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FIRSTLY thanks to all those who bought issue #1. We exceeded our own expectations within one week of release date! You’ll notice that this issue is printed on better paper, it should have been on this paper last issue but one of those commy spies from the White Army must have bribed the printers or something! We continue the Rolemaster scenario which you all loved last issue, and from downtown U.S.A. comes an ‘official’! Villains and Vigilantes scenario. Who says we don’t cater for a variety of tastes, huh? I think you will also be spellbound by Rob Nott’s Magik article, Fire on High. Thanks also for the healthy response to our Cover Story competition. After reading some of the entries, I couldn’t sleep at nights. One entry in particular made me think that there’s some awfully sick people out there (no names mentioned, Mr.****). Anyway, this is issue #2. I hope you like it, I certainly do. Either way, more feedback please.

Ste Dillon.

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The BLACK TOWER

by John S. Davies

part two

THE TOWER OF KELL

to rivalry between the two cults. Their
temple has seven lesser clerics, of
levels 1 to 4 and a 7th level priest, and
they also employ members of the
assassin's guild.

The Plains Of Desolation

The area south of the River Fairan,
and north of the Kelvirov mountains is
a barren waste. The area around
the tower itself is even more desolate.
The vegetation is sickly and the area
is constantly overcast. There is a 20% chance per day (cumulative) that it will
rain.

The area is inhabited by various
creatures set as guards. Encounters
will occur on a roll of 1 on d8. On the
Plains of Desolation, encounters
should be checked after every hour, and
within 3 miles of the tower, every 20
minutes. Roll d8 to determine
counter on the plains, and d10 to
determine encounter within 3 miles of
the tower.

1-6: A group of 5-8 low level undead.
7-8: A group of 2-5 medium level
undead.
9: A group of 1-2 Flaymes.
10: A guard from the tower; a monk
of the order of nightstalker. Note that
the nightstalkers wear black, giving
them a +15 bonus on hiding in dark
and shadows.

The Black Tower

Map B shows the tower, a black,
seamless, stone-like material. It rises
130 feet in total, the upper 50' being
narrower than the base. The walls are
only broken by a door at ground level,
and by arrow slits at several levels.
There are always guards on the roof
areas, though overcast conditions limit
their view to 200' or 100' in the rain.
The ground level door is false; the
only way in is by rope ladder, which can
be dropped from the lower roof level.
The walls of the tower are smooth,
making climbing more difficult than
usual.

Level 7

1. This is an enclosed area surrounding
the top of the central stair. To the left of
the doorway are 4 buckets, used for collecting
water from the roof tank.
2. This is the upper roof of the tower. It is
surrounded by a 5' high, slitted wall. The
roof is patrolled by a nightstalker monk,
armed with a bow and a quiver of 20
arrows. If he hears any commotion from the steps,
he will investigate.
3. This is a 15' square, 8' high, stone tank
in which rainwater is collected. Due to the
local weather conditions it is usually full. A
ladder leads up the side of it.

Level 6: The Cells

All ceilings inside the tower are 15'
high. All doors are made of wood and
open outwards.

1. The guard room. In here are a bed,
ra table, two chairs, five sets of manacles
and a ring of keys hanging on a hook
on the northern wall. There is always at
least one guard in here. There is a 15% chance
that another guard is here, hence a 35% chance that they will be
drinking.
The other rooms on this level are all
cells. Each contain some dirty straw
and a ring fixed to the wall for fixing
manacles to.
2. A farmer was captured and put in
cell 2 days ago.
3. A woman, wearing a plain smock
with dirty, scruffy hair. It is Ellbien,
Priestess of Shayvere. She has been
kept alive by Kell to use the relic. Ellbien
will be very suspicious of anyone in the
tower, but if the party can convince her
they are here to rescue the relic, she will
be inclined to help them. Ellbien knows
the powers of the relic, but will not
disclose its secrets. She will only use
the relic to heal a party member if
necessary.
4. The door to this cell is obviously
stronger than the others in the tower. In
here is a large Ogre slave, used for
heavy duty work and as a deterrent to
intruders. He wears a gold bracelet
worth 35 gold pieces. The bracelet is
magical and acts a tranquilizer. If the
ogre is released, he will accompany the
party, obeying any direct commands,
providing they are simple enough for
him to understand. If the bracelet is
removed, he will attack the next living thing. In role play, the bracelet
detects as channeling.

Level 5: Dining Rooms/
Kitchen

1 and 2. These are dining rooms.
They have tables and chairs, though
the table tops are scarred and stained.
Room 1 is generally used by the guards,
room 2 by the priests.
3. The kitchen, containing standard kitchen equipment (no micro-waves!). In the NW corner of the room is a fire-
place. If the western wall is examined, a row of fine slits will be seen along the
top, acting as smoke vents. The room is,
however, smoky most of the time.
There is a 50% chance that the 'cook'
will be present.
4. Storage room. Boxes of preserved
meat and vegetables are kept here,
along with 3 kegs of weak ale. Tucked away in a corner is a cask of moderately good wine. There is a 15% chance of the cook being there.

5. The cook’s bedroom containing a bed with a chest underneath. The chest is locked (Rolemaster: medium (+0) to pick) and the cook has the key. In the chest are clothing, personal items and an empty pouch.

### Level 4: Guards Quarters

The latrine at the NW corner of the roof, and those on the lower levels, are chutes leading out of the tower. They are washed out once or twice per day. The doors on this level are all stained black.

1. Lower roof area. This area is surrounded by a 5’ high, slitted wall. There are coiled rope ladders for use in entering the tower. The area is patrolled by 4 nightstalker guards, armed with swords and bows. If they hear noises inside, they will investigate.

2 and 3. These are the guards’ barracks. In each there are 10 beds, each with a footlocker (Rolemaster: medium (+0) to pick) containing black clothing and 41 gold pieces. In room 3 is an extra bed belonging to the guard captain. The footlocker is locked (Rolemaster: hard (-10) to pick) and contains the same black clothing, and 15 gold pieces.

10 guards live in each room. At any time there will be 1-6 guards asleep in each room. Each is a light sleeper, and will take 30 seconds to fully awaken. During the night, the guard captain will also be asleep, in room 3.

4. This is the guards’ combat practice room. At the western end of the room are 4 straw dummies and a selection of wooden practice swords. Against the eastern wall are two targets, and 3 quivers of arrows, with 30 arrows per quiver. In front of the dummies is a 20’ square straw mat, used for martial arts practice.

### Level 3: Priests’ Living Quarters

1. This passageway gives a view of the surrounding area, through a number of arrow slits. The passage is patrolled by 4 nightstalker guards.

2-6. These are the living rooms/bedrooms of the lesser priests. Each contains a table, one bed and one chair per occupant. There are writing materials on each table. Each room also contains a locked chest (Rolemaster: medium (+0) to pick) per occupant.

Two lower level clerics live in each of rooms 2, 3, 4 and 5. One higher level cleric lives in room 6.

The chests in rooms 2 and 3 contain clothing, personal effects and 3-30 silver pieces each. The chests in 4 and 5 contain 5-50 silver pieces each, and the chest in 6 contains 97 silver pieces and 3 gold pieces.

7. The study/library. Contains a medium sized table, a writing desk with pens, ink and sheets of paper, 6 chairs, a large bookcase against the northern wall and a smaller, locked bookcase against the eastern wall. This is where the clerics come to study aspects of their religion, and to study the use of spells. If the books on the desk are examined, some of the sheets of paper will have written notes concerning Zyrgal and their religion.

The larger, northern bookcase contains about 30 books. All of these contain writings about Zyrgal, methods of worship, lists of special ceremonies and Zyrgal’s interactions with other gods and goddesses. In total, they could be worth 20-30 gold pieces to a collector of religious texts.

The eastern bookcase is locked (Rolemaster: very hard (-20) to pick).

Rolemaster: In the building are 39 books covering channeling spell lists. 10 books cover the opening channeling lists, to 10th level and another 10 cover the same lists from 11th to 20th level. 5 books cover closed channeling lists: one on locating ways to 10th level, one on creations to 10th level, one on symbolical ways to 10th level, one on calm spirits to 10th level. The fifth covers calm spirits from 11th to 20th level. There are 3 books covering the cleric base lists; summons, communal ways and life mastery, each to 10th level. Finally, there are 11 books covering the evil cleric base lists, one set for 1st to 10th level, one set for 11 to 20th level, and one smaller book covering the 25th level spell from the necromancy list, create undead V (worth 250 GPs). The books of open, closed and cleric base lists could be sold to most temples, but the evil cleric list will have a very limited market. The evil cleric base list books are all cursed, such that any reader who is not a worshipper of Zyrgal must resist a 20th level channeling attack, or be struck by excommunication (curses: evil cleric base list). The cures on the books will resist removal at 20th level. All books to 10th level are worth 70 GPs each. All books to 20th level are worth 120 GPs each, providing a buyer may be found.

For AD&D: in the eastern bookcase are seven scrolls. The bookcase is protected by a glyph of warding which will do 20 points of electrical damage to anybody opening it.
AD&D: In the chest is a book of Vile Darkness, and a scroll of flamestrike, which Kell will use if he has the chance. Dominating the western end of the room is a 8' tall stone throne. It is plain, made of a dark grey stone.

Rolemaster: A worshipper of Zzygal who sits in the throne can cast commune 1 (communal: clerics base list), once per day. The first non-worshipper of Zzygal to sit in the throne must resist a 50th level channeling attack or be transported to the altar (4) on level 1. This will only happen once a day.

AD&D: Once per day, a worshipper of Zzygal who sits in the throne can cast commune. Anyone else who sits in it must save vs. magic or be teleported to the altar (4) on level 1. The teleport works once per day.

Rolemaster: Anyone teleported to the altar will suffer the effects of touching it, as described later.

The secret door in the northern wall is well concealed (Rolemaster: extremely hard (-30) to detect).

5. Kell’s and Chassly’s bathroom. In the centre of the bathroom is a large, bronze basin. In the NE corner of the room is a small stove, a pile of wood, and two bronze buckets used for heating water.

Level 1: The Temple

AD&D: Cast on the wall behind the door is a glyph of warding which will cause deafness.

2. This passageway is in a filthy state, and the smell from it permeates the whole level. There is filth and old straw throughout, and the walls show many scratch marks. It is the home of the temple watchdog, a pack of 8 dogs which have been raised as undead. The bars over the entrance to this passageway and those on the entrance to the stairway inhibit the mobility of the pack. Normally, the pack is left in this passageway, but if necessary, the stairway can be sealed off, and the pack can be let loose in the temple area. The controls for the stairs are at 5.

There are 2 trapdoors in the ceiling of this passageway, which lead up to area 1 on level 2. These are used to drop prisoners or small animals down to the pack. When the pack has been sent into the temple, this is how they are lured back. Any watchdogs who stay in the temple can be herded back by Kell. The pack is usually only let loose in the temple when Kell is away from the temple.

3. This is the main temple area, and is obviously different from any room in the tower. The floor is made of golden stone blocks. The walls are of the same black stone-like material as the rest of the tower, but here they are carved with epic battle scenes. The golden floor starts at the entrances from the stairway and outer passageway, and ends at the dais. On a corner of the floor stands a 7’6” tall statue of a man wearing chain mail, armed with a 2-handed sword. If any living creature touches them, they will animate one at a time until each one is defeated. They are mindless.

When a statue is brought to 0 hits, it will fall and break into pieces. If the rubble from the SW statue is examined, a black +2/+10 bastard sword will be found.

4. This is a stepped dais made of black stone. On top is a rectangular block of red stone. Anyone touching this block will be affected, and if they resist the effect, they will gain a +1/5 bonus on further resistance rolls to the block.

Rolemaster: Anybody touching the altar will be struck by absolution (dark channels: evil cleric base list) at 50th level.

AD&D: Anyone touching the altar must save vs. magic or be struck by absolution, or the offending limb will wither (reverse regeneration).

5. This is the bottom of the central stairway. On the southern wall is a lever, currently in the raised position. If it is pulled down, the bars between here and the main temple will drop, while the bars between the temple and the outer passageway will rise. Pulling the lever up reverses the situation. The lever is out of reach of someone reaching through the bars by at least 3.

In the floor, under the stairs, is a concealed trapdoor (Rolemaster:...
medium (+0 to spot), which leads to a spiral stair. This leads to the room below the tower. If Kell is in the lower room, he will hear the party in the temple, fighting the statues, and will attempt to trap the intruders by going to the level and closing the temple off from the rest of the tower. This will also let loose the undead dogs.

Level 1a

This room is approximately 30' below ground level. The ceiling is 8' high. The room is used by Kell as a second study, and for storing ceremonial items. In the eastern area of the room is a desk and a chair. There are 2 chests in the northern area.

On the desk are writing materials and some notes about Zyrgal, and some books of ancient myths and legends. The books on myths and legends are mostly written in obscure languages, which will need expert translation. These could be used to introduce surviving characters to new adventures.

The larger of the chests measures 4' x 3' x 2', and is locked (Rolemaster: hard (-10) to pick). Inside the chest are 3 ceremonial robes, and an ornate dagger worth 14 GPs. It is symbolic, and has no edge or point. There are also 6 silver candlesticks and 24 red and black banded candles, plus a timber box with flint and steel.

The second chest is a 2' cube. It is also locked (Rolemaster: very hard (-20) to pick). Inside is a 1' cubic box. This box is made of polished black wood, and has the symbol of Shayvere, a golden chalice, on the top, inlaid in silver. This box is unlocked. The inside of the box is lined with white velvet, and contains the sacred chalice of Shayvere.

