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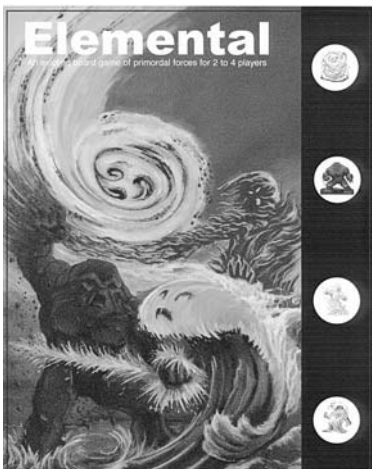
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**Knights of the Dinner Table #30
No Honor!
April, 1999**

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Knights of the Dinner Table™

M A G A Z I N E

“No Honor”

The KODT Development Team is
**Jolly R. Blackburn, Brian Jelke,
Steve Johansson and David S. Kenzer**
Cover Art by George Vrbanic

Table of Contents

Cries from the Attic <i>Editorial of a madman</i>	2
Table Talk <i>Reader mail</i>	3
Takin' Care of Business <i>Weird Pete hawks his wares to B.A.</i>	5
And One Got Away <i>Sara bails on the Knights and joins another group? Huh?</i>	8
Dirty Politics <i>The gang plays Race for the White House and it's 'politics' as usual.</i>	19
One-Two Punches <i>A collection of single panel Knights. Short and Sweet.</i>	21
Clash of the Iron Clads <i>Bob and Dave pull out the classic game, BattleShip.</i>	22
The Black Hands: Simply Irresponsible <i>Pete and Sievil continue their efforts to shed themselves of benchmen status.</i>	26
Shardar™ <i>Installment II of the monthly comic strip based in the Kingdoms of Kalamar™</i>	29
Heard it on the GameVine™ <i>News, rumors and industry buzz plucked from the vine</i>	34
Brian's Small Press Picks™ <i>Brian's picks of the month for games worth pulling off the shelf</i>	36
Weird Pete's Bulletin Board™ <i>Pete's board is jammed with lots of interesting things to read.</i>	37
Gamin' Dick's Back Room™ <i>An Opinion Arena and Open Forum. Anything goes!</i>	38
Parting Shots™ <i>One last jab at yer funny bone on the way out the door</i>	40



Although he won't admit it, Knights of the Dinner Table™ was created by Jolly R. Blackburn way back in 1990 as *filler* for the small press magazine Shadis™ (which he was publishing out of a spare bedroom). Eight years later, as head writer and creative director for the KODT development team, he continues to draw and write strips for the monthly Knights of the Dinner Table™ magazine as well as for Dragon® magazine and The Rifter™ Sourcebook Series. Recently, Jolly decided he wanted quit and get into the vinyl siding business. After checking into the cost of tools, however, he changed his mind.

Editorial of a Madman

*"Embrace your Geekness. Wear it like a badge of honor.
For it is the Geek who shall inherit the Earth!"*

Gary Jackson

"I am Geek, Hear me Roar"
Random Number Books, 1986

A few years ago I got a call from an old friend (Kristy). We hadn't seen each other in several months, so when we discovered we were both going to be in L.A. on the same weekend (I was going to be attending a game convention) we knew we couldn't let the opportunity pass by.

Unfortunately, I was running the booth by myself and wouldn't be able to get away. That's when, Kristy offered to come to the convention. "We can visit at the booth!" she said, "Besides, it will give me a chance to see what you do for a living."

For years, Kristy had known I was in the 'games industry' but, as she would readily confess, she really didn't know what that meant. "You mean like checkers and backgammon? That kind of thing?"

So there I am a few weeks later hawking product at the booth when I look up and see Kristy with an astonished look on her face.

Before I could even say, "Hi!" she blurted out, "Oh my god - there are SO MANY geeks here!" Feeling rather offended I asked her what she meant.

"Don't you see them?" she asked. I scanned the dealers room and shrugged. Then, laughing hysterically she hugged me "Oh my gawd! You poor thing, you're one of them aren't you?"

I was reminded of Kristy recently when watching the episode of Jesse (NBC's sitcom) in which Jesse is unwittingly dragged to a game of D&D™ by her date.

When she finds out what her date has in mind her comment is, "D&D™? Have they updated that game or something? 'Cuz when I was in junior high that game was only for geeks!"

That episode apparently offended a lot of gamers. I got at least a dozen letters from concerned readers urging us to protest and join in on a letter-writing campaign to NBC.

Personally, I wasn't offended. Sure it was an inaccurate portrayal of what role-playing is all about. But the strange thing is, I wanted to sit down and play with those guys. "Hey, somebody hand me a character sheet! That three-eyed badger is going down!"

This is what Peter Adkison (CEO of Wizards of the Coast) had to say on the 'Jesse' controversy, "We were not offended by this episode and

in fact considered it a very positive development. Yes, it did portray us role-players as nerds, but that is a huge step up from portraying us as satanists. And the math professor/date for Christina Applegate was obviously an intelligent upstanding gentleman, not at all a negative stereotype for a role-player.

We recommend NOT protesting to NBC about this episode. Such a protest would sound whiny and would discourage further exposure. Instead let's show that we have a sense of humor and can laugh at ourselves and this hobby we love so much."

