost a small fortune to find out if it's real."* And he's right! As any lawyer worth his "lie convincingly" proficiency can tell you, defending your legal rights against "nuisance suits" can be very expensive. Even if you win, you can still end up broke.



But what if there were a way to test the line without spending a small fortune? What if we could just go before a judge and say, "Judge, your honor, your worshipfulness, here's the issue. We want a ruling, and we don't want to spend a lot of money, so no lawyer-games, okay? Here are the facts of the case. They're in writing. Those are our signatures there at the bottom. Just speaketh your wisdom so we may know the right from the wrong. Be good and we'll give you a noogie when this is all over."

Well, as it turns out, there is a way to do just that, and it's called a summary judgement. The idea is that before you get into the courtroom, both sides agree

beforehand on all the facts of the case, so that the lawyers don't have to waste a lot of time arguing about them in front of a judge and the court doesn't have to waste any time arriving at what it considers the facts to be. If both sides go into court with total agreement as to the facts, then all that is left is interpreting the law and applying it to those facts. This, of course, only the court can do, but the court's work is minimized (as is the work of the lawyers). The less work the lawyers have to do, the less expensive the whole thing becomes (comparatively speaking).

What I figured, in my usual idiocy, was that I could simply write TSR's lawyer and see if we could do this as cheap as possible. I ran the idea by TSR's new online representative, Sean Reynolds. He said that I'd better send it snail-mail, as legal correspondence and email don't mix, so I sat down and wrote the letter.

August 31, 1995

Ms. Lindman:

It has come to my attention during the past year that TSR has erected a policy on the Internet which forbids individual players of the AD&D roleplaying game from freely distributing, without charge, materials which they have written which are compatible with and which make use of the terminology of the AD&D game system, such as adventures, spell books, monster databases, character sheets, and the like.

I have exchanged email with Sean Reynolds, TSR's Online Representative, on this topic. He is apparently attempting to gather a list of "generic" terminology (that is terminology which is used by both TSR and at least one other game system) which he purports is usable by individuals on the Internet.

I have two questions for you.

First, which of the following terms (if any) does TSR classify as "generic" rather than as AD&D-specific, and can they be used in net-publications with their AD&D meanings assumed: Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution, Charisma, Comeliness, Frequency, # Appearing, Armor Class, Move, Hit Dice, Hit Points, % in Lair, Treasure Type, # of Attacks, Damage/Attack, Special Attacks, Special Defenses, Magic Resistance, Alignment, Size, Psionic Ability, THAC0, Experience Points, Level, Range, Duration, Area of Effect, Components, Casting Time, Saving Throw, and Speed Factor?

In the event that TSR allows all or most of these terms to be used freely on the Internet with their AD&D meanings assumed, I think that most people will be satisfied enough to let the issue drop. However, in the event that TSR does not allow the free use of this terminology, I think that there are those of us who might want to take the issue before a judge, depending, of course, on how much it'll cost to get a judicial verdict on whether or not this terminology is copyrightable in the first place, and if so, to what extent it can still be used in a freely-distributed, third-party game supplement or module.

My second question, then, is whether or not TSR would be willing to take the terminology issue to court. I could write an AD&D-compatible adventure which makes use of all of the game-terms listed above. Would TSR be willing to seek injunction against my free distribution of that module so that we could both appear before a judge, make our arguments, and get a verdict as to this issue?

Thank you for your time and consideration in answering these questions. I will be sure to post your reply to the Internet for others to see.

Sincerely, Jim Vassilakos

And here was her reply:

February 14, 1996

Dear Mr. Vassilakos:

This is to respond to your letter enquiring about the use of AD&D game terms and TSR's response if you were to write and distribute an AD&D adventure outside TSR's authorized on-line sites. I realize that several months have passed since your letter and I apologize for the delay. More urgent business has kept me well-occupied and I wanted to give you a complete and thoughtful response.

Your question about ownership of terms is a red herring. The real question is whether your work is “based upon” TSR’s copyrighted AD&D game. If so, then your work is a derivative work and, unless you have TSR’s permission, it infringes TSR’s rights. It doesn’t matter whether you write an AD&D adventure using actual AD&D terms or you write the same adventure using code terms (e.g., Alpha = Strength, Beta = Dexterity, etc.). If the adventure is written specifically for the AD&D game, then it is based on the AD&D game and is an infringing derivative work. On the other hand, a generic adventure that could be adapted by the reader to any fantasy role-playing game would not infringe TSR’s rights. In that case, the adventure is not based on the AD&D game or any particular fantasy RPG.

If you deliberately infringe TSR’s rights, TSR will take appropriate action at the appropriate time. There are too many factors that go into such a decision (including direction from upper management) for me to give a definitive answer to your hypothetical.

If you want to file suit, you could ask a judge to “declare your rights” in this matter. In order to maintain the suit, you would have to prove to the court that an “actual controversy” exists. (The purpose of the “actual controversy” requirement was explained by the Supreme Court in *Public Service Comm’n v. Wycoff Co.*: “The disagreement must not be nebulous or contingent but must have taken on fixed and final shape so that a court can see what legal issues it is deciding, what effect its decision may have on the adversaries, and some useful purpose to be achieved in deciding them.”)

In the intellectual property area, courts generally (but not always) require that the rights holder (in this case TSR) have specifically threatened the plaintiff (you) with litigation. Other pertinent facts are also considered in order to determine whether the parties are improperly seeking an advisory opinion. I do not believe there is an “actual controversy” in the legal sense at this time. Of course, you (and your attorney) may disagree.

I hold no illusion that you will be satisfied with this answer. I hope at least that you will take a few moments to consider my comments and put yourself in TSR’s place. You may still disagree with me, but perhaps you will better understand TSR’s position. For myself, I do understand your frustration in not having an substantial number of TSR-authorized Internet sites on which to share your creative endeavors with others. We are working on this problem and expect to open a large web page (possibly mirrored to other sites) in the near future. However, corporate wheels turn slowly even in this fast-paced modern age. We don’t have an ETA for the web page at the moment, but Sean and Jim will keep you posted.

Very truly yours, Constance R. Lindman, Corporate Counsel, TSR, Inc.

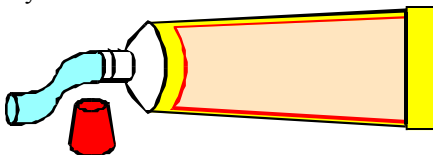
I suppose I could have stood up and squawked about her refusal to sue me, but to be perfectly honest, I was somewhat relieved. After all, I didn’t really want to be a legal guinea-pig. The idea just hit me in a moment of stark, raving madness.

Nonetheless, I was still convinced that we, the gamers, were being royally screwed out of our rights and freedoms. To that end, I constructed an archive of files related to the debate, partly in the hope that it would help educate gamers about the intricacies of copyright law, and partly in the hope that it would serve as a permanent reminder of what TSR had done, so that those who would come online in the years to follow would have an opportunity to learn what had happened to shape industry standards prior to their arrival.

For me, this issue of industry standards was really critical, because, like most of you reading this, I can clearly remember a time when the standard operating procedure was that anybody could produce supplements for any roleplaying game, and it was perfectly okay. You might not be allowed to market your supplement as an “AD&D supplement” or a “Traveller supplement”. That would cause consumer confusion as to who was producing the damn thing, and hence would be a violation of trademark law. However, you could market your supplement as being “For use with

AD&D” or “For use with Traveller”, or if you wanted to be especially safe, “Not approved for use with AD&D” or “Not approved for use with Traveller”.

I realize this is getting nitty-gritty, but that’s the difference between trademark law and copyright law. With trademark law, it’s all about consumer information, making sure the average dummy realizes that what he’s buying isn’t the real-deal. It’s about awarding quality and brand loyalty, so that when all his teeth rot out, he can’t say “Oh, those damn people at Cavities Inc. are responsible for this. They fooled me and made me think I was buying Crest.” No. If his toothpaste says “Crest” than it’s by “Crest”. Thank you trademark law.



Copyright law is completely different. It’s all about making sure that you aren’t copying somebody else’s work and capitalizing on it, hence stealing money out of their pocket. The whole question comes down to what constitutes copying. When is it fair and when is it foul? And, as to be expected, there are grey areas, particularly when it comes to new areas of expression like, for instance, roleplaying games.

But, like I said, for a long stretch of time, from the 1970s and through the

1980s, there were quite a few companies producing AD&D-compatible supplements and adventures. Judges Guild and Mayfair come immediately to mind. Judges Guild came out with City State of the World Emperor in 1982 (set in the same world as Invincible Overlord) which also happens to be the same year that Mayfair published Dwarves, part of a line of books specializing on various races and monsters.

And before anyone states that these products were licensed, let me just kill that notion right now. On the cover of Dwarves it states in large type: “A Complete Kingdom and Adventure suitable for Advanced Dungeons & Dragons” and then down below in small type: “Advanced Dungeons & Dragons is a trademark of TSR Hobbies, Inc. Use of the trademark NOT sanctioned by the holder.” Their emphasis, not mine. Only a year later, North Pole (a little known games publisher) came out with the Tome of Mighty Magic, a book that has magic-user spells which look to be compatible with AD&D but which go up to 20th level instead of stopping at 9th.

Back in the early 80s, these were the standards of doing business. In 1993, when TSR finally got around to reinventing these standards, they sued Mayfair, alleging, in part, that Mayfair’s line of “Role Aids” were being marketed

in a way that devalued the AD&D trademark. What happened, according to the little bit that I've read, is that Mayfair was promoting the "Role Aids" product line as being suitable "for any fantasy role-playing game on the market" as well as for AD&D. TSR asserted that *"Mayfair's advertising campaign promoting ROLE AIDS modules as suitable for any fantasy role-playing game on the market harms the reputation and goodwill of the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS mark as representing a unique brand of products."*

The Judge thought this allegation was "nonsense", and he said as much in his opinion:

"If the producer of Gatorade claims its drink is great for football players and also claims it is great for participants in any high-energy sport, is it reasonable to argue that football is at risk of becoming generic for high-energy sports as a result thereof? Indeed, the restriction that TSR incorrectly contends was violated in the respect now under discussion is the one aspect of the Agreement that appears to find no legitimate justification in TSR's trademark rights. It seems to be purely anti-competitive and hence likely unenforceable as an unlawful extension of the trademarks."

The important thing here isn't that TSR was making a silly argument or that they were having their competitors sign anti-competitive agreements. The important thing here is that even as late as 1993, the courts recognized that there were standards of doing business in the roleplaying games publishing industry that basically said that competitors could publish materials related to and/or supplementary to any gaming system they chose. The judge recognized these standards, and his opinion eloquently illustrates this recognition. TSR, of course, was trying to bury these standards and set up new ones.

My fear at the time was that TSR might only be the first roleplaying games publisher which would try to do so. After all, we should recall that AD&D wasn't the only roleplaying game for which other companies were producing material. Traveller-related products were also a hot item. FASA,

Gamelords, Judges Guild, Paranoia Press, and DGP were all involved in producing Traveller supplements and adventures.

I think only the big games (AD&D and Traveller) attracted this sort of attention. And why shouldn't they have? They were the first well-supported RPGs on the scene, and timing was absolutely critical when it came to grabbing market share. It takes more than a little effort to learn a new game system, and so the first game systems naturally had a huge advantage in terms of keeping market share.

Remember, a roleplaying game isn't like a disposable razor. If you know how you use one lawn mower, you pretty much know how to use them all. Likewise with cars that you drive or fast food that you eat. Customer loyalties in those industries are all based on advertising and how much the customers like the product. In the roleplaying games industry, things are different. It takes some time, effort, and patience to thoroughly learn a new game system, so there is quite a bit of hesitation on the part of consumers to invest in a new game. Hence, many latecomers in the roleplaying games industry decided to contribute via systems that people had already learned rather than re-invent the wheel and hence force the consumers to learn a whole slew of entirely new game systems.

Of course, so far I've talked exclusively about professional (for profit) competition, but the fans themselves were also contributing material to the hobby, usually on a for-the-fun-of-it basis, and since I am writing this essay to you, the fans, it would be negligent of me to forget this contribution. As I recall, quite a number of small roleplaying fanzines flourished during the 70s and 80s. I couldn't even begin to give you an estimate of their number, but I should not be in the least surprised if they amounted to several hundred. These fanzines had free reign to publish "compatible" materials. Of course, they had to use a game's "terminology" to make their articles compatible. No special permission was required. It was assumed, and as far as I know, the large game companies (TSR and GDW) didn't complain.

Well, that's not entirely true. Even as early as 1977, while TSR was still licensing use of the AD&D trademark to Judges Guild, Gary Gygax wrote in Dragon #11, *"Imitation is claimed to be the sincerest form of flattery, and D&D has ample reason to be flattered. Foolish imitations are demeaning, however, and shoddy ones are worse still in that to the extent they are associated with the imitated, they lower its character and repute."* He continued, *"We will not praise our imitators, but neither will we try to drive them out of business."* And finally he concludes, *"The next time someone complains about TSR not allowing them to publish or produce some D&D related item, perhaps you should ask that individual why he or she doesn't create their own game instead of trying to steal what is the property of another."*

The middle quote and the final one leave me slightly bewildered, as with the middle one, he seems to be saying that he won't try to stop 3rd-party publishers from producing AD&D compatible material, but with the final one he seems to indicate that he already has. Or is it all a matter of the quality of the "imitation" as the first quote tends to indicate? And if so, where does that leave the fans?

A year later, in Dragon #16, he gave his opinion of one segment of the fan-press, *"APAs (Amateur Press Associations) are generally beneath contempt, for they typify the lowest form of vanity press. There one finds pages and pages of banal chatter and inept writing from persons incapable of creating anything which is publishable elsewhere. Therefore, they pay money to tout their sophomoric ideas, criticize those who are able to write and design, and generally make themselves obnoxious."* As for other segments of the fan-press, he holds a similarly dim view. *"Certain small publishers of amateur magazines or second-rate work have accused TSR of maintaining a proprietary interest in Dungeons & Dragons from a purely mercenary motivation. This is usually because they have fervent desire to trade on D&D's repute and make a reputation or quick buck on its merits rather than their own.... Just as we must prevent the ignorant and inept from spoiling the*

game by tinkering with the integral systems, we also take every possible step to prevent exploitation of D&D enthusiasts by publishers who hide shoddy products under a fantasy roleplaying guise. We cannot stop them from putting worthless material into print, but we can certainly make it clear that it is neither recommended nor approved for use with Dungeons & Dragons. As long as these worthless goods do not trade on the good name of D&D, we can only tell our readers that they should beware of the products they purchase.”

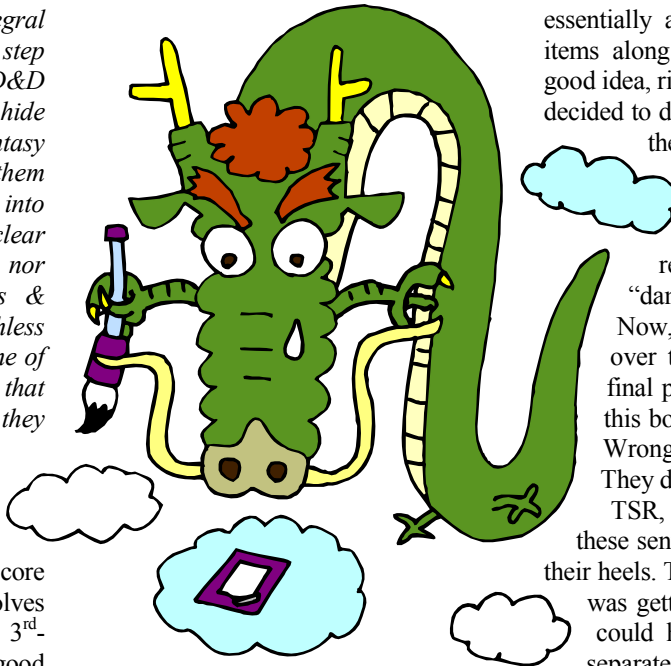
So, in short, what he’s saying is that while he personally doesn’t much approve of 3rd-party material, he recognizes that the core legal issue we’re dealing with revolves around trademark law. As long as 3rd-party products don’t “trade on the good name of D&D” there is nothing that TSR can legally do about them. Fair enough.

However, it is interesting to note that as late as 1989 (after he was booted out of TSR), Gygax wrote a book which, among other things, encouraged the publication of fanzines. With respect to their content, he encouraged editors to publish the very materials which TSR was (in 1994) purporting were copyright violations. Gygax wrote:

“There is nothing quite so appealing as a good game-scenario for a popular RPG. A short unique adventure does attract readers (and play). Expansion materials for a widely played RPG are also popular. Good new classes of adventures, monsters, spells, and magic items for the AD&D game are good, for instance.” (Master of the Game, Chapter 12: How to Create Your Own RPG Publication, pg.139)

This, to me, sounds like explicit authorization to create such works. Gygax, in 1989, was actually advocating what TSR, in 1994, seemed to be prohibiting. I found this policy flip-flop so confusing that I even wrote Rob Repp about it. His reply was succinct: *“The Copyright/Trademark Policy was formalized during the past year in response to an internal management directive.”*

In short, it seems that TSR is saying, in effect, that prior to 1994, TSR was



condoning the free and unconstrained publishing of (in the words of Mr. Gygax) “adventures, monsters, spells, and magic items for the AD&D game.” Then, in early 1994 or thereabouts, according to Rob’s statement, this policy was reversed due to an “internal management directive.”

And this is consistent with TSR’s suit against Mayfair in 1993. They made a conscious decision to re-invent the “standards of doing business” sometime around 1993-94, and as a result, we the fans were under attack.

I found this rather annoying, as I happen to prefer the old standards. They worked quite well not just because they allowed a huge number of fanzines to thrive and to aspire to become “prozines”, but because they kept game companies in competition. For example, if a consumer wanted to purchase a star sector for Traveller, he or she could buy the Spinward Marches from GDW, or the Glimmerdrift Reaches from Judges Guild, or the Beyond from Paranoia Press. The bottom line is that the consumer had a choice, and that kept the game companies in competition, and with competition came better quality, new ideas, and a flourishing marketplace.

Contrast that with the situation during the mid-1990s. TSR had just begun publishing a series of works entitled The Encyclopedia Magica which were

essentially a list of a bunch of magic items along with their descriptions. A good idea, right? Well, one of the editors decided to do a global search-replace on the first book of the series.

They decided to change every occurrence of “mage” to “wizard”. As a result, every occurrence of “damage” became “dawizard”. Now, you’d think that somebody over there would have done one final proofread before they’d send this book off to the printers, right? Wrong. TSR had a captive market. They didn’t need to proofread.

TSR, of course, was not alone in these sentiments. GDW was close on their heels. The errata for MegaTraveller was getting to the point where they could have made it into a whole separate book. It was so bad that the joke when Traveller:TNE came out was that TNE didn’t stand for “The New Era”... it stood for “The New Error”.

I recall the Traveller Mailing List on the Internet complaining vociferously when T:TNE came out, because within about two weeks of the release date, several people on the mailing list had compiled an errata sheet about a mile long. They wondered why GDW didn’t give them a sneak preview to fix all the mistakes in the new version. Think about it. The fans were willing to do the editing themselves.

In what other industry are standards of quality so utterly atrocious that the consumers are offering their services for free just so they can get a decent product? Only in the roleplaying publishing industry.

These companies had no competition because of these new “standards of doing business” which TSR has invented. Half the customers were rolling around on the floor laughing, the other half were whining about how shoddy everything had become, and the rest were too new to gaming to have ever known a time when things were better.

So we come back to the question. What sort of standards of doing business would be favorable to us as consumers over the long term? Based on all the arguments above, I’d have to conclude that in order for standards to be

favorable, they should promote competition between different roleplaying games publishers within the markets of individual roleplaying games. We got a wider variety of material back then, when Paranoia Press and Judges Guild and GDW all produced sectors for the Traveller Universe, and when Judges Guild and Mayfair and TSR all produced adventures for AD&D. That is the sort of standard we should have if we want our long-term interests as consumers to be provided for.

Now, I was talking with one fellow about this via email, and he brought up an interesting point. *“Here’s a thought for you: what if TSR re-wrote the Cyberpunk 2020 game book (in an original, clever, and pretty way) and did not copy the actual text? If the game mechanics are not copyrightable, this would be legal, no?”*

There is a distinction here we have to remember. If I re-write AD&Dv2 and release an AD&Dv3, that should count as a derivative work (in the legal sense of the term). And since this work would be competing against the work it was derived from (AD&Dv2), that would be a strike against it in terms of it being a case of fair use. Take, however, the example of TSR writing a module for CP2020. In this case, the module will incorporate terminology from the game system, but would it be derivative of the game system in the legal sense? I think this would be a hard question for the courts to answer. However, even if they did say the work was “derivative”, then you have to ask, is it a fair use? Well, does the module compete against the game system from which it was derived? Absolutely not. If anything, TSR’s support of the game system ought to enhance its sales, not detract from them. In this case, TSR would have produced a supplementary work for use with CP2020, and the makers of CP2020 ought not to be able to do anything about it.

I personally feel that RPGs ought to be a special case under the law, and that there should be a distinction made between supplementary game aids and actual “re-writes” of game systems. One is a supplementary work. The other is derivative. One enhances sales of a given rpg. The other competes with

those sales. Never mind that TSR’s adventure for CP2020 may compete with FASA’s adventure which would compete with GDW’s adventure and so on. These adventures are not derived from each other. At worst, they might be derived from a common game system (CP2020). More likely, they just incorporate terminology invented in that system.

I think this is how the law ought to be. I can’t say if this is how the law is or if this is how it will be interpreted in court, but these are my feelings on how I would interpret it in order to create the best marketplace for the consumer.

To be perfectly honest, I would even go a step further. If I had my way in putting together an industry-wide standard, I would make it such that monsters, spells, magic items, races, equipment, and all those other things (which I classify under the general heading of “props”) ought to become a common resource which all game companies may reference in their products. For example, if I write a new monster for Talislanta, I think that TSR should be able to reference it in one of their adventures so long as they don’t quote my entire description word for word but just stick to the stats and leave a little note telling the consumer which gaming product to purchase for more information. I think this sort of cross-pollination would lead both to better roleplaying game products and to greater competition (both in terms of quality and in terms of price). One might call this somewhat extreme set of standards “the standards of freedom”, as they probably allow as much latitude to game companies as possible without stepping over that line into clear cases of illegal infringement.

Of course, while the “standards of freedom” which I just proposed might seem like the ideal course to some people, I should mention that Thomas (the guy I was exchanging email with) brought up an important criticism. He said that some companies might rely on the sales of adventures and supplements after the initial revenue from the game system to stay afloat, and that with TSR (the big company with the most money for production expenses and artwork) stepping into such an industry-wide

policy, they might be able to absorb the entire roleplaying games industry just by producing modules and adventures for every game on the market. In short, a lot of smaller companies might go under due to such a legal framework, which would probably be a bad thing, as the more companies you have in the market, arguably the better it will be for the consumer in the long run, and that’s the bottom line goal... to have a legal framework which maximizes the consumer’s long-term joy.

For myself, the TSR/Copyright debate came to an abrupt end when Wizards of the Coast purchased them. Peter Adkison, WotC’s founding janitor and CEO, was a gamer at heart. He understood the issues (having been recently sued by Palladium over a half-page of conversion notes in the back of Primal Order he understood them rather well). Perhaps I should back up a bit and explain this minor flap in RPG history.

Peter wrote Primal Order as a cap-system. That is to say, the idea was that it would be a generic supplement about gods, giving gamemasters a way to handle deities in their games. However, in making it useful to gamemasters, Peter realized that he’d have to include some method for converting his terminology into that of various popular fantasy RPG systems on the market. To that end, he enlisted the aid of a wide assortment of gamers on the Internet to write these conversion notes. When Primal Order finally came out, the appendix in the back looked like a veritable who’s-who of rec.games.frp.misc. There were conversion notes included for all sorts of game systems, and they were written by a multitude of different people. Incidentally, the product got glowing reviews in the magazines, and people still talk about it even today as being the primary resource on creating deities for fantasy RPGs.

Now, it might have been prudent to write each game publisher and ask for permission to include these conversion notes, but it was such a small thing, Peter didn’t feel it necessary. After all, who in their right mind would get upset about him wanting to support their game? So he published, and Palladium sued. Keep in mind, this was WotC’s

first major product. They were incredibly new and incredibly cash-poor at the time. This little lawsuit threatened their very survival. Needless to say, even though it was clearly ridiculous, they decided to settle out of court rather than be sacked by attorney fees.

Shortly thereafter, Magic: the Gathering was released, the CCG craze hit the industry like a thunderbolt, and quite suddenly, WotC was rolling in dough. Everyone thought that WotC would continue to focus exclusively on their cash cow, but even after they dropped their RPG divisions as being unprofitable, I knew in my gut that they'd eventually come back.

Y'see, I had the fortune to spend a few evenings with Peter before M:tG was released. We ate pizza and watched some videos in one of my friend's cockroach-infested apartments, and over the course of those few evenings, I got a sense of what he really wanted in life. Well, more than a sense, actually. He flat out told me. He said that he was awed by the power of roleplaying and by the ability for it to lead otherwise lazy kids toward educating themselves in math, history, the sciences, not to mention creative writing. He saw games, and the roleplaying hobby in particular, as having enormous possibilities to benefit education, and his long term goal, he said, was to create and market products which would do just that.

Now, as we all know, life has a way of getting in the way of our dreams. This is true for all of us. In Peter's case, the unexpected happened. M:tG was a huge success. Actually, that's a serious understatement. M:tG was blowing everything else out of the water. I think he hoped that the game would be a success, but he never dreamed that it would be as successful as it was. Quite suddenly, he found himself as the CEO of this huge company, and there were hundreds of people, from employees to stockholders to distributors, whose livelihoods and families depended on *him* keeping the ball rolling. It was a heck of a lot pressure for a guy who just wanted to contribute his two-bits to the hobby and hopefully make a positive difference.

Lo and behold, he eventually had to cut RPGs out of the company plan. He

found good homes for them. It was more than a lot of companies do. Years later, and I have no idea how this happened, he suddenly got the opportunity to buy TSR. Whamo! Instead of Lorraine Williams, heiress of the Buck Rogers estate, in control of the TSR's copyright policy, we suddenly had a guy who grew up as a gamer, a guy who'd been sued over some lousy conversion notes!

He's one of us. Sure, he's rich, but he wasn't born into the money. He knows where he came from, and he knows that people in positions of power have a responsibility to do the right thing.

Now, I can see you all rolling your eyes at me. "There goes Jim again... he's finally lost it. Somebody grab a straight-jacket." Well fine... be that way. I try to inject a little bit of idealism into this sordid article, and look where it gets me.

But listen... before you throw me in that padded cell, just consider a few things. The day after the TSR purchase was finalized, what did Peter do? Did he sit there like his predecessor, folding his arms and saying "I have all... you have none... bwahahaha!" No, he rewrote TSR's policy. He made it into something that was pretty agreeable to most every gamer on the Internet. The TSR/Copyright debate had come to an end, and a good one at that.

Furthermore, his copyright policy has always been to err on the side of lenience. Even in mid-1995, when M:tG was selling like hotcakes, Jeff Franzmann wrote:

"I've been doing a series on Magic: the Gathering for well over a year over on rec.games.trading-cards, which has been very well received. It's even spawned a mailing list with recipients all over the world. Has WotC threatened me with legal action for using references to Magic: the Gathering cards (each and every post contains references to

numerous WotC trademarks in a gaming capacity)? No. In fact, I'm even discussing the possibility of having the world on the mailing list made semi-official. Kathy Ice from WotC has informed me that the WotC WWW page may even have a pointer to the mailing list. The series is archived on one of the official WotC homepages."