The secret door in the northern part of the room (Rolemaster: hard (-10) to spot) leads to a tunnel which goes NE for 4 miles, and leads to the surface, through a concealed exit.

NPCs and Creatures

Large Ogre

Rolemaster: (Level 8, hits 140; At 1(−20) +120 large bash). Use large creature critical table.
AD&D: HD 6, AC 4, d1−12, AL: CE.

Undead

The low level undead encountered on the plains of desolation are class 1, created undead in rolemaster, and a mixture of skeletons (80%) and zombies (20%) in AD&D. Medium level undead and the undead dogs in the tower are class III, created undead in Rolemaster, and ghouls in AD&D.

Rolemaster: Class 1, created undead (level 1, hits 25, AT 1(−10) +25 small bash).
Class III created undead (level 7, hits 100, AT 1(−30) +60 medium bash).
Class III created undead dogs (as above except +60 medium bite).
AD&D: Skeleton: HD 1, AC 7, d1-6, AL: N.
Zombie: HD 2, AC 8, d1-8, AL: N. Always attack last in a round.
Ghoul: HD 2, AC 6, D1-3/1-3/1-6, AL: CE, plus paralysis on hit.
Ghoul dog, as above except: D1-4 plus paralysis.

Flaymes

Flaymes are lesser elementals from the elemental plane of fire. They appear as 3' tall dancing flames, but can change shape to 3' tall, red-skinned, hairless humanoids. They can only use physical attacks in humanoid form. They are immune to fire-based attacks, but can take double damage from cold. They are also able to cast bolts of fire.
Rolemaster: Cast five +10 firebolts

(fire law: magician base list) at 100' range per day.
AD&D: Cast five magic missiles per day, one at a time.

Statues

These are immune to mental attacks.
Rolemaster: (level 0, hits 10, AT 1(−10) +5 hand axe (meat cleaver)).
AD&D: 0 level human, hp 3, AC 10, d1-6 (meat cleaver) AL: LE.

Cook

The cook in the tower is an apprentice cleric of Zyrgal.
Rolemaster: (level 0, hits 10, AT 1(−10), +15 hand axe (meat cleaver)).
AD&D: 0 level human, hp 3, AC 10, d1-6 (meat cleaver) AL: LE.

Tower Guards

These are all monks of the order of nightstalkers, an order associated with Zyrgal.
Rolemaster: Warrior monk (level 3, hits 35, AT 1(−35) +45 rank 1 strikes, +45 rank 1 sweeps and throws, +20 falchion, +35 longbow).
AD&D: 2nd level monk, AC 9, d1-4 (open hand), 2-7 (bo stick), 2-5 (light crossbow). (NB: damage includes level bonus).

Captain of the Guards

Rolemaster: Warrior monk (level 4, hits 43, AT 1(−10), +55 rank 1 strikes, +35 rank 2 strikes, +50 rank 1 sweeps and throws, +25 dagger). He uses dagger kata with his rank 1 strikes. He wears a fine gold necklace which gives a +5 on martial arts strikes.
AD&D: 3rd level monk, AC 8, d2-7 (open-hand), 2-7 (bo stick), 2-5 (dagger). He has a fine gold necklace which gives +1 damage and to hit on open-hand attacks.
Lesser Clerics
There are 8 lower level clerics.
Rolemaster: (level 2, hits 20, AT 1(−20), normal shield +20 mace).
Spells known at 2(10):
1 and 2. Disease, Dark Lore, Necromancy, 2 power points.
3 and 4. Purifications, Curses, Dark Canvians, 2 power points.
5 and 6. Concussion's Ways, Necromancy, Protections, 2 power points.
7 and 8. Necromancy 2(10), Dark Channels 2(10), Concussion's Ways 2(10), 4 power points.
AD&D: 1st level cleric, AC 8 (leather), d2-7 (mace) AL: LE.

Higher Level Cleric
Rolemaster: (level 5, hits 37, AT 9(−20), normal shield, +30 mace, +5 dart).
Spells known at 5(10): Disease, Dark Channels, Necromancy, Barrier Law, Concussion's Ways, Light's ways. 5 power points.
AD&D: 3rd level cleric, AC 4 (chain mail, shield) d2-7 (mace), 2-7 (flail.) AL: LE.
Level 2: Hold person.

Chassly
Rolemaster: 6th level human, female astrologer. Co 87; Sd 44; Ag 64;
Me 79; Re 53; St 56; Qu 83; Pr 98; Em 35.
Hits 31.
AT 1(−5).
Weapons: Thrown dagger OB +23.
Spells known at 6(10): Power points: 2-4.
She wears a ring on the second toe of her left foot, which is a x2 astrologer multiplier. She wears light clothing and carries 5 throwing daggers.
AD&D: 4th level cleric.
S11; I12; W16; D15; Co 16; Ch 17; AL: LE; HP: 23.
AC 6 (leather, shield, −1 dex. adjustment).
Weapons: Flail and quarterstaff.
Spells: level 1 Command, Cure light wounds (x2), Cud strength wounds, light.
Level 2: Chant, Hold person, Know alignment. Resist fire.
She wears a soft hide glove on her right hand, which allows her to cast cause light wounds once per day. It is only usable by a cleric.

Kell
Rolemaster: 12th level human cleric.
Co 65; Sd 57; Ag 82; Me 43; Re 83; St 62; Qu 83; Pr 77; In 99; Em 87.

The Sacred Chalice of Shayvere
The chalice is a goblet, made of an almost unbreakable, golden glass-like material (Rolemaster: treat as gold tinted Laen). It has four powers, which can be used by Priestesses of Shayvere.
1. Any priestess within 100' up to a total of 30 Priestesses, can cast more spells.
2. Rolemaster: For the Priestesses it acts as a x5 channeling multiplier.
AD&D: The Priestesses cast double the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th level spells.
2. Up to 4 times a day, a Priestess can use it to totally heal one creature.
3. Once per day, a Priestess can use it to cure any disease in one creature.
4. Once per week, a Priestess can resurrect any dead body, irrespective of the creature's race, or of how long they have been dead.
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ORGANISED CRIME (£4.45). A VILLAINS & VIGILANTES scenario, Published by FANTASY GAMES UNLIMITED. Single booklet with centre pull-out of character counters.

Pursued by the police, a black sedan crashes out of control, disgorging its villainous contents into the night. A matchbook for Vanguard Shipping and Storage is the only clue left by the criminals as to their whereabouts. Jewel thieves, however, are surely a job for the New York Police Department? Or do the police's underground contacts lead them to believe that beneath this facade of petty crime there is something too tough for them to handle? Thus are the heroes called into action.

That's pretty much how Organised Crime starts; no game master's overview of the plot is provided, it's just straight into the action. It's an interesting approach to scenario design but not one that I think works in this particular case. The adventure consists of a number of relatively easy sections which link up the major confrontations; the plot is therefore presented in a number of capsules. As a result, the game master has to pick up the threads of the plot as he reads the adventure through. A summary of the story and the motives of the villains at the start of the adventure would have assisted in getting a feel for the plot and the overall direction of the adventure. If the writing style of the adventure were a little tighter and less hackneyed the scenario might have worked much better in this format.

Enough of my initial gripes. Organised Crime is a two part adventure, each part being made up of a number of capsules. Whilst these capsules fragment the plot they make the adventure very easy to run by keeping all the relevant information in one place. The production is in keeping with FGU standards; clear enough for the game master to work out what's happening. The heroes' regular opponents are a group known as The Midnight Men which, naturally enough, contains two women... This group is nicely balanced for the level of heroes the adventure is aimed at (three to six player characters from second to sixth level).

The overall flavour of the adventure is very reminiscent of the Batman TV series. There's a wacky finale with a host of bizarre antagonists, and one of the earlier antagonists is a poor substitute for the Riddler. This should provide light entertainment in a serious campaign, although rather limited in its applications beyond this. The plot line is rather too linear for my liking and suffers from weak links, some of which are dependent on the heroes behaving like 'true heroes' or rather what the scenario's designer envisages as being true heroes. Organised Crime is also rather too combat-oriented, but with a little creativity on the part of the game master it should provide a few sessions of interesting play. I would hope that future V&V adventures get away from what is essentially a D&D style of adventure which is caused essentially by an over-restriction with trivial detail. I've seen Superhero adventures which are very tettle and concentrate on plot, as well as providing the necessary combat encounters which are vital to the running of the scenario; compared to these, Organised Crime only runs as average for the genre.

IAN MARSH

INTRODUCTION TO STAR FLEET BATTLES (£4.95) Published by Task Force Games. A 48-page rules booklet with colourful card cover. What a surprise to see Star Fleet Battles, for years a technically difficult game to master, and becoming harder, arrive on my desk in this simple introductory manner. It begins from scratch, explaining game terms such as *hex* and *scenario* in a straightforward manner. The book continues to explain starfleet terminology such as Seeking Weapons and SSD.

A sequence of 'programmed instructions' modules get the player started straight away via a battle drill training exercise. Only the rules for manoeuvre and firing are given, as these are all that are needed to play the opening scenario. Each scenario gets progressively more complex, introducing the relevant new rules step-by-step. No less than 6 cadet scenarios are given as training, prior to promotion to the rank of Lieutenant and the chance to swap your cadet ship for a full size Commander's ship. 12 scenarios are played in all, culminating with The Tholian Web and the graduation to Star Fleet Captain!

SSDs are given for 3 cadet cruisers and 6 full scale cruisers, a pull-out hex map and card counters, together with all relevant movement, energy and damage allocation charts. In all, a well-planned introduction to SFB of benefit to new players and clubs wishing to taste the excitement of Star Fleet command. Introduction to SFB also serves as an excellent solo instruction module.

STE DILLON

FLASHING BLADES (£10.75) Published by F.G.U.

The box is unattractive: the contents dull by comparison with the recent wave of 'glossy cover' jobs. Needless to say, I bought the game anyway.

This is the game of 17th century France, of Arthus, Porthos, Aramis and D'Artagnan, of the dastardly Cardinal Richelieu and the unfortunate problem over the diamonds (...shh! don't tell the King!). Having felt that the period is one of excellent opportunities for role-playing for some time, I was very pleased to see this game hit the shelves.

The game consists of two books: the main rulebook and an adventure booklet, the latter with a reference guide and a master character sheet for photocopying. It is illustrated with contemporary and modern drawings, the rules are clear and easy to read. Unlike most FGU games, Flashing Blades is totally devoid of abbreviations and is elegant in its simple yet sophisticated mechanics. Using familiar role-playing characteristics and mechanics makes it easy to learn and play. The combat system is certainly the high point of the mechanics, using a d20 based system reminiscent of Runequest, but with no number juggling than most. With this, it reproduces duelling with foils and rapiers in a wonderful manner, offering several choices of attack;
thrust, lunge or slash, and of defence; dodge, duck, sidestep, step back. These are quickly cross-referenced on a matrix for a modifier. The combat system also incorporates pistols, muskets, brawling weapons and less subtle weapons such as the pike and halberd. Despite a realistic feel, it is not slow to play.

Combat is to be avoided, it seems, as a couple of skewers in your chest and you're an ex-Pierre. Duels can be quite heated simply since both parties know the risks: maybe that's why duelling is usually only to first blood! Moving away from this potentially deadly area, the book goes on to explore the society that your budding characters will emerge into. Careers in the army, the church, the bureaucracy, the nobility and the underworld, there is a system of advancement and promotion similar to Traveller character generation, but as part of an ongoing campaign, and probably superseded by the seductions, grovelling, toadyng and brown-nosing that the players resort to in play. This is a game where activities between adventures can be as much fun as the actual adventure session; in this 'dog-eat-dog' society, there is much opportunity to backstab and be backstabbed.

17th century France is detailed in the meticulous fashion that we've come to expect from FGU. A comprehensive survey of the social customs, dress, politics, major figures, 16th and 17th century history and maps of Europe, France and Paris concludes with a bibliography of the major sources used.

The Adventures book is the scenario pack which, though thin and weak by FGU standards, compares favourably with many other games. The major scenario is a romp to Italy and back in 'musketeer' style, the other a seedy intrigue in the backstreets of Paris - both worthy of a couple of sessions of play. If Parisian Adventures and High Seas are of this quality, I shall make purchase soon. Since High Seas expands into the Caribbean and the world of piracy, this broadens the appeal and variety of the game.

To conclude, Flashing Blades is a professional, well-written game with none of the excessive numbers that most games have. The combat system enchantingly reproduces duelling whilst accommodating the (safer) alternative of fistcuffs. Its coverage of 17th century France details a rich and exciting society in which players can live, love, intrigue and, hopefully, succeed.

T. H. ZINDER

COSMIC ENCOUNTER (£10.95)
Published by GAMES WORKSHOP under licence from WEST END GAMES. This old Eon favourite is now once again available in a new edition from Games Workshop. The new versions looks different; the artwork has been completely redone; a jigsaw board has replaced the old giant hexagons; the Destiny discs are replaced by a pack of cards; and in place of the old cardboard counters we now have three-dimensional (and stackable) plastic pawns. This is all fine, except that the cone-shaped pawns are nearly impossible for blepharaglyph players (like me) to pick up. Greg Costikyan (no less) has been called in to rewrite the rules; as far as I can see, the new rulebook makes no changes to the game at all, but it is much clearer than the original version, and several troublesome ambiguities have been cleared up.