I guess I should finish telling you my story about Kristy. Later that same day I invited her to have dinner with me. I also invited a half dozen of my 'geek friends'. By the end of the meal, Kristy was having the time of her life. Partly because we learned we could make her laugh at the drop of a hat. (My friend Tony made her spray coke out her nose twice with his Bobo the Near-sighted dwarf stories.) But the main reason Kristy had such a good time, as she would later tell me, was that she genuinely enjoyed the company. (As she put it, she found my friends, "bright, charming and hilarious")

When it was time to say goodbyes, Kristy sadly pleaded to the group, "I wanna be a geek too! Take me with you!" Chalk up one convert on the tally sheet. Maybe Gary Jackson is on to something when he says, "Embrace your geekness!"

Speaking of geekness, is it just me, or has anyone else noticed that 'geek' has become something of a catch phrase in mainstream advertising lately? Microsoft (as well as many software companies) are using such slogans as "Bring out the geek inside!" and "The geek in you will thank you for it!" Is geek becoming kewl? Will having a dice bag hanging from your belt become a trendy fashion statement? (Hey it could happen! Military glasses are in vogue now.)

Okay, I'm done rambling now. Until next issue — good gaming!

Jolly R. Blackburn
Jolly R. Blackburn

OKAY, BOB, SO THE **SEWER GOPHER RIPS YER HEAD CLEAN OFF**. THEN HE SHOVES IT IN A SACK AND BEATS IT AGAINST THE SIDES OF THE **SEWER TUNNEL** UNTIL A **BLOODY GOO** OOZES FROM THE BAG.



DAMMIT! I TOLD YOU TALKIN' TO THIS GUY WASN'T GOING TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING. NOW HE'S GOT MY HEAD IN A SACK!

YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO **WAVE** THE FLAG OF TRUCE - **NOT** POKE HIM IN THE CHEST WITH IT TO EMPHASIZE YOUR WORDS.

BOB, YELLING, "**YOU GOT SOMETHING TO SAY TO ME, MISTER BUTT-UGLY?**" IS **NOT** WHAT I'D CALL PARLEYING.

IT'S NOT BOB'S FAULT. HE JUST **LOST HIS HEAD!** HAR HAR.

Our Readers Talk Back!

Dear KODT,

Wanted to drop you a line to say thanks for a great comic. I picked up my first issue of KODT (#27), although I've been reading the strip in *Dragon*™ and *Shadis*™ for years. I think gamers of all kinds can see a bit of themselves, or their experiences in the Knights.

I also wanted to let you know that I've placed a link to the KODT web site on my own site, *Dice Tales*.

It's a site dedicated to war stories from veteran gamers (RPG, not PC). If you would like to peruse it, the URL is <http://members.tripod.com/DiceTales>. Thanks for the fun. BTW, the reading at U-Con (what I caught of it, I had to get to a game) was a blast!

Michael Webster
via E-mail

Dear KODT,

Did you know Issues 5 through 9 are all sold out? I mean, of course you know this, but yikes! You need to release another Bundle of Trouble. A suggestion, if I may be so bold. Do it double-size and instead of just 4-6, include 4-9.

It'll certainly make you more popular at parties, and may very well win you the governorship of, uh, Minnesota. Though you may have to battle the current guy in one-on-one combat. Also, you'd have to pretend like you're -from- Minnesota. Nevermind that, though. Just have those Kenzer guys release **Super Bundle of Trouble** : KODT Issues 4-9! Please pass on my suggestion.

Adam Schroeder
via E-mail

Hey Adam! Thanks for an awesome idea. I was so excited when I got your email (I've always wanted to be Governor of Minnesota) that I ran it by the other officers. I just don't get it. They laughed at me. Brian Jelke actually kicked me in the chin while Steve and Dave gave me an atomic wedgie. Then they made me wear a placard which read, "Bundles of Trouble shall be, No more, no less than Issues three!"

Sorry, but I tried. I didn't realize the company had taken such a hard stance on the issue.

Jolly

Dear KODT,

I'll have to make this quick as I'm sitting here trying to read issue #27 and type this e-mail under the pretense of doing actual work (well, no, okay...I am on a lunch break - but still try telling your boss why you're sitting with your feet up reading a comic book).

Just like to say, keep it up; you're doing a great job! I wrote earlier saying that my role-playing days were a hazy memory in my past but since I started reading the KODT, the old urge to pick up the trusty dice bag has slowly started to kick again....hmm...now where are my old D&D™ modules...?

Also, in regards to the comments by Alan Miller in his letter in issue #27 in which he criticized *The Black Hands'* constant abuse of Newt - I don't think it's really necessary to defend him. If you ask me Newt is the craftiest one of the lot of - the way he set up Stevil and Weird Pete by continually regenerating their characters, then killing them off, then regenerating them again, then killing them off...wow!

This was one of the most coolest...uh, vicious pieces of game play I have ever witnessed!

So, no - I don't think it's really necessary to defend Newt - I

think the lad can hold his own.