Wow! What a difference a CEO makes. Let me take this even a step further. Back when I was busy working on the TSR/Copyright archive, I began contacting various RPG publishers to get their copyright policies. Most all of them sent me back emails which were favorable, very much in support of the free distribution of fan-authored material. However, only one of these companies took it upon themselves to contact me out of the clear blue sky. Guess which one. It was WotC, and their copyright policy was as favorable to the fan-press as it gets. I can't help but think that this net-friendly attitude began right at the top, with Peter, and with the people he chose to help him carry his dreams to fruition. Hence, with WotC's acquisition of TSR, the stage was finally set for a return to the good old days, a spinning in full-circle, if you will. That, I believe, is what is about to happen.

I'm sure everyone here has heard about D20 and the OGL. If you haven't, then pull your head out the sand. OGL stands for Open Gaming License. WotC tells us that it will bring us back to the days when anyone could publish AD&D supplements, adventures, what have you... and that they could publish them for profit. This is something that most of the other RPG companies still won't allow even though they'll turn a blind eye to free-distribution and the fan-press.

For various reasons, however, there are people who are annoyed about this impending development. Some have even called it a scam. Until we see the final license in its approved form, it's sort of hard to fully evaluate it, however, I'll talk briefly about what the license purports to do, and I'll also cover several of the main criticisms.

First, the OGL purports to be a "Copyleft" mechanism, analogous to the Gnu Public Documentation License. The basic idea is that WotC will open the



D&D game system in such a way that nobody need fear being sued ever (regardless if Hasbro decides to reverse the policy several years from now). Anyone who wants to publish his or her monsters or spells or adventures may do so. However, in so doing, they are contributing their work to a common pool, a sort of public domain, which other people may build upon. The trick to all this is that if you use somebody's work in such a fashion, then your work must also be contributed to this common pool. And so on and so forth, a great ocean of OGL material would be built, open to everyone who agrees to contribute their own work in such a fashion.

To me, this is like the best of all worlds. I couldn't have imagined a better way of doing things. Sure, I suppose WotC could have just chucked the entire game system, settings and all, into the public domain. It would be crazy, but they could have done it. But this is so much more satisfying. What they are saying, as I interpret it, is that if you want to use their ideas, then allow others to use your ideas. Put the game into a quasi-public domain for those who are willing to play by these rules. Personally, I think it's genius.

However, there are criticisms. As promised, I'll cover those which I consider the most important. The first is that WotC can still publish "closed material", that is, material which does not fall under the OGL but which is clearly AD&D-related. Competing publishers apparently do not have this luxury unless they purposely separate their closed-content material such as setting information from their open-content material... everything that needs stats.

Secondly, the OGL would allow WotC to publish fan-authored material for profit without the consent of the author and without paying any form of compensation. Of course, under the terms of the license, anyone would be able to do this, not just WotC.

Third, there has been criticism directed toward one of the key OGL proponents within WotC, a high-level manager by the name of Ryan Dancey. Actually, the entire idea of doing OGL & D20 seems to have originated with

Dancey. In the words of Sean Reynolds, TSR's net-rep, "It was mainly Ryan's idea. He realized that people are already copying D&D, so we might as well let them do it in such a way that it points back to D&D." Apparently, however, Dancey stated publicly that he wants to drive competitive game systems from the market, and he hopes to make it very difficult for small companies to enter the market with new RPGs.

On 21-Jan-2000, Dancey clarified his statements on the OGL mailing list, "*I said that I wanted to drive competitive game systems out of the market, and that I wanted the market to resist the introduction of other game systems; I also said that our intention with 3e and the 3e pricing plan was to make it very, very hard for an undercapitalized, poorly planned company to get a foothold in the market.*"

Whether or not the market is segmented more than is healthy is still a topic of debate. As for wanting to run his competitors out of business, that is the nature of capitalism. I can't really apologize for his statements since I've never even met the guy, but for better or for worse, much of the public discussion has focused on him.

Finally, as I stated earlier, there are those who, because of the sordid history of TSR as well as some of WotC's own legal maneuverings, feel that the OGL is a nothing more than a scam. Nat Barmore writes:

OGL is pointless: there's nothing that it makes available that wasn't always available, as long as D&D has existed. Anything that complies with the OGL would be legal whether or not the OGL existed, and there's nothing that WotC could do, legally, to prevent it. So WotC seems to be cashing in on a current trend (copyleft, etc.), without actually doing anything differently. They want to appear magnanimous, when all they're really doing is putting a fancy spin on something they have no power over in the first place.

The D20 license is overly-restrictive for a supposedly-generous deal, and is seen as very hypocritical coming from the company that killed most of the legitimate online D&D material, and tried to kill Mayfair (or at least their

RoleAids line) & Dangerous Journeys, and has attempted to claim that most, if not all, trading card games are using WotC-patented technology, and has a history of buying up excellent small-press companies and RPGs and then killing them. Management may change, but it's hard to be understanding when it's happened so reliably.

I had to blink once or twice when I saw this long list of allegations, but there is some truth to each of them. How much truth, I'm not entirely certain. Bob Bledsaw told me that after TSR started to produce their own adventure modules, they initiated a number of moves directed at crippling Judges Guild who they had come to view as a competitor. These were things like cutting the approval rate of JG material, suddenly refusing to recognize JG as a wholeseller for discount purposes, and even going so far as to warn the larger distributors not to carry JG material if they wanted to continue to do business with TSR. Likewise, TSR's suits against GDW and Mayfair are a matter of record. However, all of these statements are with respect to TSR's old management, not the new management which has been placed in charge since the WotC buyout. The one accusation against WotC concerns their patent on Magic: the Gathering. Nat elaborated:

"If the patent was held up in court, almost all CCGs currently in production would be in violation of it, and WotC could demand royalties or the cessation of production. So far, to the best of my knowledge, nobody has agreed to pay any royalties, and I suspect WotC is nervous about the legitimacy of the patent, which is why it hasn't actually gone to court yet. Also, the rumor is that when the patent went through they sent letters to all the infringing game manufacturers—and this included the makers of a game that predates M:tG. If this is the case, it implies that there was a game out there doing whatever M:tG is patented for before M:tG was doing it, which would invalidate the patent."

John Nephew, president of Atlas Games, backed up these sentiments to some extent:

"The general impression I get is that

the patent office in recent years started just handing out patents left and right (e.g., “one-click ordering” is a patent of Amazon.com, “hypertext” is supposedly a patent of British Telecom!), leaving it to the courts to sort out which are really legitimate. I think this is all going to be coming to a head in the next few years, when industries (like the Internet) that have the money to burn on litigation bring a bunch of cases all the way through the court system.”

There are really two questions raised by all this. First, is the patent legitimate? Second, what exactly does it protect (i.e. what is its scope)? For those who are interested, you can actually find WotC’s CCG patent online at the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office (<http://www.uspto.gov/patft>). The patent to check out is #5,662,332.

Although I’m no lawyer, the patent looks to me to be very specific about the M:tG mechanics. Even assuming the patent is legitimate (i.e. that game systems can be patented), my guess is that in order for another CCG to be in violation, it would have to be alarmingly similar to M:tG. So, in short, it seems this patent would protect WotC from another company creating a game almost exactly like M:tG, but it would not close off the CCG market as WotC’s critics have claimed. And, of course, patents only last for something like seventeen years, meaning that the “system” falls into the public domain after that period. In my opinion, at least WotC is treating the law as it was meant to be treated.

The only thing that concerns me is the mention of “threat letters”. If WotC sent out such letters realizing that their patent’s scope did not enable them to carry out a successful suit, then that qualifies as a bullying tactic in my book and is much the same thing that the old TSR-management had been doing with AD&D, only on a grander scale. Should such a thing be tolerated? Absolutely not. Did it actually happen? When asked about whether or not he received any “cease & desist” letters, John stated that he always had a positive relationship with WotC.

“I don’t remember getting any letter, but I do recall seeing the license that

WotC’s legal department had been drafting for CCG licensees. We didn’t sign it, and after the original furor, we pretty much forgot about it (it’s not like On the Edge was a big money-maker at that point, besides which WotC had been very helpful and encouraging when we were publishing it in the first place). Other companies that weren’t, say, friends with the CEO and various upper managers of WotC might have had a different experience. I don’t know of any nightmare stories, though. I think a few companies, particularly large ones from outside the industry with lots of assets, may have done a license with WotC to cover themselves legally. I doubt many of us smaller guys, if any, did. I haven’t heard any stories about WotC throwing their weight around on the little guys. The one company that industry insiders thought WotC might seriously go after was Decipher—but I’m not aware of anything happening in that direction, neither litigation from WotC nor a license-signing from Decipher.”

Why Decipher in particular?

“Because only Star Trek and Star Wars really came anywhere in the ballpark near Magic, prior to Pokemon. It comes down to assets: any other game company you might sue, if they weren’t bankrupted defending the suit, and if you won against them, would have nothing left to pay your legal fees, let alone any damages. Plus there’s the risk of the patent being overturned by the court. There isn’t any reward that WotC could expect to make the risk and the investment worthwhile.”

I contacted Decipher to see if I could get more information. Anthony Vittone, Vice President & General Counsel, only had a brief statement:

“WOTC did send out letters to a number of CCG companies including Decipher. However, Decipher’s trading card games do not infringe the claims of WOTC’s patent, therefore, no license agreement was required. We sent WOTC a letter to this effect, and no further issue was raised.”

So the short of it is that WotC did send out letters, but it was basically a bluff. Those who called the bluff never received a court summons, and those

who didn’t got to pay royalties. I have to admit, I was rather put off by this revelation. Prior to learning about this, I had assumed that WotC has been behaving (at least with respect to intellectual property issues) with the highest degree of ethics. Certainly, this is nothing close to what the old-TSR management had done, but it’s a step in the wrong direction, and it does give one pause.

My overall assessment of the situation is that there’s still a lot of stuff that goes on in this industry that ought not to happen, and no matter how well you think you know a company, the bottom-line is that it’s all still about money. The glory days of roleplaying are long gone. It’s now a corporate world, and like it or not, corporations will behave like corporations.

Returning to the discussion of OGL, I have to admit that I’m still hopeful. I’m hopeful on two counts: first, that OGL ends up being everything it was hyped-up to be, and secondly, supposing that this shall come to pass, I’m hopeful that it will succeed in the market. If it gets gutted by the lawyers and ruined through compromise, it’ll be a real shame, and I don’t think anybody will be fooled in the end. But if they end up doing it right, I think it could end up having a life of its own.

Ryan Dancey remarked, *“To make the OGL concept work, consumers have to decide that they’d rather have Open Games than Closed Games. If they so choose, consumer preference will have more effect on game publishers than Wizards or Hasbro ever could.”*

Indeed, if they manage to pull it off, perhaps some of the other major systems (GURPS, etc) might be prompted to follow suit (hence making their own set of standards more available for copyleft purposes). I don’t think that would be such a bad thing.

If you want to look at this whole thing with a cynical eye, I can see how the case could be effectively made that WotC had to put forward the OGL (thus enlisting the aid of 3rd-party publishers) or risk letting AD&D become overtaken by one of the more modern gaming systems. GURPS or WOD would seem to be the prime

candidates at the moment.

This whole notion reminds me of one of the conversations I had with Adkison back before he'd struck gold. As we were driving to one of the local gaming shops, he mentioned with some smugness that the little guys had been slowly chipping away at TSR's market share each year, and that it was only a matter of time before the big, invincible giant would go down due to the cumulative erosion. Being first had counted for a lot, but it ultimately it wouldn't replace being the best. I wondered to myself if perhaps TSR's big mistake had been closing off competition within the AD&D market. By declaring AD&D a TSR-only domain and not allowing anyone to professionally publish unlicensed products for the game, they had unwittingly ensured their own decline because it forced this proliferation of systems and the subsequent segmentation of the overall RPG market. Now the new management is desperately trying to backpedal and undo the damage the previous TSR management has caused.

And what about that management? Just what sort of people were they?

I'm not going to stoop to naming names, but Peter informed me about how a certain TSR employee (one of the old guard) came up to the table of a small game company at GenCon where there was sitting someone who would shortly become one of the first WotC employees. Words to the effect were that, "You're a 3rd world gaming company; when you become 2nd world we'll squish you like bugs."

Flash-forward ten years. WotC now owns TSR. Ah... the brutal irony of fate.

Additional Reading on the Open Gaming License & D20 Trademark License:

Unofficial OGF-D20 FAQ (by Faustus von Goethe):

<http://www.earth1066.com/D20FAQ.htm>

Dungeons & Dragons to go open-source?

A gaming executive ponders an "open gaming license" for roleplaying games.

(by Andrew Leonard, 10-March-2000)

<http://www.salon.com/tech/log/2000/03/10/dungeons/index.html>

Interview with Ryan Dancey: D20 System and Open Gaming Movement

(by Eric Noah, 19-March-2000)

<http://www.rpgplanet.com/dnd3e/interview-rsd-0300.htm>

Opening the Dungeon:

Does game maker Wizards of the Coast really want to create an open-source Dungeons & Dragons, or is it just trying to capitalize on the buzz?

(by Wagner James Au, 29-March-2000):

http://www.salon.com/tech/feature/2000/03/29/open_dungeon/index.html

The d20 License: An Explanation

(by Clinton R. Nixon in RPG Evolution #2, Sept 2000)

<http://www.rpgevolution.com/issue1-2/d20explain.html>



The Slavers of Thin-gala

an AD&D adventure for characters level 5-7

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Introduction

This material may contain references to non-TSR monsters, spells and magic items. If you would like information on non-standard spells or items used in this module, write or email me at the above addresses. I will be happy to share whatever information I can.

abbreviations and other notations used:

th or thaco = to hit armor class 0
hd = hit dice
hp = hit points
ac = armor class
d = damage
mr = magic resistance
str = strength
con = constitution
dex = dexterity
int = intelligence
wis = wisdom
chr = charisma
pp = pick pockets
ol = open locks
frt = find / remove traps
hs = hide in shadows
ms = move silently
hn = hear noise
cw = climb walls
rl = read languages

Some spells, magic items or monsters may have a notation following them similar to this: find familiar [P 134]. The information in the brackets is a book and page number reference for locating the item's description. The following are the book abbreviations used in these references:

P = Player's Handbook (2nd edition, first printing)
T = Tome of Magic
D = Dungeon Master's Guide
A = Unearthed Arcana
M = Monster Manual
F = Fiend Folio
S = Monster Manual II (first edition)
C = Creature Catalog Supplements
K = my own compiled reference manuals

If you run this adventure, I'd like to hear how it turned out.

Background

The Duchy of LaGrange in the kingdom of Tanaska has a problem. Over the past few months, several of its coastal towns have been raided by pirate slavers. They have sacked the towns and taken most of the able-bodied men back aboard their ship in chains. There have been four raids to-date, each about 3 weeks apart, and over 100 people have been taken prisoner. The coastal towns have petitioned the Duke to do something to help but Reginald LaGrange, who is not exactly known for his compassion, has declined to intervene, claiming that without a naval force, there is nothing he can do. A petition for aid was also sent to the King, but the reply declared the problem to be an "internal matter" for the Duchy to deal with.

With no help forthcoming from any source, the many towns along the LaGrange coast are now living in fear, keeping a close watch on the seas, and preparing to run at the slightest hint of trouble. None of the villages are large enough to afford a mercenary protection force, and are too widely dispersed to band together for common defense. Some of the residents of these towns have moved away, but most have refused to leave, either because they are too stubborn to give up their homes without a fight, or because they have nowhere else to go.

For The DM

The pirate slavers are working for Thin-gala, a high priest of Mældain (a lawful evil goddess of pain and cruelty modeled after Loviatar), who is constructing a huge temple to his goddess on a remote island between the kingdom of Tanaska and the continent of Crocroom. Thin-gala was exiled from his homeland of Crocroom for acts of depravity committed in the name of his goddess. In the years following his banishment he traveled extensively and built a small following. When the size of his growing priesthood made it difficult to continue his travels, Thin-gala began to think about creating a new temple to the Goddess of Pain. He realized, however, that doing so in a well populated area would probably result in his banishment again so he began looking for an appropriately remote location. While sailing to the Kingdom of Tanaska with the intent to scout for a suitable building site, a unexpected storm blew the ship aground on an small island not far from the coast of Tanaska. The island appeared to uninhabited and Thin-gala came to believe that the storm and shipwreck was a sign from Mældain that this should be the location of the new

temple. While the ship's crew worked to repair the damaged ship, Thin-gala and his acolytes explored the island with growing enthusiasm. During one of their expeditions, they encountered a group of aquatic ogres who made their home in the reefs around the island. After a few tense moments following their initial meeting, Thin-gala and the ogre's leader, Brushnick, negotiated a mutually beneficial peace treaty. The ogre's agreed to leave Thin-gala and his followers unmolested; in return, Thin-gala would allow the ogres to participate in raids he planned to carry out on merchant ships, the first being the one that brought him to the island.

In the years following his arrival on the island, Thin-gala has been slowly building up his resources by waylaying ships with the help of the ogres. Most of the sailors and passengers of these ambushed ships have been killed and eaten by the ogres, although a very few were converted to the worship of Maeldain. He has also been sending his loyal converts to Tanaska and Crocroom to recruit new worshippers. Those who decided to join the cult were advised as to when and where to rendezvous with one of the stolen ships now manned by Thin-gala's followers. In this manner, Thin-gala's following grew to the point where he was ready to begin the next phase of his operation, the construction of the temple.

Rather than use his loyal followers, he decided to use slave labor to construct the monument to Maeldain. He began a series of slave taking raids along the coasts of Tanaska and Crocroom, carefully keeping his expeditions wide-spread so as to minimize the possibility of retaliation. For most kingdoms, one or two slave raids a year is hardly enough to warrant mounting a military campaign to stop and after two years Thin-gala's labor force swelled to nearly 500.

Construction of the temple progressed well in light of the resources applied to it, and might have been completed in another 2 years except for a recent problem. Several months ago, a disease spread through the ranks of his slave labor force and more than half of them died, putting the project considerably behind schedule. Thin-gala decided that he needed to get a large number of replacement slaves quickly if he wanted to make up for the loss, and so began to look for an opportunity to do so. His agents in Tanaska recommended that the Duchy of LaGrange would be the perfect choice for a concentrated series of attacks. The ruling Duke has little concern for the welfare of the populace, and has no naval force with which to pursue the slavers. The coastal villages are small and do not have the means to muster their own defense. All in all, they are ripe for the picking.

The Slavers' Modus Operandi

The slaver's raids are well planned and executed with military precision. Each raiding party is lead by a mid-level priest of Maeldain (typically 6th level) with a mage or priest/mage of about 4th level as his assistant. There is also at least one agent working undercover onshore. This onshore agent will typically assume the disguise of a traveling

merchant or minstrel. He will enter a town, do a little covert investigation to gauge its defenses and then signal to the ship as to whether or not the town is to be attacked. If the town looks promising, the onshore agent will rendezvous with the two commanders and pass on to them all the information he can about the town and its defenses.

Once a plan has been decided upon, the slavers wait until the middle of the night, about 2am, and row ashore about a mile outside of the village. They then split up into teams of 6-8 men and begin breaking into cottages under the cover of <silence> spells cast by the priests. They overpower any able-bodied men and knock them out with blackjacks. Women and children are killed outright so as to prevent them from alerting their neighbors as well as to protect the anonymity of the slavers. One team is also assigned the duty of looting provisions and acquiring a wagon to transport their stolen goods back to the longboats.

On occasion, variations on this M.O. are used when the situation warrants it. If the village has a militia or town guard, one team of slavers may be sent to engage them while the other team goes about their business. If there are any inhabitants that could seriously impede the slavers, such as a mage or priest, or visiting adventurers, the onshore agent may create a diversion such as setting fire to one of the larger buildings in town, thus keeping their potential foes busy.

Part 1: The Glen Cove Raid

Enter the Party

read to the players...

You have been traveling north along the coast of the Duchy of LaGrange for several days now. The weather has been cooperative, but the damp wind blowing in off the sea invariably leaves you feeling sticky after a day of traveling. Luckily, the coast is dotted with small fishing villages, most of which have a tavern or inn where you have been able arrange for sleeping accommodations. The villagers are, for the most part, quite friendly and receptive to travelers. There appears to be a substantial amount of traffic along the coastal road, made up primarily of itinerant peddlers selling everything from pots to knives to clothing. These wandering shopkeepers typically stop for several days at each village to sell their wares then pack up and head on to the next town. This army of peddlers, in addition to spreading their goods and services, also serve as the news-mongers for the small communities they frequent and recently, the news they have been bringing bodes ill.

In almost every village you have passed through, there have been rumors of marauding pirates. So far, all of the stories you have heard have been second or third hand accounts; some peddler who talked to an innkeeper, who heard it from a minstrel, etc. While you are not particularly prone to believe idle tavern-talk, the sheer number of rumors has led you to believe that there very well could be something amiss. In this respect, you are not alone. Stories

of whole towns being sacked and the inhabitants kidnapped or killed have caused no small amount of alarm in the poorly defended villages. Some have started to form local militia units in an attempt to defend themselves, and many have issued curfews.

It is getting on towards evening and normally you would have stopped for the night by now, but a farmer you spoke to earlier in the day said that the village of Glen Cove, which was “just up the coast a-ways” had an inn, and you would much rather sleep in a bed than a bedroll. Unfortunately, the farmer seems to have underestimated the distance to Glen Cove and now dusk has settled upon the land. The road you are on has been climbing steadily upward for the past mile, and the ocean has dropped away, although you can still hear the sound of the surf breaking on the cliffs below. As you crest the top of this rise, you are greeted with the sight of a small village about a mile in the distance. You breath a sigh of relief and head down towards what you hope will be a hot meal and a soft bed when a twinkle of light catches your eye. Out on the ocean you see a faint light blink on and off several times. You cannot quite make out the source of the light in the darkness, but you assume it is coming from a ship, or perhaps an off-shore island.

The ship is a slave ship of Thin-Gala’s and they are exchanging signals with their on-shore agent, a bard / priest called Whimble. Whimble has been evaluating the village of Glen Cove as a possible target while posing as a traveling minstrel and has decided that it is a good one. There is no town militia and there are no people with extra-ordinary powers other than one priest of Dionus who should pose little threat to the well organized strike force. The spy is now on the beach signaling this information to the slavers’ ship offshore and recommending that they attack the town tonight. In about twenty minutes, a long boat from the ship will row ashore with the slavers’ captain and her assistant. From where the party is standing, they will be unable to see Whimble who is at the base of the cliff, but if they decide to stick around, they may catch a glimpse of the long boat as it rides in on the tide.

The cliffs at this point are very steep, and actually angle in towards the bottom making it impossible to climb down although it might be possible to descend on a very long rope (200’) or by magical means. If the PCs decide to do this, then the DM should alter the encounter so that Whimble and the other slavers see or hear their approach, and escape back out to sea before the PCs can get a good look at them.

Sooner or later, the PC’s will make it to the village of Glen Cove, and the inn. (read the following)

The inn, which is called the Flying Barracuda, is all that you hoped it would be. While it is far from being luxurious, the rooms are tidy, the bedding clean, the common room inviting, and if the food tastes half as good as it smells, you believe you will have a very satisfactory evening. You have just returned to the common room after cleaning up and are eager to sample some of the stew you saw cooking over the fire. There are a dozen others in the room, most are gathered

around a man dressed in traveling clothes who seems to be answering their questions. From his talk, he is an eye-witness to a pirate raid on the village of Corwin several days farther north along the coast.

The man is Stuart Sharp, a cutlery merchant who has just arrived in town. He was indeed witness to a slave raid on the small town Corwin. He was sleeping in his wagon, (actually, more like a shack on wheels) on the outskirts of town when the sounds of shouting woke him. He went out to see what the commotion was all about and saw a group of villagers in chains being led down to the beach. The moonlight was just bright enough for him to make out the shape of a ship riding at anchor in the harbor. He was debating what to do when a group of the slavers saw him and started moving in his direction. Fear quickly made up his mind for him, and he ran back to his wagon and bolted the door closed. The slavers began pounding on the wagon door and yelling at him in a strange language, but after a moment a distant horn blew a long, low note and the men abandoned their efforts. Stuart, a strong believer in the “better safe than sorry” axiom, remained locked in his wagon until well after sunrise.

This is the extent of his knowledge of the slavers; although the tale he tells has been embellished somewhat with dramatic details. He stayed in town for the next day and night and learned that close to twenty men had been abducted. Several others were killed while resisting, as were most of their wives and children. The slavers raided the drygoods store, making off with several cases of food and casks of wine, and the town’s only tavern was partially destroyed by a fire apparently set by the raiders. There was no other looting or pillaging, even though they had plenty of opportunity.

The party is free to ask Stuart questions or to have him repeat his story which he does with great dramatic flair.

After dinner...

You have finished your third helping of the stew and decided that it was definitely worth the extra time spent on the road. While you settle back in your chairs to relax, a man walks into the inn who receives a warm welcome from most of the patrons. He is dressed in a dark brown cape, has a short sword slung on his hip and is carrying a lantern. He is apparently a bard, for there are several requests for him to play. He smiles and addresses the crowd:

“Aye, Aye, I’ll play for ye till the wee hours if you’ve the want of it, just keep my tankard full. I’ll be back soon as I change into something a bit less damp and more comfortable, since it’s likely whatever I be wearing tonight, I’ll be waking in on the morrow.”

Amidst the scattered laughter his announcement invokes, he turns and heads for his room. Shortly he returns with a lute and commences playing. All in all, he is not a bad minstrel, although his accent sometimes makes the words difficult to understand. But he does know several ballads you have never heard before and keeps you quite entertained throughout the evening.

At some point during the evening, Whimble will approach the party and strike up a conversation. They are new arrivals in town and his intent is to gauge their abilities and evaluate to what extent they could interfere with the raid planned for tonight. He will ask where they come from, what they do for a living. If they indicate that they are “adventurers”, he will ask them to tell him about some of their adventures under the pretense that he might compose a ballad about them. After a few minutes of conversation, Whimble will realize that the group could pose a serious threat to the slavers. It is too late to contact the ship and call off the raid, so he will instead plan a diversion.

If the party asks Whimble about his background, he will say that he was born on the continent across the sea from here, and stowed away on a merchant ship when he was a young lad. If questioned about his whereabouts earlier this evening, he will say that he was just out for a walk on the beach. The part about being born across the sea is true, but he didn’t run away to see the world, rather he joined the priesthood of Maeldain and has been a loyal follower of Thin-gala’s for several years. He does not openly wear a holy symbol, and will not expose himself as a priest under any circumstances.

After the evening’s festivities are over, and the residents have all retired for the evening, Whimble will sneak out to the stables and start a fire in the hay. Several rounds later, one of the party members will awaken to the smell of smoke and the sound of a raging fire.

You find yourself awaking in the middle of the night coughing due to an abundance of smoke in your room. The sounds of a raging fire can be heard and the orange glow on the neighboring building would indicate that the stables at the back of the inn are completely engulfed. Given the proximity of the stables to the inn, you decide that evacuating the premises might be a very good idea. While you quickly gather up your belongings, you can hear shouts and yelling coming from the hallway as well as from outside. You meet the rest of your companions in the hall, and head for the front door.

The scene in the street is one of mass chaos. Villagers in various stages of dress are milling about shouting, and an older man who is trying to get a bucket brigade started is having trouble being heard over the noise.

The older man is Rogveld the priest (see NPC roster for details). Within 10 minutes, all the residents of the inn will have been evacuated and most of the villagers from the surrounding houses will be out assisting in putting out the blaze which is in danger of spreading to adjoining buildings. At the same time the slavers from the ship will land ashore and will take as many prisoners as they can from outlying cottages while the villagers are preoccupied with the fire. It is highly likely that at this point in time, the PCs will not be wearing their armor. They certainly would not wear it to bed, and there was no time “suit-up” inside the inn. If they opt to help with the fire immediately, without putting on

their armor, Whimble will attempt to steal it in the confusion and toss it in some nearby bushes.