There is one important difference from the original game. The Eon version was for only four players; the equipment box and special cards which allow the holder to do something outrageous, such as playing out of turn, sending inconveniences allies home, changing the outcome of an attack, or (the dreaded Cosmic Zap) stopping an opponent from using his alien power. The fun in Cosmic Encounter derives from the rapid explosion of one little bombshell after another, as players constantly strive to mess up one another's well-laid plans. This is a game of skill, though the skill required is the ability to adapt rapidly to constantly-changing circumstances, rather than the ability to pursue a long-term game plan with single-minded dedication.

There are a few problems. The Judge character seems far too powerful, and there are conflicts between alien powers (such as between the Anti-Matter and the Virus) which are impossible to resolve according to the rules. Still, these are minor problems, and the game as a whole works very well indeed; for sheer entertainment value, Cosmic Encounter is hard to beat. Anyone who missed out on the original edition eight years ago should hurry out to buy this one.

LARRY TRASK
FANTASY WARGAMING (£7.95) by PSL books.

This is a hardback book containing 220 pages. It is basically a book about fantasy wargaming, providing a realistic rules system reminiscent of Chivalry and Sorcery. The system has its roots in the dark ages, and appeals for a coherent and static setting for fantasy role-games. The book was published in 1981, and suffers slightly by being a bit dated, but then so does D&D. The book's strongest point is the flavour which it lends to FRP games. Reading the chapter on medieval society really puts you in the mood for a role-play session. Myth, magic and religion in an intelligent approach to magic and sorcery, covering subjects such as power. THEIR POWER COMES FROM YOUR BELIEF. THE GREATEST SOURCE OF MANA IS YOURSELF. This theme that gods obtain power from their very worship is one which very easily transpires into other games systems, and runs throughout the FW system. A mini-bestiary is included, again based on dark/middle ages mythology, incorporating Norse, Celtic, Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic beliefs. The weapons section covers an overview of weapons and armour types, army organisations, siege warfare and a glossary of arms and armour. Following a chapter on the source and inspiration for fantasy games, is an inspired article on refereeing, making it quite clear to the beginning and experienced referee what his real job is! The character creation system is rather complex, accounting for astrological modifications to the rolled PC, his place in the social structure, personality, skills, religion, leadership qualities, skills and a 'bogey table' of guises or character traits. Rules for group combat follow this, including a 'warrior table' for various cultures. The religion/magic system is what really makes FW. It contains tables of deities with their characteristics, interests and influences, etc. Spells are cast taking into account controllers and diminishers, astrological influences, elemental matters, intercession, dreams, miracles and inspiration. If you're good on your side, ok, but if not, you better be prepared to resolve your differences.

£7.95 for a hardback book? Yes, it does sound a lot for a book that was published in 1981, but it does contain a complete system that is inspired and self-contained. FW is not a game for beginners, but is a suitable alternative for anybody seeking a realistic, coherent fantasy game.

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STREET VINCENT

15
**A LEAF THROUGH MAGAZINES**

Due out in May is TORTURED SOULS #9, providing it can find a decent distributor. Now that Paul Cockburn (ex-imagine) has temporarily taken over the editor's seat at White Dwarf, I wonder if Gamesmater, presently at issue #3, will get to see #4. Oh, and whatever happen to the Irish magazine, Fantasy Chronicles? Well, Ian Brown has just informed me that issue #1 is due out at the start of May. It costs £2.95 for 40 pages, the paper quality is even better than ours. It feels somewhat like Tortured Souls, a bit more detailed. C64 Introduction To Gaming, THE CRYPT OF THE SERPENT AD&D scenario, a short fantasy story, wargaming, book reviews and more. Distributed through game shops and newsagents. We wish you all the best with that one, Ian.

**DIFFERENT WORLDS #41** has just arrived at my desk. A U.S. import, you'd expect the reviews to be a little up-to-date than to include Dr. Who, Runequest III and SCOUTS for Traveller, but this is the Jan/Feb issue, so it takes its time swimming over her. Anyway, a great magazine packed with reviews, a Frank Frazetta interview with some of his piccies in. This issue also includes a 7-page Morrow Project adventure, a Doc Savage Chronology that lends to the belief that Chaosium are designing a Doc Savage Game! Also covers rules for playing Insane characters in Cthulhu.

**WHITE DWARF SWINGS THE AXE**

The White Dwarf has recently moved premises from London to the Citadel plant in Nottingham. Between you and I, this may have caused some interesting problems... several members of the WD staff have objected to the move by "opting to remain in London", despite being given the wonderful opportunity of moving house and home, and leaving their playmates in the big smog to move to remotest Nottingham (incredible!). Latest victims of the well-slung axe include Ian Marsh (ex-editor), Trevor Mendenham (ex-news columnist), Paul Mason (ex-something-or-other), Jon Sutherland (ex-advertising editor), and Joe Dever (ex-tabletop heroes; decided he doesn't just want to paint Citadel figures for eternity).

As far as I can make out, the magazine should be undergoing a not-so-radical transformation into a Games Workshop/Citadel magazine. Methinks it may be called something exciting like "Citadel Magazine."

**LOW COST IMPORTS:**

Star Fleet Battles will soon be available to mere mortals at only £14.95. Also available from Task Force will be back issues of Nexus magazine, SFB miniatures and a new range of fantasy figures called "off-the-wall-armies." These include floppy-earred rabbit soldiers, yarkee badgers with bagnpids, ottier warriors (!) etc. Having cast a cursory glance at these off-beat figures, they look very nice with clear detail, but do we really need them? Who knows.

Another drop in price will be MERP (the U.S. version) at £6.95, and I believe a few rule-books at £5.95. MERP is being translated in Germany, where it will be available as separate rules, scenarios, etc.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

...STARDATE... 1979... Earth...

In Different Worlds #2, Steve Jackson (USA) states "Let me offer a definition of a role-playing game, then, one that will surely stand until it is shot down. A role-playing game is one that invites its players to take on a personality different from their own."

Has anybody managed to shoot this definition down yet? Herogest was given a sneak preview in DW #4! For those who don't know, Herogest was the much publicised, eagerly awaited Runequest supplement that never actually materialised. Runequest, by the way, cost just £8.95 in 1979.

The Journal of Traveller's Aid Society first appeared, as did the AD&D Dungeon Masters Guide and Freedom In The Galaxy.

**NEXT ISSUE**

In ADVENTURER #3, we continue Rob Hobb's new character, so keep your spell books to hand. Andy Bradbury offers Cthulhu cultist a chance to start their own cult. On the scenario side, we're keeping it secret, but you can bet it will be a biggie!

Ian Marsh joins the rest of the ADVENTURER team next issue, and a name from the fanzine world will also appear. Lee Gibbons fuses the past with the future in his specially assigned ADVENTURER cover art, providing another spectacular poster, while Robin Parry offers Cthulhu humour via another d3 cartoon, and an ADVENTURER portrait of the photographer.

**VICTORY GAMES**

Victory Games are pumping out the 007 supplements lately. Back Of Beyond presents a new adventure never before seen in book or movie! Villains presents deadly villains for Bond to seduce or subdue, and Bond Assault is a combat board game for detailed operations. To my count, that's 14 adventures/ supplements to the basic rules, emphasizing Victory Games confidence in their own RPG to date.

**NATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL**

Games People Play is the name of the exhibition to be held at Stoke from 9-13 July 1986. Every effort is being made to provide competitions, special games and the opportunity to participate. There will be plenty of space allotted to the fantasy game world under the ADVENTURER umbrella, and I can imagine the mayhem that will result. Such frivolous goings-on as a drawing of the artist or the editor of ADVENTURER may yet materialise. Add to this the opportunity to get sneak previews of the latest games and miniatures, ADVENTURER #3, enter figure painting competitions, have your figure photographed, indulge in live role-playing, real treasure hunts such as "Spot the Tarp", etc., and you should have an interesting day out. Of course, you could always visit the rest of the festival, including a labyrinth of trees and plants, narrowboat rallies, 80 theme gardens, railways, hot air balloons, nature reserves, and various exhibitions and shows. Tickets cost from £4.50 a day (adult) or £3 a day (child/student/unemployed).

**TIME WARP**

On 26th July, there is an event to take place in the Shotton Hotel in Liverpool called TIME WARP. Organised by Time Warriors, a Liverpool based role play enactment organisation, it is a one day ST/Military games/modelling exhibition. Participants include the Mailed Fist, Birmingham Modelling group, and representatives of the Sealed Knot, but more recruits are needed to make a really spectacular event. Admission is 50p for adults, 25p children. If your club or society is interested in participating you can telephone Bob Wooster on 051-734 2287 or write to him at 21 Herberton Road, Liverpool L9 2SY.
Heavy on the Magick

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Hail and well met, fair ADVENTURER! Ali ye who have ears to listen and a mind with which to think, I pray ye take heed! Selora the Sorceress has robbed me of mine mind, and with it, all recollections of who I may be. If thou hast thoughts or knowledge through magic or the divine arts, then I pray thee help me! I must know of my quest which lies before me, to where I am bound and from whence I came. My name must be told, for in names lies the secret of man's destiny. I pray thee, oh scribes, to put quill to parchment and tell me what thou knowest!

Feature artist this issue is Ralph Horsley, whose work we should be featuring within the pages of ADVENTURER. Ralph is already known in the fanzine world for his Convert Or Die zine (now up to issue #3).

ADVENTURER CLUB newsletter is now available to full members only. It contains a fantasy/SF crossword, letters, information to contributors to ADVENTURER, Cover Story snippets, etc. Fun! Please remember! All contributions or queries to the Adventurer Club must enclose a stamped, SAE for a reply.

ADVENTURERS ABROAD!

If you live in such far-off places as Germany, U.S.A., Europe or Middle-earth, please add enough pennies to make sure our newsletter or magazine reaches you.

A sound piece of advice from A. Ward: Whenever I lose a cherished PC who I am particularly fond of, I tend to create a new one with different characteristics and personality. I then must all my will-power and either destroy, sell or swap the lead figure which represented my character, no matter how much he has meant to me, or how well-painted he is. This, I feel, adds a deeper sense of remorse when a PC dies. Ultimately, it means that my player-characters act far more cautiously than do my friends, whose PCs often seem to have a death-wish.

KILLER FIENDS

Ghosts and ghouls and skeletons too, haunting corridors, following you, running through doors into unmarked chambers, running through doors into un-named strangers. You're fighting demons with your sword and shield. Mages and clerics your wounds they can heal. Where other bold fighters have perished, slaying monsters you have relished. Clerics, druids, magicians and monks, barbarian fighters and all kind of hunks though falling dead all around, they hardly make a single sound. Each person wearing differing armour; all adds to the glitter and glamour; leather, banded, scale and studded; plate, padded, ring and splinted. Each has a weapon of some kind, eager to see what treasure they find after the death of those killer fiends.

From a poem by Angus Abranson.

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ADVENTURER CLUB, 85 VICTORIA STREET, LIVERPOOL L1.
FRONT LINE:

This issue, \textit{DENIZEN MINIATURES} of Brighton march up to the Front Line. To them goes the dubious honour of being the first figures to be showcased in \textit{ADVENTURER}. Denizen Miniatures are the creations of \textbf{CHUB PEARSON}, who began making his own figures 6 years ago. Chub informs me that he started off making model kits and the like when he was only little (I'm not sure if that means he used to be a Hobbit!), and began his serious modelling with the much larger scale of 90mm. Working as a freelance designer with \textbf{Barton Miniatures}, Chub decided that he would like to become more involved in the actual production side of the business, as well as the design stage. He took the logical step of producing his own figures, switching to 25mm scale but still retaining the detail of his former work.

The first dozen or so figures were cast by a sub-contract firm, advertised, and found to be in demand. Thus Denizen Miniatures was born. Over the past 3 1/2 years, the range has grown to some 60 figures, along with a DIY of dwarves which provide an almost endless list of variations. Interest in the figures has been such that Denizen, now have distributors in Germany, Australia, France, and Sweden, and look set to break into the US market.

Chub now has his own mouldmaking and casting facilities, combining the whole operation under one roof. He now makes the figures, makes the moulds, casts the figures, designs the catalogues, writes the invoices and feeds the cat! Apart from retail outlets, Denizen offer a mail order service, for which customers should thank Jean.

The figures received for review were a good cross-section of the range, and I only wish I'd been able to have more of them painted for this issue, had copy dates not approached with such immodest haste. The Elf Bowmen is a particularly elegant figure, and without the pointy ears could surely double as a Greek or Roman god in human form. The DIY Dwarves, I think they are a great idea. Chub is a little concerned about whether people can be persuaded to stick figures together, but these fit together so painlessly that I don't think he needs to worry on that score. Another feature that I like about the dwarves is that to me they seem the correct size, I've seen more than enough 6'4" dwarves!

The female figures are nicely proportioned (I've always had a weakness for female figures) and the Greek style hero seems a must for \textit{Runequest}. The "Legion Of The Damned" range of undead warriors are a particularly evil looking bunch, but just one bone to pick (pardon the pun), they seem a little too well fed for skeletons. Then again, who am I to question what dire magic must keep them animated.

All in all, they look like a very tasty range of figures, and I wish Denizen well for the future. Oh, my regards to the cat!

Next issue, Dixon Miniatures will display some of their Oriental talents...

BACK TO FRONT:

Mr. J. B. Hill of Newton, Derbyshire has sent us a painting up which I am itching to try for myself:

\textbf{\textit{UHU STRONG BOND}} is transparent. This fact can be used to advantage as follows: Take a decent skeleton or ghost figure and paint it up - bones white, eye sockets red with areas of yellow fat, and red blood vessels (I first read this over a plate of spaghetti, thank you Mr. Hill. M.T.). Let it dry, then cover it with \textit{UHU} strong bond. When this has dried, paint a few more red veins on the surface and then varnish. You have a really good 3-D Transparentman, Chulhu Proto-Shoggoth, Sci-Fi figure or a Lankhmar style Ghoul."