Finally great news about all the KODT products coming out - I can't wait! The "Orcs at the Gates" board game sounds fantastic - it may be just the thing to get me back into the gaming routine. It also sounds like you'll be able to get a "free" comic out of it by simply writing about the gangs adventures playing the board game!

Oops! Gotta go now...the boss is coming!

Chris Yee
via E-mail

Dear KODT,

I just wanted to let you know that you have a new fan web site devoted to the KODT. I thought your readers might like to know about my site as well as a few others.

Go see these wonderful web sites and give the designers some feedback. A lot of hard work went into these and we will appreciate any comments!

Also, remember the TOP 10 best strip that I suggested to you? Now you can vote on my web site and you can also take a look at the first results.

And which strip is currently #1? None other than the very first strip published in KODT#! **Lair of the Gazebo!!!** So I invite all of you, KODT readers, to come vote.

Erik Bouchard
Chicoutimi PQ, Canada
email : rush@saglac.qc.ca

*Thanks Erik. Websites such as yours are a great service to our fans. I pulled the website addresses from your letter and posted them in *GameVine* in the back of this issue where they should get more notice. Again, thanks for providing another forum where KODT fans can get together.*

Jolly

Dear KODT,

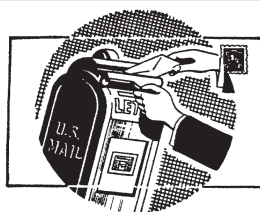
Is there any possibility, any chance at all, Brian could go back to GMing, his speech in KODT #25, pg 20, was not only inspiring, but made me wonder why he doesn't return to GMing, and if it had something to do with his ability to manipulate the campaign from the player's seat?

Lewis Powell
via E-mail

There seems to be a growing demand to see Brian take his place behind the GM screen. It's already been revealed in the comic that Brian used to be a very popular GM and that something 'tragic' happened that made him 'give up' the screen.

You may see Brian sitting as GM in a few Retro-KODT strips in the near future.

Jolly



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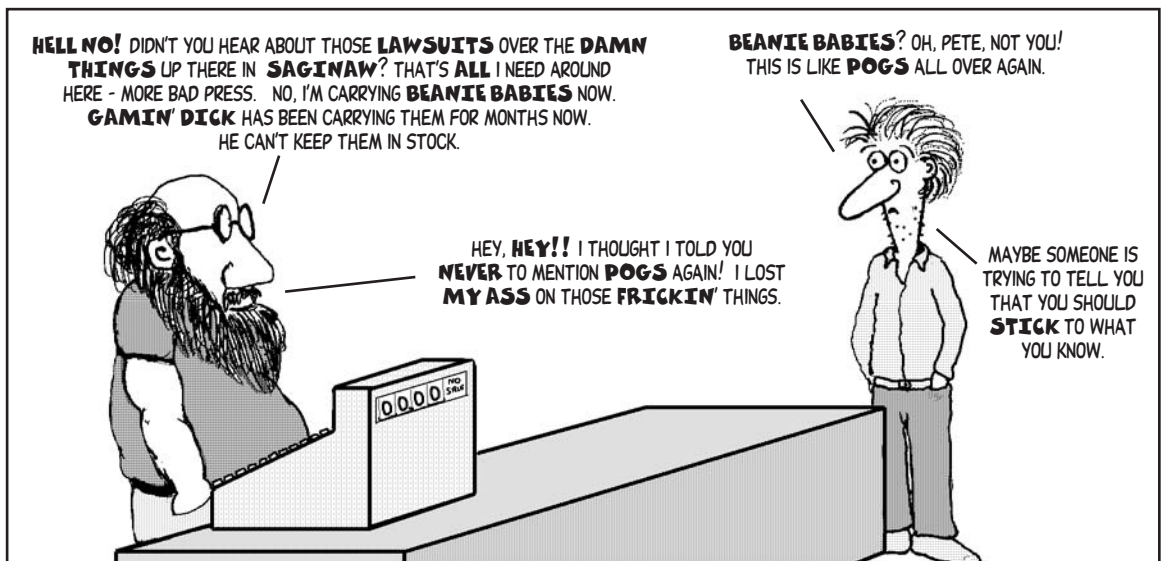
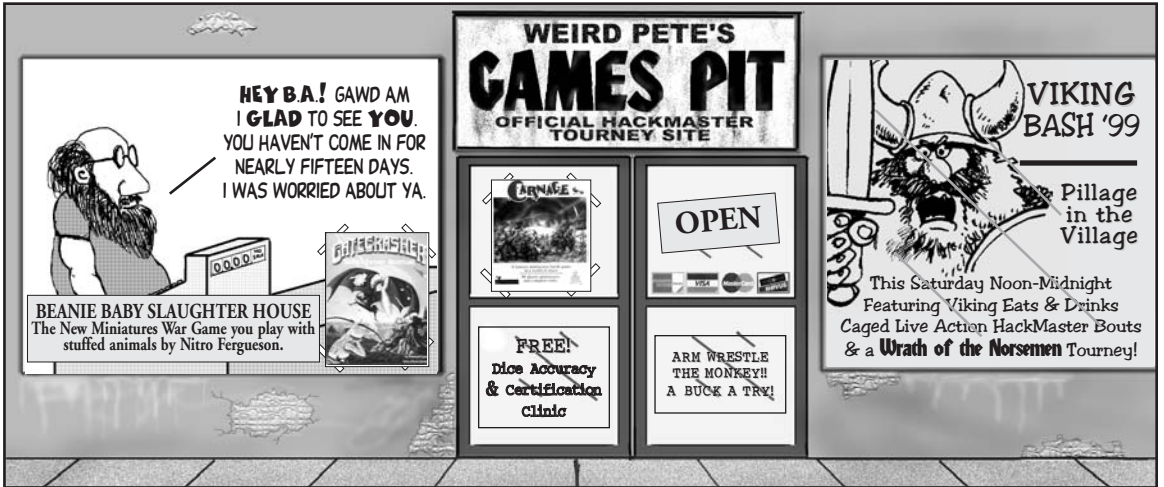
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Takin' Care of Business