If the PCs do not leave the vicinity of the inn and help with the fire, read them the following:

Eventually the older man gets the crowd organized into a bucket brigade, although their efforts do not seem to be making much of a difference. You are lending as much assistance as you can, but in the midst of all the confusion a young boy runs up to the crowd yelling “Pirates! Pirates! Down at the shore. They’ve taken my Pa. Come Quick.”

The boy is Harold, the son of a widower fisherman who has just been taken prisoner by the slavers. Harold was asleep in the loft of their cottage, when the slavers attacked. The light from their lanterns woke him, but he could not hear anything because of the <silence>. When the slavers left with his father, he jumped down and ran to the village for help.

If the PC’s decide to ignore the fire and begin scouting around the town:

As you begin moving around the village looking for anything out of the ordinary, you notice that a ship has dropped anchor in the cove. In the gloom of the night it is only barely visible, by you can hear the faint creaking of timbers and the flutter of sails. As you move down the path that leads to the shore, you see a group of a dozen men moving towards three longboats. Several of the men appear to be bound and are being led away at swordpoint. The group seems to be moving very quietly, because you cannot hear them at all.

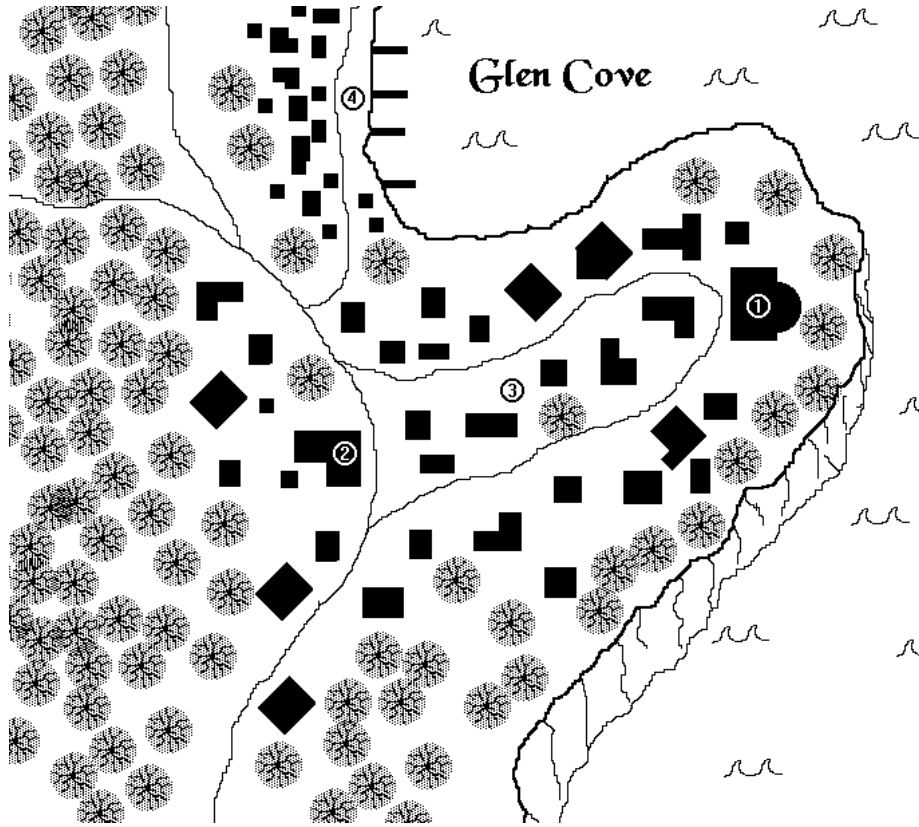
Whether they are alerted to the slavers’ attack by Harold or by finding out for themselves, the party will encounter one of the slavers’ strike teams. If melee ensues, which is likely, then the team leader will move beyond the area of silence and blow a horn, alerting the other two teams to the trouble. Half of each of these teams will arrive to assist their comrades while the others will take what prisoners they have and head for the ship in the long boats. The slavers will continue to fight as long as moral is good and their strike force commander is still alive. If things start to look bad for them, they will attempt to retreat back to the ship.

If Whimble believes that the party is suspicious of him, he will join the fray as well, taking up arms against his comrades. Only the slavers Meglan, Druka and Rangor know that he is one of them and will not be surprised by his apparent change of loyalties; it is a ploy he has used in the past. Whimble will fight as well as he can, but only against the crew members, not the three leaders. He will retreat, or feign death if he becomes seriously injured.

Assuming the PCs win the battle on the shore, they will probably desire to get out to the ship and apprehend the rest of the slavers. The ship will be manned by eight slavers, plus any that escaped back from the raiding party. In addition to the standard weapons employed by the landing party, those aboard ship also have short bows, and mounted on the aft deck is a ballista which can fire every third round if manned

by one person, every other round if manned by two people. The damage from a ballista bolt will do 3-18 points of damage if it hits and will put a moderate size hole in a small boat.

After killing or apprehending the remaining pirates, the party will probably search the ship. There are 35 slaves aboard, which are kept below deck in iron shackles. Also



stored below are the food and dry goods taken on their slavers' previous raids which in total is worth several hundred gold. In what appears to be the captain's and first mate's (Meglan & Druka's) quarters in the forecastle can be found a large chest containing 2,500gp of silver, gold & platinum neatly bagged in leather pouches. It also becomes apparent during their search of these quarters that one or both of the inhabitants are followers of Maeldain for the goddess's holy symbol can be found on some of their belongings, and a platinum holy symbol on a chain is found in a chest of clothing. Safely stored in a small wooden chest is a set of spell books (Druka's, see below), a large mast-flag bearing the symbol of Maeldain, and a bone scroll case containing a navigational map showing several sea routes going to and from a small island off the coast of Tanaska.

The PCs may attempt to question any prisoners they might have taken but will have very little luck getting any useful information out of them. All of the pirates are followers of Maeldain and will not reveal anything, even under threats of torture or death. Most would readily commit suicide if they thought it would advance the cause of their goddess.

The Village of Glen Cove

The village of Glen Cove is built on a small promontory. The southern portion is bordered by 50' cliffs which are constantly pounded by the surf. The ground slopes downward to the north until it reaches sea level. A few of the notable features of the village are:

1. Temple to Dionus

This is the only stone structure in town and consists of an open worship area which also serves as a town meeting hall, and a few private rooms for Rogveld, the only priest. Rogveld is an elderly man who never advanced very far in the service of his goddess but who is looked upon as the unofficial mayor in the village which has no formal government.

Rogveld, 3rd level priest of Dionus (CG) goddess of life and fertility, str: 8, con: 9, dex: 8, int: 15, wis: 16, chr: 13, ac: 9 hp: 12, thaco: 19, no armor, mace (stored in the temple), priest spells: 4 / 3

2. Flying Barracuda Inn

The Flying Barracuda is a typical country inn. The common room, kitchen and storerooms are on

the ground floor, and a dozen rooms to rent are located on the second floor. Typically less than half of the rooms are taken, although the tavern gets a fair amount of local business. The proprietor of the inn is Gabby, a young, unmarried man who inherited the establishment when his father died a few years ago.

3. Businesses

The few businesses in town include a smithy, shoemaker, baker, candle shop, cordwright (rope maker), cabinet maker, boatwright (small, fishing boats only), seamstress, and a few other miscellaneous shops. Most of the shops also serve as the proprietors' homes.

4. Fishermen's Lane

The major business in Glen Cove is fishing, and the majority of the fishermen live down near the docks. There are nearly 20 families, most living in small one or two room cottages with sleeping lofts. Most of their daily catch is taken inland and sold at the two or three other villages within a day's travel of Glen Cove.

The Slavers at Glen Cove

The slavers encountered at Glen Cove are lead by Meglan, a female priest who is fanatically devoted to Maeldain and Thin-gala. Her assistant, and sometimes lover, Druka shares her cabin aboard the ship but their relationship is secondary to Meglan's devotion to her goddess and high priest. Druka, who is a fairly capable sailor and navigator, is in charge of the crew while at sea, but Meglan commands the slave taking raids and is in charge of the overall mission. Thin-gala has charged her with the taking of at least 100 slaves, a number which will fill the small ship's hold to capacity. So far she is about a third of the way to her goal and is anxious to return to Thin-gala's island. During a raid, Meglan divides her crew into three teams and leaves eight to man the ship.

Whimble, the slavers' onshore agent, is a competent bard and an accomplished spy. He has successfully acted as a covert agent for Thin-gala in many situations and will do everything possible to keep his association with the slavers from becoming known, even if it means compromising his own well being. Of all the slavers in this first encounter, Whimble could potentially be the most dangerous to the party because of his aptitude for subterfuge.

Whimble, 4th level bard/priest. str: 8, con: 12, dex: 18, int: 16, wis: 16, chr: 17, ac: 5, hp: 16, th: 19, no armor, dagger (d4/d3), short sword (d6/d6). priest spells: 5 / 4, cw: 55%, dn: 35%, pp: 25%, rl: 35%, non-weapon proficiencies: disguise (chr -1), blind-fighting, forgery (dex -1), spellcraft (int -2), gaming (chr +0), tumbling (dex +0), instruments: lute, recorder, harp (does not carry a harp), wizard spellbook:

level: 1 number per day: 2
cantrip [P 131], color spray [P 132],
comprehend languages (r) [P 133], erase [P 134],
friends [P 134], hold portal [P 135], read magic [P 137],
spook [P 138]

level: 2 number per day: 1
bind [P 139], fools gold [P 141], knock (r) [P 143],
misdirection [P 144], ray of enfeeblement [P 145],
scare [P 145]

Raiding Team 1

slavers: 3rd level fighters (6), ac: 7 (leather), hp: 21, thaco: 18, d: scimitar (d8/d8)

Leader: **Druka**, 5th level priest/wizard, str: 10, con: 9, dex: 14, int: 16, wis: 16, chr: 15, ac: 7 (5 w/ <armor>), hp: 18, th: 18, leather armor, mace (2-7/1-6), sling (d4+1/d4), priest spells: 5 / 5 / 1, spellbook:

level: 1 number per day: 4
armor [P 131], color spray [P 132],
conjure spell component [T 17], detect magic [P 133],
detect undead [P 133], erase [P 134], find familiar [P 134],
friends [P 134], shield [P 147], sleep [P 138],
spook [P 138], Tenser's floating disc [P 138],
unseen servant [P 138]

level: 2 number per day: 2
continual darkness [P 96], continual light [P 140],
deephockets [P 140], detect invisibility [P 141],
fog cloud [P 141], improved phantasmal force [P 95],
magic mouth [P 143], Maximillian's earthen grasp [T 22],
ride the wind [T 23], strength [P 146], web [P 146]

level: 3 number per day: 1
blink [P 147], clairvoyance [P 147],
illusionary script [P 150], phantom steed [P 152],
protection from normal missiles [P 152],
spirit armor [T 26], wizard sight [T 28]

Raiding Team 2

slavers: 3rd level fighters (6), ac: 7 (leather), hp: 21, thaco: 18, d: scimitar (d8/d8)

Leader: **Meglan**, 7th level priest & captain of the expedition str: 12, con: 13, dex: 11, int: 13, wis: 17, chr: 16, ac: 7 (5 w/ <magical vestments>), hp: 38, thaco: 16, leather armor, mace (d6+1/d6), priest spells: 5 / 5 / 3 / 1

Raiding Team 3

slavers: 3rd level fighters (6), ac: 7 (leather), hp: 21, thaco: 18, d: scimitar (d8/d8)

Leader: **Rangor**, 5th level fighter, str: 17, con: 17, dex: 14, int: 12, wis: 12, chr: 13, ac: 5, hp: 55, thaco: 16, leather armor [+2], scimitar (d8/d8), throwing daggers (d4/d3), +1 th / +1 damage for strength

Part 2: Sailing over the Bounding Main

Following their search of the ship, the PCs should have enough information to find Thin-gala's island and a boat to do it with. All that is necessary is to find an able captain and crew. Enough of the prisoners and residents of Glen Cove have the necessary sailing abilities to man the ship and could be signed on as a crew with a little convincing and/or the promise of gold or revenge. An older fisherman from Glen Cove, Randy Star, once served on a merchant ship as assistant navigator, and believes that he can follow the maps to the island, assuming they are accurate. He estimates that the journey will take three or four days.

Sabotage!

If he is still around, Whimble will try to sign on under the pretense of recording the PCs daring exploits in song and prose. He will do his best to convince the party that he can be trusted. If they refuse, then he will try to stow away by disguising himself as one of the former prisoners. This will of course require that he leave most of his belongings behind (everything except his spellbook and weapons), but it is a sacrifice he is willing to make if there is a chance he can sabotage the mission. Unless the PCs are particularly vigilant in keeping an eye on everyone who comes and goes to the ship during the preparations, Whimble should be able to get aboard without too much difficulty.

If Whimble makes it onboard, he will engage in various acts of sabotage in an effort to cause the PCs to abort the mission. He will use his charm person spells to gain the support of the other sailors and try to convince them to abandon the mission when things start to go wrong. The following are some of the things Whimble might try:

- 1) He will salt the water stores, making it undrinkable. If a priest is unavailable to cast *<purify food and drink>* or *<create food and water>*, then the expedition will have to set ashore to taken on fresh water.
- 2) The rigging for the mainsail will break, causing the ship to drift for the better part of a day while repairs are made. If investigated closely, the ropes will appear to have been cut part way through.
- 3) A fire will break out in the captain's quarters when a lantern bracket pulls loose from the ceiling, spilling burning oil all over the room. Whimble accomplishes this through the creative application of the *<cantrip>* and *<knock>* spells cast through the window which loosens the nails holding the bracket. Luckily, a PC is nearby when it happens and should be able to put it out before it destroys more than some bedding.
- 4) One of the fisherman, who has been casting nets to catch fresh fish, becomes entangled, falls into the sea and drowns, courtesy of a *<bind>* spell cast on him by Whimble.
- 5) During any encounter with "monsters" while at sea, Whimble will attempt to act covertly to create a disadvantage for the PCs. This might include making poor tactical suggestions to his sailor "friends", generally getting in the way, or even casting spells on the PCs if he believes he will not be discovered or if the party is nearing Thin-gala's island.

Encounters at Sea

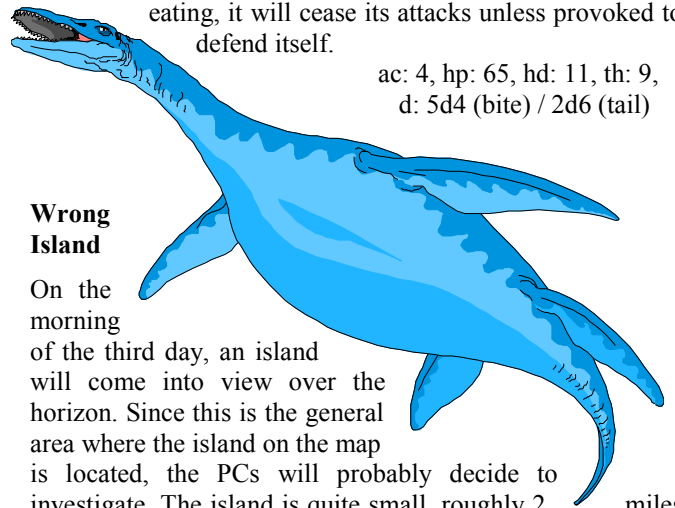
During all of the following encounters, remember that there are quite a few normal sailors on board armed only with swords taken from the slavers. They are not wearing any armor, and do not have any real fighting experience making it likely that many of them will be seriously injured or killed.

sailors: ac: 9, hp: 5. hd: 1, th:20, d: d6

Dino-Dinner

Late in the afternoon on the second day at sea, a Temnodontosarus (a fish-dinosaur with a long neck and sharp teeth) nearly overturns the ship, and begins to attack anyone on deck. It is not overly hungry and will retreat if it takes more than half its hitpoints. Anyone killed by the beast will be dragged overboard and eaten. While the beast is eating, it will cease its attacks unless provoked to defend itself.

ac: 4, hp: 65, hd: 11, th: 9,
d: 5d4 (bite) / 2d6 (tail)



Wrong Island

On the morning of the third day, an island will come into view over the horizon. Since this is the general area where the island on the map is located, the PCs will probably decide to investigate. The island is quite small, roughly 2 miles in diameter, with a smoking volcano being the most distinctive feature. A coral reef surrounds the island, preventing the ship from approaching any closer than several hundred yards. An investigation of the island will not take long, and will fail to reveal any signs of habitation. The volcano is only marginally active and has not erupted in nearly 75 years.

Dragonflies

On the afternoon of the third day, a faint buzzing noise in the distance can be heard. The buzzing becomes louder and louder until 3 huge dragonflies can be seen. They will circle the ship a couple of times before zipping in to attack. The appearance of these dragonflies can correctly be seen as a sign that there is land nearby.

ac: 3, hp: 54, 48, 42, hd: 8 (+2-8), th:11, d: 3d4, receive a bonus of -3 to initiative when they win initiative, they dart out of melee range after attacking, missile attacks are at -2, or -4 if the flies win initiative.

Mutiny

After the encounter with the dragonflies, which probably claimed the life of one or two of the crew, the sailors will begin to openly question the advisability of continuing. If Whimble has been on board to stir things up, this sentiment will be even stronger and it will take a fair amount of convincing to get them to agree to continue. A charismatic PC can probably talk them into sticking it out, but not without a few tense moments. If the PCs handle the situation badly, or fail to make an effort to reassure the crew, then the crew will mutiny and sail back to Glen Cove (possibly ending the adventure prematurely).

Ogre Welcoming Committee

This encounter takes place on the morning after the PCs leave the first island, as the ship draws near to the real destination. Ten ogres have been sent from the ogre colony at the island to intercept the ship. If the PCs have decided to fly the flag with Maeldain's symbol on it, the ogres will simply swim up to the ship, shout out a greeting, and then head back to the island assuming it to be manned by Thin-gala's followers. If the flag is not being flown, or if the ogres are attacked, they will know that the ship is not one of Thin-gala's and will attempt to board it and kill the crew.

Each of the ogres is equipped with a grappling hook which they use to board with. They can climb the rope and gain access to the deck in two rounds. They do not use weapons but instead rely on their claws and teeth. They have very good morale and are not too bright, so it is unlikely that they will retreat when the fight turns against them. If, however, one of the ogres does survive and retreats back to the island, then Thin-Gala will be warned of an impending attack and will martial his forces to defend the island.

If Whimble has survived up to this encounter, he will ensure that the ogres attack regardless of whether the Maeldain flag is flying and will no longer hide either his abilities or his loyalties. He sees this encounter as his last chance to prevent the PCs from reaching the island and will fight to the death to accomplish the task.

ogres (10), ac: 4, hp: 25, hd: 4+4, th: 15, d: d6/d6/2d4

Part 3: The Island

The PCs will sight the island in the early morning, seeing it silhouetted against the rising sun. The "Ogre Welcoming Committee" encounter mentioned previously, will occur at mid-morning, before the ship has approached close enough to the island to make out any details.

As you approach the island, more and more details become apparent. This island is larger than the previous one you explored but was formed in the same manner. The conical peaks of two volcanoes sit at either end of the island, and the land surrounding them is covered with forest. When you come within a mile of the island, you can also make out what appears to be the ruins of some large, black stone structure sitting between the two peaks. The forest has been cleared from this area, and you can barely see the movement of a large number of people working on and around the structure. A reef surrounds the island, which will force you to drop anchor and row ashore in the longboats if you want to investigate.

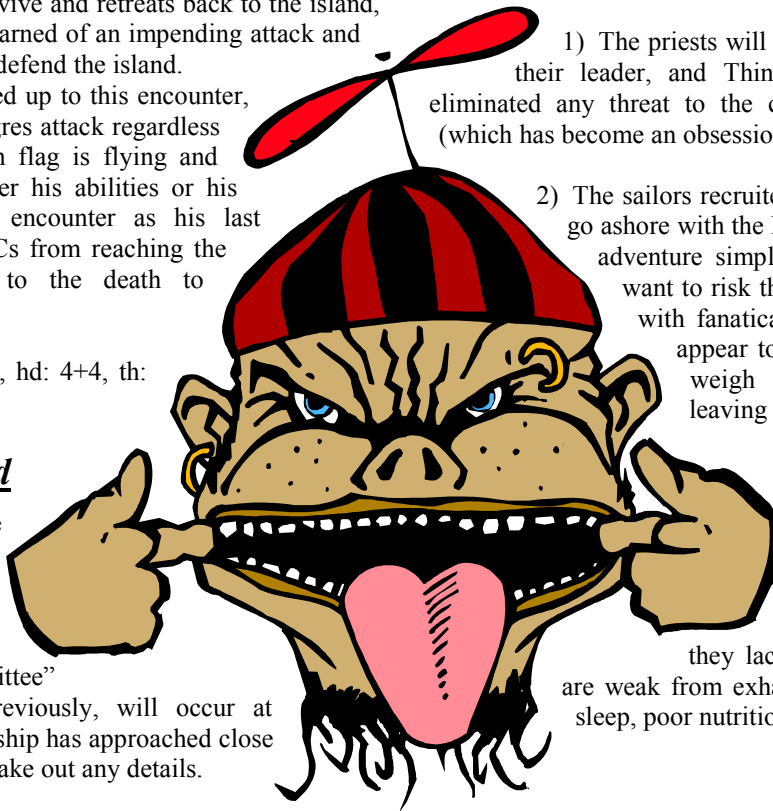
The "ruins" are actually the partially completed temple and most of the activity is that of the slave labor. The stone for the temple is being quarried from the side of the volcano and is a very striking black granite with veins of white quartz running through it. It is cut from the mountain side, then dragged along a wide path through the forest on log rollers under the supervision of Thin-gala's priests. Behind the growing temple are several, large huts which house the slaves. Thin-gala and his priests are living in a completed portion of the temple.

The location of the island inhabitants is determined primarily by two factors 1) The time of day and 2) Whether or not they have been alerted to the possibility of hostile visitors. A general schedule of activities is given below with notes as to where everyone can be found. How the adventure unfolds from this point is entirely dependent on the actions of the PCs but some things will remain constant...

1) The priests will fight to the death to protect their leader, and Thin-gala will do likewise to eliminated any threat to the construction of his temple (which has become an obsession with him).

2) The sailors recruited from Glen Cove will not go ashore with the PCs. They have had enough adventure simply getting here and do not want to risk their lives in a pitched battle with fanatical priests. In fact, if things appear to be going badly, they may weigh anchor and sail away, leaving the PCs stranded.

3) Some of the slaves will attempt to help any potential rescuers if the opportunity presents itself, but most will not fight primarily because they lack weapons and armor and are weak from exhaustion, over-work, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, etc.



Possible Approaches

There are several approaches a party might take in their investigation of the island. Some of the most obvious are detailed below with a brief description of the responses of Thin-gala and his followers.

The Direct Approach

If the PCs simply row ashore during the day they will be seen from the temple and a group of priests will be dispatched to meet them on the beach. Unless the island inhabitants are somehow alerted to the contrary, they will assume that the ship holds their comrades and will be met on the beach by the group of priests sent down from the temple. If the ship is flying the Maeldain flag, the priests will not attack, even when they realize that the people coming ashore are strangers. They will assume that they are new recruits and will welcome them as such. If the flag is not flying, they will be on their guard, but will wait to parlay with the PCs under the assumption that they could have been sent here by one of their agents. If there is no battle on the beach, the PCs will be brought to the temple to meet Thin-gala. If there is a battle, then the PCs will be able to find their way to the temple easily enough. Any priests escaping the battle will rush to the temple to warn Thin-gala.

The Sneaky Approach

It would be difficult but not impossible for the PCs to attempt to sneak onto the island either to do some reconnaissance or to mount a raid. If they attempt this, keep in mind the following points:

1. The temple's location affords Thin-gala and his followers a good view of the surrounding ocean (although the view to the North and South is blocked by the volcanoes), and they will be able to see any boat approaching.
2. Waiting until dark to row ashore will certainly indicate to Thin-Gala that the ship is no longer manned by his followers and will cause him to prepare his defenses.

The Sneaky Direct Approach

A particularly daring group of PCs might attempt to bluff their way past the reception committee by posing as converts. This should be accomplished with a minimum of risk since the priests have been lulled into a sense of overconfidence due to their success to-date. The new converts will then be escorted to the temple and presented to Thin-gala. This is where the plan falls apart, however, because their deception will be immediately revealed when the high priest casts a *<detect enemy>* spell on the new arrivals. This could place the PCs in a very poor strategic position.

If Thin-gala Knows They're Coming Approach

If Thin-Gala is aware of a potentially hostile force approaching his island, then he will have organized a plan of

defense and will be well prepared for any attack. If he has time, he will have warned the ogres of the invaders and ordered them to ambush anyone attempting to row ashore. He will also keep a close watch on any ships approaching the island and dispatch a force of priests to ambush anyone rowing ashore.

If there is time, the slaves will be recalled from their duties and locked in their quarters with a nominal guard of 5 priests. The rest of the priests will gather at the temple and set up a perimeter guard (of about 10) around the edges of the clearing.

Places on the Island

(1) The Reef & Cove

The cove on the west side of the island is somewhat sheltered from the prevailing winds, and the wide sandy beach is the easiest place to land a longboat. The reef that surrounds the island will prevent any vessel with more than a 10' draft from sailing into the cove, and is the home of the tribe of ogres that are working with Thin-gala. There are a total of 22 male ogres (10 of which were encountered earlier), 15 female ogres and 12 young ogres in the tribe. They live in a series of caves carved out of the coral reef. The female and young are non-combatants and will probably not make an appearance in this adventure unless the PCs decide to do some underwater exploring.