\textbf{Wargames:} We received a number of enquiries regarding preparing the wargames table, bases, accessories and buildings for fantasy battles. The best thing for us to do would be to devote some articles to this in later issues, as this is a large subject. If anybody has any special questions (or tips) on this subject, please let us know. Who knows, if the Editor is in a nice mood, he might give us space for a special feature magazine on the subject.

Don't forget to mark any letters to this department "BACK TO FRONT," Adventurer, Mersey Leisure Publishing, 85 Victoria Street, Liverpool.

UP FRONT:

Denizen's DIY dwarves have prompted me to take a closer look at what is for many people a rather 'sticky' problem. I refer to the assembly of multi-part figures, i.e. those with separate heads, wings, or weapons.

\textbf{STEP 1:} Try the parts to be joined to ensure that they fit, trimming where necessary with a sharp modelling knife. If they fit correctly, score the surfaces to be glued with your knife. This ensures that the glue will have something to key onto and will not come away once dry. For a stronger joint, the pieces should be pinned together. For example, when fixing a head onto a body, both pieces should be drilled using a very fine drill (pin drill or pin vices are available from DIY shops for a few pounds). A small length hacksawed from a pin should be glued into the hole of the head. When set, push this protruding pin into the hole drilled in the neck and ensure a snug fit. If the pin is too long, it must be trimmed, or the hole drilled deeper. Apply glue to both the hole and the pin to make a very strong joint.

\textbf{STEP 2:} On a piece of stiff cardboard, old tin or matchbox, mix the glue thoroughly with a matchstick (not the live end), pin or Similar and leave to stand for a couple of minutes. There is no need to apply the glue until it begins to go tacky. Then, apply the glue to both surfaces and press the pieces together. Do not use too much glue, as this will simply be squeezed out between the pieces and make a mess. It will also obliterate the detail of the figure.

\textbf{STEP 3:} The two parts need to be held in contact while the glue dries. This can often be done with elastic bands, or by pressing the pieces into plasticene or blue-tack, but sometimes thumbs and fingers will have to do the job. Of course, you run the risk of the dreaded CRAMP ATTACK, but sometimes it's worth the effort...

\textbf{STEP 4:} Once the glue is completely set, any excess should be trimmed off with your trusty (not rusty) knife, or filed down.
These photographs, taken by our liche with the lens, Antony Ward, show a selection of Denizen Miniatures’ fantasy castings. Painted by Martyn Tetlow, the above shot shows the figures FA29 and FA2 in dramatic pose against a scenic background (used without permission, sorry Messrs. Hildebrandt). Bases are hidden by green modelling flock, as they do tend to spoil the effect.

The photographs below show several Denizen figures without the distraction of their background, to illustrate the clarity of the models themselves.
FIGURES IN FOCUS
A look through the lens of Antony Ward

Photographing your miniatures is one way of showing off your talents without carrying a whole box full of figures around with you. However, the photograph that you take must do justice to your ability. Antony Ward takes us gently through the world of miniatures photography:

Introduction. To achieve the desired effect from your photographs, you will need the right equipment. The best camera for the job would be a 35mm camera with a close-up lens. When you buy your camera, the shop will supply you with a 50mm lens, but if you buy the camera body and ask for a 55mm MACRO LENS, it will do the job of a 50mm plus close-up work for only a few pounds more. A tripod is recommended, because the camera needs to be steady and constant light source. Failing this, outdoor lighting may be okay (on a clear day), but you have little control over it then. Background scenery and modelling aids will also be required, and a steady, spacious table on which to lay the models is invaluable.

1. Positioning. Positioning depends upon the figure you have selected to photograph. If a giant, you might choose to photograph him from the base, perhaps with a photograph of the sky as background, to really emphasise his height. A dwarf would require different treatment altogether.

Another consideration when positioning your miniature is that of painted detail. If you have spent 6 weeks painting the shield on your character's shoulder, you would want it to show up on the photograph, and would shoot from a slight angle, from above shoulder level.

2. Lighting. To get the best results from your photography, you will need to know a little about lighting. Relying on a flash gun is probably not the best way of doing things, as you don't really know what part of the figure is lit, or where the shadows will fall (possibly hiding much of the detail which you painstakingly painted). It is far better, if you have the resources, to light the figure before taking the shot, using two tungsten lights or similar, one from each side to avoid casting strong shadows. If not, then try and visualise (using a torch or spotlight) where the shadow from your flash will fall. Unless you have a tripod and clamp, you may need an extra pair of hands to shine the light at the figure while you look through the viewfinder. This will let you see if the face is lit up, if he casts a strong shadow on the background or if his sword casts a deep shadow across his face, etc. The use of two lights is helpful, as one may be lowered to shine up at the figure's face, whilst another can light him from above to cut down on any shadows.

Lighting can be modified to give your photographs what light. A red flash filter or red acetate sheet held in front of the flash would cast a red glow over the whole scene, particularly useful if the model or background shows a fire scene (Fig. 5).

3. Background scenery and props. Background may vary depending on what you want to show in your photograph. If you wish to show off your painting expertise, you might wish to show your figure against a plain, light coloured background. This would emphasise the model's shape, colouring and detail. If, however, you wanted to create a mood or atmosphere, then a black background with heavy shadows could do this. Background scenery, e.g. rocks, twigs, shells and other 'props', will also give an 'atmosphere' to your photograph, and should be chosen appropriately. For example, an elf drawing a bow, could be photographed with a woodland scenery (Figure 1). Figures 6, 7 and 8 show the same figure with 3 different backgrounds, each of which suits the figure, but suggests something different about it.

4. Subject. The subject of your photography may vary from a single figure to a group shot or diorama. Single figures are the easiest, allowing for a close-up shot to highlight the detail of the model or painting technique. Figure 4 shows a 90mm, barbarian, his face well-lit and with all the detail as crisp as the real model. A group shot of 3 figures or so will make each figure appear smaller, possibly with a loss of detail. Fig. 9 shows 3 small figures in combat with a Hunting Horror. It is a balanced 'action shot' that doesn't emphasise any particular figure. Although the guy with the mace is slightly out of focus, we printed this to show you that problems do arise, especially with tricky shots like this one. Large groups of figures, or large dioramas, suffer from lighting problems, proximity to the camera (the front one may appear a lot larger than those at the back), depth of field (the 'in focus' range of the camera) and the possibility of cluttering the shot with too many figures. It is immensely difficult to create 'action shots' with more than 5 or 6 figures, without special equipment. If this were required, I would suggest paying attention to a small proportion of the figures (the front ones, for example). Those at the back could be within view, but perhaps not as well-lit, or slightly out of focus.

5. Special Effects. Fig. 3 shows the 90mm, barbarian superimposed beneath the wing of the 25mm Hunting Horror. This type of photography requires a camera that allows dual exposures on one frame, although a similar, though not as convincing, shot could have been achieved by photographing the giant Barbarian and using that as a background to photograph the Hunting Horror. Other special effects can be achieved, such as superimposing a photograph of yourself doing battle with a mighty Balrog, or photographing a wizard with real sparks shooting from his fingers. Special filters can be bought for 35mm cameras which really open up the art of photography and allow you to expand your horizons from merely painting a figure, to producing a work of art.

If, like Alice, you wish to journey through the looking glass, I suggest you take heart from my photography. At first, they were awful, but with practice, decent results are quickly achieved.
Capitol features:
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- Capitol's simplified order formats are easy to remember. No coding your orders onto computer cards or other gimmicks.
- Capitol has an easy to understand rulebook, complete with numerous examples.
- Capitol was subjected to the largest playtest of any commercial PBM game. Over 100 players played over 1500 turns of Capitol prior to release.
- Runs on an IBM PC, using 512K.
- "Capitol is fast becoming the standard against which other space warfare games are compared."
- With each rulebook you receive a set of overlays to use in mapping the game and moving ships.
- Mapping Capitol is extremely interesting, using the computer printed maps you receive with your turn results.
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Once Bitten

For one particular handful of clients at the Once Bitten Inn in pungent scatophagium things, if not the ale, are coming to a head as the power of a remote hand is felt.

Now this one does resemble the scoundrel I seek.

Dear me, I fear I have transposed a gutterry along with my prize.

Ugh! Ho foul necromancer know that you just summoned thine own doom by thus displacing me? As soon as I disentangle me from this, this

Back at the Once Bitten

Whither wouser? The gods must have taken him for all his prayer.

There’s not much south of scatophagium. It shouldn’t be too hard to locate the source of such malstraygious

Next: Desperately seeking wouser...
Missing Page
the creature and the remaining members of the Crimson Guard were gone. In addition, there was no trace of any trapped miners.

Raven, having heard of the players’ superhero team, flew off into the night in search of their help. He arrived on the verge of collapse after his flight over hundreds of miles.

The players may question Raven but he is in no condition to give lengthy explanations. If the heroes have decided to help him, Raven will give the players the location of the mine. His information about the monster in the mine is limited. Everything happened so fast and it was dark. The creature was clay-like and bipedal. Its torso and arms were thick and powerful.

At this point, the most probable course for the players to take is to investigate the mine. The GM should make it known that there are virtually no other leads. Raven is not well enough to go with the heroes. If the players have some way of healing Raven then they should be allowed to do so. The GM or one of the players will have to control the character.

If the heroes have absolutely no means of getting to northern Manitoba short of hitching a ride, alter the adventure. Explain that Raven used the Crimson Guard’s Quadjet to reach the players. The jet is conviently parked outside the heroes’ headquarters. It seats up to seven and has just enough fuel to return to Canada. The Quadjet has no weapons and has a top speed of 700 mph. Remember, the jet should only be available if it is absolutely necessary. Raven’s condition upon reaching the players will be the same whether he used the jet or not.

JOURNEY TO THE CITY OF THE EARTH

The Granville Copper Mine is located 25 miles northeast of Lynn Lake (a small town near the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border). That’s about 1700 miles from San Francisco, New York, or Oklahoma City. The mine is temporarily closed while authorities investigate the cave-in. The heroes will have to get permission to go inside.

Inspector Talbot, the officer in charge of the investigation, will let the players through the police curtain if they manage to convince him. An “agreeable, interested” result on the Redaktion Table (page 27 of the V&V rules) will suffice. Give the players a +2 modifier if they have helped the Canadian government in the past (a +4 if the heroes and the government are actually on bad terms). There are 15 additional policemen at the mine who should negotiations result in combat.

Assuming the players get into the mine, the GM will need to consult the map of the Granville Copper Mine. Here is a description of the numbered areas on the map:

1) Office Building: 1-story, with a basement. In the basement are records showing that this mine has an unnaturally high number of accidents. The owners don’t find this to be good publicity and haven’t disclosed this to outsiders.

2) Warehouse: 2-story. This building is half full of tools, heavy machinery, explosives, fuel, and other supplies.

3) Winchhouse: 2-story. Inside here is a winch for lifting and lowering a cage to the underground transfer station. The winch is motor-driven and the cage has a carrying capacity of 6000 lbs.

4) Transfer Station: Located at the bottom of the first shaft and at the top of the second, the transfer station has a pulley for emptying one cage into another. A second winch here has a cage with a capacity of 5000 lbs. that is lifted and lowered into the second shaft.

5) Sump: At the very bottom of the second shaft is a sump. This is a pit to collect seepage water. The water is pumped to the surface through a hose running up the shaft.

6) Level One: This horizontal passage is the closest to the surface. It is connected to the first shaft. This level, and all others, are
The following are details on the areas numbered on map 2:

1) Cavern:
This cavern connects this map with the Granville Copper Mine map. A steep upwards passage leads to level 4 at the mine. This is the first area on the map that the heroes should enter. If they have not encountered Gargantua yet, they will in this cavern. Combat with the earth monster will be as described earlier except that missed blows have a smaller chance (one-third of the attackers Strength score as a percentage chance) of causing rocks to fall.

2) Farm:
This is an underground farm where enslaved humans toil over rough, rocky gardens of tubers, roots, and squash. There are about 60 men and a handful of women here. They have crude tools and a low moral (-3 on moral check). The workers are supervised by three Slavers. They are Frazak, Nanog, and Thogho. The Slavers are cruel and sadistic, often inflicting indignities on the human workers such as forcing them to lick their boots.

3) Pit:
The pit is an open mine at which about 40 enslaved men work. With primitive equipment they hammer away at the slopes of the pit, collecting ore for processing in area 4. A track with three mine cars is used for transporting mined rock to the smelter. The men are low in morale, like the farmers, and are watched by three evil Slavers. They are Bundi, Gronk, and Sneer.

4) Smelter:
The smelter gleans metals and building material from the rock mined in the pit. 12 captive men work the crude machinery; they are watched by two Slavers, Durge and Ulgor. A track runs from the smelter to area 3.

Note that the Slavers will waste no time in attacking any heroes that arrive on the scene. They would prefer to capture rather than kill the players but they are not concerned with the condition they're in. Captured characters will be taken to area 6.
Palace:
Here stands a royal house of old Rome, or so it would appear. The palace with its many arches, domes, and trusses looks to be a place out of another time. Surrounded by pillars and columns with vast interior spaces, the palace is an appropriate residence for Empress Terra Tyrannia. The Empress's slaves have worked for years creating her underground empire. The house has luxurious public and private chambers, a large bath, treasure room, and servant's quarters. The Empress Terra Tyrannia is waited upon by four male slaves and two females. Her bodyguards, the Praetorian Guard, also live here.