BY JOLLY R. BLACKBURN



* See KODT# 10: The Spyder Pits of Queen Krawler

HEY, I'M A **BUSINESS MAN**, HERE! I'M JUST DIVERSIFYING A BIT. I WON'T BE CUTTING BACK ON GAMES, IF **THAT'S** WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I JUST GOT A **CRAP LOAD** OF NEW PRODUCT IN FROM **BISON HEAD GAMES** AND A FEW NEW GOODIES FROM **HARD EIGHT!!**

BISON HEAD? YOU'RE KIDDING, THEY HAVEN'T PUT OUT A NEW GAME IN OVER TWO YEARS. I WAS AFRAID THEY'D GONE UNDER.

YEAH, WELL, THEY TRIED TO CASH IN ON THAT **ONE-LEGGED DWARF*** CRAZE LAST SUMMER. I THINK THEY TOOK SOME **MAJOR** HIT POINTS WITH THAT **ONE-LEGGED HOBBIT** RELEASE.

RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE IS ONE OF THEIR **NEW** GAMES. SOME KIND OF ROLE-PLAYING GAME THAT UTILIZES CARDS. HAVEN'T GOTTEN ANY FEEDBACK ON THAT ONE YET. THE BOX SURE IS **PURTY** THOUGH.

A POLITICAL GAME, EH? AND AN **RPG** TO BOOT? KEWL!! SOUNDS LIKE IT WOULD ENCOURAGE ROLE-PLAYING OVER HACKING. I MIGHT HAVE TO CHECK THAT ONE OUT.

OH YOU SHOULD, YOU REALLY SHOULD.

SO WHAT ELSE DID THEY COME OUT WITH?

A RE-RELEASE OF **WILLOW THE RPG**. WOULDN'T LET THE DRIVER UNLOAD THAT ONE FROM THE TRUCK, THOUGH. BASTARDS TRIED TO **DOUBLE SHIP** ME. I AIN'T FALLIN' FOR THAT TRICK AGAIN. ALL I NEED IS MORE **CRAP** IN THE BACK ROOM I CAN'T MOVE. I'M **STILL** SITTIN' ON **THREE PALLETS** OF THOSE FRICKIN' DING BLASTED **WAR-TRACTOR** EXPANSIONS TO **FARMER THE RPG** BACK THERE.

I THOUGHT **WILLOW** WAS KINDA KEWL. I'VE GIVEN UP WAITING ON A SEQUEL TO THE MOVIE, THOUGH. (SIGH)

YEAH, YEAH, YOU AND THE **OTHER** TWO PEOPLE WHO LOVED THAT MOVIE.

OKAY, OKAY, I DON'T WANT TO HAVE **THAT** DEBATE AGAIN.

WHAT ABOUT THE **HARD EIGHT** STUFF YOU MENTIONED?

OH, THE LONG AWAITED, CATTLEPUNK EXPANSION, "**COME HELL AND HIGH WATER!**" THE WORD ON THE STREET IS THAT IT **KICKS ASS!** IT COMES WITH A FREE PAIR OF **FRAGRANT-DICE™** THAT SMELL LIKE **SADDLE LEATHER** AND **BURNT GUNPOWDER!**

OH MAN, I'M **DROOLING** OVER HERE. CAN YOU MAKE ME A DEAL IF I BUY **BOTH** THE **HIGH WATER** THING AND **RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE**

MAKE YOU A DEAL? WHO DO I LOOK LIKE? **MONTY HALL?**

AW, C'MON, PETE! I SPEND A **LOT** OF MONEY IN HERE. MAYBE YOU SHOULD CONSIDER A **FREQUENT BUYER** PROGRAM OR SOMETHING FOR YOUR **LOYAL** CUSTOMERS. HUH?

SURE, SURE, OKAY, HOW ABOUT A FREE **BAG OF HOLDING** WITH EACH PURCHASE. HUH?

ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THOSE **STUPID** PLASTIC BAGS YOU HAD PRINTED UP FOR **HACKCON** AND COULDN'T SELL?

YEAH. SO? DOESN'T DIMINISH THE VALUE. THEY'RE KEWL!

*See KODT# 14: A Sure Thing

OKAY, I GUESS YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT ME CUTTING YOU A DEAL, HUH? UH HOW ABOUT A COUPLE **ONE-LEGGED DWARF KITS** ON THE HOUSE?