The ogres will not attack anyone approaching the island unless one of their raiding party returns to warn them or if they are instructed to by Thin-gala. The ogre's loyalty to Thin-gala is not very strong, and if more than half of them are killed, the rest will retreat and take up a defensive posture around their caves. The ogres have no treasure of interest; Thin-gala keeps all of the valuables from the pirate raids which he uses to fund his activities.

ogres, male (11 + earlier survivors)
ac: 4, hp: 25, hd: 4+4, th: 15, d: d6/d6/2d4

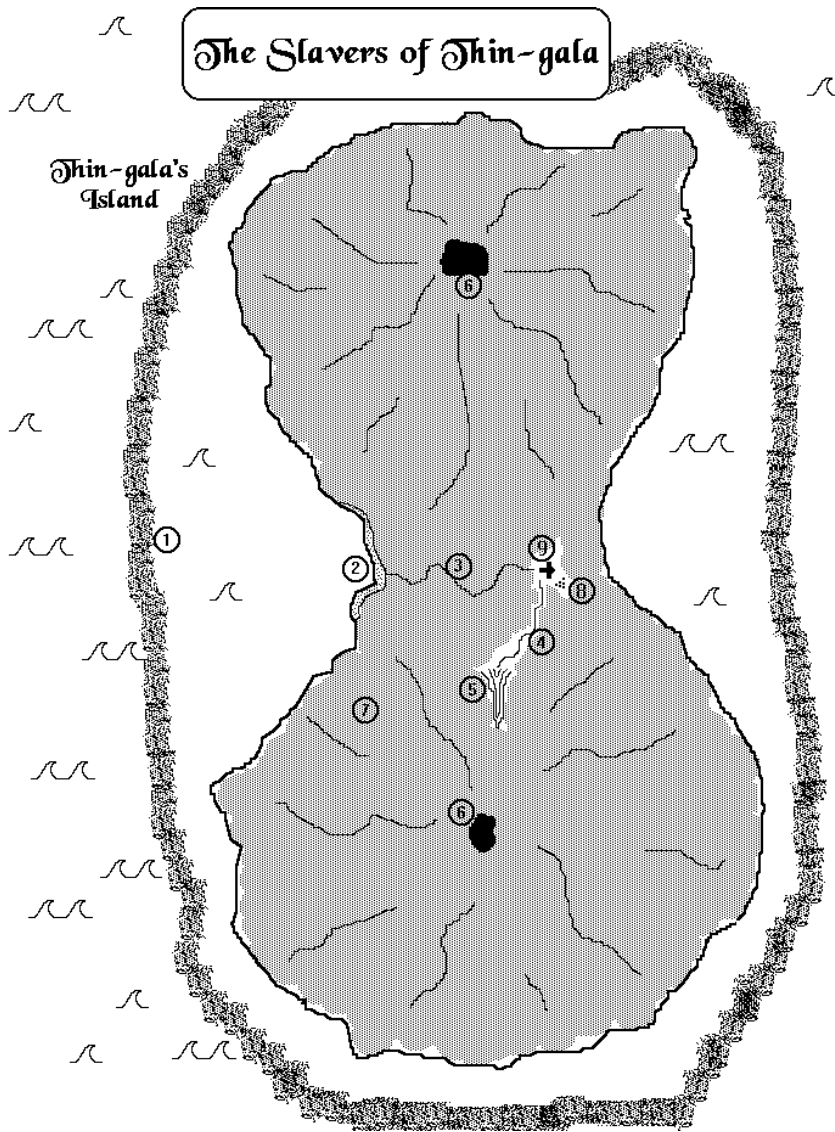
ogre chief (1)
ac: 4, hp: 35, hd: 6+4, th: 13, d: d6/d6/2d4

(2) The Beach & Welcoming Committee

This sandy beach is fifty yards across at its widest and is relatively flat. It is here that Thin-gala's priests will meet anyone rowing ashore. The priests will wait in the shade of the forest until the boat lands and then walk out to greet the arrivals.

If Thin-gala is forewarned of hostile intent, the group of priests he sends will wait in the jungle and attempt to ambush the invaders. If Thin-gala sees a boat attempting to land anywhere other than the beach, he will send the "welcoming committee" to intercept and ambush the landing party.

Welcoming Committee: Priests of Maeldain (8) - 3rd level,
(1) - 5th level



(3) Path to the Temple

The path leading from the beach up to the temple is well-traveled and clearly visible from the beach. It winds upward through the forest and eventually leads to the temple clearing. Thin-gala believes the island to be safe from any sort of attack, and so has not laid any traps or other defenses along the path. There are, however, several good places along the way where the PC's could be ambushed by a group of priests if Thin-gala has been forewarned of their intent.

(4) Path to the Quarry

The path leading from the temple to the quarry is very wide to accommodate the stone blocks which are dragged down from the mountain-side. If the priests at the quarry are unaware of any trouble, there will be one or two work crews along the path. Each will consist of 2 priests (at least one higher than 1st level) supervising 20 slaves who will be dragging the quarried stone to the temple using ropes and log rollers.

(5) The Quarry

The quarry is where the majority of the slaves will be during the day. They work with hammers and huge chisels, cutting out large blocks of black granite from the volcano's lower slope. About 100 of them will be here working under the supervision of 12 priests.

(6) Volcanoes

The volcanoes that formed this island are dormant and the forest grows well up the sides of the conical peaks. The upper portion of the volcano is quite steep and only supports scrub brush and weeds. Anyone attempting to climb either of the peaks will have an arduous hike but once at the top will be granted a beautiful view of the entire island and surrounding ocean.

(7) Forest

The forest that covers most of the island is made up primarily of pine trees with a few hardwoods scattered here and there. It is cool, damp and dark beneath the trees and the spongy forest floor is covered with ferns and the mossy remnants of fallen trees. Wildlife is limited to birds and insects.

(8) Slave Quarters

Thin-gala's slaves sleep in a series of log cabins set away from the temple area. The buildings are windowless and empty of any furnishings. The unfortunate inhabitants are locked in at night and are forced to sleep on the bare, dirt floor. While the slaves are locked in, there is a guard of six priests assigned to keep an eye on things.

(9) The Temple

(A) Entry Hall (unfinished)

The foundation for this portion of the temple is completed, but the walls only rise to a height of 3 feet. The bases for pillars have been laid along the length of the hall but have not yet been finished (polished and engraved). At the end of the "room" are a pair of large wooden doors leading into a completed portion of the structure. They too have an unfinished look, although they are completely functional.

(B) High Priests' Wing

This wing of the temple will house the high priest and his more important guests. It is the portion of the temple that is

being worked on the most at the moment, and the 10 foot high walls are covered by a web of scaffolding. Several large pulley systems are used to lift the great stone blocks into place, and during the day, the entire area is swarming with slaves (30) and overseers (6).

(C) Alter / Throne Room

This domed room was the first to be built and is the most impressive feature of the temple. The 30' high ceiling is supported by six huge pillars, the bases of which have been engraved with praises to Maeldain. Long, thin windows let in shafts of sunlight which only partially illuminate the room, even on the brightest days. It is currently unfurnished except for the large, black granite alter and a throne (which sits on the floor in front of the alter dais) made of the same material. It is here that Thin-gala greets any new arrivals, usually with Bashiell at his side.

The alter is used by the priests to offer up sacrifices to the goddess of pain and is equipped with shackles. Behind the alter is an unlocked iron chest containing various tools of torture which are used on the unfortunate sacrificial victims after being chained to the table.

(D) Priests' Quarters

These rooms are the living quarters for the priests living on the island. Each has a dozen plain but clean beds and chests containing clothing and miscellaneous personal effects.

(E) Priests' Quarters

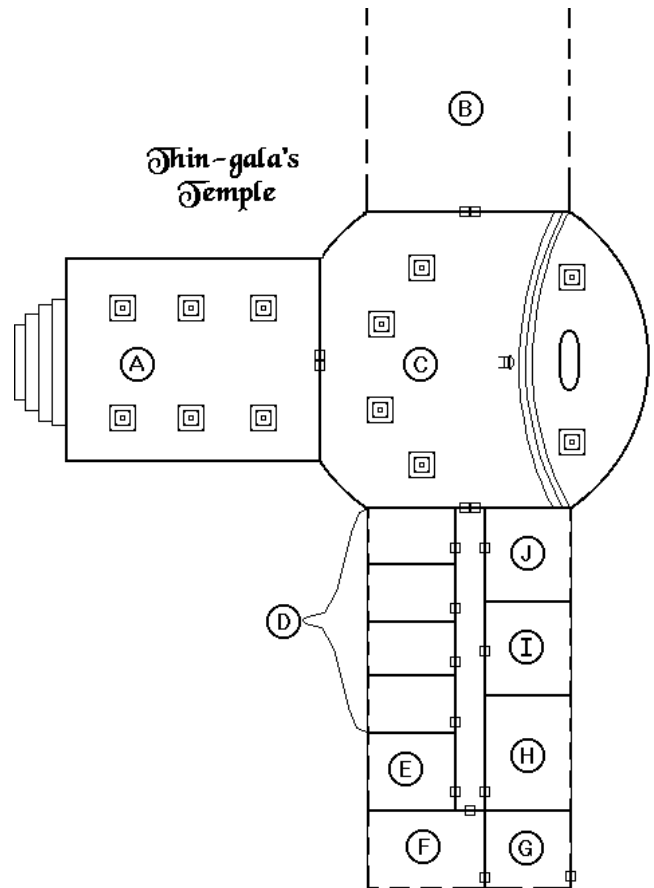
The two 7th level priests are currently using this room as their quarters. It is furnished simply with two beds, chests for clothing, a round wooden table with four chairs and a small alter.

(F) Dining Room

This is the common dining room where the priests take their meals. Two long, wooden tables can seat up to 50 people.

(G) Kitchen

A large fireplace with several baking ovens (niches built into the walls of the hearth) dominates the room. Two heavy wooden tables stand in the center of the room, and a multitude of pots hang from pegs on one wall. Two large cabinets contain plain wooden plates and cups, wooden eating utensils and an assortment of steel cutlery. Bags of flour and meal are stacked in one corner, and casks of watered wine are kept on large wooden racks. A wooden trapdoor in the floor leads down to a small, well stocked root cellar.



50 feet

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(H) Library / Office

This room will probably be converted into living quarters once the temple is completed, but for now it serves as the temple library. A small collection of books and scrolls are stored on plain wooden shelves. One section contains information concerning the priesthood of Maeldain and essays on the proper worship of the evil goddess. Another contains log books and account books for the temple and includes information detailing the ships waylaid, their contents and the funds received from the sale of the stolen goods. The names of several key fences/smugglers are mentioned, which could be used as a lead-in to another adventure.

A large table in the middle of the room contains a multitude of scrolls detailing the temple's construction. They include drawings of various portions of the temple with notes as to the size and shape of the required stone blocks, sketches of various pulley systems and scaffolding, and estimated timelines for completion based on available slave labor. All of these architectural plans were created by one of Thin-gala's priests. During the day, there is a 40% chance he is in here checking the plans.

(I) Bashiel's Room

The rakshasa's room is more decorated than the other living quarters and is permeated by a strong scent of incense. There are several wall hangings with various geometric patterns woven into them, and a collection of bone carvings of strange beasts (done by Bashiel) are arrayed about the room on small tables. There is no bed, but there are several large floor cushions that Bashiel sleeps on. The rakshasa has very few material possessions, having donated all of his wealth to Thin-gala and the temple, but he did keep his hookah (water pipe) and a supply of strong, heavily spiced tobacco which is stored in oiled leather pouches in a wooden box.

(J) Thin-gala's Room

This room serves as Thin-gala's living quarters until the other wing of the temple is completed. The walls of the room are adorned with tapestries taken from one of the ships Thin-gala has waylaid. They were originally commissioned by a wealthy lord and depict a man in armor in various battle scenes: defeating a host of orcs, attacking a giant, shooting down a flying red dragon, etc. Thin-gala was struck by the images and decided to keep them.

A table in the center of the room serves as a desk and holds a variety of parchments, scroll cases and writing implements, including the necessary components for creating magical scrolls. Thin-gala's bed is a down tick on a four-poster frame with heavy velvet bed curtains, fine linens and decorative blankets. A standing wardrobe holds the high priest's clothing and vestments.

A large, iron bound, locked chest (Thin-gala carries the key) contains the temple's treasury, stored in pouches of 100 coins each: 3,000pp 8,500gp 17,000sp and 12,000gp worth of gems. Thin-gala has not bothered to put wards or traps on the chest because the other priests wouldn't have any reason to steal from their own temple, and the slaves can't get off the island even if they did manage to get the treasure.

Island Schedule

The activities of the island inhabitants are very regular, unless they are responding to unusual circumstances. The general location of everyone is dependent on the time of day.

Morning

Most of the priests will be in the temple either in their quarters or in the dining room. The slaves will be in their log cabins being served their breakfast of gruel. The 6 slaves who cook and clean in the temple will be either in the kitchen or serving food in the dining room. Thin-gala will be in his room. Bashiel will be in his room.

Daytime

There will be about 30 slaves working at the temple, 100 in the quarry and 60 (3 groups of 20) transporting blocks from the quarry to the temple. The 6 "domestic" slaves will be at various places in the temple doing their chores. There will be

about 10 priests overseeing the work at the temple (including the architect), 12 more will be at the quarry, another 6 will be overseeing the work crews along the quarry road, and the 12 will be relaxing or sleeping in their temple quarters. If a welcoming committee is needed on the beach, they will be pulled from the 12 who are off-duty. Thin-gala will spend 60% of his time in his room, and 40% surveying the work on the temple. Bashiel will be asleep in his room.

Evening

The slaves will be locked in their cabins for the night, eating their evening meal. The priests will all be at the temple. Following the evening meal, there is a daily ceremony in the main alter room. All of the priests will attend with the exception of 6 who will be guarding the slaves. Thin-gala will be taking his meal in his room along with his two lieutenants (the 7th level priests) and will then preside at the evening ceremony. Bashiel will be waking, having breakfast, then attending the ceremony.

Night

The slaves, with the exception of the domestics, will be locked in for the night. The domestics will be asleep on the floor in the kitchen if they're lucky, or with one of the priests if they're not. The priests will be asleep in their quarters except for the 6 on guard duty at the slave cabins. Thin-gala will be asleep in his room. Bashiel will be in his room carving (40%), strolling the temple grounds (40%), or in the library perusing the books and scrolls (20%).

Island Inhabitants

Slaves (200)

There are about 200 slaves on the island, most are men who were taken to work on the temple's construction. There are also a handful of women (6) who cook, clean and serve the priests. For the most part, the male slaves will be found at the quarry or working on the temple. The women will be found in the completed portion of the temple either in the kitchen or in the priests' quarters cleaning, serving meals, or satisfying the carnal desires of their captors.

slaves:

0-level humans, ac: 10, hp: 3, th: 21, weapons: none

Priests (40)

All of the converts and many of the priests who have been living on the island have been assigned to one of the slave taking ships, leaving only a small contingent of priests behind to oversee the temple's construction. The priests on the island range from 1st to 7th level; 60% are male, 40% female. All statistic for them are the same in regards to armor, weapons and equipment.

Unless forewarned and organized by Thin-gala, they will be completely unprepared for an attack on their stronghold and will not act in any coordinated fashion.

ac: 7 (leather armor), weapons: mace (d6+1/d6), sling w/ bullets (d4+1/d4), whip (d2/1)

by level:

7th level (2) - typically one of these priests will be at the temple, the other at the quarry, th: 16, hp: 32, spells: 3 / 3 / 2 / 1

5th level (8) - one of these is also the architect / engineer for the temple's construction, th: 18, hp: 23, spells: 3 / 3 / 1

3rd level (15), th: 19, hp: 14, spells: 2 / 1

1st level (15), th: 20, hp: 5, spells: 1

Bashiel - Rakshasa Ruhk

The rakshasa ruhk known as Bashiel has been on the island for two years and has become Thin-gala's second in command. He had heard rumors of a temple to Maeldain, and being a devout follower of the goddess, sought it out. After revealing his true form to Thin-gala and professing his faith to Maeldain, he was welcomed into the fold. Once he became an acknowledged member of the cult, Bashiel dropped the illusion of humanity and has remained in his true form ever since. Bashiel appears as a large, black-furred ape with human proportions. Of all the cult members on the island, Bashiel is the most feared because of his taste for human flesh. Most of the priests avoid him, and the slaves cower when he passes hoping to avoid becoming his next meal. Thin-gala has found their fear a useful advantage and has allowed Bashiel to feed on the slaves, as long as he doesn't kill too many. Recently however, Thin-gala has had to restrict the rakshasa's diet due to the shortage of slave labor. Bashiel typically sleeps during the day, and prowls about the temple grounds during the evening and night.

ac: [-5], hp: 56, hd: 8+16, th: 11, d: d6 / d6 / 2d6, +2 or better weapons to hit; +2 & +3 weapons do half damage, immune to spells less than 8th level

wizard spells at 9th level of effect :

level 1: burning hands [P 131], hypnotism [P 135], light [P 136], sleep [P 138]

level 2: levitate [P 143], scare [P 145], summon swarm [P 146]

level 3: dispel magic [P 148], lightning bolt [P 151]

priest spells at 9th level of effect:

command [P 199], detect magic [P 199], penetrate disguise [A 33]

Thin-gala - 12th level Priest of Maeldain

Thin-gala is a gaunt but strong looking man with shoulder length, dark hair. He is usually dressed in luxurious, deep red robes with a large silver holy symbol on a chain around his neck. He spends most of his time in his quarters but will occasionally wander around the construction site to assess the progress. He believes that this great project is the ultimate test of his faith to Maeldain and will stop at nothing to see his dream realized. This does not mean, however, that he will throw his life away in a hopeless battle. If a tactical retreat or even an unconditional surrender would enable him to survive to fight another day, he will do so. If his plans are thwarted and he does manage to escape, he will become a bitter enemy of the PCs who defeated him and will devote a considerable amount of effort towards seeking revenge against them.

Thin-gala's high intelligence and cunning make him a dangerous adversary. During melee, he will always avoid physical combat, and will use his spells and magical items to the fullest extent possible while directing the actions of his minions.

str: 13, con: 15, dex: 11, int: 17, wis: 18, chr: 17, ac: 4, hp: 48, th: 13 sling & bullets (d4+1 / d4), mace (d6+1 / d6), barbed whip (d3 / d2), bracers ac: 4, staff of pain (18 charges) - effect same as the spell <symbol of pain> when hit, scroll (of his own making) : conjure air elemental, blade barrier, feeblemind
priest spells: 8 / 7 / 6 / 4 / 2 / 2

He wears a heavy gold holy symbol with rubies worth 2,500gp on a chain around his neck, and three jeweled rings worth 300gp, 500gp and 1,200gp.



Spell List for Priests of Maeldain

Priests of Maeldain are granted access to the following spheres:

major: healing (typically reversed), creation, summoning, astral, protection, law, guardian

minor: divination, combat, sun

Level 1

analyze balance [T 51]
animal enmity [K 23]
bless (r) [P 198]
call upon faith [T 51]
combine [P 198]
command [P 199]
conjured weapon [K 23]
cure light wounds (r) [P 199]
detect enemy [K 23]
detect evil (r) [P 199]
detect magic [P 199]
detect metal and minerals [K 13]
detect north [K 1]
detect poison [P 199]
detect snares & pits [P 200]
endure heat/cold [P 200]
faithfulness [K 23]
find water [K 9]
guardian watch [K 24]
light (r) [P 201]
magical stone [P 201]
penetrate disguise [A 33]
portent [A 33]
protection from evil (r) [P 201]
purify food and drink (r) [P 202]
remove fear (r) [P 202]
ring of hands (r) [T 54]
sacred guardian [T 55]
sanctuary [P 202]
sense direction [K 17]
speak with astral plane [T 55]
tracker [K 24]
wailing wind [K 22]

Level 2

augury [P 203]
barkskin [P 203]
calm chaos [T 56]
chant [P 203]
charm person/mammal [P 203]
create holy symbol [T 57]
detect charm (r) [P 204]
detect life [K 1]
draw upon holy might [T 58]
enthrall [P 204]
find traps [P 204]
hailstone [K 17]
healing sleep [K 25]
hold person [P 205]
know alignment (r) [P 206]
music of the spheres [T 60]
mystic transfer [T 61]
nausea (r) [K 25]
resist fire/cold [P 206]
resist paralysis [K 25]
sanctify (r) [T 62]
silence 15' radius [P 206]
slow poison [P 207]
spiritual hammer [P 207]
striking [K 24]
tracking [K 18]
withdraw [P 208]
wyvern watch [P 208]

Level 3

astral window [T 63]
berserker [K 25]
cache [K 19]
continual light (r) [P 209]
create food and water [P 209]
dispel magic [P 210]
emotion control [T 65]
exaltation [K 22]
extradimensional detection [T 66]
flame shield [K 21]
forceward [K 21]
glyph of warding [P 210]
line of protection (r) [T 67]
locate object (r) [P 211]
mace of odo [K 21]
magical vestment [P 211]
negative plane projection [P 212]
prayer [P 212]
protection from fire [P 212]
protection from lycanthropes [K 24]
remove curse (r) [P 213]
remove paralysis (r) [P 213]
resist electricity/acid [K]
rigid thinking [T 70]
speak with dead [P 214]
starshine [P 214]
strength of one [T 71]
unearthly choir [T 73]
warmth [K 31]
wind and rain protection [K 18]

Level 4

abjure (r) [P 215]
addition [T 74]
animate statue [K 30]
awake [K 26]
blending [K 5]
cloak of bravery (r) [P 216]
compulsive order [T 76]
cure serious wounds (r) [P 217]
defensive harmony [T 77]
exorcise [O 48]
focus [T 79]
fortify [T 80]
free action [P 217]
guardian seal, lesser [K 30]
imbue with spell ability [P 218]
join with astral traveler [T 81]
loyalty [K 19]
neutralize poison (r) [P 219]
protection from charm [K 25]
protection from evil 10' (r) [P 219]
protection from lightning [P 219]
repel insects [P 220]
resist acid [K]
sanctum sigil [K 26]
spell immunity [P 220]
uplift [T 86]

Level 5

atonement [P 221]
blessed abundance [T 88]
champion's strength [T 88]
cure critical wounds (r) [P 222]
dispel evil (r) [P 222]
golem [A 39]
impeding permission [T 92]
meld [T 93]
ostracize [K 27]
plane shift [P 224]
protection from cold [K 5]
quest [P 224]
transfer [K 6]
unceasing vigilance [T 97]

Level 6

aerial servant [P 226]
animate object [P 226]
blade barrier [P 227]
charm monster [K 6]
conjure fire elemental (r) [P 227]
conjure air elemental (r) [K 30]
control lycanthropes [K 11]
feeblemind [P 168]
forbiddance [P 228]
guardian seal, greater [K 30]
heal (r) [P 228]
hero's feast [P 228]
holy brilliance [K 28]
imbue purpose [K 31]
karma enhancement [K 26]
legal thoughts [T 101]
mass cure [K 27]
otherworld [K 12]
protection from acid [K 7]
word of recall [P 230]
ancient curse [K 31]

Level 7

astral spell [P 231]
changestaff [P 231]
chariot of sustarre [P 231]
confusion [P 231]
conjure earth elemental (r) [P 232]
conjure water elemental [K 7]
creeping doom [P 232]
exaction [P 233]
gate [P 234]
inner sanctum [K 31]
shield of the archons [K 31]
spirit of power [T 109]
succor (r) [P 235]
symbol [P 236]

Critical Hit Tables for AD&D

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Table 1: One-Handed Slashing Weapons

(axe, axe-like, sword sword-like, bardiche, bec de corbin, par ransuer, spetum, voulge, etc.)

01-25	MAXIMUM DAMAGE
26-45	Extremely deep cut: max. damage x 1.5
46-65	Hit semi-vital area: max. damage x 2
66-80	Hit vital area: max. damage x 2.5
81-89	Hit extremely vital area: damage x 3
90	Serious hit on left leg: max. damage + 1d4 points of blood loss damage for every round after injury until bound or healed. If not entirely, magically healed within 3 rounds, injury will have permanent effects (subtract 1-3 from movement rate) until a regeneration is performed.
91	Serious hit on right leg: same as above
92	Serious hit on left arm: max. damage +1d4 points of blood loss damage for every round after injury until bound or healed. If not entirely, magically healed within 3 rounds, injury will have permanent effects. Also, a shield cannot be operated correctly to obtain A.C. benefits, weapons (single and two-handed) are wielded with -4 to their thac0 and -4 to damage (with a minimum damage of one point), and # of attacks drop to the next category: 2:1 to 3:2, 3:2 to 1:1, 1:1 to 2:3.
93	Serious hit on right arm: same as above
94	Critical hit on left leg: severed, max. damage x 1.5 + 1d6 points of blood loss damage for every round after injury until bound or healed. If not entirely, magically healed (yes, a severed body part can be reattached if entirely, magically healed within 1 round), injury will be permanent until a regeneration is performed. Movement rate is halved. Location (d6): 1:Foot, 2:Mid-shin, 3:Knee, 4:Mid-quadriceps, 5:Mid-hamstring, 6:Lower-pelvis
95	Critical hit on right leg: same as above
96	Critical hit on left arm: severed, max. damage x 1.5 + 1d6 points of blood loss every round until bound or healed. If not entirely, magically healed (same as #94), injury will be permanent until a regeneration is performed. Obviously, shield and weapon use which require that arm become impossible. Location (d6): 1:Hand, 2:Mid-elbow, 3:Elbow, 4:Mid-biceps, 5:Mid-triceps, 6:Shoulder
97	Critical hit on right arm: same as above
98	Punctured lung: max. damage x 3 + 1d6 points of blood loss damage for every round after the injury until pressure is constantly applied (which lowers it to 1-2 points of damage) or magically healed. With or without pressure, victim will drowned in his own blood within 2d10 rounds unless magically cured. Magical cure must take place within 3 rounds, if it doesn't, the magical cure will still stop the bleeding, and the appropriate damage will be cured, but the victim will lose the use of his right or left lung until a regeneration is performed. Loss of one lung will lower the individuals constitution (in regards to endurance, not hit points or system survival rolls) by 1d8 points (if a roll of 7 or 8 occurs, the other lung was also slightly damaged).
99	Punctured heart: max. damage x 4 + 1d8+1 points of blood loss damage for every round after the injury until pressure is constantly applied (which lowers it to 1d4 points of damage) or magically healed. Magical healing, if performed before victim dies, will fully repair this wound unless the victim rolls a 1 or 2 on a d6. If that occurs, the wound will still heal, but the victim's constitution (in regards to endurance and system survival rolls, but not hit points), will drop 1d6+1 until a regeneration is performed.
00	Neck or head critically hit, roll a d6:
1-3	Decapitation, you're dead!
4-5	if you're wearing a helmet, max. damage x 3 and 1d6 points of blood loss damage for every round after the injury until direct pressure is applied (which slows it to 1-2 points of damage per round) or a magical cure is performed. And, you're retarded until a regeneration is performed (unless a magical heal is done, within one round, which cures all of the injury's damage in one round). If you're not wearing a helmet, your brains are everywhere: you're dead!
6	This is your lucky day! You only suffer max. damage x 2 (x 1.5 if you are wearing a helmet), receive amnesia for the next 1d10 days (unless healed completely within the next 2 rounds), and take 1d4 points of blood loss damage for every round after the injury occurred until bound (which stops the progressive damage) or magically healed.

Table 2: Two-Handed Slashing Weapons (axe, axe-like, sword, or sword-like)

01-25	MAXIMUM DAMAGE	87-88	SEE #90 ON TABLE 1
26-45	Extremely deep cut: max. damage x 1.5	89-90	See #90 on Table 1
46-65	Hit semi vital area: max. damage x 2	91-92	See #90 on Table 1
66-73	Hit vital area: max. damage x 2.5	93-94	See #90 on Table 1
74-80	Hit extremely vital area: max. damage x 3	95-96	See #90 on Table 1
81-82	See #90 on Table 1	97	See #90 on Table 1
83-84	See #90 on Table 1	98	See #90 on Table 1
85-86	See #90 on Table 1	99-00	See #90 on Table 1

Table 3: One-Handed Crushing Weapons* (club, pole, stick, hammer, mace, morning star, flail, etc.)