6) Arena:
This is a Roman colosseum. It is lined by stone steps and balconies. The centre is a floor of soft dirt. If the heroes are captured, this is where they will be brought to await Empress Tyrannia's judgement. Her judgement, of course, will be trial by combat. The players must face her Praetorian Guard. See map 3: The Arena.

7) Maze:
Dozens of tunnels interconnect, doubleback, spiral, and, for the most part, dead end in this area. One tunnel does wind its way through the maze to the surface. Only the Empress knows this route well. Though she has led her Slavers this way several times before, they do not have the intellect to remember the path alone. Any heroes attempting to get through the maze must make 4 successful Detect Hidden rolls. Each roll that fails costs the heroes 30 minutes of wasted time.

BATTLING THE PRAETORIAN GUARD
The Praetorian Guard is actually the Canadian superhero team, the Crimson Guard. They are under the control of the Empress. Each Guard member is dressed as a Roman centurion. Included on the costumes are collars that induce Mind Control. This Mind Control does not act as fatigue on the wearer because it also causes limited amnesia. If the collar-wearer fails any Intelligence saving throw allowed for immoral actions, he'll take 2d4 damage from mental shock for resisting the control. The heroes can determine the source of the Mind Control by rolling their Intelligence or less on percentile dice or by spending an inventing point (the collars are not obvious because they look like part of the centurion outfit). The collars have a structural rating of 9.

The Praetorian Guard will engage the heroes when they have been brought to the arena, have entered the palace, or freed all the slaves. They will try to take the fight to the arena, either by challenging the players to combat there or just running to that location. If the heroes are in the arena, the Empress will enter her balcony from the stairs. The leader of the Guard is still Seeker. He will give orders to the others and try to watch everyone's back. Chat Noir will use Evasion while in combat and then make Special Attacks at his opponent's eyes, head, etc. Klondike uses his strength to assist the rest of the team. He'll hurl dangerous opponents away from his teammates, hold them for other Guard members to hit, and so on. Dynamo may bounce a lightning blast off Klondike into one of the heroes. She must roll half her Agility or less to aim the shot, but gets a +4 to hit and +4 damage for surprising the target. This bonus may only be used once. Dynamo can use her lightning as a carrier attack for her sword. This small chart shows how each Guard member is equipped and how they may resist the Mind Control:

Combat in the arena is to the Praetorian Guard's advantage. There are hidden pits (Detect Hidden x2 to spot) that know the locations of. The pits are 12 game inches deep and have a 40% chance of being spiked (+3d10 damage). Spare weapons are stashed all over the place. From her seat in the balcony, the Empress can activate a 66 PR Force Field that protects her booth and seals the top of the arena, preventing flying characters from escaping. The Force Field is invisible. The Empress has an identical one around the throne in her palace.

Empress Terra Tyrannia's idea of trial by combat is more for sport than anything. She will watch from a high balcony as the heroes battle her Guardsmen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Armor</th>
<th>Weapons</th>
<th>Situations for Intelligence Saves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeker</td>
<td>ADR 55</td>
<td>Spear, Sword, Dagger, Retarius (weighted net × 2 to hit, HTH × 1 damage, special attack entangles target)</td>
<td>Dynamo loses over half his Hits, Slave is killed, Hero is incapacitated, He is ordered to kill or has accidentally killed someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat Noir</td>
<td>ADR 40</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none (due to Low Self-Control)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamo</td>
<td>ADR 55</td>
<td>Sword, Dagger</td>
<td>Seeker loses over half his hits. She is ordered to kill or has accidentally killed someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klondike</td>
<td>ADR 30</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Anyone on the Guard loses over half his Hits. Slave is killed, Hero is incapacitated, He is ordered to kill or has accidentally killed someone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the heroes overwhelm her Praetorian Guard with ease, she'll make a hasty retreat to the surface through the maze of tunnels. If the fight is a close one she'll try to finish the players herself. Either way, the Empress will use any remaining Slavers as a buffer between herself and the heroes. Should the heroes lose to the Praetorian Guard or the Empress herself, they will wear the collars of obedience as well. Should that happen, the players might start thinking about what their next characters will be like.

IN CONCLUSION...
Ideally, the heroes bring an end to Tyrannia's cruel empire, freeing the slaves and returning the Crimson Guard to normal. The Empress may escape and try to create a new power base somewhere. She may even take a Crimson Guard member with her if she still has control over any at the moment of her retreat. Her knowledge of both sorcery and science, courtesy of all the teachers she has enslaved over the years, leaves her with great personal resources.

If the Crimson Guard regains their own freewill, they will insist that the stolen goods which fill Tyrannia's palace be handed over to the Canadian National Treasury (a deed which may or may not give some reward to the heroes, GM's discretion). The Crimson Guard know when they owe a favour and they will offer their services should the heroes ever need them.
EMPRESS TERRA TYRANNIA

Origin and Background: Constantin Galia grew up in a village outside Rome. Near her home there were a number of underground caverns. Constantin loved exploring and relating in those dark chambers. She made them a temple to Terra, the Roman goddess of the Earth, and fervently worshiped there. One morning a stormy, rock-faced giantess appeared in Constantin’s cave. The giantess was a manifestation of Terra. Terra broke open her mostly hide and turned Constantin to drink of her boiling blood. Constantin died and in doing so was imbued with supernatural abilities. Terra then sent the leader. Constantin nearly did but as legions of Roman soldiers swarmed the palace, she fled for her power was running low and she was afraid. When she returned home, she found every one of her living relatives had been turned to stone. Terra had punished her for her failure. Constantin’s prayers could not bring the goddess back. Embittered, Constantin left her homeland. She travelled around the world, learning the secrets of scholars and wizards, in hopes she would gain the power that had almost been hers.

Centuries later, Constantin who now called herself Terra Tyrannia acquired the golem-like Slayers from a medieval wizard. Over the last 200 years, with the Slayers in her service, Terra Tyrannia became Empress of her own underground empire.

Combat Tactics: Terra refrains from direct combat, preferring to let her Slayers battle for her. If engaged she will hurl stones, blind targets with sand, slow them in mud and so on.

Personalities: Terra is powerful but her long life has taught her patience. Due to the nature of her powers, she feels entitled to rule the planet some day.


Powers:
1) Mutant Powers: earth powers. Terra can manipulate stone, dirt, sand, mud, etc. much in the same way a person with Magnetic Powers can manipulate metal. “Earth capacity” is Strength x 100 lbs. per level. Terra has a capacity of 10,000 lbs. Use Chemical Power for a defense. Terra can control sand or dirt to create darkness or attack as HTH with rocks (use weight and velocity to determine damage). Pt=5, Range=10 inches.
2) Transmutation: alter the earth so as to make stone become sand, mud become rocks, or any other similar alteration. Roll 2d8 to determine how many cubic feet are altered. Pt=8, Range=44 inches.
3) Body Power: Terra began aging extremely slowly after puberty. She ages 1 year for each century that passes. Terra is immune to disease and her endurance has been doubled.
4) Heightened Charisma As: +16

KLONDIKE

Klondike’s spacecraft crashed above the arctic circle several years ago. Although Klondike survived the crash, he suffered severe memory loss. As fate would have it, Seeker saw the ship crash. He found Klondike resting on a nearby ice-flow. When they returned to the crash site, the spacecraft’s self-destruct sequence engaged and the ship disintegrated. Seeker befriended the Massive, golden-skinned survivor and agreed to help him adjust to his new home. Seeker named him Klondike.

Identity: Unknown.

Powers:
1) Adaptation.
2) Heightened Strength B: +23.
3) Heightened Experience: to hit with HTH Combat.
4) Size Change, permanent: 1.5 height factor. 7 weight factor.
5) Mutant Power: Klondike’s body reflects all light and lightning control attacks. He takes no damage and the attacks continue the remainder of their range in a random direction away from his body.

DYNAMO

Janice’s mother, an inmate at the Safe Haven Mental Institute in Ontario, was injected with unstable chemicals while pregnant with Janice. The experiment was illegal but no-one was ever prosecuted. On the night that Janice’s mother went into labour, lightning from a terrible storm struck the delivery room. The doctor in charge of the experiment, nurses and Janice’s mother were all killed. Miraculously, newly born Janice survived until firearms and paramedics arrived. Safe Haven burned to the ground that night.

Janice was given the last name Jones by the government and raised in orphanages. As she grew, she learned of her electrical powers, but kept them secret. She ran away at the age of 16. In the dark alleys of Toronto, Alex Bowan found her. He befriended her, unaware of her special powers. When Janice confided her superpowers to Alex, now Seeker of the Crimson Guard, he convinced her to join the team a Dynamo. She recently married Seeker.


Powers:
1) Lightning control: this power must be channeled through a metal object. Damage: 2d8, Range 24 ins., PR=4.
2) Absorption: this power absorbs 100 volts/4 pts. damage of electricity per level (300 volts/12 damage 4 for Janice). Absorbed electricity does not damage and every 25 volts/4 damage adds 1 to her power (not to exceed her total). No PR cost.
3) Armor, Type B: ADR 90, metal battle suit that allows Dynamo to channel her lightning control. As a Proscenium Guard, she will have a centurion armour instead.
4) Heightened Agility B: +17

GARGANTUA

Origin and Background: Lawrence Bergren was a drifter who was captured on one of the Slaver raids. During his capture, the Slavers were spotted by several people in a passing motorhome. The RV and its passengers were destroyed before they could get away. The incident prompted Terra Tyrannia to find a more low profile way of collecting slaves. With the aid of rare alchemical solutions, Terra transformed Empress Tyrannia into Gargantua. Gargantua would be her means of snatching miners from the Swen in the surrounding area.

Combat Tactics: Gargantua will use natural cover to gain surprise, and then begin pummeling away.


Powers:
1) Heightened Strength B: +18.
2) Heightened Strength B: +23.
3) Invisibility in a natural earth environment Gargantua blends in as if invisible. No PR cost.
4) Vulnerability: 20 pts.
5) Life Support: Clay-like body does not need air and survives well in all environments except heat (no a defense against flame powers).
6) Size Change: Permanent: x2 Height Factor, x8 Weight Factor.
7) Body Power: triple body weight but double damage from flame attacks.
Weakness: Lowered Intelligence, —10.

Weight: 3600 lbs.

Basic HTH: 6d10 Move R:146 ins. (33m) Det. Hidden: 2%
Inventing Pts: 0 Inventor: 6%

Basic HTH: 6d10 Damage Mod: —4 Hit Points: 241 Power: 36

Reaction/Go: —2

Reaction/Go: —2

Accuracy: —2

Move R: 241,652lb's

Inventing Pts: 0 Inventor: 6%

Basic HTH: 6d10 Move Rt: 146 ins. (33m) Det. Hidden: 2%
Inventing Pts: 0 Inventor: 6%

Basic HTH: 6d10 Move R: 146 ins. (33m) Det. Hidden: 2%
Inventing Pts: 0 Inventor: 6%
RAVEN

To the people of the Blackfoot Indian reservation where Joseph Ravenfeather grew up, he was a symbol of their ancient Indian spirits. Unfortunately, Joseph had little faith in ancient spirits. Ravenfeather would argue repeatedly with the elders of the tribe that his mutation was genetic not mystical. One night, after a particularly heated debate, Joseph threatened to leave the reservation. Later, a group of young tribesmen ambushed him with orders to clip his pinfeathers. Without them, he could not fly. Ravenfeather fought madly and escaped before they could 'cripple' him. He knew he could no longer stay with people to whom he was nothing more than a symbol. Joseph flew to Manitoba to join the Crimson Guard as Raven.


Powers:
1) Heightened Defence: +4 to hit by others.
2) Wings: 352 ins (80mph) PR=1 hour.
3) Weakness Detection: +8 to hit.
4) Natural Weaponry: +11 to hit, +2 damage, Indian Fighting.

Charisma: 12. Hit Points: 15. Reaction/F: +1
F/Evil: -1. Damage: 16. Heal Rate: 1.6
Accuracy: +2. Power: 5. Carry Cap: 333 lbs
Basic HTH: 16b. Move Rate: 44 gds. Ins. 352 air ins.
Det. Hidden: 10%. Det. Danger: 14%. Inverting Points: 3.6
Invent: 36%. Cash: $5,000
Security Clear: 13 (Gen. Govt.)

SLAVERS

Origin and Background: The Slavers are fiendish creatures of dark magic. The Empress collected them from a world when they were mere infants. She trained them and gave them a limited education. They can speak a little English.

Combat Tactics: Slavers will attack with Power Blasts from the air before moving in to kill or capture. They rely on their Slavers whips to capture opponents. They are not opposed to kicking an unconscious foe.

Personality: Slavers are nasty, obnoxious, sadistic creatures. However, they treat the Empress with complete respect and, believe it or not, adoration they would show for their mother.


Powers:
1) Armor, Type B: ADR 50.
2) Special Weapon, Battle Staff: built-in Power Blast, 2bd damage. Range: 20ins. 12 charges. As a HTH weapon, +1 to hit, HTH +1d6 damage.
3) Special Weapon, Slaver Whip: +9 to hit, HTH +1d8 damage, Range: 3ins. Parasite Ray carrier attack (no range) has +2 to hit. 3 charges.
4) Vehicle, Graw Sled: wt. 400 lbs. passengers 1-2. cargo 400 lbs. speed 100mph (air only), structure rating 10, hits/displace 14, hits/demolish 10. Can be operated with 1 hand, has very low speed and can be destroyed. Flies at maximum altitude of 12gms, has a battery life of 4 hours.
5) Body Power: Slavers are fairy folk. They age 1 year for every 25 that go by. They also have +5 Endurance.
6) Heightened Strength B: +9.
7) Heightened Sense: Night Vision, can see in the dark as if it were daylight.
8) Weakness: Vulnerable to Light attacks. Slavers are blinded by light with only one roll needed to hit. Saves to recover from blindness are always 5%. Slavers take +6 damage from light blasts.