(GROAN) NEVER MIND THE DEAL. JUST PUT IT ON MY MOM'S CREDIT CARD, OKAY?



YA WANNA PICK UP A **REAM OF CATTLEPUNK CHARACTER SHEETS** TOO? THE **HACK RATING ON HELL AND HIGH WATER** IS A WHOPPING **FIFTEEN!**



FIFTEEN??!! DAMN! YEAH, GO AHEAD A THROW THOSE IN TOO. OH, AND SOME **CATTLEPUNK WESTERN-STYLE™ HEX SHEETS.**

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

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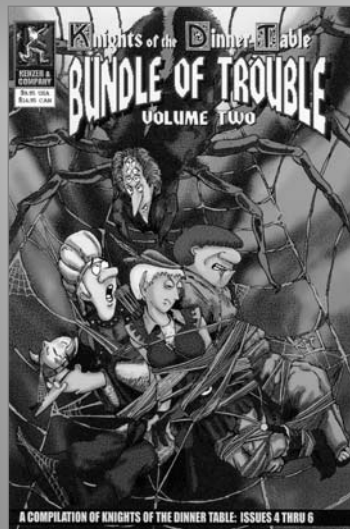
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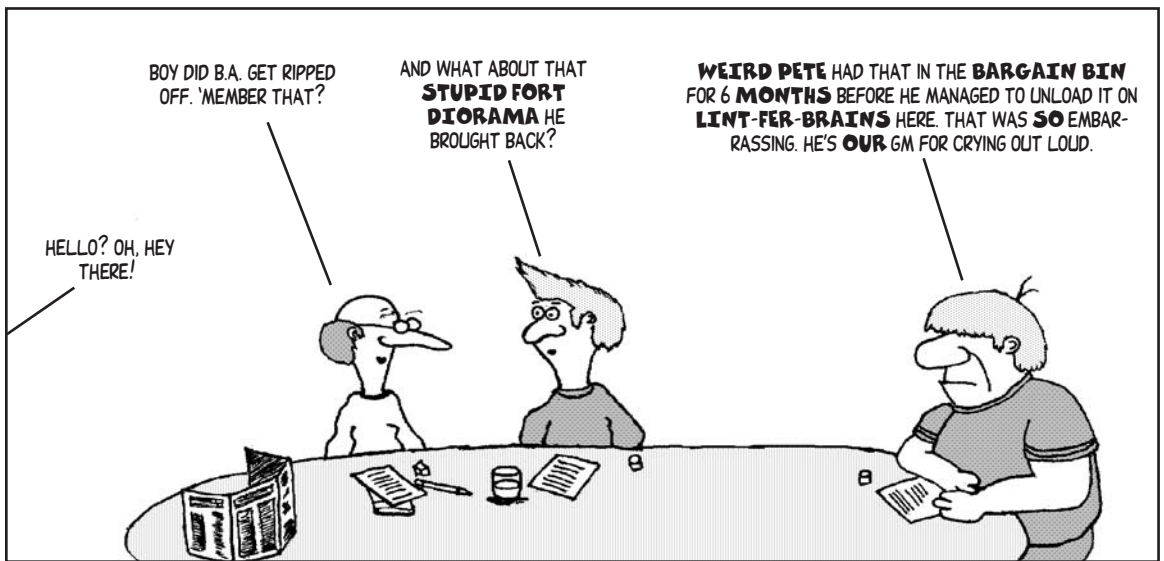
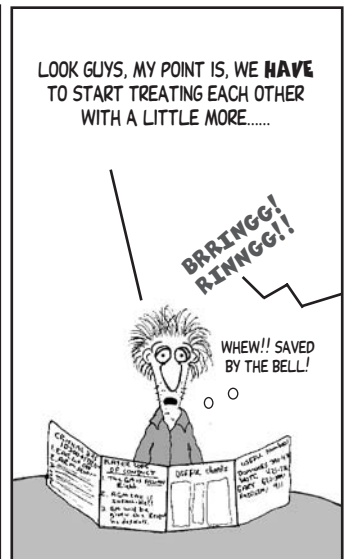
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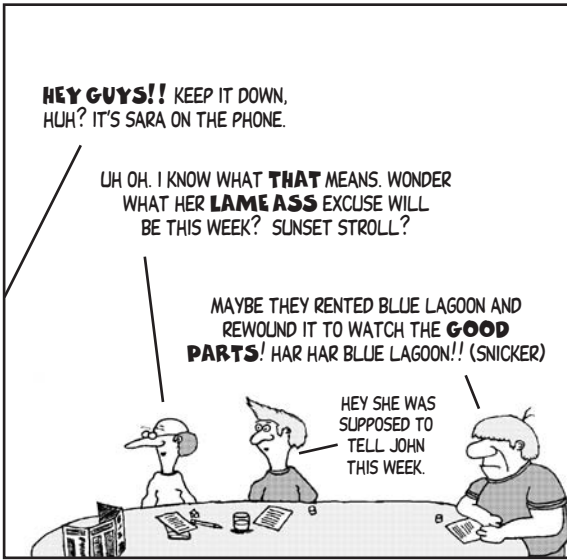
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And One Got Away...