01-30	EXTREMELY SOLID CRUSH: MAX. DAMAGE
31-55	Crushed semi-vital area: max. damage x 1.5
56-75	Crushed vital area: max. damage x 2
76-90	Crushed extremely vital area: max. damage x 2.5
91	Cracked right arm**, max. damage. It will heal in 1-4 weeks if not strained. It will have a 25% chance of breaking entirely, if used in battle (% check must be made for every successful hit that the injured makes on his opponent), or for strenuous work, until healed. Also, thaco drops -2 and damage drops -2 (with a minimum damage of one point). If break occurs, d4 additional damage is taken and arm becomes inoperable (see #95 for additional effects). Location (d10): 1-2:Wrist, 3-4:Forearm, 5-6:Elbow, 7-8:Upper Arm, 9-10:Shoulder
92	Cracked left arm: same as above
93	Cracked right leg: max damage. It will heal in 1d4 weeks if not strained. It will have a 25% chance of breaking entirely, per round, if being strained in battle, or a 5-10% (GM's call) chance of breaking, per round, if heavy movement (any movement faster than half of normal movement rate, any movement with a large amount of extra weight on body, demanding physical exertion, etc.) If break occurs, 1d4 additional points of damage are taken (see #99 for additional effects). Location (d10): 1-2: Ankle, 3-4: Shin, 5-6: Knee, 7-8: Thigh, 9-10: Lower Pelvis
94	Cracked left leg: same as above
95	Broken right arm: max. damage x 1.5. If there is a Cleric or someone with a healing proficiency in the party, they may set the leg (1d4 extra points of damage during setting procedure, but, if they fail their wisdom check and set it wrong, it will have to be reset for an additional d4 damage), if not, the arm will heal incorrectly and a luck roll will be taken for the severity of its incorrectness. After splinting, recovery time is 1-2 months. Obviously, the arm cannot be used in battle until healed completely. If the arm is used in any way that seems questionable, before it is fully healed, a % roll, similar to that in #91, will be rolled for the result. Location: 1-2:Wrist, 3-4:Forearm, 5-6:Elbow, 7-8:Upper Arm, 9-10:Shoulder
96	Broken left arm: same as above
97	Broken right leg: max. damage x 1.5. If there is a Cleric... (see #95), if not, the leg will heal incorrectly and a luck roll must be taken for the severity of its incorrectness. After splinting, recovery is 1-3 months. Absolutely no weight can be put on the leg for two weeks after the break; after that, movement can occur at a rate of 25% so long as there is no additional weight on the individual's body. If the leg is used in any way that seems questionable, before it is fully healed, a % roll, similar to that in #91, will be rolled for the result. Location (d10): 1-2:Ankle, 3-4:Shin, 5-6:Knee, 7-8:Thigh, 9-10:Lower Pelvis
98	Broken left leg: same as above
99	Broken neck: max. damage x 2.5. Individual immediately falls to the ground and is paralyzed. It can be set, as exactly described in #95, but, whether or not the healing is done magically, or naturally over time (1d4+1 months), a save vs. paralyzation must be taken by the individual to avoid permanent paralysis from the neck down. If the injured fails his / her saving throw, a form of regeneration must be performed before full recovery can occur
00	Head critically hit: if you're wearing a helmet, max. dam. x 3 will occur, and you will be retarded unless you make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. If you are not wearing a helmet, your skull has been crushed and your brains are mush; you're dead!

*One-handed, spiked, crushing weapons, do an additional d3 damage on critical hits.

**All cracks and breaks, after being set (if need be), can be healed by magical means if gotten to within a week's time. After that, a regeneration will need to be used, or the time, indicated by the % roll, will have to be waited out.

Table 4: Two-Handed Crushing Weapons*
(club, hammer, mace, morning star, flail, rock thrown from a giant, etc.)

01-25	EXTREMELY SOLID CRUSH: MAX. DAMAGE	87-88	SEE #94 ON TABLE 3**
26-45	Crushed semi-vital area: max. damage x 1.5	89-90	See #95 on Table 3**
46-65	Crushed vital area: max. damage x 2	91-92	See #96 on Table 3**
66-80	Crushed extremely vital area: damage x 3	93-94	See #97 on Table 3**
81-82	See #91 on Table 3**	95-96	See #98 on Table 3**
83-84	See #92 on Table 3**	97-98	See #99 on Table 3**
85-86	See #93 on Table 3**	99-00	See #00 on Table 3**

*Two-handed, spiked, crushing weapons, do an additional 1d4+1 damage on critical hits.

**All cracks and breaks on the two-handed crushing weapons table heal like the ones on Table 3.

Table 5: Sharp Projectile Weapons
(arrow, dart, dagger, thrown dagger, bolt)

01-30	EXTREMELY DEEP PUNCTURE: MAX. DAMAGE
31-60	Punctured semi-vital area: max. damage x 1.5
61-80	Punctured vital area: max. damage x 2
81-90	Punctured extremely vital area: max. damage x 2.5
91-92	Punctured right eye: max. damage x 2, loss of vision in that eye, -2 to thac0, -2 to comeliness, and -4 to perception
93-94	Punctured left eye: same as above
95-98	Punctured / deeply cut face, max. damage x 1.5, comeliness -2 (large scar). Location (d6): 1-2:Right Cheek, 3-4:Left Cheek, 5-6:Chin.
99	Internal Organ Damage, roll d6
1-3	Lung: see #98 on Table 1
4-6	Heart: see #99 on Table 1
00	Skull critically punctured: if you're wearing a helmet, max. damage x 3, and 1-3 points of blood loss damage for every round after the injury until direct pressure / binding or a magical cure is performed. And, you're retarded until a regeneration is performed (unless a magical heal is done within three rounds, which cures all of the injury's damage in one round). If you're not wearing a helmet, your brains have been deeply punctured, max. damage x 5, and unless a magical heal is done within one round, which cures all of the injury's damage in one round, you're dead!

Table 6: Spear-Like Weapons
(spear, javelin, trident, lance, fork, pick, pike, etc.)

01-35	EXTREMELY DEEP PUNCTURE: MAX. DAMAGE
36-65	Punctured semi-vital area: max. damage x 1.5
66-80	Punctured vital area: max. damage x 2
81-90	Punctured extremely vital area: max. damage x 2.5
91-92	Punctured right eye: max. damage x 3, loss of vision in that eye, -2 to thac0, -3 to comeliness, and -4 to perception. Also, take a luck roll on a d6; if a 1 is rolled see #00
93-94	Punctured left eye: same as above
95-96	Punctured / deeply cut face, max. damage x 2, comeliness -3 (huge scar). Location (d6): 1-2:Right side, 3-4:Left side, 5-6:Chin
97-98	Punctured lung: see #98 on Table 1
99	Punctured heart: see #99 on Table 1
00	Skull critically punctured: see #00 on Table 5

Table 7: Bitten or Clawed
(monsters and unarmed humanoids excluding dragons)

01-20	DEEPLY CLAWED / BIT: MAX. DAMAGE, 15% CHANCE FOR A DISEASE TO OCCUR*
21-50	Extremely, deeply clawed / bit: max. damage x 1.5, 25% chance for a disease to occur
51-70	Clawed / bit semi-vital area: max. damage x 2, 40% chance for a disease to occur
71-85	Clawed / bit vital area: max. damage x 2.5, 50% chance for a disease to occur
86-95	Clawed / bit extremely vital area: max. damage x 3, 60% chance for a disease to occur
96-97	If the monster is below 10' tall, see Table 5. Then roll a d4. Directly correspond the result of your roll to the numbers 91-98 for the result by rolling a d8. Also, there is a 70% chance for a disease to occur.
98-99	See #99 on Table 5
00	If the monster is under 9' in height, see #99 on Table 5. If the monster is 9' or taller, your head has been bitten or ripped from your body. You're dead!

*If a disease was contracted, refer to pg14 of the DMG and roll % dice on the Disease (or disorder) Table. Also, the character will most likely have no idea that he / she has a disease until the symptoms surface, so seeking its cure before that time would be playing on out-of-character knowledge.

Table 8: Dragon, Bitten or Clawed

The following table only refers to dragons, in the 1st edition Monster Manual, who are in the Adult Stage (stage 5) or older,* and the dragons in the 2nd edition Monstrous Manual, who are in the Young Adult Stage (stage 5) or older.** All other dragons use Table 7. (The idea behind this is that we used a mix of 1st & 2nd edition dragons within the same campaign. It should be interesting to see how the 3rd edition dragons measure up. –Editor).

01-15	DEEPLY CLAWED / BIT: MAX. DAMAGE AND 15% CHANCE FOR A DISEASE TO OCCUR*
16-30	Extremely deeply clawed / bit: max. damage + 1d8, +1 point of damage per age category & 25% chance for disease to occur
31-45	Clawed / bit semi-vital area: max. damage x 2, +1 point of damage per age category & 35% chance for disease to occur
46-60	Clawed / bit vital area: max. damage x 2.5 + 1d8, +1 point of damage per age category & 45% chance for disease to occur
61-69	Clawed / bit extremely vital area: max. damage x 3, +1 point of damage per age category & 60% chance for disease to occur
70-71	See #90 on Table 1
72-73	See #91 on Table 1
74-75	See #92 on Table 1
76-77	See #93 on Table 1
78-79	See #94 on Table 1
80-81	See #95 on Table 1
82-83	See #96 on Table 1
84-85	See #97 on Table 1
86-87	See #98 on Table 1
88-89	See #99 on Table 1
90-95	See #00 on Table 5
96-00	Your body has been been ripped (around the waistline to chest area) or torn into two pieces, you are dead! Everyone in the party must make their saving throw vs. spell (no matter how close the dragon is to death) or be subjected to the same effects of the Magic User, 4th level spell, Fear.

*Consult Table 7 for information concerning diseases.

**A 1st edition dragon whose age is 1-6 still needs a roll of 20, followed by another successful hit, to critically hit their opponent, but a dragon in the age category of 7-8 can critically hit their foe with a 19 or 20, followed by a successful hit.

***A 2nd edition dragon of ages 1-7 also critically hits their foe in the normal fashion, but ages 8-10 critically hit their opponent on a 19 or 20, and ages 11-12 only need an 18-20 (followed by another successful hit).

Disease!

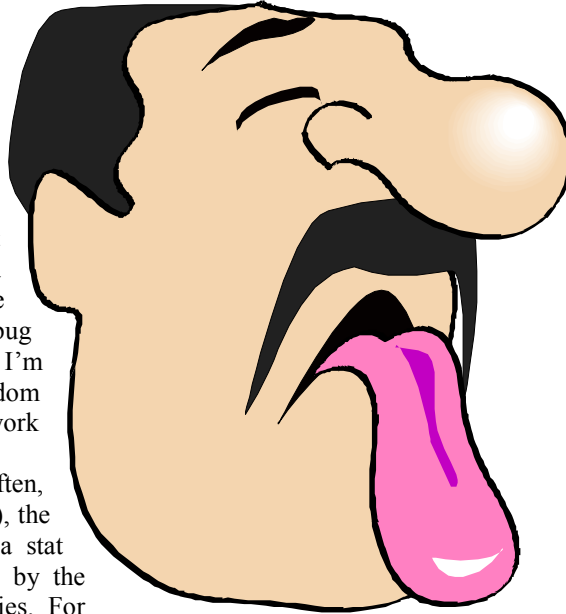
Minor Illnesses for AD&D

Tim Prestero

Have you ever noticed that characters in your AD&D campaign tend to be marvelously healthy? When I look at the traditional medieval setting, it doesn't strike me as being the most hygienic of places. So, to add a wee bit more realism to the campaign, and to generally bug the crap out of my players, I'm going to implement a random disease table, which'll work something like this:

Once a week (or more often, depending on the surroundings), the character will have to make a stat check against CON, modified by the surroundings and their activities. For example, if the characters are hiding out in the sewers and eating rats, they'd have to make disease checks every three days at a -4 modifier. They fail, they sick.

Now that they've fallen prey to illness, I'd randomly generate some minor illness and chuckle as they panic. After a while, disease becomes rather commonplace, as it would be in such an environment, setting the players up for all kinds of nasty things. "You say you feel ill, Drago? Probably just another dumb cold. Ooh, look, he's coughed up a lung and turned into a ghoul!"



- **Red Itchies:** The character breaks out in bright red rashes, which itch maddeningly. Spellcasters need to make wisdom checks when casting spells, as the desire to constantly itch is so strong. While in combat, those suffering from the Red Itchies are at -1 to hit and AC.
- **Flying Lunch Disease:** The character is unable to keep *anything* down and vomits uncontrollably (dry heaves) at the very scent of food. The character temporarily loses a point of strength per day (cumulative) until the disease breaks.
- **Sweat of the Hog:** The character's metabolism speeds up under the influence of this disease, causing him to sweat profusely. Unless he bathes thrice daily, he will absolutely reek, much to the dismay of those downwind.
- **The Coughing Spiders:** The character is stricken with terrible gas pains and tends to flatulate frequently and loudly. Thieves will find that this disease ruins their Move Silently ability.
- **Curse of the Slobbering Orc:** Characters inflicted with this minor disease find that their saliva glands go into overdrive, causing them to drool uncontrollably. The character is unable to sleep and can hardly even rest/pray/study, as they tend to choke on their own slobber. After a few days, the disease could progress to affect the sinuses, with appropriately disgusting effects.

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Creatures of Natahl

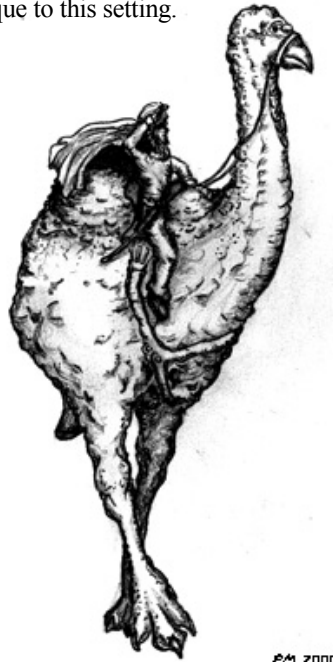
Phillip Mezzino (philmez@box.net.au)

<http://www.box.net.au/~philmez>

Natahl is a world of mighty empires and ancient societies, each struggling for power against the backdrop of an epic catastrophe caused by the crash of a giant spacecraft ten-thousand years ago. This event, known as the "Red Tempest" transformed the world into the one we see today during the era known as "Dragonfall". It is rumored in prophecies that this era is soon coming to an end. Many of the creatures of Natahl have been influenced by modern Australian fauna, elder Australian megafauna, especially reptiles, as well as my young son's love of dinosaurs, the "Leatherskins". Apart from these creatures, I have retained many classic D&D creatures which have been re-designed to fit the hooks unique to this setting.

Sunmon (Sunmount or Southern Mount)

Frequency: Uncommon
Number Appearing: 2d6
Armour Class: 6
Move: Walk, 15" Full Trot, 24"
Hit Dice: 6d6
% in lair: 50% (In breeding season)
Treasure Type: NA
Number of Attacks: 1 Trample
Damage per attack: 1d10
Special Attacks: NA
Special Defenses: Full Trot
Magic Resistance: 20%
Intelligence: 1
Alignment: Neutral
Size: 16-20 ft tall.



The sunmon is a combination of southern languages to describe a mount which inhabits the arid regions of the southern Myskan Desert. The sunmon, at adulthood, is a lofty 16-20 ft tall, sturdy, bipedal creature that has long powerful legs which can reach speeds up to 60 km per hour at full trot. The creature is a herbivore and not particularly brave. They will bolt if 'spooked' although a herd of them can easily trample a man on foot caught in their path.

The sunmon has a two 'humps' of fat on its back which help the creature to survive without food and water for long periods in its typical semi-arid environment. The herds migrate south to more fertile lands during the spring to feed and lay eggs then return to the relative safety of more isolated areas for the remaining seasons. The herds then drift from waterhole to waterhole, a few of their number dying along the way in extreme conditions.

The sunmon is a quiet creature even when excited. It snorts softly when at ease and only slightly more loudly otherwise. The only form of attack is the possible trample if someone is in the way of the creature. The sunmon will usually only attack other creatures who threaten their eggs at nesting time.

The Myskan tribesmen quickly learned that by hiding around waterholes the creature could be captured when they stopped to drink. Some of the creatures would kneel down which would give the Myskans an opportunity to sneak up and jump on their backs. Over time, many have been captured this way and are now used as mounts. The first tribes to learn this ability gained a great superiority over their enemies in the desert and beyond.

The Myskans don't breed the sunmons preferring to seasonally capture young adults. Breeding was tried by the Myskans but the domesticated sunmons seemed much weaker than the wild ones and would often die before maturity. The tradition of capturing a sunmon is now ritualised in part of the Myskan culture of achieving young adulthood.

When rigged, a light harness is placed between the sunmon's appropriately shaped humps. The creatures are trained to kneel on command so the nomads can safely mount the sunmon. The ride can be very rocky at full trot and great expertise is required to stay on for any length at this pace. It's a long way to fall off a sunmon and 'green' riders who do are usually badly hurt more often than not. The sunmons apparently can't be trained to charge an enemy although some non-Myskans would disagree.

Molg

Frequency: Uncommon
Number Appearing: 1
Armour Class: 7
Move: 12"
Hit Dice: 2d6
% in lair: 10%
Treasure Type: NA
Number of Attacks: 1
Damage per attack: 1-2
Special Attacks: Screeching shriek which can attract other creatures
Special Defenses/Powers: Hide in shadows (Discretionary)
Magic Resistance: 10%
Intelligence: 1
Alignment: Neutral
Size: 2-3 ft.



This solitary species of molg are usually found in 'near-surface' underground caverns and caves in temperate regions. They are small, 2-3 ft tall, bipedal, with two small arms. They have thick, greyish, leathery skin, with a slow and plodding gait as they continually sniff for edible worms and grubs. The molg has good night vision because of its nocturnal habits and normally sleeps during daylight hours.

When threatened the molg will run or duck into suitable cover or shadows and start continually screeching until the threat is over. This method of defense often works against other non-intelligent creatures in their normal environment. Normally the creature just occasionally snorts as it searches for food.

Some humans, who can get their hands on one, use the molg as a 'night-time' household guardian which are normally kept chained outside doors to warn of intruders. A chain or tether is used because it is difficult to truly train molgs and they have a tendency to wander about. Some semi-domesticated molgs have special human-made brands and markings to ensure their ownership.

Molghell

Frequency: Rare
Number Appearing: 1-3+1
Armour Class: 7
Move: 12
Hit Dice: 2d6
% in lair: 10%
Treasure Type: NA
Number of Attacks: 1
Damage per attack: 1d6
Special Attacks: Screeching shriek which can attract other creatures
Special Defenses/Powers: Tracking as Proficiency (Use 15 WIS)
Magic Resistance: 15%
Intelligence: 1
Alignment: Neutral
Size: 2-3 ft

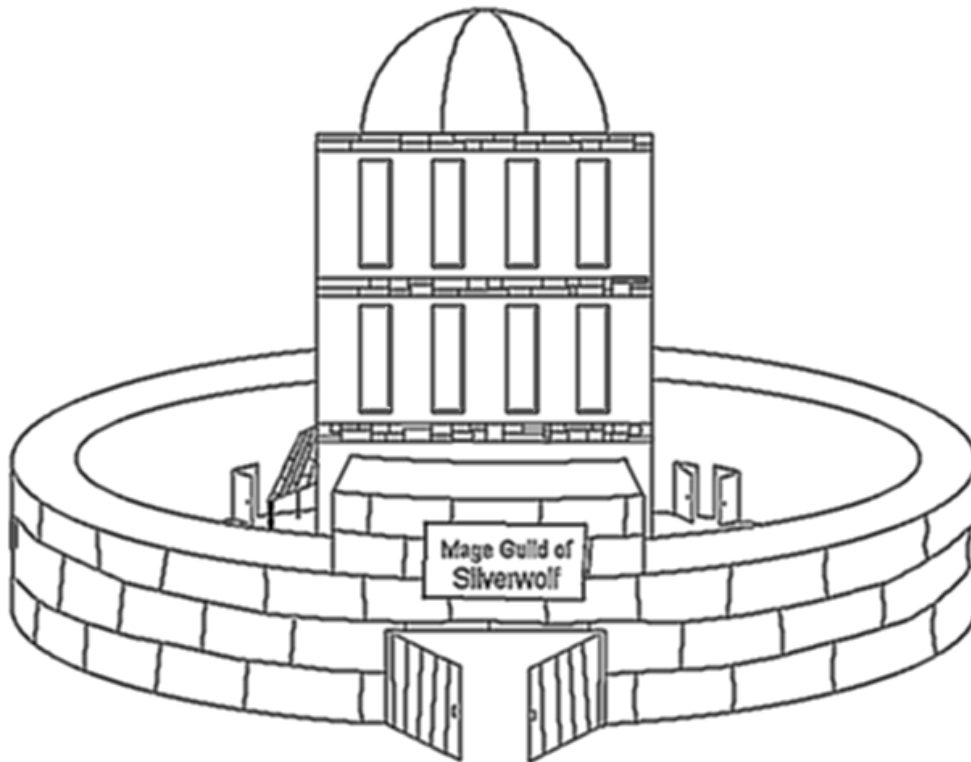


This rare species of reddish coloured molg is only found in the Hellanic Mountain caves in the southern Myskan region. A feature of this molg is their larger stature than their common cousins and a much more aggressive demeanour. They hunt in small packs and trap larger game. Their bite is quite vicious, even to a human.

When threatened the molghell will either attack or run off shrieking to warn or summon others of its kind. Then they start to act with a pack mentality chasing the sound of the shrieking molg hoping to corner and kill its attacker as a group.

Mage's Guild of Silverwolf

Jim Grant (grantj@armc.co.san-bernardino.ca.us)
http://www.dreamsoft.com/steel/html/ad_d.htm



In the October 1998 issue of *Dragon's Horde Magazine* I read a fascinating article on mage guilds. Guilds concerning mages had never made much sense to me until this point. I could never quite grasp how a group of people known for being secretive and reclusive could band together to form a cooperative, businesslike community.

In this article, though, the author suggested treating a mage's guild not so much as a craftsman's guild, but rather like a gentleman's club; A place where people of the trade could drop in for an afternoon and hear the latest gossip, or rent a room for an extended stay while they do more in-depth research and experimentation. This made much more sense to me, and as I sat there reading the rest of that issue of the e-zine an image of what such a guild might look like started forming in the back of my mind.

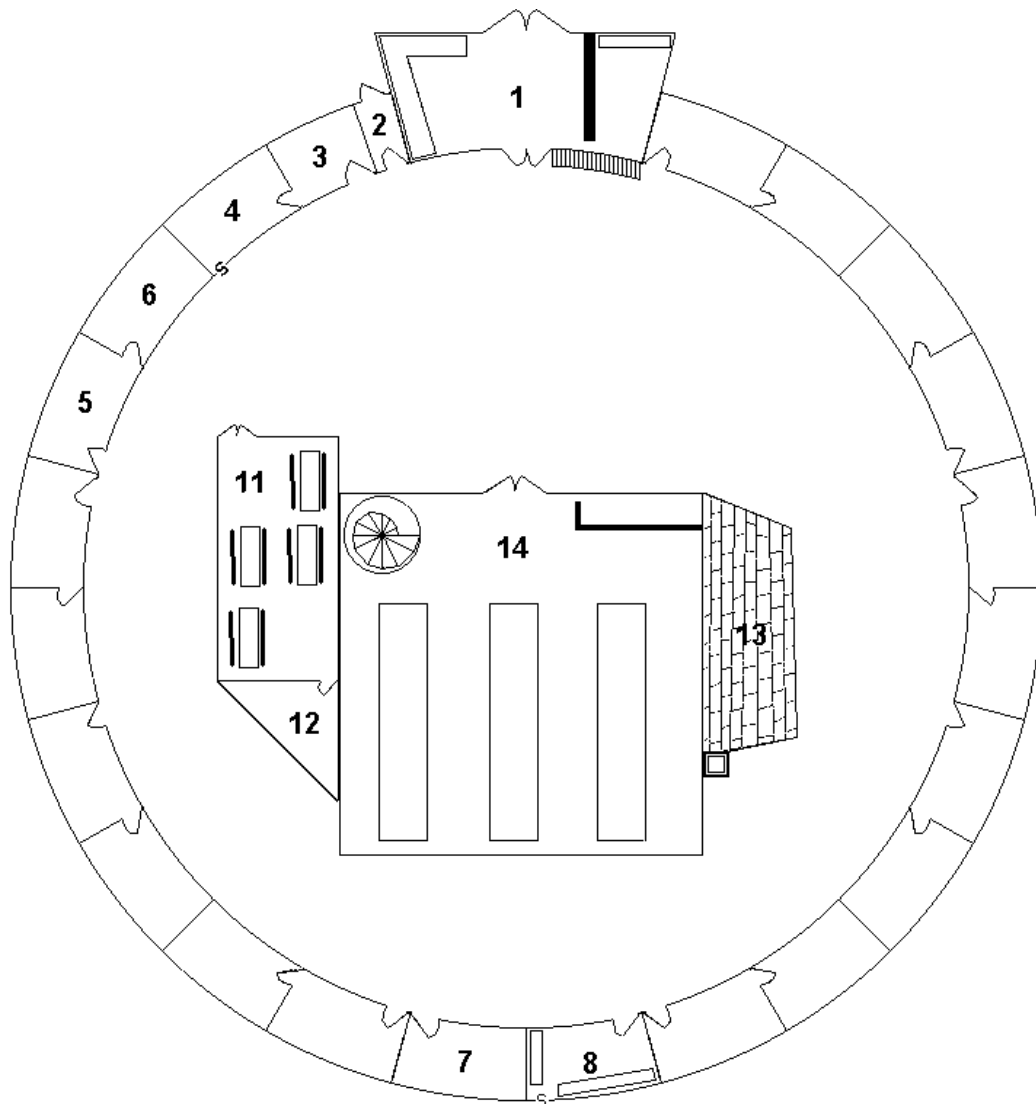
I've always enjoyed creating very in-depth characters, but had never really developed an entire group or organization before, so I looked forward to trying to take the image I had in my mind and express it on paper. I found that there were some aspects of my imaginary guild that, once on paper, just didn't

seem to work out right. This led to several rounds of re-thinking and revising. I think I'm finally finished though, so here it is for your use and enjoyment.

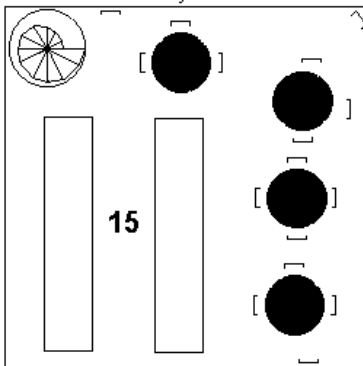
Originally I started to fill out statistics on all the key characters, and even describe security measures for the buildings themselves, as is usually done in a gaming module. I decided against that, though. We all run worlds that are a little different, and trying to force my characters into your worlds just didn't seem right, so all I'm giving you is a name, description, and suggested levels. I've left it up to you to equip them with weapons, skills, and magical goodies.

If you have any stunning ideas for this guild that I have left out, please feel free to email me. All suggestions are welcome

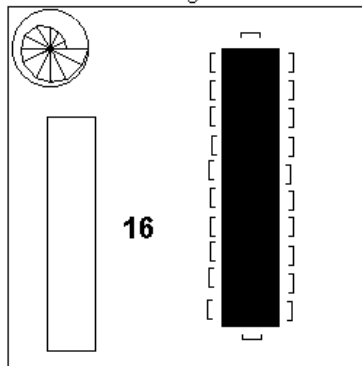
The Dragon's Hoard Magazine: The DH magazine is now defunct. The last known address for the e-zine is: http://members.xoom.com/DragonHorde/current_issue.htm, but has not released an issue since August 1999.



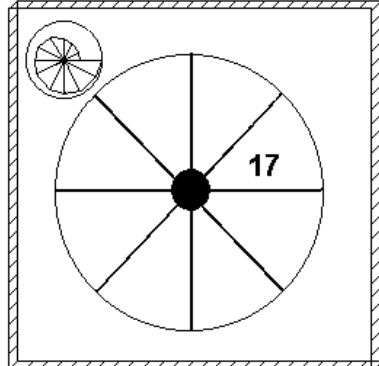
2nd Floor - Library



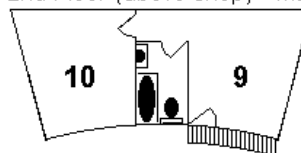
3rd Floor - Meeting Hall



4th Floor - Observatory



2nd Floor (above shop) - Magnus' Room



The Guild

The mage's guild of Silverwolf is a place of congregation, research, retreat, and resources for the mages of the area of the realm surrounding Silverwolf. It is by no means the only guild of mages in the realm.