SLAYER STATS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>STR</th>
<th>AGI</th>
<th>Hits</th>
<th>Power Move</th>
<th>1gm</th>
<th>Md</th>
<th>Acc</th>
<th>Power Move</th>
<th>1gm</th>
<th>Md</th>
<th>Acc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bundt | 2   | 1   | 10   | 52        | 84  | 95 | 1   |       | +1 | 3  | 1d10
| Durge | 5   | 20  | 13   | 57        | 49  | 41 | 3   |       | +1 | 1  | 1d8
| Frak  | 3   | 18  | 10   | 51        | 46  | 41 | 4   |       | +1 | 1  | 1d8
| Gronk | 2   | 22  | 9    | 54        | 46  | 41 | 4   |       | +1 | 1  | 1d10
| Nanog | 3   | 19  | 11   | 53        | 45  | 41 | 4   |       | +1 | 1  | 1d8
| Sner  | 4   | 15  | 11   | 53        | 45  | 41 | 4   |       | +1 | 1  | 1d8
| Thog  | 4   | 23  | 8    | 54        | 46  | 41 | 3   |       | +2 | 1  | 1d2
| Ugor  | 2   | 27  | 9    | 51        | 46  | 41 | 3   |       | +1 | 1  | 1d12

CHAT NOIR

Georges Lafontaine was named Chat Noir (Black Cat) by his father, Sir Hillary Lafontaine. His father didn’t want him to risk his position in society and the parliament and so sent baby Georges and his younger mother away.

The problem with Georges, or Chat Noir, was his appearance. He was covered in black fur with cat-like eyes and sharp teeth. Chat Noir and his mother were taken to a large, isolated Nova Scotian estate. Eventually, Chat Noir grew restless and ventured into the nearest town. The townspeople cornered Georges and beat him. He used his Emotion Control to escape.

His mother, long held in suspicion by the locals, was forced from the area. Chat Noir bade her farewell and entered the forests where he survived alone for years until Seeker and Klondike found him. They convinced Chat Noir to join them.

In combat, Chat Noir slashes with his claws at faces, groins, and so forth. He gains pleasure out of fighting. Seeker figures that having Chat Noir on the team is the best way to keep control of him.


Powers:
1) Animal Powers: Mammals
   a) Natural Weaponry, claws +2 to hit, +4 damage.
   b) Speed Bonus, +40%, ground move.
   c) Ht. Sense, acute hearing, 10x distance, triple Det. Danger.
   d) Ht. Sense, acute vision, see in the dark, double Det. Hidden.
2) Heightened Agility B: +15.
3) Emotion Controls cause superstitions fear. Affected targets may bring 'bad luck' on themselves by acting awkward or nervous. May be used on a single target or in radius. Range:10, PR=8.

Weakness: Low self-control of his emotions.

Weight: 160 lbs. Basic Hits: 3. Strength: +16
F/Evil: -3. Damage Mod: +1. Heal Rate: 0.9
Basic HTH: 16b. Move Rate: 77 ins. Inverting Points: 3.6
Det. Danger: 36%. Cash: $9500
Security Clear: 18 (Gen. Govt.)

SEEKER

Alex Bowman grew up in the rugged Yukon Territory, where he learned to hunt and trap. Financial commitments placed on him by an alluring mother forced Alex to join the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Alex excelled and rose quickly in the ranks of the RCMP. Shortly after his mother died, he left the RCMP to return home. With both parents gone (Dad died in a hunting accident when Alex was 10), home didn’t feel the same.

Alex became a wanderer and explorer, living by the hunt. On his travels, he met Kondork. Together they formed the core of the Crimson Guard. He chose the name Seeker after his remarkable tracking prowess. He recently wed Dyna.

In combat, Seeker uses a variety of weapons. A typical selection would be a crossbow, hatchet, and noose (+1 to hit, HTH +1 damage, roll special entangle to entangle target).


Powers:
1) Heightened Agility A: +11.
2) Heightened Charisma A: +11
3) Heightened Endurance A: +12
4) Heightened Expertise: +2 to hit with all weapons including fists.
5) Heightened Sense: Tracking ability, follow a trail with 75% chance +2% per level. Seeker has an 85%. Poor conditions may lower chance by as much as 30. Seeker’s keen perceptions double his Det. Danger, and triple his Det. Hidden.
6) Willpower: Type A.

Weight: 180 lbs. Basic Hits: 4. Strength: +15
Charisma: 17. Hit Points: 38. Reaction/F: Good: 2
F/Evil: -9. Damage Mod: +3. Heal Rate: 2.4
LIVE BY THE SWORD

READER'S LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I find it difficult to believe how many letters have arrived at my desk since the launch of ADVENTURER 11. Many offer praise, advice, offers to contribute, subscriptions, money (!), and of course, criticism. The major bee in everyone's bonnet is the quality of the paper. I hope we have made it up to you by this issue (note the superior quality?). In fact, issue 11 was not printed on inferior paper in an attempt to penny pinch. It was a classic, official 'clerical error' (why don't you just say 'cock-up')?

MR. McGRAW: First and foremost, I applaud what you're trying to do with ADVENTURER. We need another professional gaming magazine of this type.

(Mr. McGraw goes on to summarise the articles contained in issue 11):

The prospect of grunting schizophrenic role-players presumably worrying about blood loss and the fact that they don't fit the statistical norm in the opinion poll brings tears to my eyes.

Most readers who offered criticism tended to level it at the articles (the scenarios seem to be highly praised, particularly the 3D view of Bealings House), and the cartoon, i.e. Once Bitten.

NEIL GRANT: of Mid-Glam: ONCE BITTEN was undoubtedly the worst cartoon I've ever seen. I'm glad to hear that it's going down to one page next issue. Improve it or get rid of the one major blemish in an otherwise good magazine.

JAMES WALLIS agrees: Once Bitten was hard to follow and ultimately uninteresting. Please to be disposing of. Soonest. (What's with the peculiar accent, James?). As if by way of reply, OLIVER DICKINSON calls O.B. "A superior comic strip; a main reason for subscribing to ADVENTURER.

Griselda wishes to follow the adventures of Fey the Fiery and she generally gets what she wants.

Personally, I think that Once Bitten is so radically different to other fantasy cartoons that many readers have been a bit stung by it. No, you're not supposed to quickly flip to that page, read it through once, snigger and then read the rest of the mag. A lot of background work and subtle humour is there. Read it slowly, savouring it as you would a well-written scenario or work of fiction.

Speaking of strange... how about this letter I received from DAVE PALMER:

Erm... wow... Dear Si, no, no... erm... saying... no, no... giving off vibes... that issue 1 of ADVENTURER was... really heavy... I mean... just mind staggering... there I was in my sacred grove eating my lentils when... wow! I just appeared... like... heavy man... it just came from nowhere... wow! I mean, flower power... peace... and ADVENTURER... Heavy! Oh no! Here comes that horrible dwarf again... the white one... he just doesn't dig me... not like ADVENTURER... Oh no!!

ANDY BRADBURY: having just rescued a copy of your new magazine from the newsagent's shelf (where it had already become a lone survivor of the initial rush), may I congratulate you on an impressive first issue. I was particularly struck by the subtle shift towards a more mature audience, though without going over the heads of the younger set.

A few comments have come my way concerning age groups, possibly due to the never-ending debates on the subject which other magazines have.

DAVE PERRY: Since the average age of your readership is 21.2 years old, perhaps we can have some decent, mature articles as opposed to the childish things in the other one, whose average reader is about 15 years old.

CLIVE SHERWOOD: Although the centre spread helps writers attempting your competition, I can see few other uses for it. Perhaps the kiddie-winkle (7-14) brigade of role-players may like to blue-tac it to their walls. I'm sorry, isn't it a waste of space?

JAMES WALLIS: The idea of a short story competition does seem a little juvenile for a magazine aimed at mature gamers... although that isn't going to stop me from entering!

I think this last point sums up the argument about the age at which ADVENTURER is aimed, i.e. anybody who cares to buy it and enjoy it. What difference does it make if you're 15, 19 or 21.2 years old? I don't know about the rest of you, but I still pin posters on my bedroom wall (providing they're of sufficient standard), and I still enjoy thought-provoking competitions, and yes! I am a member of the Dennis The Menace fan club!

DING DONG! (Has anybody seen Gnasher?) Seriously though, although the content of ADVENTURER is aimed at an older age group, what we are trying to do is present it in such a way that all age groups will appreciate, and more intelligent or experienced younger readers will benefit from.

Can you guess which 'state-of-the-art' games magazine Clive Sherwood is talking about...?
IAN MARSH: For a 1st issue of a newsagent-distributed magazine, I felt that ADVENTURER lacked the necessary impact; (it sold well -ed.) some better articles... stronger articles would have helped achieve this (but it sold well!) Even an intelligent introduction to role-playing games mightn't have gone amiss. I would think that ADVENTURER, as a new magazine, is quite likely to get a few curious, impulse buyers; something to help them understand the magazine would have gone down well.

If there had been any little pages left over, Ian, I would have included a "play-as-you-learn" scenario for exactly the above reasons. As it was, I decided to try and please the games players, not the few impulse buyers. As it is, I'm sure that those who are not familiar with role playing games would be able to find out about them through one or other of our advertisers, or direct from ourselves.

STEVE SHERLOCK: I have some comments to make about S. Rawlinson's article on Method Role-Playing. He says that a character should be thought up, imagining how he/she looks, dresses, background and profession, and then the stats should be 'thought up.' Now, come on, S. Rawlinson, that's turning the characters into Batman, Superman and Wonderwoman. After all, who's going to 'think up' a character with low requisites? Surely the idea of role-playing is to play the character that you roll on your dice to the best of his ability.

I think that Mr. Rawlinson was trying to say that you should fit the stats around the personality to create a realistic, believable character, instead of rolling a series of numbers and trying to build a character around that.

ANGELA TIMMS: Shop Window is a great idea and very well put over. It is good to get an unbiased review of a game and to know what you get for your money, as I have wasted a lot of money in the past on games with very little content and a very boring game.

We try to be impartial, Angela. Compare the shining review given to Cosmic Encounter this issue to the less enthusiastic treatment of Super-power last issue. Both games, of course, are Games Workshop's concern.

ANGELA TIMMS: This leads me to another point; one way in which we can find out about a game is to hear from someone who plays it. Magazines have the problem of being a little careful what they print, but if you talk to another player they can quite easily say that a game is utter junk without being polite about it. Let's face it, when it comes to wasting money, you really need the truth. There is a lot of ill-concealed conflict between clubs; there may be a little friendly rivalry but not much more. Meetings such as Reading Games Fair and Games Day help to bridge the gap a little. There are so many good ideas, and every DM changes something. Perhaps ADVENTURER could start up some form of club contact, and also put some lonely players in touch with clubs. I am willing to do all that I can if I may be of service.

Angela, do you really know what you would be letting yourself in for? May I suggest that those clubs who would like to start a contact scheme, should refer to the addresses given in our classified column. Angela belongs to the FREEDOM WARRIORS, but please don't show her under with mail. Urgent and brief messages only please.

J.T. BROWNING: I am glad to see the production of a new fantasy magazine, yet I would like to make a few comments. First of all, you have a tough competitor (?) in White Dwarf. It is more popular, has more pages, a glossier cover, currently better articles, news etc. etc. all in all, better. So come on, you're in business now. You are supposed to be working to become the most popular magazine out (aren't you?), so get going!

Letters like that do nothing for my ego, you know...

IAN SEWELL: ADVENTURER magazine, a triumph for role-playing in this country! Your scenario style is like a breath of fresh air; usable scenarios in any circumstances, with the option of doing something that the players might want to, and not what the scenario dictates.

Now letters like that one, really do things for my ego! Finally, forgive a little back-patting on our part, it isn't every day you get to publish your first magazine. General comments suggest that we have a long way to go before soaring to the dizzy heights that we're aiming for, but with continual support and feedback, such content that we'll be there! Till our next adventure!

STE DILLON.
For five years, the armies of the world have fought back and forth across Europe. Three years ago the missiles started flying. Most countries were hit hard in the nuclear exchange, but no one had a decisive advantage and the war went on. Tanks began breaking down and the supply of spare parts dwindled to zero. The sophisticated artillery weapons have exhausted their ammo, and no one is capable of producing any more. Divisions which started the war with 20,000 men are lucky to put 2000 into the field.

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37
Mithral inscribed a perfect pentagram across the cold stone floor with silver alloy paint, sealing the points with wax and filling the space with the names of Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, Vitus, Procopius and the lesser Angelic hosts. At each point of the star stood a copper bowl in which the Mage burnt aromatic herbs as proscribed in The Book of Ebon Bindings, designed to weaken the abomination to be summoned. The Wizard himself stood in a circle of protection transcribed with an intricate array of geometric shapes such that any demon assailing it would have to break through no less than four points in succession. Around his neck hung a silver sign of Syrinx: his last line of defense should things go wrong.

Trembling slightly, Mithral began to read the broken Latin words from the black book, opening the seven gates to Hell one by one and calling forth Aggamon - the horned abomination - to his Sanctum Sanctorum.