STORY BY DAVID S. KENZER



* See KODT# 14: Go Figure!



HEY GUYS!! KEEP IT DOWN, HUH? IT'S SARA ON THE PHONE.

UH OH. I KNOW WHAT **THAT** MEANS. WONDER WHAT HER **LAMEASS** EXCUSE WILL BE THIS WEEK? SUNSET STROLL?

MAYBE THEY RENTED BLUE LAGOON AND REWOUND IT TO WATCH THE **GOOD PARTS!** HAR HAR BLUE LAGOON!! (SNICKER)

HEY SHE WAS SUPPOSED TO TELL JOHN THIS WEEK.



THAT'S RIGHT! **YEEESSSSS!** ONCE HE KNOWS SHE'S A **KNIGHT** HE'LL BACK OFF **QUICK!**

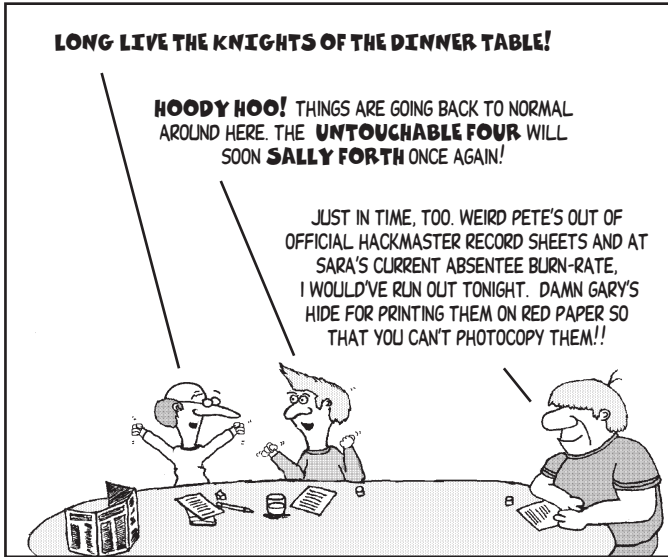
UH HUH. UH HUH. NO. HEY THAT'S GREAT!

I HOPE SHE CAN HANDLE GETTING **DUMPED**. SHE SEEMED KINDA TAKEN WITH THIS **JOHN DUDE**.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS SHE'LL SOON BE BACK IN FOCUS!

SHE KNEW THE RULES WHEN SHE PLAYED **THAT GAME!** YOU TAKE YOUR RISKS AND YOU MOVE ON.

UH HUH. OH. YEAH? UH-OH. UH HUH.



LONG LIVE THE KNIGHTS OF THE DINNER TABLE!

HOODY HOO! THINGS ARE GOING BACK TO NORMAL AROUND HERE. THE **UNTOUCHABLE FOUR** WILL SOON **SALLY FORTH** ONCE AGAIN!

JUST IN TIME, TOO. WEIRD PETE'S OUT OF OFFICIAL HACKMASTER RECORD SHEETS AND AT SARA'S CURRENT ABSENTEE BURN-RATE, I WOULD'VE RUN OUT TONIGHT. DAMN GARY'S HIDE FOR PRINTING THEM ON RED PAPER SO THAT YOU CAN'T PHOTOCOPY THEM!!



GUYS??!! WILL YOU **PLEASE** KEEP IT DOWN? I'M TRYING TO TALK HERE. **SHEESH!!**

HEY YOU CAN **TALK** WHEN SHE GETS HERE. TELL 'ER TO GET HER **BUTT** IN GEAR. I'M IN THE MOOD FOR SOME **HACKIN'** TONIGHT!!

OH YEAH! WE'LL BE SLINGING DICE IN NO TIME! NO MORE WAITING! NO SREEE!!