The costs for the guild and its services are as follows:

Membership / year	10gp
Room / day.....	10sp
Room / week.....	6gp
Meals from local inn.....	5sp

Membership is required to be able to use the guild at all. Once an individual has paid the annual membership fee they are able to rent rooms, and use the library, meeting rooms, and smith area throughout the year. Members do not have to be staying at the guild to use the library, rooms, or smith area. They are welcome to drop in at any time.

The Guild Buildings

Both buildings that make up the guild are constructed of heavy, well-fit and mortared stones. Before construction began, dwarven workers were brought in to revise the design and supervise the construction. All walls, interior and exterior, are two feet thick, and exceptionally sturdy. The ceilings are solid slabs of stone, twelve inches thick. This design was chosen for two reasons: insulation and isolation. The thick stone walls keep the rooms cool in the summer, and warm and dry in winter. Such thick walls also insure that mistakes during experimentation such as explosions, poisonous gasses, and blinding flashes are contained in the workroom and bedroom suite where they occur, and should not harm anyone else. This also saves on furniture replacement costs.

1. Main Entrance / Store

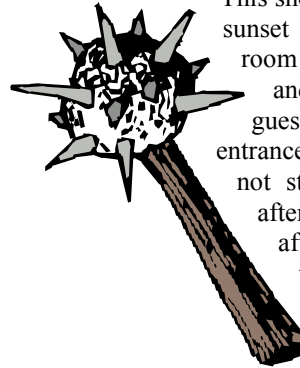
This 30' x 20' room boasts grand double oaken doors in the center of the north and south walls, serving as the main entrance to the guild. The west side of the room is lined with shelves from floor to ceiling, displaying the majority of the wares for sale. Separated from the rest of the room by a 17' sales counter, the east end of the room is staffed by the store's clerk. The more valuable stock is displayed in this area, out of reach of the public.

A large beam next to the outer doors is lowered into place and then locked down at night to secure the door from the inside. The inner doors are locked with a chain and lock from inside the guild yard. An alarm spell is cast on this lock to alert the guards of any tampering.

Guests of the guild may place items for sale in the store on consignment for a 10% fee. Any money collected for characters will be kept for them for a period of one year. This money will be released to only the character that left the item to be sold. If the money is not collected within one year, the money goes to the guild. Characters wishing to sell

items to the store may do so for 15% less than DMG prices. Items in the store are sold for 5% less than DMG prices. DMs should be discriminating as to what the guild buys. Only items that can be expected to sell within a reasonable amount of time should be bought. No evil or cursed items will ever be bought.

2. Night Entrance



This short hallway is only unlocked from sunset until 2am. A guard in the next room monitors everyone that comes and goes through the corridor. Only guests staying at the guild are allowed entrance through this hallway. Anyone not staying at the guild still present after sunset leaves by this hallway after sunset, and must do so no later than midnight.

3. Guard Station / Weapons Room

This 10' x 10' room serves as guard station and weapons storage room for the on-duty guard staff. During the day the guard on duty will be found here when not on patrol around the guild yard and store. At night there will **always** be at least one guard stationed here watching the night entrance. The second guard will be here, as well, when not on patrol.

4. Guard Bunk Room

This room serves as the bunkroom and personal space for the guard staff. The secret door in the south corner is used only in case of an emergency when the main exit of this suite has been blocked.

5 & 6. Guest Suites

These are the two-room suites for the guests. There are nine suites. Each suite accommodates up to two people, one being a mage that is a member of the guild.

5. Bedrooms

These rooms are 10' x 15' and include bed, dresser, mirror, chest, table, two chairs, lantern, heating brazier, wash basin, and a toilet. The rooms are comfortable, but not lavish.

6. Work Rooms

Each workroom can be accessed by only one bedroom and has no other doors or windows. This design was chosen to minimize the areas of the guild that would be affected by a violent accident during experimentation. Workrooms are equipped with a workbench, chair, two lanterns, heating brazier, standard glassware and metalware.

7. Librarian's Room

An unassuming room, Dewey's quarters are kept plain and simple, just the way he likes it. The furniture is plain, unfinished wood, and the decorations are minimal. The room looks very much like one would expect to find in a cloister.

A thorough search of the room will reveal only a bag with 8 silver pieces in it, a tithe that Dewey has not yet had time to take to the church.

8. Store Room

This is an ordinary store room that holds materials used in the operations of the guild. Items that can be found on shelves and stacked on the floors include: mattresses, pillows, linens, lanterns, oil, extra furniture, cleaning supplies, etc.

There is a secret door in the south-west corner of the room. This door is wizard locked. Meant to be used only as an emergency exit, this door is never used and can only be opened by three people: Magnus, Walter, and Daniel. The door opens behind a large bush outside the guild building.

9 & 10: Magnus's Suite

This suite is occupied by Magnus. Living here at the guild year-round as the proprietor, Magnus has furnished these rooms with his personal belongings.

9. Magnus' Sitting Room

This small but lavishly appointed room offers comfort and warmth to Magnus' visitors. Furnished with highly polished cherry wood bookcases and tables, and supple red leather chairs, this room stays dimly lit and smells faintly of brandy. An eclectic assortment of books lines the shelves, but there is nothing of notable value present.

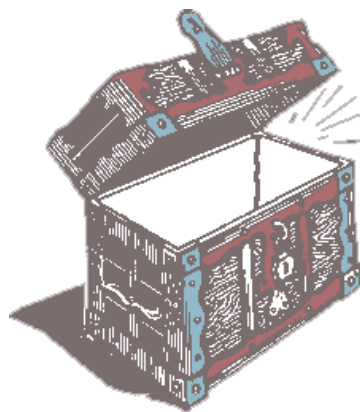
10. Magnus' Bedroom

Separated from the sitting room by a short hallway and a bathing room, Magnus' bedroom is warmly lit with the scent of orange blossoms in the air. Like the sitting room, this room is appointed with well cared for cherry wood furniture. A grand four-poster bed with a thick feather mattress and silk coverings is the centerpiece of the room. At the foot of the bed is a large chest with a padded leather lid. Also in the room is a tall cabinet, small table with two chairs, dresser with mirror, two lanterns, and a wash basin. Under the bed are four long storage chests whose ends are visible along the sides of the bed and have been carved to match rest of the furniture.

Under Bed Chests: These chests hold all the little nick-nacks that Magnus has accumulated over the years. Among various random items, the following can be found: wand of lightning (0 charges), leather armor (fair condition), an hourglass, a teddy bear, a backpack, and two wine skins.

Padded Chest: This is an ornately carved chest with a thick padded leather lid and polished brass fixtures. Measuring five feet wide, three feet deep, and three feet high, this chest is large and very heavy. A built-in brass lock secures the lid.

This chest will always be found locked. The lock is of high quality and low difficulty. Any thief should be allowed success when trying to pick this lock, as it has been designed to be easy. Once the lid is opened though, the true challenge is revealed. This ornate chest is lined with one-inch thick steel. The interior steel lid is hinged the entire length of the back edge, and has keyholes on each of the front corners. The locks are of extremely high quality and difficulty (-40% penalty). Permanent Alarm spells and poison needle traps that are activated if anything other than the correct key is used also protect each lock. The inside of the chest has flat steel sides and bottom, with two bolt heads in the bottom.



These bolts are sunk through the bottom of the chest into the floor below. The bolts insure that, even if someone were able to lift such a heavy (200 lbs.) chest, the bolts, which can only be removed from the inside, will prevent this.

This chest is where Magnus stores his truly valuable possessions.

The two interior locks

use different keys. Magnus keeps one of these keys with him at all times, and the other is kept in a secret compartment in his bedpost (described later). Inside the chest is the following: brooch of shielding, cloak of displacement, ring of wizardry (lvl 3), wand of fireballs (87 charges), boots of speed, gems (2x10,000gp, 3x5,000gp, 2x3,000gp, 7x1,000gp), jewelry (4x20,000), 5,000 platinum, and 5,000 gold.

Dresser: Aside from miscellaneous clothing, the top left drawer contains bandages, healing herbs, and three bottles of healing potion. There is also a bag containing 263 gold, 71 silver, and 22 copper.

Bed Post: The bedpost on the left side of the headboard has a small door concealed by the decorative carving that swings open at the push of a secret button to reveal a hollow area. This is where Magnus keeps his back-up reserve of cash and one of the keys to his chest. Here can be found 500 platinum, 1 ruby (5000gp), and 1 diamond (3000gp).

11. Dining Room

This large room is sparsely furnished with only four large tables, benches, and a few chairs.

A young wench from the nearby inn visits this room twice a day, at lunch and dinner times, to deliver meals ordered by resident guild members. During these visits she straightens up the room and refills the water pitchers on each table.

12. Pantry

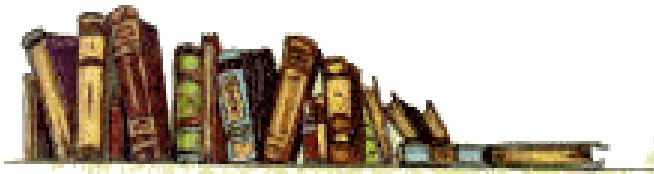
This is a large dry-storage closet used to store staple foodstuffs for light breakfasts. Emergency food is also kept here for hard winters. Some of the foods that can be found here are dried fruits, grains, salted beef, clay jars of water, honey, and salt.

A very thorough search of this room will reveal a small pouch tucked far back behind several bags of flour. The pouch has been embroidered with the name “Kyra”. The serving wench that brings food over from the inn has hidden this here. She believes it is safer here, surrounded by mages, than it is at home, where her father might find it. The pouch contains her life savings (12gp, 24sp, 12cp), which she hopes to use some day to buy passage to Malinalda, the summer capital of the realm.

13. Smith & Lathe Area

This sloping roof is supported by four posts, and provides shelter for a smithing and latheing area. In this area can be found all the tools and materials needed for small metal and woodworking projects. This area is available for use by any of the guild members, or any worker brought in by a guild member to do work for them.

14. Library – 1st Floor



Entering through ten foot high carved double doors, visitors are awed at the quality and immaculate appearance of Silverwolf’s third largest library.

This room is immediately relaxing and welcoming. With plush, dark green carpet and fifteen foot high floor-to-ceiling oak bookcases, the room gives the impression of a silent forest. An oak spiral staircase in the northwest corner extends through the ceiling to the upper floors. A long oak counter in the northeast corner provides a workspace for the librarian to maintain records and check out books from.

Books kept on this level are reference works relating to all aspects of nature, science, technologies, languages, and histories.

15. Library – 2nd Floor

Much like the first floor in appearance, this floor offers lush carpeting and finely carved bookcases. Tall stained glass windows provide decorative lighting, each depicting a different magical creature. There are four windows on each wall. The lighting from the windows is augmented by a generous number of mage lights floating at ceiling height. Several tables are on this floor for reading or holding quiet discussions at.

Books on this floor are all related to magic of all schools. These books range from “commonly found” to “uncommon, but not valuable”. Among them can be found instructional texts, research findings, and spell books (spells through level 5). These books can only be checked out by guild members who are staying at the guild, and are not allowed to leave the guild.

16. Library – 3rd Floor

Decorated identically to the lower two floors, this floor also boasts sixteen tall stained glass windows. The windows on this floor portray the great mages of history and legend, including Queen Celia.

The books on the one bookcase on this floor are the most rare and valuable in the building. Most of these books can not be found anywhere else in the realm. These include high level spell books, tomes found in ancient or exotic places, ancient scrolls, and works related to evil magic.

Dominating the east side of this room is a 35-foot long oak conference table, surrounded by 22 sturdy armchairs. This table is seldom used, most often when Magnus hosts meetings of the realm’s most powerful mages.

An alarm spell on this floor notifies Dewey, the librarian, and Daniel, the guard captain, if any works are removed from the floor by anyone other than Dewey.

17. Library - Observatory

Accessible by the spiral staircase from the lower floors, the roof of the library towers 45 feet above the courtyard below. Decorating the roof of the library is a large, glass dome observatory. A twenty foot telescope inside this dome rotates on a smooth gliding platform. This telescope uses a combination of lenses, mirrors, and Eyes Of The Eagle lenses to achieve a view of the stars not available anywhere else in the kingdom.

Characters

Proprietor: Magnustoria Elderwing



Human – Mage – LG – Level 14 – 73 years old – gray hair – gray eyes – 5’11” – 165 lbs. – STR 5, DEX 7, CON 8, INT 16, WIS 18, CHR 12

Magnus is a weathered old man, with a perpetual smile. His years of adventuring show in his wise eyes and old scars. Now that he’s paid his dues, he is greatly enjoying a soft, easy life. Magnus always has a pleasant word for friends, which is most everyone.

Magnus can often be found in the company of his close

friend, and past adventuring companion, Walter Brock (a resident of the guild). The two wile away many hours debating the nature of humanity, while sipping brandy in Magnus' sitting room or strolling the streets of Silverwolf. Walt is usually heard being cynical of mankind, while Magnus believes in humanity's inherent good.

Guild Resident: Walter Brock

Human – Fighter – LN – Level 8/7 – 68 years old – gray/brown hair – brown eyes – 6'2" – 210 lbs. – STR 15, DEX 13, CON 9, INT 14, WIS 7, CHR 7

A solid man with skin like tanned leather, Walt is still a formidable opponent, even at his age. Having recently retired from mercenary command work, he has become a permanent resident of the guild. Walt has taken the suite just downstairs from that of Magnus.



Walt is a close friend of Magnus, and can often be found in his company. Though he far prefers a stout ale, he regularly enjoys brandy during conversations in Magnus' sitting room. Being younger and larger than his friend, Walt is protective of Magnus.

While Walter is multi-class, he relies most heavily on his fighting skills. While he is a competent spell caster, he has not honed those skills, and does little to further his magical knowledge.

Guard Captain: Daniel Smith

Human – Fighter – LG – Level 6

"Tall", "strong", "tough", and "uncompromising" are words often used by the townsfolk to describe Daniel. While he fancies himself popular, his lack of flexibility when it comes to the protection and policies of the guild keeps anyone from being very close to him.

Being the captain, Daniel holds the day guard shift (8am – 4pm), during which he handles the opening and closing of the store. During his daily patrols he will often stop shortly to chat with Dewey, the librarian, or Robin, the store clerk.

Daniel is well liked and respected by his guards. They consider him fair and reliable, and greatly appreciate his willingness to cover an occasional shift for them when needed.

Guard: Franchesca delaCroix

Human – Paladin – LG – Level 4

Franchesca is a quiet one, but a person not to be trifled with. Raised from infancy to defend the land and its people, she has been rigorously trained in swordsmanship, law, and ethics. Franchesca excelled in her skills at such an early age that she was accepted into the Order of The Cross, an organization of female paladins.

Two years ago, while purging an evil temple with her companions, Franchesca's party was faced by a high level

demon. When one of her companions was torn apart in front of her during the fight, Franchesca became overwhelmed with grief and fear, and fled.

Having fled battle and shown cowardice, Franchesca's deity revoked her paladinhood until she redeems herself. She's not yet been able to allow herself to get close enough to anyone to adventure with them. She hides from the world here at the guild, working as a simple guard, and avoiding the populace in general, and particularly the sisters of the Order of The Cross.

Her sisters in the order want desperately to find her and bring her back into the fold. They fear for her safety, and wish to help her redeem herself to her god. Franchesca does not know this though, and thinks that her sisters will despise her if she is found.

Franchesca keeps very much to herself, and will seldom be seen except when on duty or doing necessary shopping in town.

When William leaves the guild's employment to go adventuring, Franchesca may decide to go with him and seek her redemption, if she feels ready.

Guard: Thorton Granitebeard

Dwarf – Fighter – NG – Level 2

A middle-aged dwarf, Thorton prefers steady employment to the hardships of adventuring. He hopes to one day be appointed guard captain of the guild, or any other reputable organization in the city. He believes that such a position must be earned through hard work and loyalty. Secretly, Thorton doubts that he will ever be guard captain of this guild. He is sure that Franchesca will be picked before him due to her greater experience.

Thorton is an easy-going dwarf, and can often be found enjoying an ale in a local tavern after his shift. He is known by many of the townsfolk, and is proud of his position with the guild.

Guard: William Michaels

Human – Fighter – NG – Level 2

William is young, and very enthusiastic about his skills and future as a fighter. When not on duty he can often be found at the local training halls, or practicing his sword-work in the guild yard.

William aspires to be a successful adventurer. Despite his desire to strike out and earn his fortune, William understands the need to be well trained and capable for the safety of himself and his companions. It is well known, however, that William's employment at the guild will only be for a couple of years.

Librarian: Dewey Stone

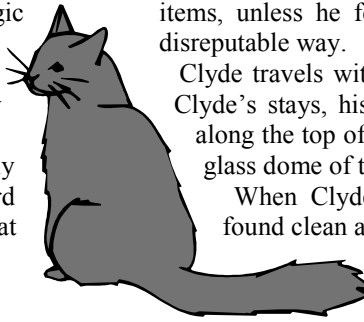
Human – Cleric – LG – Level 5

Dewey is a quiet man, and keeps mostly to himself and his books. When Dewey is not in the library he can usually be found praying in his room, or tending a small garden behind the library.

Dressed daily in a brown robe with a white cotton rope tied around the waist, Dewey is diligent in his duties of

maintaining the library. Having been trained in theology and clerical skills, Dewey has little interest in the magic related books that make up the majority of the library. He has, however, seen to it that the reference section on the first floor is very complete, covering every possible topic.

Dewey does not have many friends, but greatly enjoys his daily chats with Daniel during the guard captain's patrols. Daniel reminds Dewey of what he could have been if were brave and not so shy.



him rare magical items. Occasionally Magnus will buy these items, unless he feels they may have been acquired in a disreputable way.

Clyde travels with his familiar, a large, black cat. During Clyde's stays, his cat can often be seen at night slinking along the top of the guild building or lazing on top of the glass dome of the observatory.

When Clyde leaves the guild, his room is always found clean and with everything in its original place.

Shop Clerk: Robin

Human – NG – Level 0

Robin is an average looking girl of 19 years. She feels guilty that she is not married yet because this disappoints her parents greatly. She is a strong-willed girl though, and will not be dominated as so many of her young suitors try to do. The men don't flirt with her much anymore due to her age. This doesn't bother Robin though. Romance seems a terrible waste of time to her. She is often amused at her little sister Kyra's (the serving wench) flirtations with all the young men.

Robin dreams of one day going adventuring, and she's plenty tough enough to do it. She lacks any significant adventuring skills, though. Occasionally Robin is able to talk William, a guard, into giving her short lessons in swordplay and archery. She hopes to be good enough by the time William leaves that he might take her with him.

Serving Wench: Kyra

Human – CG – Level 0

A sweet, attractive redhead, Kyra is flighty, and seldom serious. She is very pleasant to look at, and she knows it. She can often be heard giggling while surrounded by a group of boys, and often has to be reminded of her duties by her boss, the innkeeper of the Dragon Armor Inn, or her older sister, Robin.

Kyra is 14 years old. Her father is considering her suitors as potential husbands. Kyra knows she'll have to marry soon, and looks forward to being wed, but she doesn't plan on remaining in Silverwolf. Kyra has a secret plan to leave Silverwolf and make her way to Malinalda, the summer capital of the realm. In hopes of doing this Kyra keeps two silver pieces from her pay each month and hides it. The rest of her pay she gives to her father to help support the family. Kyra hides her savings in a pouch in the pantry of the mage guild. She is the only person who regularly visits the room.

Possible Guests:

Clyde deChat

Elf – Thief/Mage – CN – Level 9/8

An older mage with dark gray hair and beard, Clyde is a quiet and solitary man. When he visits the guild he typically stays for several weeks at a time, but is seldom seen outside his room. He never orders meals to be brought in, never participates in meetings, and only occasionally speaks with Magnus. When he does visit Magnus, it is to offer to sell

Frederick Thyme

Human – Mage – LG – Level 8

Frederic is a true do-gooder. He spends his life traveling the countryside of the realm offering his services to the courts and constables of the land. While he does charge for his magical services, his prices are more than fair. Frederick has even been known to donate his services if the cause is good and the situation desperate.

Specializing in detection and location spells, Frederick is often a tremendous help in investigations of wrong-doings. There is little that Frederick likes more than seeing justice done.

With the little gold that Frederick does earn in his travels, he prefers to spend his winters here in the comfort of the guild. He will often be found here between the months of November and February, and is always given first choice of rooms due to his reliable return to the guild.

Alaria Skyhawk

Female Rakasta – Mage – NN – Level 12

Alaria appears to all to be an elf of about 300 years old. She is a powerful magic user, and can defend herself easily, though she prefers to simply avoid confrontation all together.

What the populace of Silverwolf does not see when Alaria visits is her true form, that of a Rakasta (*see TSR's Mystara references*). This illusion is maintained by a large supply of Dust Of Illusion that Alaria carries with her. This dust, made with the utmost care by Alaria herself, conceals her true form for twelve hours per application. She carries a small amount of the dust with her in a pouch that she keeps in the folds of her sleeve. The remainder of her dust is kept in an urn in a large traveling trunk that can be found in her room during her stays at the guild.

While at the guild, Alaria spends the majority of her time in the library doing research. She is most interested in the reference books on the first floor, as these give her the most information about the nature of the civilized world. Alaria studies the world, its people, and its magic under the cover of her disguise so that she can take her knowledge back to her village and teach the young Rakasta what lies outside their home, without them having to venture out for themselves.

(The Rakasta are a race of half feline, half human beings. They exist in many regions and many climates, but prefer to stay reclusive, so are seldom seen by men in this realm.)

Yori

Peter Trevor (peter.trevor@rb.cwplc.com)

Orbit	Name	UPP	Remarks
Primary	Liecs	F1 V	
0	Dueck	H200000-0	
1	Dragu	Y100000-0	
1	1 Draguring	YR00000-0	Surprising
25	Hou	YS00000-0	
3	Depoli	Y200000-0	
8	Hotte	YS00000-0	
60	Hovind	YS00000-0	
3.2	Duerholt	Y440100-9	
4	-	Y000000-0	
5	Dectura	SGG	
2	Skyline	YR00000-0	
25	Yori	C360757-A	Mainworld
35	Tino	HS00000-0	
6	Dumka	LGG	
10	Hynd	Y300000-0	
11	Haque	H510000-0	
35	Hein	Y734000-0	
40	Halder	G400266-A	Research Lab
55	Hekzco	H200000-0	
60	Heddle	G200226-9	Exile camp
6.7	Dusoswa	SGG	
1	Dusoswaring	YR00000-0	
40	Hann	Y200000-0	
45	Harcus	YS00000-0	
7	Dzioba	Y94A000-0	
9	Hnetka	F72631A-9	Corporate
9.8	Dyck	Y410000-0	

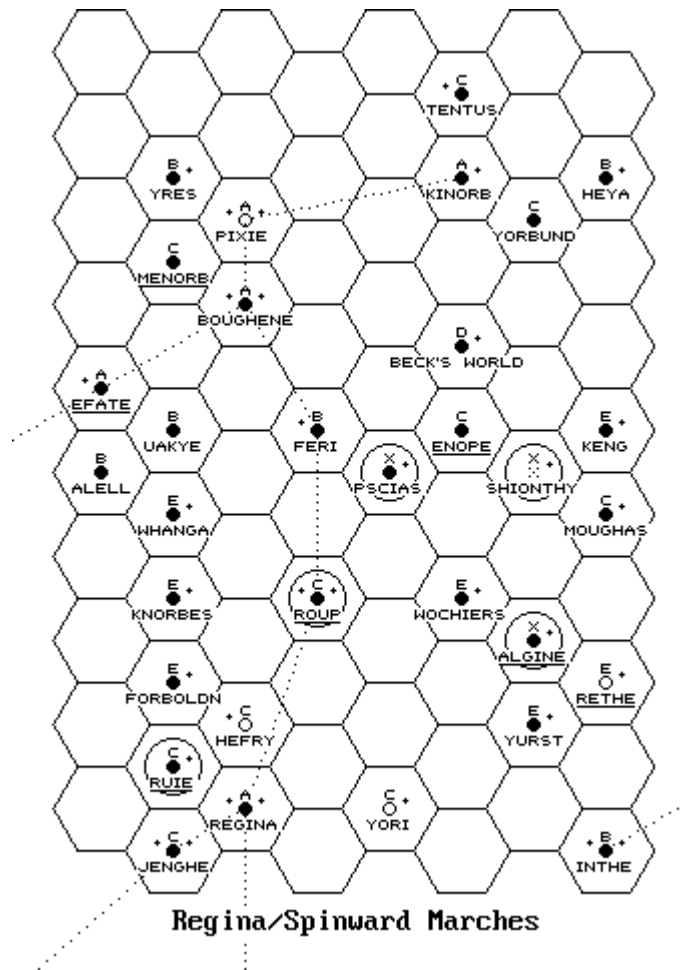
Liecs: Spectral class F1V. ICN S9C0510F1. Mass 1.6 standard. Stellar diameter 1.6 standard. Luminosity 7.2 standard.

Dectura: Small gas giant. Mean orbital radius 393.8 million ilometers (2.63 AU). Eccentricity 0.010. Period 1232.99 days. Diameter 112,200 ilometers. Density 0.72 standard. Mass 358.9 standard. Two satellites and one ring system.

Yori: Mean orbital radius 2.81 million kilometers. Period 7.45 days. Diameter 5,630 kilometers. Density 2.22 standard. Mass 0.19 standard. Mean surface gravity 0.98G. Rotational period 29 hours 26 minutes 14 seconds. Axial inclination 65° 55' 58". Eccentricity 0.021. Albedo 0.239. Surface atmospheric pressure 1.17 atm; composition - standard oxygen-nitrogen mix. Hydrographic percentage <1%; composition - liquid water. Mean surface temperature 30.5°C.

Introduction

Located in the Spinward Marches just 2 parsecs from Regina is the small desert world of Yori. Yori orbits the gas giant Dectura, which in turn orbits the F1 main sequence star Liecs (pronounced "likes"). This world is the seat of the Baron of Yori (one of the titles of Norris Aella Aledon, the Duke of Regina), and is home to nearly 74 million people (including about 30 million Humans). Yori is predominantly



desert but has a great rift valley 10,000 km long with fertile land on its floor.

Geophysical

Today, Yori is a moon of the gas giant Dectura, but once it was a planet in its own right. Dectura has an axial tilt of just over 24° to its orbit and the other significant moon (Tino), and the ring system (Skyline) both orbit close to Dectura's plane (as defined by its axis). But Yori's orbit is inclined by another almost 29°, making for a combined angle of approximately 53°, almost a polar orbit (in relation to the system) around the gas giant. This is offset by Yori's axial tilt of 66° (the other way) relative to Dectura, with the final result that Yori's effective tilt is only 13° relative to Liecs. When Dectura is in Yori's sky it has 4.3 times the apparent diameter that Luna has in Earth's sky. Skyline (Dectura's ring system) is double this.

Yori's high density creates a surface gravity more commonly found in worlds twice its size. This, and the high level of volcanic activity, has resulted in an atmospheric

pressure at base level of 17% above standard pressure (since there are no oceans or proper seas the terms “base level” and “base altitude” are used in preference to the term “sea level”). But Yori is a dying world. It’s atmosphere is composed of 12% oxygen, higher than expected given the lack of oceans but lower than ideal for human habitation (22% oxygen). Based on this oxygen level, the base altitude on Yori is the equivalent of an altitude of 3.5 km above sea level on Terra. Worse, observations have shown that the oxygen level of the atmosphere is dropping by about 1% (of total composition) every 10,000 years. It is thought that the oxygen levels will eventually stabilize at around 6% (half the current value).