A fierce wind blew through the room extinguishing the many candles and almost buffeting Mithral from his place of protection. From deep in the forest outside the Wizard's home came a deep hollow sighing - the sound of something stirring from it's age old sleep. As the wind grew stronger and stronger Mithral had to shout his words in order to be heard, commanding the creature to stand before him.

The walls of the building shook to the sound of a legion of unholy things charging headlong through the darkling trees and Mithral grew scared. The oaken double doors to his sanctum exploded inward as a great gout of flame flashed through the hall. At the centre of the pentagram crouched an ebon horned beast surrounded by 101 demonic courtiers of all shapes and sizes. Mithral saw the floor on which the pentagram had been laid crack open as if struck by an earth tremor. As the Legion of devils tore away pieces of the broken pentagram, Aggamon gazed with hellish eyes at the terrified Mage.

"You will burn!" it hissed between blackened teeth.

Fire sprang in every part of the room charring Mithral's circle of protection bit by bit. Fearful for his life he began to fumble for the correct ritual of banishment, praying to God that it would work and that it would be in time...

Ever since the first D&D set hit the streets back in the early 70s, Magik has tended to be poorly treated by the majority of commercial Game designers. In most cases little attention has been paid to 'Atmosphere' - systems revolve round prepackaged 'machine gun' spells that resemble a medieval armoury rather than the magik of myth and legend. With the set of guidelines presented herein, an imaginative GM should be able to devise his own home grown Ritual Magik system and tailor it to whichever set of commercial rules he favours.

I first became interested in this sort of thing after reading a review in an early Acolyte of 'Magic - an Occult Primer' by David Conway. Spurred on by the good review I read it cover to cover, and very good it was too - designed to be read by someone with little or no knowledge of the laws of magik. Nowadays I think it is only available in hardback, but if you see a copy going cheap somewhere, it comes well recommended as a good source of background.

A basic understanding of the Laws of Magik help when designing an FRP system. Magik has to have some form of consistency otherwise we are left with an 'anything goes' universe.

The Law of Knowledge: Understanding of a subject brings control.

The Law of Infinity: Anything is potentially possible in an infinite universe.

The Law of Connectivity: Symbolism is inherent in magik; A magician who makes use of the correct correspondencies will be in a position to exert his influence on the state of reality.

The Law of Names: An off shoot of the above law, True names possess power as they are in effect a personal symbol of the individual concerned. To know a man's true name is to have some measure of control over him.

The Law of Opposites: Every subject can be split into two opposing factors and in theory a synthesis of these factors will produce a new concept more powerful than it's
individual parts. The Magician believes in the power of a unified whole i.e. the theory that people are comprised of opposites (for example a man has both male and female elements within him, but the male side is dominant in most cases). By this law, a Sorcerer who has learnt to unite both elements within himself gains greater power and understanding.

Law of Perversity: There is never a 100% chance of anything. Random luck will always play a part in magik as with everything else in life. A random element can be reduced through planning, skill and foresight, but it can never be eliminated.

Law of Bounds: Each person lives within his own private universe created and shaped by his own senses. There is no way of telling that what you see as the colour 'blue' is indeed what other people see as 'blue'. All beings are therefore isolated from each other. A Magician who gains an understanding of another persons private universe has gained a broader insight into the nature of subjective reality and since knowledge equates to power (first law) it will advance his skill with the arcane arts.

As a sublaw from this, reality is shaped by the belief of the individual. If a man truly believes something does not exist, then for him it does not (an example being the people who walk across red hot coals without much as a blister to show for the ordeal - for them the coals do not exist). Similarly the opposite is true (Law of opposites); if a man truly believes in something, then for him it is 'real'. An understanding of someone else's universe allows a Mage to project his own reality and thereby affect that person.

Law of Neutrality: Magik, like everything else in life, is neither good nor evil. Since good and evil are subjective concepts (the definitions of each depend on the individual concerned) a spell might be 'evil' to one person and 'good' to another. It all depends on your viewpoint.

And that, you will be pleased to know, is about as philosophical as we get in this article. Beyond the above, it's not really necessary to have a deep and meaningful insight into the nature of the universe to design a magik system. If that was the case we might as well give up now.

Astrological Influences: The most important part of any ritual magik system is the table of correspondences based on the zodiacal star signs and planetary positions. A decision therefore has to be made pretty early on regarding your world's astrological pattern. The easy way out (which I took when I designed my 2112 campaign) is to adopt the familiar Earth Zodiac and planets of our solar system. Should you do this, your work is already finished for you. If not you will have to create variants on the standard pattern i.e. a planet for war, a planet for love etc. Having arranged your planetary bodies a cosmos can be drawn up based on anything from a Tarot pack to some bizarre mythological creation of your own. For simplicities sake I am going to assume a constellation based on our own.

Correspondences are those elements (plants, colours, numbers, symbols) which relate to planetary spheres of influence. The system of magik I am outlining is based on what is called 'Sympathetic magik' - planets have their own spheres of influence i.e. Mars=War, Venus=Love. Ancient religions tended to link their Gods with the heavenly orbs, so the same can easily apply to your chosen campaign pantheon. These spheres of influence represent the natural state of things throughout the multiverse. When a Sorcerer wishes to exert his influence on reality he in effect alters it. To do so he has to affect the spheres of influence and this is where our correspondences come in.

Think of the correspondences in terms of invisible 'levers' - they are a direct form of access to the universal power we term magik. The more correspondences the Mage possesses, the greater his chance of using the planetary spheres and the greater his chance of changing reality - i.e. casting a spell.

In pseudo-magik terms each planetary sphere has its own 'Mana' charge (Mana being the polysinerian term for the building blocks of magical energy) and therefore the elements linked to that particular sphere attract the power necessary to manipulate reality - hence the term "sympathetic magik."

Correspondences are therefore very important to the casting of a spell. Without them we have a situation similar to opening a locked door without a key. It can be done but it's a lot harder. Although I have mentioned that the planets control spheres of influence, it should not be implied that the planets are in any way sentient - the power is simply a natural force that keeps the universe, as we know it, together.

So you will need to draw up tables for the planets and the zodiacal correspondences. For the former you will need a matrix to tell you which planet is dominant at any particular hour of the day. The pattern will vary from day to day as each planet governs a period of 24 hours - in our planetary system the links are pretty obvious i.e. Saturn=Saturday, the Sun=Sunday etc. For the latter you will need a table listing all the correspondences for each sign of the zodiac. The easiest way of constructing your own (a matter of mere minutes) is to pick up a book on astrology from your local library and copy out the relevant bits. Bear in mind that you are designing a game system - 100% accuracy is not required - all you are trying to do is capture the style and atmosphere of the thing.

Once you have finished your charts and tables, how do you convert them to actual game use? It's quite simple: when the Mage wishes to cast a spell, he consults his astrological tables and figures out the star sign most suitable to his needs. An example would be useful at this stage, so let us suppose that our friendly sorcerer (henceforth referred to as Perion for convenience sake) chooses to cast a spell to make a woman fall in love with him. Consulting his mystic tables he finds that Virgo is associated with love and sex and so prepares the necessary for the ritual. Scouring about his work room he gathers as many correspondences as he can find.

The basic nature of the spell is to cohere an individuals will, so we can break it down into a basic pattern of three stages:

i) Perion creates a mystic link with his target, in this case a woman we will refer to as Jackie.

ii) Perion casts the spell itself and attempts to act through the planetary influence of Venus to manipulate Jackie's feelings towards those of love.

iii) Jackie has a chance to resist Perion's spell.

These three stages fit virtually all forms of magik and can be considered to be universal in application.

1. Establishing the Magik Link: Perion has to make contact magically with Jackie - creating a sort of astral path down which the magik can flow. If he cannot form the link he cannot cast the spell.

There are several factors to be considered. Does Perion know what Jackie looks like? Does he know where she is? Does he have any facts to concentrate on? The latter is quite important as it makes a considerable difference to Perion's
'Foci' are items that have been in contact with the target and still possess a personal charge individual to that person alone. Examples would include nail clippings, hair, a ring, a garment, or something that is very dear to the target. The more foci Perion possesses, the easier it will be to form a link. On a similar note, the link will be made easier if Perion is familiar with his target. If he has no idea what she looks like or where she is, it will be harder to visualise her and since magik is very much based on visualisation and concentration, such lack of information will tend to screw things up.

These factors are added into the percentage improvised, taking also into account the Mage's skill and learning. A quick throw of the dice will determine success or failure to establish the link and the process will expend some Mana as the cost of trying.

(Mana is simply a flash word for 'power points' which are used in many RPGs. It is one of the many limited factors on spell casting as all attempts use up some of the Magicians stored Mana.)

2. Casting the Spell: Next comes the spell itself. Once again a percentage chance is improvised based on several factors: a) the number of correct correspondences gathered together, b) the skill of the Mage, c) the difficulty of the spell and d) any special factors to be taken into consideration (such as the spell relating to the Mage's specialist field of study so he gets a bonus in casting it).

The difficulty of the spell is obviously very important as there is quite a difference between creating fire at the end of a branch of wood and causing a volcano to erupt on command. Spells are therefore given difficulty ratings and the higher the rating, the more difficult the chance of casting and the greater the loss of Mana points in trying. Some spells may be so powerful that the Mana required is more than your common or garden Mage has at hand, in which case he will have to work out a cheaper way of creating his desired effect.

To compute a difficulty rating for each spell the GM has to have a list of standard categories, for example:

i) Duration of the spell,
ii) Damage done by the spell (if any),
iii) Area of effect,
iv) Does it break the natural laws of the universe (e.g. gravity?)
v) Rate of movement involved.
vi) Does the spell require creation of matter (more difficult than utilising already existing matter).

As more spells are devised, the GM will have more categories to refer to in his check list. For example a spell commanding someone to walk will be easier than a command to commit suicide as the latter goes strongly against the will of the target, while the former does not (and how is the victim to know he's going to walk round a corner and drop into a 20' pit full of vipers...).

Breaking everything down into a numerical system (e.g. Duration: up to 5 minutes: 1pt, up to 30 minutes: 2pts, up to 2 hours: 3pts, up to 12 hours: 4pts, up to 2 days: 5pts, up to 1 week: 6pts, etc., etc.) the GM can add up the factors to create one final difficulty rating. This can equate to a percentage chance on a table and a roll of the dice will give success or failure. Personally I like to see a Quality Result system as in the James Bond 007 role-playing game, so that you can have four grades of success in addition to failure - it gives the GM some indication as to how good the spell really was. For those not familiar with the 007 game, a Quality 1 result is the best possible, while a quality 4 is the worst. A Q1 is represented by 10% of the base chance of success, a Q2 by a further 10%, Q3 by 30% and Q4 by the remaining 50%. e.g. if the Mage had a 60% chance of success, the breakdown would read as follows:

| 01-06 | Quality 1. | 07-12 | Quality 2. | 13-30 | Quality 3. | 31-60 | Quality 4. | 61-95 | Failure. 96-98 | Automatic failure. 99-100 | Critical failure. |

As you can see from the above, I tend to rule that 96-98 on percentage dice is a failure regardless of the base chance of success, and that 99-100 is a critical failure (the '100' being more serious than the '99').

Going back to our example of Perion and Jackie, a Q4 result would probably coerce Jackie into liking him, a Q3 into harbouring a secret crush, a Q2 into open love and a Q1 into a 'I can't live without you' syndrome. A failure of course would be a failure, and a critical fumble would probably lead to Jackie actively disliking our hero. Obviously this sort of system leaves a lot up to the GM since it is very much rule of thumb, but I feel an opened ended approach such as this is the best way of handling a subject as wide and sprawling as magik.

3. Resisting the Spell: Finally, stage 3 is where Jackie has a chance of resisting the spell, particularly if she is a sorcerer herself, or is anticipating it. This is of course the good of saving throw much loved by D&D players everywhere. As with the first two stages it is best described as a percentage die roll, based on the following points:

a) Mental prowess of the target.
b) Any magical skill.
c) Charms of protection.
d) Piety rating (if you are running a campaign where the Church dislikes Sorcery then a very holy individual will have a certain amount of God given protection in return for being faithful).

The saving throw should be evaluated as a quality result as well so that you do not get the case of a Q1 success being wiped out by a Q4 save. Simply degrade the spell roll by a number of placings equal to 5 minus the quality result of the save. For example, if Perion rolled a Q2 and Jackie rolled a Q4, the Q2 would be downgraded one place to a Q3.

Your system should be arranged so that % chance of a saving roll is less than the % chance of spell success, all factors being equal - after all, the poor mage has already had to make 2 die rolls to get this far! Do bear in mind that the target will not always be resisting a spell; an obvious example is a spell of curing. It is up to the individual concerned whether he wishes to fight the magical effect.

As with creating the link the sorcerer should lose Mana for the spell stage. In each case the loss of Mana should be based on the difficulty rating itself. In my 2112 campaign, it was 1/2 the difficulty in Mana points for the link, and all the difficulty for the 2nd stage spell.

I have introduced you to the basic background for creating your own magik system. Next issue, I shall introduce you to special material components necessary for casting specific spells, the side-effects of sorcery, demons and how to handle them, and enchanted items such as talismans.
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GAMES OF LIVERPOOL, 89 VICTORIA STREET, LIVERPOOL L1 6DG
The Silver Feather of Chazara

The feather is buried deep,
Within the mountains very heart,
Guarded by Zimon's demon,
Who would tear your soul apart.

The valley lies within the mountains,
Holding secrets none should know,
But look ye down into the waters,
And see 'tis true nature flow.