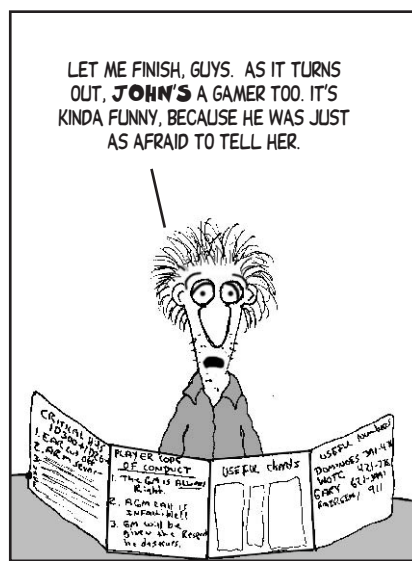
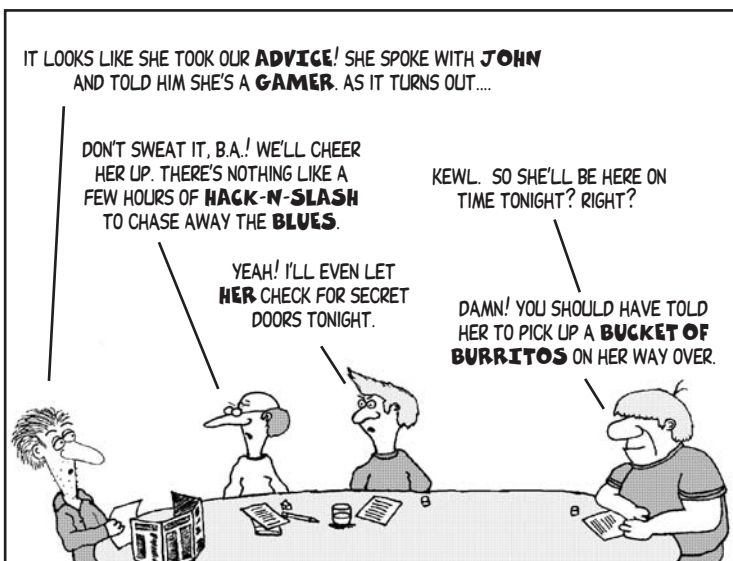
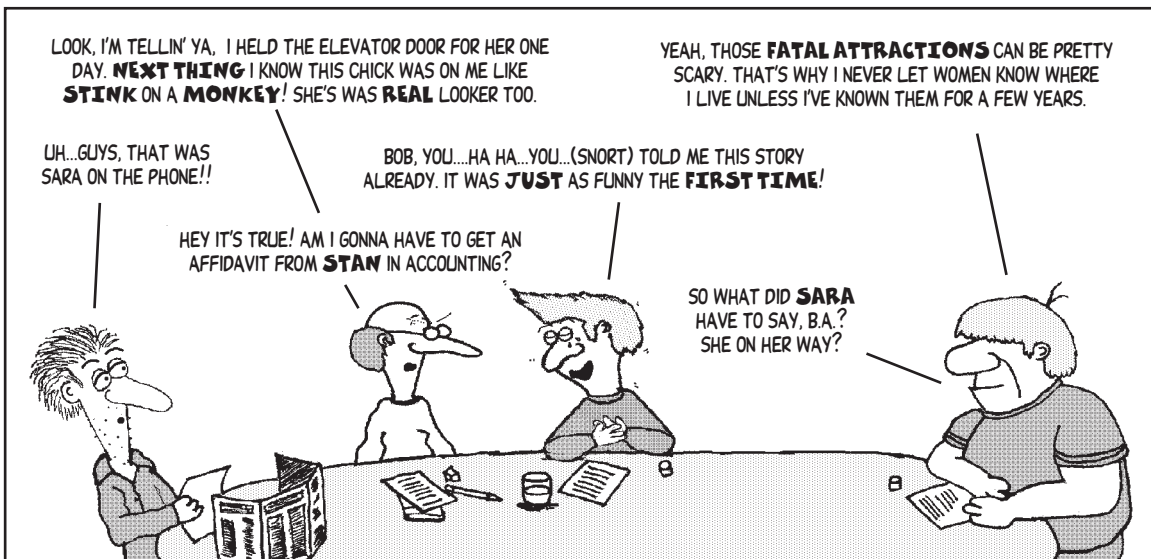
OH. UH HUH. OOOH, GEE, I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT. OH? WELL, WELL.

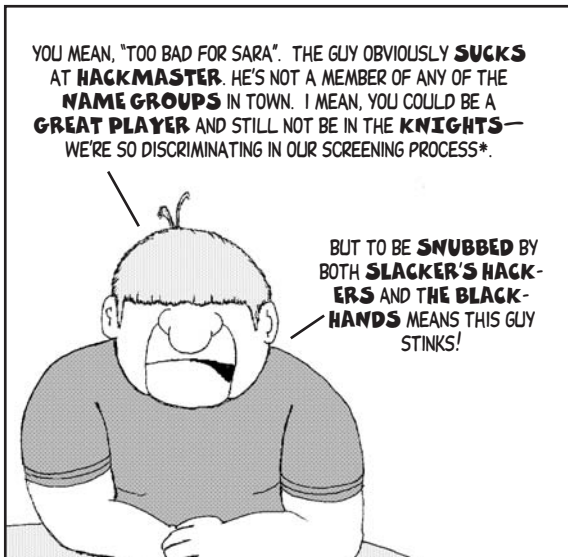
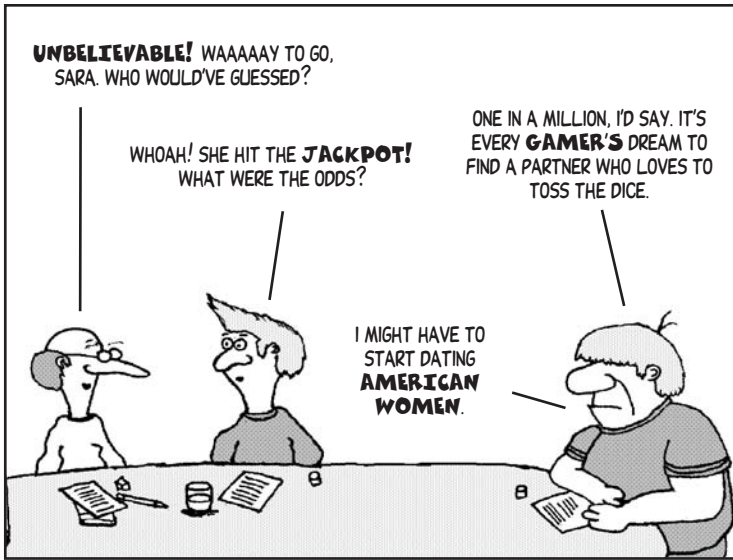
I'M KINDA ANXIOUS TO HEAR WHAT KIND OF EXCUSE **JOHN** GIVES **SARA** WHEN HE GIVES HER THE OLD **HEAVE HO!**