Yori was once dominated by warm shallow seas and had an extensive ecosystem, but most of the water is now gone, and only a few lifeforms survive on the harsh surface. Much of the water was lost into space (and is still detectable to scientific scanners), but there remains a vast network of underground rivers and lakes. Collectively (and misleadingly) called the “Undersea”, this network ranges from just below the surface to dozens of kilometers underground. The deeper parts of the Undersea are superheated, and steam is often vented in the many volcanic eruptions this planet experiences. The Undersea was evidently once part of the surface oceans long ago; fish and other marine creatures inhabit the Undersea in abundance, although they are now evolved for a life without light. The Undersea ecosystem is sustained by a combination of hydrothermal vents and a curious evolutionary adaptation called “Desert Coral”.

The general surface geology in many areas is composed of limestone, dolomite, and other carbonaceous strata carved into tortuous mazes and canyons. Analysis shows that at about the time Yori lost its seas, the water had become suddenly (in geological timescales) acidic. Often these formations are buried under the shifting sand dune ‘seas’ that slowly migrate across the planet’s surface. There are also several mountain ranges of silicate bedrock created by the numerous volcanoes.

Despite the lack of water, not everywhere on Yori is desert or mountain. In the northern hemisphere (50°N) a single small sea survives! The frequent winds whip the surface up, giving rise to the sea’s name of White Wash. White Wash covers an area of 150,000 square kilometers (or about 0.15% of the total world surface).

Scarland is a great rift valley 10000 km long. It extends from White Wash in a south-westerly direction half way around the planet. It reaches 16°S after 6500 km where it forks: one branch running due west for another 3500 km before petering-out, another branch running due south for 1500 km before also petering-out. The valley floor of Scarland is the only genuinely fertile land on the planet. A great river runs the entire length of Scarland, including both branches, and eventually empties itself into White Wash.

Two other features of note are “Salt Top” and “Soft Spot”. While the desert regions have numerous salt flats “Salt Top”, in the northern hemisphere, is a single unbroken salt flat covering half a million square kilometers. It is thought that Salt Top is where Yori’s last major sea ‘died’, and as

such it holds a certain romantic fascination for Yori’s inhabitants. Soft Spot is a region of 1.5 million square kilometers near the equator. It is a geological anomaly: the rock here is broken and pulverized to considerable depth and rich in easily recoverable tin and uranium ores.

The general lack of surface water on Yori has given rise to some unpleasant extremes of temperature. In the open desert during periastron, noon day temperatures at the equator reach 60°C, well above the human limit of habitability. At the same location the temperature drops at night to a comfy 16°C. Meanwhile, the long polar nights within the northern arctic circle can see temperatures slide to a chilly -45°C (during apastron).

Cultural

40% of Yori’s population are human while the other 60% are a minor race who call themselves the “Zhurphani” (confusingly they also use the term to apply to all local inhabitants including Humans). Prior to contact with humaniti, the race called themselves the “Zhurph”. Archaeological research indicates they arrived on Yori by STL generation ship approximately 3000 years ago (there is almost nothing left of this vessel). The identity and location of their homeworld remain a mystery.

The Zhurphani are 2 meter tall bipedal omnivores. They weigh from 40 to 150 kilograms and have two arms. They have 2 eyes in the front of their head with 2 ears above and a many-toothed mouth below. They can see in both normal light and in infrared. They appear to be vaguely reptilian but are actually warm-blooded. [Initial Zhurphani attributes: as Human except STR=3d6, END=3d6, EDU=2d6-2. Initial Yorian-born Human attributes: as normal except EDU=2d6-2. Both gain an additional pre-enlistment skill over and above normal.]

Over time the Human and Zhurphani cultures have merged into a fairly homogenous mix. There is now just one culture which is a fusion of the two. Evidence can be seen in the local language which borrows words from Zhurphani and Human languages and mixes them together. For example, the outermost gas giant of the system has a Zhurphani name (Dusoswa) while its ring system is called Dusoswaring (Dusoswa-Ring), an Anglic suffix to the Zhurphani name. There are no racial tensions between Zhurphani and Yorian-born Humaniti.

Yorians operate on a shortened version of the Vilani day cycle. Each local day is split into four equal periods of 7 hours 21 minutes: Work, rest, work, sleep. The “work” periods are in the morning and evening, allowing people to find shelter from the noon-day heat during the “rest” period. This system was apparently developed for outside use in the equatorial regions (including Scarland) but has become a planetary standard, being also used both in the polar regions and inside the modern air-conditioned cities. (A popular children’s rhyme includes the chorus “Mad dogs and Solomani go out in the midday sun!” as a warning to avoid the extremes of heat.)

The dominant religion of Yori has always been a form of polytheistic animism, but at different times different gods have been in ascendance. Which god is dominant has a profound effect on Yorian culture. Many details of Yori's religion are unknown as viewing the "A'chim Papers" (liturgical writings) is restricted to Yori's "Advisors" (members of the government legislative council). These Advisors reveal their interpretations of the A'chim Papers as and when they feel it is appropriate. Regardless of which god is dominant, the religion centers around the belief that by appeasing the gods the believer can avoid the slave pits of "Corsu", the mythical Yorian hell.

At the time of the second Imperial Grand Survey (published in 1065) the god "Chaarni" (or "he who moves the sand dunes") was dominant. The IISS survey team noted that Yori had a monolithic culture displaying a positive attitude towards change and new ideas, and a significant drive towards progress. Locally produced goods were technology level 13. The population was unaggressive with a strong anti-war sentiment (there was no local military despite signs of significant past militarism) and generally xenophilic. Many starship atlases still carry this information.

However, by 1104 the god "Zeludeous" (or "deep one of the undersea") had displaced Chaarni, and a sea-change in Yorian culture occurred. In Yorian mythology Zeludeous is an angry god who calls for a return to traditional ways of life. Under his/her influence (gender is not clear) Yori has become conservative, almost reactionary towards change, and all progress has stagnated. Many of the local population have forsaken the use of high tech goods in their day-to-day lives, and this has caused a collapse of local manufacturing sophistication to technology level 10. The attitude towards offworlders has also cooled and can be considered as "aloof". Many tech level 12 and 13 relics can be found abandoned (still in working order) or unused in long-term storage. Increasingly, new tech level 7 items of local manufacture are becoming popular. The lack of access to the A'chim Papers make it impossible to guess how long the Zeludeous phase will last or what will characterize the next phase.

Yori's legislature is an elite council of 80 senior "Advisors" (and 720 junior "Advisors") who make decisions and advise the population. Their deliberations are behind closed doors, and whatever their personal and professional differences might be, they present a united front in public. Nothing is officially enforced; the executive and judicial functions are carried out by the general public. These recent changes make it arguable that Yori's government is really a religious autocracy, but when surveyed by the IISS, just before 1065, Yorian society and its council of Advisors give the appearance of a feudal technocracy.

Another recent change is the formation of a planetary militia (contradicting the prior anti-war sentiment). Currently with a strength of 100 battalions, it is equipped to tech level 13 standards (the current disdain for high tech goods not extending to military matters apparently). With the current tensions in the Spinward Marches, this has been bolstered by a Colonial Lift Infantry Brigade (also tech level 13), which doubles up as a training cadre for the planetary

militia. The Advisors have also commissioned a squadron of System Defense Boats, although so far only one SDB has been built.

Yori's local law level is rated at 7, and this generally applies to all areas other than personal freedom and offworld trade. There are no laws governing personal freedoms (visitors may be forgiven for assuming there are strict rules on religious behavior, but the almost total subservience to the local religion appears voluntary). Laws covering offworld trade are rated at level 10.

Trade

Yori's starport consists of a single downport called "Geronemo Field". Geronemo Field, and its attended startown (called just "Geronemo"), is located in the desert at about 12°N. It sits astride the monorail link from Market (in Scarland) to "Soft Spot" (the key mining region of the planet). Geronemo has a population of 564,000, which makes it the 13th largest settlement on Yori.

Geronemo Field is a square area of rough ground 2 kilometers on each side and bounded by a 4 story high solid stone wall. Part of the south and west walls are thicker and contain all the starport facilities (including traffic control, the passenger terminal, warehousing, local SPA offices, and maintenance docks). The landing area itself is little more than cleared level ground, more in keeping with a class E starport, but the wall facilities are definitely of class C standards. Refueling and external power for landed ships is supplied by a fleet of specialized ground vehicles (there is no built-in refueling system or power grid to the landing area). A company of Imperial Marines (TL15) provide physical security within the starport and maintain passport control on the XT line (usually 25% are on duty at any one time).

Geronemo Field is run for profit by YAC (Yorian Airfield Consortium), a consortium of the Yorian central government, the Imperial SPA, Naasirka, and Sternmetal LIC. The starport charges a basic landing fee of Cr350 per 1000 dttons of ship (or part thereof) per week. This covers landing and berthing, general handling, use of standard starport facilities, and even cargo warehousing (within reason). Should a ship require full dry-dock facilities (needed for annual maintenance and significant repairs) they can be had for Cr350 per dtton of ship per day; any parts and labor are extra.

Non-streamlined starships which cannot land at the downport can make a 'virtual' landing: For the same price as if they had landed, they can make use of the starport's small craft (within reason), use the starport facilities, and even land their own small craft at the starport at no extra cost. The downport fleet of small craft include 41 modular cutters (with a variety of modules), 2 launches, and a general purpose lighter. There are no orbital dry-dock facilities.

There is a flat trade tax of Cr2 per dtton of cargo (or part thereof) regardless of its nature. This trade tax is applied to both imports and exports (i.e. crossing the XT line) but not to cargo being transhipped (i.e. kept within the starport).

Businesses selling ship spare parts, etc, keep their stock within the starport to avoid tax. The tax goes directly to the Yorian central government. Naasirka and Sternmetal LIC (and their registered subsidiaries) are exempt from the trade tax.

At its height Geronemo Field handled 6,500 passengers and 25,000 dtons of freight per week. 85% of this was transacted with nearby Regina; the rest was spread between Roup, Jengha, Inthe, Dinomn, Retha, and Extolay. This has now dropped to an average of 1,000 passengers and 4,000 dtons of freight per week. While most of this reduction was in trade with Regina, all regular trade with Extolay has now ceased. However, given that the Zeludeous phase is temporary, YAC has kept up the starport's full maintenance. As such, Geronemo Field does not look run down, merely not busy (visitors may think they've arrived during a public holiday).

Yori's natural resources include an abundance of tin, crystals and gems, radioactives, and petrochemicals. The mining company Sternmetal LIC runs several franchise operations in cooperation with the Yorian central government (an "Advisor" is allowed on the board of directors of the franchisee as a full voting member). Due to

the recent religious changes (mentioned above in the Culture section) all mining operations on Yori have dramatically slowed. Negotiations between the Yorian "Advisors" and Sternmetal LIC are ongoing.

In addition to mining, the population manufactures computer/electronic/cybernetic parts, air/rafts, precision machine tools, and ATVs. Major computer companies like Cheetah Industries (a subsidiary of Naasirka) and ISMM have operations here, though Cheetah Industries has recently relocated to new facilities on Hnetka (in the outer system), and ISMM never fully recovered its reputation after the problems with its Series-1519 computers (as used in Kinunir class Colonial Cruisers).

Population

As of the Second Imperial Grand Survey the population stood at 73,702,000, and it has not changed much since. There are only 6 cities with a population more than 1 million. About two thirds of the population live in Scarland, the rest in numerous high mountain communities.

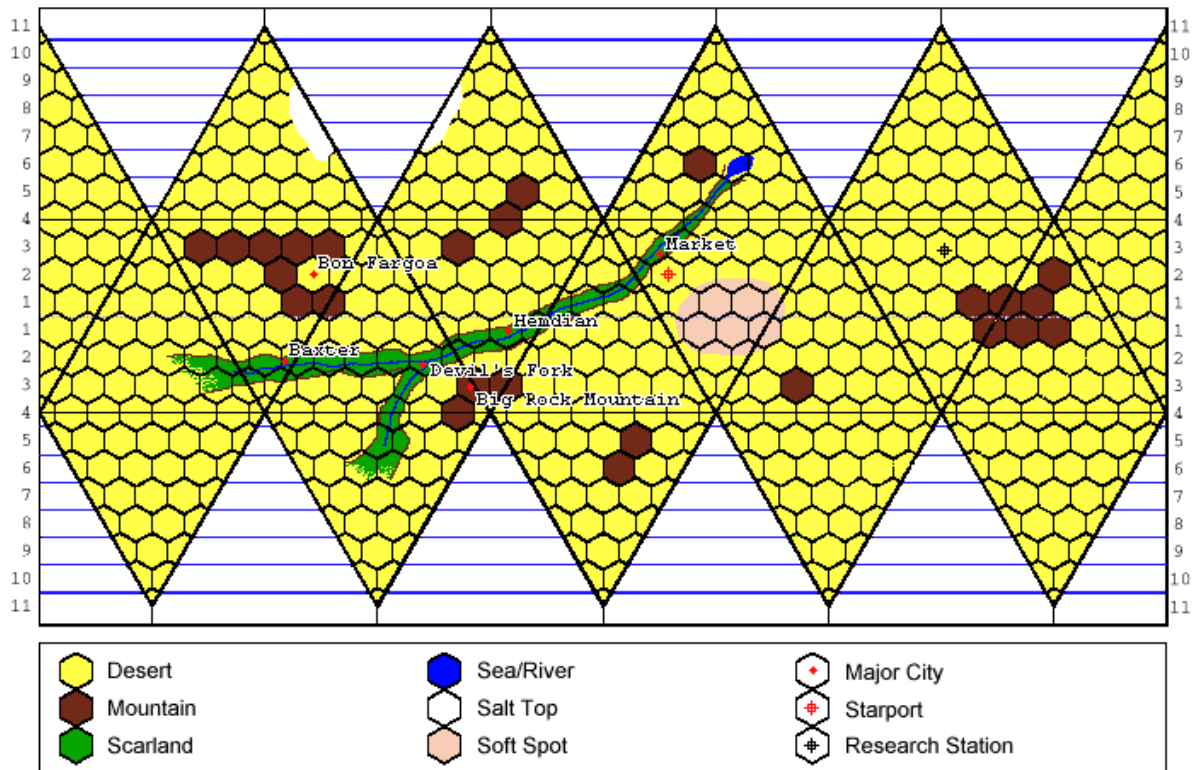
Primary cities	Population	Location (and hex row)	Comment
Big Rock Mtn.	8,499,000	Shield Mountains (S-3)	Planetary capital
Devil's Fork	8,840,000	Scarland (S-2)	Strategic commercial hub
Market	7,644,000	Scarland (N-3)	Major commercial hub
Hemdian	7,885,000	Scarland (S-1)	Agricultural center
Bon-Fargoa	7,052,000	Claw Mountains (N-2)	Mountain stronghold
Baxter	4,313,000	Scarland (S-2)	Industrial center

Big Rock Mountain: Big Rock Mountain is the capital of Yori and the second largest city. Located in the Shield Mountains the city started out as a simple cave community. In its 800 year history it has grown into a warren of underground caves and tunnels making it the largest subterranean city in the Regina subsector. Today Big Rock Mountain boasts the Advisors' Council (Yori's religion-dominated legislature), a major financial services quarter (including Yori's stock market and commodities exchange), museums, theaters, and first class shopping facilities. A sizeable portion of the local economy is geared around the tourist industry, though most tourists are Yorian.

Devil's Fork: At the point where the west and south branches of the Scarland River meet on their journey towards White Wash lies the 2000 year old stone fortress of Devil's Fork. Built in an age when Yori was Tech Level 5,

its battlements and even its iron cannons still survive today as a tourist attraction. 2000 years ago this fork in the river was a vital hub of commerce as trade from each of the three branches of Scarland all passed this point. The cannons of the fortress gave total dominion of Scarland to the Lords of Devil's Fork, and under them a market town grew. The Lords of Devil's Fork collected 10% of all goods passing through and remained in power for 528 years. Then one day, there was a change in the dominant god, the Advisors withdrew their services, and the people (including the fortress staff) rose up and killed their Lords. After this the fortress was abandoned despite never having been bested in war. Today, Devil's Fork is still a major hub of commerce and has become the largest city on the planet (the outer suburbs are actually beyond the range of the fortress' cannons), and the Fortress itself has become a major tourist attraction.

World Map Grid		This geodesic map grid divides the spherical surface of any globe into twenty triangles, each of which is further divided into hexagons. Note terrain identities and other planetographic features of the world in these hexagons. Total number of map hexes per triangle: 25. Total number of map hexes: 500.	
Date of Preparation	001-1065	Hexagon Scale in Kilometers (Circumference divided by 35)	505 km per hex



Market: The name says it all. While Geronemo provides cheap housing, hotels, and bars for the starport staff and visitors, Market is where the action is. Market has the distribution warehouses that store Yori's imports before they are shipped to their final destinations. Market has the export warehouses for everything leaving the planet (other than the production of Soft Spot). Market has the freight brokers, the corporate hiring halls, and Sternmetal LIC's planetary HQ offices. Market has its seamier side too, where anything is for sale at a price. A combined passenger and freight monorail link connects with Geronemo (and Geronemo Field) and Soft Spot in one direction, and travels the length of Scarland out to Baxter in the other direction.

Hemdian: Hemdian is a large and fairly new Scarland city originally built on agriculture. While other Yorian cities may have their fair share of sky-scrappers and tall buildings, no building in Hemdian is over 4 stories tall. The exception being the ubiquitous rice silos which are usually 6 stories tall and almost seem to exist on every street. Given the low housing density, Hemdian is the most sprawling city on Yori, but its wide streets and careful planning means that the streets are not congested with traffic. It is also the cleanest city on Yori. The recent cooling of attitudes towards

offworlders is not evident in Hemdian; the locals are still open and friendly towards offworld visitors.

Bon-Fargo: Located in the Claw Mountains in the northern hemisphere, Bon-Fargo is a great fortress city, not dissimilar in many ways to the fortress at Devil's Fork. Unlike Devil's Fork fortress, Bon-Fargo encompasses its city within its walls. There are less than 100 kilometers between the city's outer walls and a natural wall of mountains on three side and open desert on the fourth. Constructed and armed to Tech Level 6 and early 7 standards, the violent fall of Bon-Fargo to desert raiders over 600 years ago represented the end of the last militaristic phase and the start of over half a millennium of peace on the planet. Today Bon-Fargo is a regional capitol for Yori's northern tribes and a center for the planet's gem trade.

Baxter: Baxter is a fairly new city, less than 200 years old. It is an industrial center and specializes in ground vehicle construction. In addition to Baxter Motors (from which the city gets its name), both Phoenix Motors and the Alchemy Motor Company have major factories here. Baxter Motors is a subsidiary of General Products and produces GP brand ATVs for offworld export.

Communication Within the Gaming Group

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Let me tell you a story. I once played in a brief campaign, set a few hundred years in the future, where the PCs were a team of secret agents working for a secret multinational organization. We were supposed to investigate strange incidents and situations and find out if there was some conspiracy from beyond the solar system to conquer Earth, Mars and Venus (the settled worlds). In the course of the game, we were going to find out "the truth", help save life as we knew it, etc. In other words, it sounded like the campaign was going to be along the lines of "*The X-Files* in space".

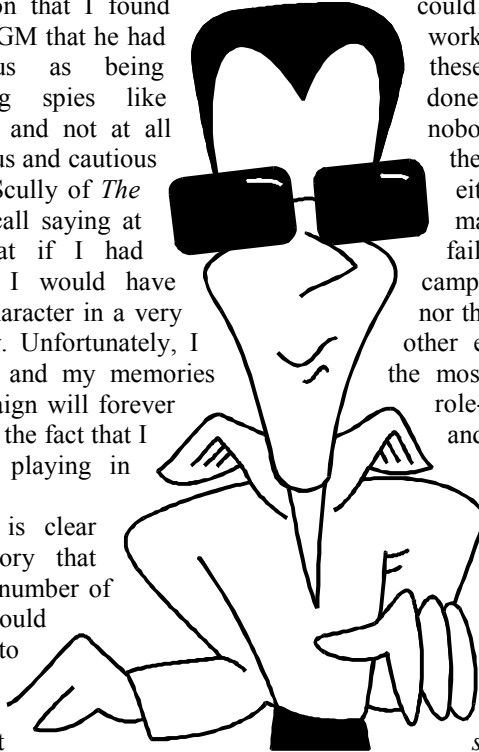
However, I had a number of problems with the campaign. One was that the players designed their characters without taking into consideration the need for our characters to get along with each other. Thus, we wound up with three individuals (one of whom was a psychotic knife-wielding murderer) and one pair who had worked together before the campaign began (the computer-hacking anarchists). My character was nominally the group leader because of his army background, but it was beyond my ability as a leader to make our dysfunctional team of characters functional. At the end of the first session, I had to present a report to H.Q., in which I summarized my impression of the team's first mission (everyone went off and did their own thing, we were lucky to achieve our mission goal) and made the point that the team was not capable of working together. H.Q. (i.e. the GM) had to tell my character that he was stuck with the people assigned to his command, as they were "the best that could be found". Things grew progressively worse as time passed, and I was happy to leave the campaign.

The day after the last session I played in, we (three of the players and the GM) sat around and talked about the way the campaign had gone. It was at

this discussion that I found out from the GM that he had envisaged us as being swashbuckling spies like James Bond, and not at all like the serious and cautious Mulder and Scully of *The X-Files*. I recall saying at the time that if I had known this, I would have played my character in a very different way. Unfortunately, I didn't know, and my memories of that campaign will forever be colored by the fact that I didn't enjoy playing in that game.

I think it is clear from my story that there were a number of things I could have done to try and avoid the problems that did crop up once we began playing. Most obviously, the GM and I could have talked about what kind of secret agents the PCs were going to be before the campaign began, and not once it was all over (for me, at least). Both of us assumed that the game world was going to be a certain way, and that everyone else had made the same assumptions about the way things were going to be. I got it wrong, and my error ruined my enjoyment of the game.

Another thing that I should have done but didn't was talk with the other players about the characters we would play, and how they would interact with each other. The GM did a good job of making sure we had a good mix of fighters, computer experts and burglars; however, when it came to characters who could get along with each other and work as a team to achieve our common goal or goals, we failed to create a group of people who



could be friends, or at least working partners. Both of these things I should have done but didn't. Admittedly, nobody else thought that they should do them either, but that doesn't make up for my personal failing. In this particular campaign, neither the GM nor the players talked to each other enough about some of the most important aspects of role-playing: cooperating and having fun.

I have given you a specific example: let me now talk in general terms. My understanding of how groups of role-players function revolves around the idea of a *social contract*. A *social contract* is a voluntary agreement between equals, in which some may give up certain rights or powers to others. However, everyone continues to have some rights or powers; there are checks and balances held by various members of the group.

It seems to me that this idea of a *social contract* applies to role-playing groups. Everyone agrees to participate, and one person is accepted as GM by the others, who take the more limited role of players. The GM has potentially autocratic powers over what happens in a session, especially regarding the game world and the results of events within the game setting, but players do not forfeit their rights to withdraw from the game or to ask for explanations from the GM. To make an analogy, the GM has executive control over the game, but the players possess at the very least the *reserve powers*, the right to choose whether or not to take part, and the GM may choose to share

some of the executive powers with the players.

Of course, the *social contract* is more than just a division of roles and power within a group. The basis of the *social contract* is that all participants, players and GMs alike, agree to place certain constraints on their actions and behavior during the game. In most cases, this consent is not consciously verbalized, but given without thought: for instance, how many of you have said to another person in your gaming group, “I voluntarily accept that whether or not my character succeeds in opening this locked door depends on me rolling equal to or less than a certain number on these dice”? We accept that only the GM can decide that a character automatically succeeds at a task like opening a lock: only the GM can say, “Don’t bother rolling, you can open the lock even though your skill level is less than 100%”.

There is usually very little debate on issues like the two examples given above: questions of procedure, rules application and rules interpretation are intimately related to the power structure created by the division of the group into the GM and the players, and gamers rarely disagree over who should be the one to make such decisions in a game. Individual players may disagree with a decision, but they still respect the right of the GM to make that decision. Most of the serious problems within a gaming group do not revolve around the rules, but are caused by the differing expectations of the people involved.

To deal with an obvious case, let me make the point that my discussion revolves around the concept that people derive their enjoyment from role-playing a character in a friendly and cooperative group. Sometimes, people derive their enjoyment from role-playing a unfriendly and volatile group of murderous and greedy thugs who spend their time watching their backs because the other player characters may stab them when they aren’t looking. That’s a perfectly valid version of the *social contract*, but it’s not one I want to address in this article: I’m going to focus on the *social contract* for a group where the participants want to work together to

have fun (even if that fun is being a group of murderous and greedy thugs who trust each other implicitly and just stab the backs of all the NPCs who aren’t looking).

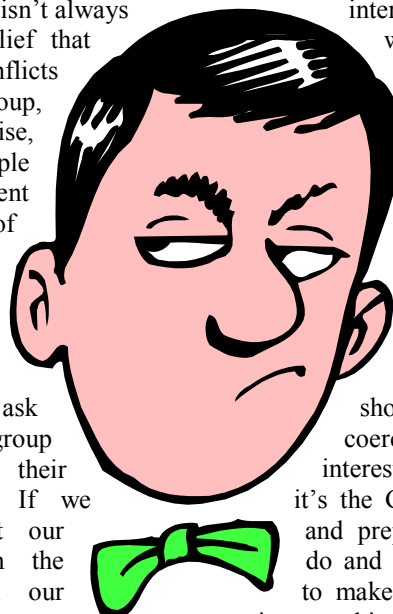
At the heart of role-playing is the idea that it’s meant to be fun. Role-playing is a hobby; we role-play because we enjoy it. Furthermore, when we role-play together in a group, it seems reasonable to conclude that everyone is meant to have fun by being part of a group. In other words, everyone is responsible for trying to ensure that everyone else is able to have fun when role-playing: it isn’t the responsibility of the GM or the individual player alone. However, what we have to do to ensure that everyone is able to have fun isn’t always clear. It’s my belief that most serious conflicts within any group, gaming or otherwise, occur because people have different expectations of what being part of the group means, assume that everyone else thinks like them, and don’t ask the other group members what their expectations are. If we don’t talk about our expectations with the other people in our gaming group, sooner or later someone’s expectations will not be met or will be denied, and there will be a problem.

One point I feel should be made is that participation is an important part of making a role-playing group cohesive and stable. Obviously, the GM is meant to be prepared to run a session when the group has assembled. In return for ceding the GM control over the game universe and the running of the campaign, players expect that the GM will regularly provide them with something for their characters to do or with a forum for interacting in character with each other. If the GM does not run, the entire *social contract* is invalidated, because there is no game. The converse of this may be less

obvious, but it is no less important: when the GM does present the players with something to do or a forum to act within, they should be interested and willing to participate.

It is incredibly frustrating for GMs when their players do not care about what they have prepared, and are “going through the motions” rather than be involved in the game. If a scenario does not interest you as a player, it is your responsibility to tell the GM and explain *why*. Whenever I GM, I assume that my players are enjoying themselves until they tell me otherwise: no GM is telepathic. I have played in a number of campaigns where at times I found myself thinking, “What am I doing here? I’m not interested, I’m not having fun, why am I bothering?” Did I try to involve my character? Did I try to interest myself in what was happening in the game setting? Sometimes, yes; sometimes, I sat there waiting for the GM to do something when he or she didn’t know anything was wrong. Why should the GM have to coerce the players into being interested in a scenario? Surely it’s the GM’s responsibility to try and prepare interesting things to do and the players’ responsibility to make sure their characters are interested in what’s going on!