With those words Chazara vanished,
Leaving a silver bow in the circle, where
he had been standing. Wearily I moved
and touched it gently with a finger.
Somehow I thought that
something made by magic would be
hot as the flash that had created it, but it
was cool to the touch and made of a
metal I was not familiar with.

"Pick it up, child, it is your gift.
Chazara gives it to help you in your
quest."

"Why me father. I do not understand.
I know nothing of fighting or legends. It
must be a mistake to use me to find the
stolen Silver Feather." Tor smiled at his
beautiful daughter. She did seem to be
an odd choice. Tall and fair but so very
delicate, unlike her brother Shem, who
was strong as an ox and loved a fight.
Yet Shara had her strengths. Never
once had Tor seen his daughter
flustered. She was always calm,
whatever the circumstances.
Sometimes he had wished something
or someone would excite or confuse her
but it never happened. Even this
appeared to have only puzzled her.
"Chazara has never led us astray Shara,
so we must trust in his judgement.
He must believe you can succeed
where others might fail."

"Why then did he not choose Shem
with me instead of Lien. I hardly
know him. He never speaks to anyone,
unless he has to and I'm not even sure
he is to be trusted."

"I confess I do not understand any
more than you, but Lien is a brave
warrior and it is as important to him that
Zimon's power grows no greater by
stealing Chazara's magic, than it
already is. His fathers lands are also on
the border of Zimon's spreading
empire. As for him saying little, that
is true but you can trust in the few words
he speaks. Now you must rest Shara,
you should leave at first light. Shem
rides to Lien now to tell him what we
have learned."

As dawn broke and the sun crept
over the mountains, I walked out into
the courtyard. I looked towards Lien, he
showed no sign of greeting and gave
his attention to the bustle and
excitement that surrounded us. I
flicked blond tresses from my face and
resigned myself to the fact that this
person was to be my companion until
the Feather was returned. He was
handsome. Tall, dark and powerfully
built, but cold and silent. He didn't even
smile to acknowledge my presence,
so I treated him with indifference and
saved my smiles for my family. My
father, sensing the atmosphere
between us, wished us both good luck
and God-speed. Shem complained
again at being left behind and asked
that Lien take care of me. I was angry
that Shem would embarrass me with
such talk, and furious with the curt nod
which was the only reply Lien could
manage. Before anger got the better of
me, I bid a hasty farewell and led my
mount from the court yard without
looking back.

I heard the hoof beats fall into step
behind me and knew Lien followed, but
I would not acknowledge him. We rode
in that fashion until dusk, when the
steep mountain path brought us to the
entrance of the caves. I would have
continued despite my exhaustion, if
Lien had not called a halt for the night.
I will not give you cause to complain at
my delaying you. I thought to myself, as
I shared out our rations of meat. It was
with that same thought on my mind I fell
asleep, with some of my food still
uneaten.

I was awakened by a strong hand
shaking my shoulder, and opened my
eyes in panic, wondering where my
maid was. My look of uncertainty was
obviously amusing to Lien who stood
over me smiling. I felt like slapping his
face but remembered we had more
important things to worry about.

I ate a quick breakfast, happy to get
moving and shake some of the chill
from my bones. As we entered the
mountain, I realised cold was a feeling I
had better become accustomed to. We
moved slowly downwards in the
darkness of the caves. We had left
the horses outside as they would make too
much noise on the stones and gave
away any chance we had of surprise.
Lien led the way, holding a reed torch
which dimly lit our path. As my bones
began to ache at all the walking we had
done. Lien stopped dead in front of me
and signalled silence. I wondered what
was wrong until I head a strange
slobbering sound.
thinking my lungs would burst, when we spotted daylight up ahead. Lien lit some reeds and as we ran out into the fresh air, he dropped them at the entrance. The shock of the flames and the squeals of the early victims stopped the rats in their tracks and we were safe.

We found ourselves on a wooden bridge that led us over the water of a canyon. Across the other side was a strange white building and a huge, featureless stone figure.

"Zimon's Temple, I hope he doesn't know we're here," Shem muttered. "How do you know? I asked. Shem pointed down into the water. The reflection showed the temple as a skull and the figure with eyes. I remembered Chazara's words about the reflection showing the true nature and realised Zimon would be expecting us. At that moment a dark shadow fell upon us, and before we could react, Shem was swept up in the talons of a huge Eagle.

"Use the feather," Iscreamed at Lien. He looked uncertain but as the bird flew across the water towards the Temple, he took it from his pouch and held it at arms length. "Think flight Lien, think flight." As he did so, he was lifted upwards and he pointed his arms in the direction of the eagle. I aimed the bow and as the first arrow hit the great bird, shuddered. At the second arrow, he dropped Shem, who fell into Lien's waiting arms. Never in my life had I been so relieved. As the two landed, they found me weeping.

Shem was confused by my state, but Lien just smiled. "I think it's time to go home Shara, too much has happened for one day. Come, there's a camel over there." Surprised as I was, I still allowed Lien to take my arm and guide me towards the mount, while Shem, still shaken, followed behind. Lien lifted me up to place me on the camel's back and as he did so, its form changed into that of a smiling Chazara. "Well done you two. I'm sorry Shem caused you such trouble but perhaps he will mind his own business in the future. I think you both found what you were looking for anyway. Shall we go then?" Before we had a chance to even register our amazement, he flicked his hands and the clouds swirled about us. As they dissolved we found ourselves dazed but happy, back in the palace courtyard.

Well done, Alex. £50 worth of your favourite goodies are on their way to you.

ADVENTURER CLUB newsletters are on their way to the following runners-up:

Robert M. Doyley; Rhys Williams; Simon Goldsmith; Andrew Cannon; V. M. Burgin; Donald Storey; Jean C. Mills; Dave Newton; Jon Barresen; Barry Stephen.

COVER STORY SNIPPETS...

Our Cover Story entries have provided us with dramatic tales...

The huge creature gave a hideous screech as the shaft plunged deep into its right thigh. The beautiful elfin woman unleashed the golden purse that caressed her shapely thigh. Take this, the leaf of the old elm. Take the leaf in your palm, raise it to the soft winds and feel its spells run through the veins of your body. Fly, Morthal! fly! My arrows will not reach him now.

S. Howitt: Turnditch

With humorous tales...

See, you dumb blonde pixie, I told you the Eagle was dead! Rthur Daily had finally outwitted the elven maiden, Sa-Mantha the Fox.

J. Taylor: Chelmsford

With tales of gore and blood...

Like lightning, his hand grasped the exposed neck. His fingers tightened around the barman's throat and squeezed! The landlord's face contorted in agony, his eyes bulged as if to explode! Yet still the fingers, like jaws of steel, tightened!

We had references to games...

I was sitting there, watching Bryvillion being dragged across the distance, blood spilling from an open wound like blood from an open wound.

Pythonist (my wife) says it might be useful to have Bryvillion's 5X10^6 GPs worth of wealth.

D. Read: Peterborough

We even had 'Surreal Ideas'...

Dillon sat cross-legged on the cool grass, munching thoughtfully. He had a lot of time on his hands; he also had it on his legs, elbows and feet. He wondered if the small blue mushrooms really were magic. Out of the corner of his eye, Dillon saw a strange lumpy fellow in a camel hair coat. Then he realised it was a camel.

B. Brown: Wroughton

As the man said, it takes all sorts...

Our only foreign entry to the competition comes from Alexander Hohmann, a German living in France (?):

Poor Zwynzyk! His coward betrayed him once again. After a difficult journey full of challenges and dangers we had at last arrived at the castle of the great Archmage Dee-Em. Our purpose had been to demand... err... ask him to do us a favour and join our party to seek adventure and push back the boundaries of mankind etc.

But Dee-Em only laughed at us. So we left, thanking him for having granted us an audience. But in that moment Zwynzyk got angry and called him a..... Dee-Em enraged and pronouced a couple of strange syllables. Our friend was transformed into a camel and vanished, leaving only a stinking cloud behind him.

To find him again we bought all the camels we could buy all over the province and led them to the Lake of Revelation, which reveals the truth of things. We just had to examine the mirror-image of the heard to find our friend.

This we did. Zwynzyk was there. I gave him back his human shape with a Wish scroll I had discovered in a dustbin some days before.

But instead of thanking us, that thankless little scamp only insulted us; he said true friends would have felt his presence in the animal's body and so on... Amanda and I were up to kill him, but suddenly a sort of giant chicken came to grasp him and save him from our wrath (and for his larder). Amanda immediately took her bow and shot an arrow, but unfortunately she hit that poor chicken and not Zwynzyk.

I knew it was my task to execute Zwynzyk, and took off, sword drawn, with my Feather Of Taking Off (found in another dustbin) to follow the chicken....

"AHAI! The Second Course!"
FANZINES FOREVER...?

An overview of selected fanzines by Ste Dillon

Last issue we introduced ADVENTURER readers to the world of fanzines. Response to this article has mainly consisted of letters from fanzine editors, so I don’t know if the rest of you are still in the dark, or if fanzine coverage bores you silly! So... hoping that it’s not the latter reason, several fanzines are opened up this issue, to see exactly what they contain. Addresses are given at the bottom of the page for those people interested in a particular ‘zine. A word of caution, however, most editors would agree that it is best if you write first, to check the details and availability of the zine before sending any cash.

Next issue, a name from the fanzine world will be here to give a deeper insight into what goes on out there. We also introduce ADVENTURERS to the Play By Mail world of gaming. Anybody connected with this phenomenon should contact Wayne at 69 Kiln Court, Newhall Street, Poplar, London B17 7JP.

1. LANKHAM STAR DAILY #2 2360 (LSD) by Rob Nott consists of 8 pages of letters, 6 concerned with Thunderdome. Robb’s Sci-Fi postal game, 2 of fiction, 10 covering postal game updates, zine reviews, an article on PBMs, 5 pages on music and 3 pages about the editor’s weekend! LSD is primarily a postal games ‘zine with interests in music and the compulsory feedback pages.

2. TOME OF HORRORS #2 260p (ToH) by Gordon Muir et al contains a mini article on spell casting, a 4 page epic comedy episode, a fighting fantasy spoof, a 3-page zine review. Film reviews, 7 pages of letters and a few other mini-brief articles. Primarily, this is a sarcastic, sardonic look at games and the gaming world, held together by letters/communications with other ‘zine fiends.

3. SOUND & FURY #2 50p by James Wallis is more like a mini version of a professional magazine. By that, I mean it opens with reviews of games, comics and magazines. Following this is PHEADRA, the fantasy campaign games world. A zine spoof follows this, and a tongue-in-cheek article on pregnancy in RPGs. A mini fantasy scenario follows, a Paranoia adventure and an excellent parody of one of comic-book heroes, Judge Fredd. Definitely a different sort of ‘zine.

4. RAGE IN EDEN #3 70p by Rich Mumford begins with an introduction to the editor, his likes and dislikes, and even more about the editor. Next comes an article on writing articles, 3 pages of music chat and an article on modern witchcraft. 100 pages of letters follow this, and then the ‘zine/PBM round-up (17 pages). This ‘zine is really for those who participate in the PBM world.

5. STARQUEST #5 50p by Mark Oewin. Includes a good, but weird story called “Family”, a feature on the state of fandom and the responsibility of the ‘zine editor. Next comes the 3-page zine review, 4 pages of music chat. 11 pages of letters and several small articles concerning games.

6. ZINE WITH NO NAME #1 40p by Martin Le fee plans a list of ‘zines including RPG and postal ones. This includes a section on new titles, ‘zines which have folded, British ‘zines, European, Colonial, hobby services such as the Central Gamestart Organiser for people who want to get started in postal games. A ‘who’s who in the hobby’ is included. A sort of directory for anyone who’s interested.

7. DAGON #12 75p by Carl Ford is a 44 page Cthulhu ‘zine relating fiction by Brian Lumley and R. J. Curran, a one player/one Keeper scenario outline, notes on the myths and its propagators, a review of Cthulhoid horror movies, notes in CoC, discursive with Sandy Peterson and letters pages. A real ‘must’ for Keepers and Cthulhoids.

8. UTTER DRIVE #3 45p by Ben Goodale includes the introduction to its RIVERWORLD rpg system, an (almost) systemless scenario called Time Chase. The postal campaign Disastria fills the next 9 pages. 5 pages of letters. Add a few Reynold’s cards and an excellent mickey-take advert for Garden Gnomes Centre (we’re serious about gnomes!) and you have UD.

9. IVORY Tower #5 50p by Geoff Dean is worth mentioning for the excellent centrefold cartoon. The ‘zine covers editorial, lengthy ‘zine reviews, a hand-written campaign scenario covering 9 pages. Letters fill 5 pages, a hand-written Runequest 2 scenario (8 pages), Traveller subsector and more editorial. Useful hardware, though the presentation is scrawny.

10. CONVERTED Wraith #1 55p from T. P. Stoddart, covers book, comics and game reviews, ‘zine reviews, oriental weapons guide, spoof on Indiana Jones, Care Bears RPG, Games Day report and other miscellany.

11. XIMOC #9 50p is a comic-type publication from Dave Francis et al. This issue is full of rats, e.g. The Rat Race, introducing Roger the Biker Rat who, with the help of his rat-friends, manages to thwart a cat-plot which involves poisoned cheese in Tesco! A short and weird story follows, then on to Ciderman (our superhero spoof), and concluding with another Rat Adventure!

12. SPITTING FROM THE BATTLE MENTS: #3 55p by D. G. Evans contains an entertaining Traveller solo, a 9 page systemless scenario that provides a village background. An epic quest (9) involving King Arthur the Unavailable—comment covers 6 pages, rounded off with sarcasm, letters and reviews.

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