When it comes to interacting with other players in character, I have noticed that some players have strange ideas of socially acceptable behavior. It seems that things that would be offensive if people did them in real life are acceptable when role-playing: I have, among other things, seen one player reduced to tears by another player who clearly believed it was acceptable to continually insult and harass if he was in character. Some people seem to have a certain mentality that “what happens on the field stays on the field”. However, not everyone shares this belief, and as I’m sure you all realize by now, making assumptions about other people’s beliefs, interests or preferences is a risky business. Whether the player or the



character is obnoxious, the group can be disrupted by the antisocial behavior, and this is, in my opinion, undesirable.

Players are meant to form a working group. Sometimes, a character may be an unwilling participant in the group, but the player should not be unwilling to play. If they are, why are they playing? Role-playing is a voluntary activity: nobody is forcing you to spend your time playing or running a game. It is *not* the responsibility of the players or the GM to keep a recalcitrant character in the group just because the player wants to participate in the game. A character's motivations should be compatible with the GM's campaign *and* the motivations of the other characters. Personally I think that players should try and develop ties of friendship or common interest between their characters, because groups stay together more plausibly when these links are in place. If you want your character to dislike the group and not want to associate with them, that's fine, but you had better work out why your character stays with them

anyway. Motivating your character is your responsibility, and no-one else's.

I have discussed at length the concept that players and their GM should try to minimize disagreements between each other by moderating their behavior and trying to cooperate with each other. It should be noted, however, that not all problems can be solved by talking about them, and sometimes it may be necessary for someone to leave a role-playing game or group because of irreconcilable differences between what that person wants and what the others in the group want. For example, one player enjoys combat, but the other four players dislike combat and prefer to resolve potential crises by diplomacy, stealth and careful planning instead of the frequent use of plasma rifles. The player who enjoys combat simply isn't going to get enough of what they want out of role-playing if they stay with this group: the wishes of one person are not more important than the wishes of four. If that player cannot put up with extended periods of boredom,

only broken by the occasional flurry of violence (possibly deliberately included by the GM so that the player has something to do), they should find a gaming group that more closely matches their interests than the one they are currently in. Attempts at compromise do not always lead to a consensus, and even if it does the consensus may leave everybody partially dissatisfied and unhappy.

Some players tend to see a game as a case of the GM serving the players, interesting them in what is happening, and letting them do what they want. This attitude is unfair on the GM: the game is a shared enterprise, and everyone is responsible for the success of the game and the happiness of the group. Gamers should talk to each other about what they want out of role-playing so that everyone can have the greatest opportunities for fun and enjoyment. I know it can be hard to criticize your friends or argue with them, but the only way to avoid or resolve problems is to try and deal with them: problems don't go away when they are ignored.



"Nice Backhand"

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T. Seeling

Review: Guardians of Order's Tenchi Muyo! RPG

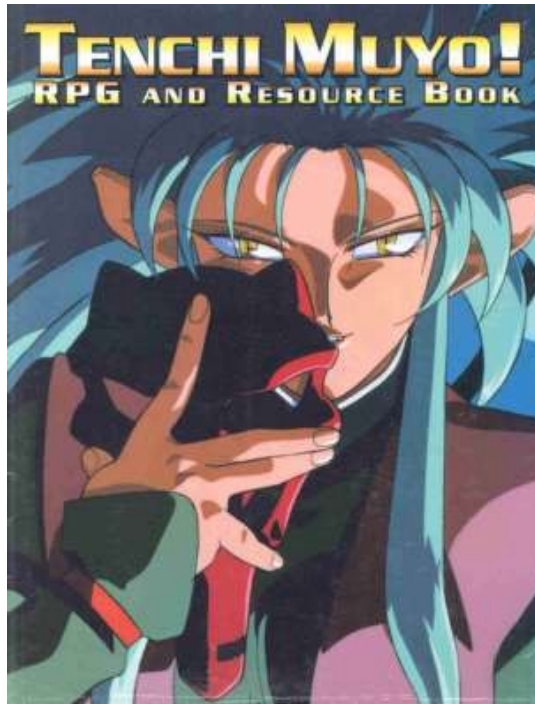
Peter Flanagan (rolandx@silver-gateway.com)

Guardians of Order has been enormously successful of late. These talented creators have won accolades from their peers with its multi-genre books *Big Eyes*, *Small Mouth* and *Big Robots*, *Cool Starships*, while sales on the *Sailor Moon Role-Playing Game and Resource Book* have been wildly successful. It would be perfectly understandable for Guardians of Order to stick with what works and milk their cash cows rather than taking another risk on a less well-known license.

Fortunately for fans of the Tri-Stat system and *Tenchi Muyo!*, they chose to take the plunge with the *Tenchi Muyo! RPG and Resource Book*.

For those unfamiliar with the setting, *Tenchi Muyo!* (which can be translated in many ways—the name is a play on words—but is usually read to mean “No Need For Tenchi!”) is about Tenchi Masaki, a seemingly normal Japanese teenager, whose life turns upside-down when he accidentally releases a beautiful female demon who turns out to be a beautiful alien space pirate. Unlike many Japanese anime tales of a luckless lad buried in an avalanche of beautiful, superhuman women, however, Tenchi is different. He is a genuinely good and likeable young man who just happens to be a lot more than he seems, and therein hangs a tale of unrequited love, friendship, romantic (and sexual) comedy, space battles, super powers, and lots of collateral damage.

As with its other licensed products, Guardians of Order has created an amazingly comprehensive resource for fans of the original *Tenchi Muyo!* OAV (original animation video, an animated series released directly to video) series. Though no knowledge of the series is required—the book includes extensive synopses of all the OAV episodes—the guide is clearly meant for the enjoyment of die-hard Tenchi fans as well. The character descriptions are among the most exhaustive ever written for a role-playing game, and Tenchi's world is covered in minute detail. From a complete diagram of the home of the Masaki family to a



comprehensive look at the Galactic Union, from Detective Kiyone (who only appears in the OAV as a “fictional” character in a story told by another character) to Tenchi himself, it holds up as a “Resource” book every bit as well as it does as an RPG. Naturally, all of this background information is extremely useful to a GM planning a campaign set in Tenchi's universe.

The game mechanics should be familiar to anyone who has used the Tri-Stat system; like all the previous anime licenses put out by Guardians of Order, *Tenchi Muyo!* uses their simple and effective house system. There are three statistics: Body, Mind, and Soul, each rated from 1 (inept) to 12 (best in the universe), with many possible character “Attributes” (which enhance the character) and “Defects” (which limit the character). But *Tenchi Muyo!* contains the most comprehensive version of the game to date, with abbreviated but complete rules for the alien powers of Tenchi's house guests, mecha construction, and skills. Though all of the powers are clearly restricted to the setting, many character's abilities are used as examples of “unique” powers and skills, to help players determine the value of talents not described in the rules section. For example, both of Tenchi's primary would-be girlfriends, Ryoko and Ayeka, have unique characteristics.

In addition, Guardians of Order goes to great lengths to make playing either an existing character or a player's original creation a simple matter. No effort is made to discourage players from creating characters as powerful as the main characters, or from playing those characters—quite the opposite, in fact.

The quality of the book's construction is superb. Printed in full color on tough, glossy paper, the only way it could be sturdier is as a hardcover. Crammed with images from the OAV, the graphics are clearly, amusingly, and often cleverly used to illustrate various powers and defects without detracting from the text.

There are a few very minor problems with the book. Foremost among them is the character sheet. A faded version of the cover graphic is used as the background on the character sheet to excellent dramatic effect—but when copied on a black and white copier, it can render almost a third of the page useless. Setting the copier as light as possible will mitigate this. A few minor characters are given biographies but no statistics. This is understandable, since their abilities are never shown. However, as several of them would make excellent antagonists (most notably a pink-haired fellow who comes to challenge Tenchi to a duel), some extrapolation would be appreciated.

Also, since the book contains very complete synopses of the OAV series, spoilers abound. While this should be obvious to anyone buying the book, there's always two percent who don't get the word. In a similar vein, the only indication that the book includes nudity and adult (read: overtly sexual) situations is a small notation on the back cover stating that some readers might find the contents objectionable. Anyone coming to the game from the bowdlerized version soon to be shown on Cartoon Network is in for some major surprises. Finally, Ryoko's unique power (the ability to create minor illusions) is not explained. Exactly what qualifies as a "minor illusion" would help.

Of moderate curiosity is the relative cost of mecha when compared to powers. Even a hardsuit of moderate power is likely to overwhelm all but the mightiest unarmored heroes. This appears to be a stylistic decision, due to how powerful individual heroes tend to be when compared to a space ship. This is certainly borne out by the events of the series and the character construction system presented in the second edition of *Big Eyes, Small Mouth*.



Still, this is ultimately nitpicking. The *Tenchi Muyo! RPG and Resource Book* is highly recommended for fans of anime, the Tri-Stat system, and novices and experienced gamers alike. Whether a gaming group is looking for light-hearted comedy, soap-opera drama, epic adventure, in-depth characterization, or any combination of the above, there is definitely a need for *Tenchi*.

Monty Haul's Top Ten Cousins

The Gamemaster's Hall of Shame:

Peter Maranci (peter@maranci.net)
<http://www.maranci.net/rq.htm>

10) Minnie Haul (AKA "That Cheap Bastard")

Quote: "Okay. After twenty-seven sessions you have finally slain the Three Giant Dragons of Chaos. In the treasure vault you find 12 copper pieces and a rusty fork. Who gets the fork?"

Good Points: You'll never be over-encumbered.

Bad Points: Majority of characters killed by starvation, plus risk of lockjaw from rusty fork.

9) Mr. Softee (Also known as "Pathetic Guy" & "The Amazing Mushman")

Quote: "You're down 3 hit points? Uh... suddenly the troll falls over and spontaneously combusts! Magically, the smoke heals you."

Good Points: Characters never die. Ever. No matter what.

Bad Points: Who cares?

8) Anger Man (AKA "The Master" & "It Wasn't Me")

Quote: "What? You don't like the King? Your limbs fall off."

Good Points: Order and discipline.

Bad Points: Discipline und Order.

7) Das KillMeister (AKA "Dr. Death" & "Why Do I Keep Playing?")

Quote: "Better roll up six characters each. That should last the first session. Maybe. [chortle]."

Good Points: The thrill of danger.

Bad Points: The boredom of constant defeat.

6) The Sexist Pig (AKA "The Sleazeball" & "L'il Friskies")

Quote: "They rape you and you love it, like all women. Ha ha ha! Now you're pregnant!"

Good Points: Not boring.

Bad Points: Extremely irritating. Will emotionally scar any player under the age of sixteen. Knows no shame.

5) Das PunMeister (AKA "STOP!" & "Please, I Beg of You, Kill Him")

Quote: "A killer Ent? WOODn't you know. I'd LEAF him alone. Bet his BARK is worse than his BIGHT!"

Good Points: A wacky, funny, laugh-a-minute guy.

Bad Points: Will not stop.

4) Monotone Man (AKA "ZZZZzzzzzzzz...")

Quote: "Hi. I'm the King." "Hi. I'm the peasant." "Hi. I'm the wizard." "Hi. I'm the knight." "Hi. I'm the Dragon."

Good Points: Will never cancel due to laryngitis.

Bad Points: Save vs. Paralyzation or die.

3) The Drunk (AKA "What's That Smell?" & "Not Again!")

Quote: "H'lo. BLEUUEUERGHH!!! G'bye..."

Good Points: Vivid descriptions of strange, bizarre creatures.

Bad Points: Rarely coherent. Will probably die soon.

2) The Insane Plotter (AKA "Machiavelli" & "Mr. Myxylplyxx")

Quote: "But the twelfth arbitrary conundrum signifies nascent ursinoids rising. Any idiot can see that!"

Good Points: Dazzling, intricate plots, sub-plots, and sub-sub-plots.

Bad Points: Makes you feel really stupid.

AND THE NUMBER ONE GM OF SHAME IS:

1) The Die-Hard (AKA "Old Faithful" and "Gary Gygax Jr.")

Quote: "There is nothing wrong with AD&D™. Nothing. Nothing!"

Good Points: Intense commitment to fantasy gaming, plus owns everything ever published by TSR™.

Bad Points: Cranky. May strike dissenters about the head and shoulders with The Compleat Unearthed Adventurers Wilderness Arcana Survival Handbook Guide (2nd ed.)™.

QUIZ

Question #1: Which of the above have YOU been?

Question #2: Which of the above have I been?

Question #3: So what?

Send quiz answers to your parents. All entries will receive a "Why do you play those silly games?" lecture, free of charge.

This list first appeared in The Wild Hunt #166. An amateur video has also been made of The GM's Hall of Shame, a shameful act in itself. Please email inquiries to the author.

Zines!

Jim Vassilakos (jimvassila@aol.com), San Bernardino, California
<http://members.aol.com/jimvassila>

RPG Magazine & Fanzine Overview

In the process of working on my RPG Magazine index program, I discovered that there are a lot more RPG magazines and fanzines currently in operation than I had ever imagined. Many of them have homepages and are worth checking out.

Paper Magazines & Fanzines:

Carnel

<http://www.geocities.com/shudderfix/carnel>

Published by Robert Rees since 1994, this UK fanzine has covered a variety of games over the years. The most recent issue (#14) includes an article on city design, a generic fantasy adventure involving half-orcs, and a WFRP adventure. Altogether, this is a zine definitely worth getting.

Games Unplugged

<http://www.gamesunplugged.com/>

This is a professional magazine put out by Dynasty Presentations during the past few months. So far, Games Unplugged seems to be trying to cover the entire gamut of gaming with the notable exception of computer games, however, its main focus is on RPGs as well as industry news and profiles of people involved in the industry from art to game design to the business side. This is a great magazine if you want to learn about the people who publish the games.

Masters of Role Playing

<http://www.mastersrpg.com>

Put out by Chalice Publications since 1997, this magazine covers a variety of rpgs. It may be heading toward an electronic format, but so far it's been a paper magazine, and an impressive one at that. Each issue is huge as well as packed with interesting material. Jason Anderson runs the whole thing, and I'm very impressed with his work so far. This is one worth checking out.

Mythic Perspectives

http://www.gnawing.com/mythic_perspectives/mp_index.html

Published by Gnawing Ideas since the Autumn of 1997, Mythic Perspectives focuses exclusively on Ars Magica. If you're a fan of the game, then this magazine is a definite must.

Other Hands

<http://www.otherhands.com>

Chris Seeman (chris1224@aol.com), the magazine's editor/publisher, writes: *Other Hands is the only gaming magazine devoted exclusively to J.R.R. Tolkien's world of Middle-earth. It began in 1993 as an attempt to provide a forum for alternative resource materials for role playing in Middle-earth, often critical of the treatment given by Iron Crown Enterprises' MERP series, but always in a constructive vein with a view to facilitating a more authentic ambiance. The journal's contents range from ready-to-run scenarios to more general explorations of the world, embracing both "scholarly" and more "fannish" interests.*

Speaking personally, I'm extremely impressed by this zine. If you are a fan of MERP or simply a fan of Tolkien, I think you'll find Other Hands a terrific read.

Serendipity's Circle

<http://members.aol.com/serccircle/catacomb.html>

Published since 1994 by Wheality Productions, Serendipity's Circle is devoted to supporting horror and weird fantasy gaming. What is weird fantasy? Well, it's anything that falls outside the normal categories of straight science fiction, high fantasy and superheroes. If you like games like Call of Cthulhu, Nightlife, Whispering Vault, Conspiracy X, or Over the Edge, then you'll like this fanzine.

Warpstone

<http://www.warpstone.darcore.net/>

Warpstone is the magazine of Warhammer FRP, and about all I can say is that it's consistently excellent. I personally don't play Warhammer, but I buy this magazine anyway because the articles are that good. Last I checked, it was edited by John Keane & John Foody. Kudos to both.

The Whisperer (Call of Cthulhu)

http://phoenix.open.ac.uk/~richard_monk/whisperer

Published by Severn Valley Press and edited by Mike Mason, this UK fanzine is only a little over a year old. It focuses exclusively on Call of Cthulhu.

If you know of any other magazine websites that I've missed, please drop me an email with their URLs.

APAs (Fanzine Collectives):

APAs are a lot like electronic mailing lists, except that instead of being distributed via computers, they're distributed on paper. The basic idea is that a bunch of people agree to each submit a regular "zine" to the coordinator who then has the responsibility of organizing all the zines into a larger magazine and distributing it to the members. Each member has an account with the coordinator to cover the printing and postage charges, and the coordinator simply uses money from these accounts to run the APA. Unlike the case with a regular fanzine, however, the coordinator generally doesn't do any editing. Each member sends whatever they want to send, and they are themselves responsible for maintaining the standards and appropriateness of their own content. Hence, APAs generally lack the cohesion of a regular magazine, however, they often make up for it in their wealth of ideas and diversity of opinions.

Alarums & Excursions

<http://www.morat.demon.co.uk/AandE.html>

Monthly since 1975 and still going strong! Kudos to Lee Gold for her dedication to the hobby. If you're new to the world of APAs, this one is a must. Beware, a lot of people in the industry read A&E. Rumor has it that Steve Jackson Games keeps a current issue in the most important room in the building: the bathroom! Let us only hope they can afford toilet paper.

All of the Above

<http://www.io.com/~rgilson/AOTA.htm>

This is a GURPS APA. I know, that's too many initials. Actually, I've only got this one of this one (dated 1991), but the compiler, Robert Gilson (rgilson@io.com) tells me it's still in operation.

Haymaker

<http://www.haymaker.org>

In publication since 1992, Haymaker is the APA of Champions, the Hero system, and Fuzion.

Interregnum

<http://www.fantasylibrary.com/ir>

Originally published by Peter Maranci beginning in 1994 as the successor to The Wild Hunt, this roleplaying APA was later handed to Kiralee McCauley & Joseph Teller, and they are still running it up to the present day. If you like A&E, you're bound to like Interregnum. Also, they are in need of more contributors in order to keep the zine on a regular schedule. Joe & Kira have really put a lot of effort into keeping the APA on its feet, and so if you feel that APAs are worth supporting, lend them a hand by sending a zine.

Electronic Magazines (Web-Subscription):

Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society

<http://jtas.sjgames.com>

JTAS was once a paper magazine published by GDW and dedicated to Traveller. Now it's published on the web by Steve Jackson Games, but it's still dedicated to Traveller (i.e. GURPS:Traveller). As old-timers know, there have been five versions of Traveller to date (Classic, Mega, TNE, T4, and GURPS). Regardless of which you like the best, everyone agrees that SJG is putting out some excellent source material for the game, and having JTAS back in publication is a dream-come-true for the game's fans. If you like Traveller or just like SF-RPGs, this is a magazine worth checking out.

Pyramid

<http://www.sjgames.com/pyramid>

Also published on the web by SJG (although the first 30 issues were originally published on paper), this is the official GURPS magazine. If you play GURPS of any genre, this is a subscription worth getting. Not only will you get access to each new issue as it's published, but you'll also have access to the extensive archives (and believe me, they are truly extensive). All in all, it's a great value.

EZ Hero (Champions/Hero)

<http://www.ezhero.com>

This is an online magazine about Champions & the Hero System.

Electronic Magazines (Free):

Apocrypha

<http://www.apocrypha.com>

Although defunct since 1996, somebody is still paying for the domain name, and articles are still available online. Unfortunately, the articles aren't bound into separate issues as downloadable files, so once they're gone, they're gone (unless somebody goes to the trouble to archive the entire site).

Beyond

<http://www.mindshiftdesign.com/beyondzine>

Beyond labels itself as the online magazine of fantasy, science fiction, horror and gaming of all kinds. Currently on hiatus, it is hosted by MindShift Design, a small gaming company. Like Apocrypha, each of the articles is a separate html file, so easy downloading it right out, however, they are at least segregated into separate issues.

Critical Miss

<http://www.criticalmiss.com>

Billing itself as the magazine for dysfunctional roleplayers, Critical Miss is a very cool html zine.

Demonground

<http://www.demonground.org/>

Published since 1998 by Marcus Bone, Demonground was, for its first seven issues, the electronic fanzine of Dark Conspiracy. Since then, it has broadened its focus to include all horror RPGs. Published in freely downloadable PDF, Demonground is of professional quality, and with each issue it only gets better. I give this one an A+ !

Digital Hero

<http://www.herogames.com/webzine.html>

In publication since last year, this html-zine is the current house-organ of Hero Games. There haven't been any new articles since June, so I'm not sure what's going on.

Dragon's Horde

http://members.xoom.com/DragonHorde/current_issue.htm

Created by C. Kahn and passed on to J. Michael Tipton, this online AD&D fanzine ran for fourteen issues from 1998-99. The issues are either in text or MS-Word format.

Fantasy, Folklore & Fairytales

<http://fff.fantasytoday.com/>

This highly professional magazine is published monthly by Fantasy Today, a division of ChaosManor Enterprises, and is dedicated mainly to publishing short stories (not gaming articles), but since it has a fantasy-focus, I figured I'd include it in this list. It is available in both html as well as PDF. They make you subscribe, but fortunately, it's free.

Guild Companion

<http://www.guildcompanion.com>

This is a very cool and very nice looking html zine. Unfortunately, it is not presented in a bound, downloadable format. Nonetheless, it's well worth taking a look.

Guildsman

<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Starship/8023/gman.htm>

I originally put out this zine during the early 90s while I was in college. Now I'm resurrecting it. Hope you enjoy...

Imazine

<http://www.tcp-ip.or.jp/~panurge/imaz.htm>

Put out by Paul Mason (panurge@tcp-ip.or.jp), Imazine is one of my personal favorites. In Paul's words, "*Imazine fluctuates between being a haven for pointless theory, a plug-site for my own still-unpublished Chinese rolegame, and a discussion forum.*"

Bearing a striking resemblance to Interactive Fantasy, a magazine of the mid-90s, Imazine's articles take up issues pertinent to game design, and the letters column is chock-full of insightful follow-up discussions. It is a "thinking-person's" zine, and some of the articles read like something from an academic journal, but if you're looking for some in-depth analysis of various RPG-related topics, this is the zine for you.

Ivory, Peacocks & Apes

<http://www.louisxiv.demon.co.uk/suspects/ipa/index.html>

Published by Gavin Gregg & Pete Lindsay in 1996, IPA was a general-purpose British RPG fanzine. Now Pete is slowly putting the old issues online. Here's wishing him godspeed.

Netflyer

<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~rpgsoc/netflyer/>

Put out by the Oxford University Role Playing Games Society, only issues 31-33 of this html zine are online, and the last one is dated 1999, so I don't know if this puppy is defunct, or if they just decided it wasn't worth the effort to continue putting Netflyer online.

Opifex

<http://sheertalent.com/rmendez/obmru>

Published by Michael LaBossiere (ontologist@aol.com) from 1996-2000, this e-zine ran for twenty-four issues and covered a variety of RPGs. PDF archives are available.

Places to Go, People to Be

<http://ptgptb.humbug.org.au/>

Published since 1998 out of Australia, this is a very cool html zine.

Role Playing News

<http://www3.shore.net/~typo/rpn/>

Published from the mid-90s up through 1998 by Matthew Strumpf and Mark Christopher, back issues of this RPG newsletter are still available in html.

RPG Evolution

<http://rpgevolution.com>

Billing itself as "The Independent RPG Magazine for the People" this PDF fanzine originally said it wanted to publish material for little-known RPGs. Then, in the 2nd issue, they started producing D20 material. So, in short, I dunno what they're all about yet, but they do have a nice look.

RPG Times

<http://www.ifr-inc.org/rpgtimes>

Originally known as the IRPS Newsletter, this html fanzine has been in publication since 1996.

Sabledrake Magazine

<http://www.sabledrake.com/magazine.htm>

Sabledrake bills itself as an online magazine by gamers, for gamers and for sci-fi/fantasy enthusiasts. In publication since January of this year, it is a monthly html zine with a professional look.

Science & Sorcery

<http://www.scifi-rpgs.com/SNS/index.html>

In publication since last year, this html zine mainly covers science-fiction RPGs, although the previous issue (#6) was an all-Mythus issue. Worth checking out if you're into SF-RPGs.

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comicquest@aol.com

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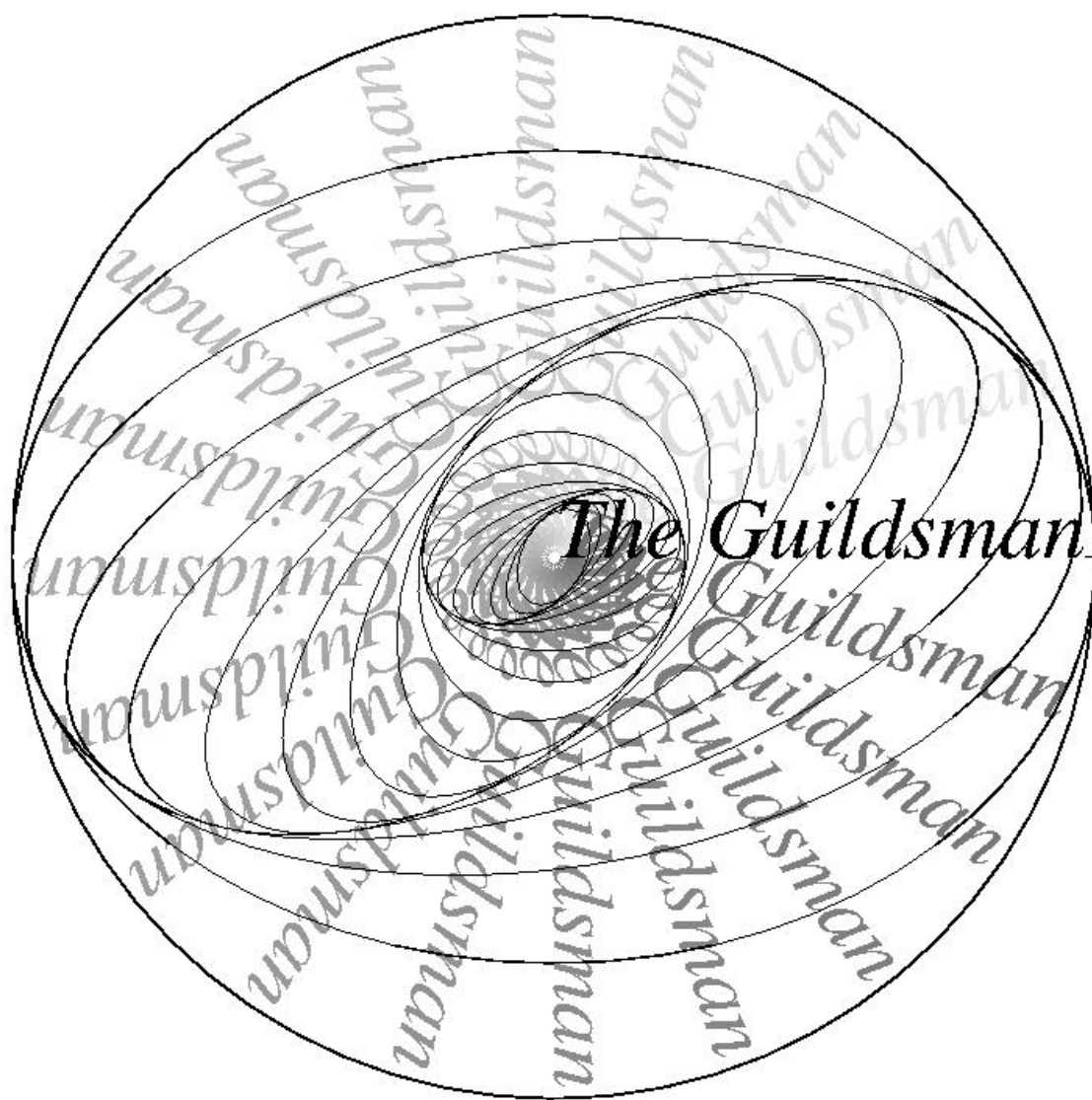
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