I LIKE TO GO WITH SEVERING **ALL** CONTACT WITH **NO** EXPLANATION. YOU KNOW, LETTIN' 'EM DOWN **EASY**. I JUST SCREEN MY CALLS FOR A FEW WEEKS AND NEVER RETURN MESSAGES. NO SENSE IN BEING A JERK ABOUT IT AND DRAGGIN' THINGS OUT. WORKS EVERY TIME.

NO! NO. UH HUH. OH NO, NO DON'T THINK TWICE ABOUT IT. WE'LL BE FINE. SURE. SURE.

MAYBE HE USED A "DEAR JOHN" LETTER, HAR HAR.





* See KODT# 11: The Empty Chair

SHE SAID TO TELL YOU GUYS SHE'S SORRY BUT SHE DECIDED TO **ACCEPT** JOHN'S OFFER. SHE'S GOING TO PLAY WITH **HIS GROUP** AND CHECK THINGS OUT.

WHAT???! WHERE DOES SHE **GET OFF??!**

THIS IS A JOKE - **RIGHT?** DIDN'T YOU TRY TO TALK HER OUT OF IT?

HEY, YOU CAN'T HARDLY BLAME HER FOR WANTING TO GAME WITH HER BOYFRIEND. LET'S JUST KEEP OUR FINGERS CROSSED THAT IT'S NOT **PERMANENT!**



PERMANENT??? NO WAY IN HELL SARA WOULD **DUMP** US FOR THAT...THAT...**FRATRAT!** WE'RE A **TEAM** DAMMIT. YOU DON'T JUST WALK AWAY FROM THE **KNIGHTS!**

LOOK, I'M JUST TELLING YOU WHAT SHE SAID. SHE'S GOING TO CHECK OUT THE OTHER GROUP. SHE SAID IF EVERYTHING GOES WELL SHE MIGHT TRANSFER TO THEIR GAME.

THIS BLOWS! IT'S LIKE HAVING A **KICKASS BAND** AND SUDDENLY LOOSING YOUR **BASS GUITAR PLAYER!**

I GOTTA GET SOME FRESH AIR. BE RIGHT BACK.

OH I'M SURE SHE'LL BE BACK. **JOHN'S GROUP** CAN'T BE **ALL THAT!** IT'LL WORK OUT - YOU'LL SEE.

OH SHE'LL COME CRAWLING BACK ALRIGHT! THEY ALWAYS DO! BUT WHO SAYS WE'LL **LET** HER BACK IN THE GROUP?

AAAAH. THE HELL WITH HER. WHO NEEDS HER? LET HER GO PLAY WITH HER **NEW FRIENDS!**

YEAH, WHO CARES?



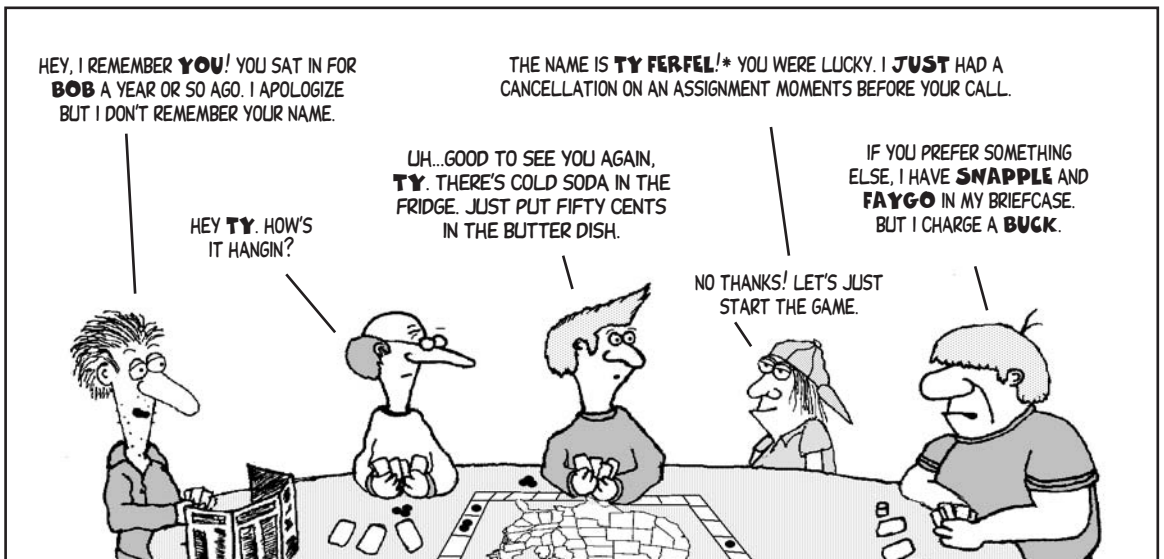
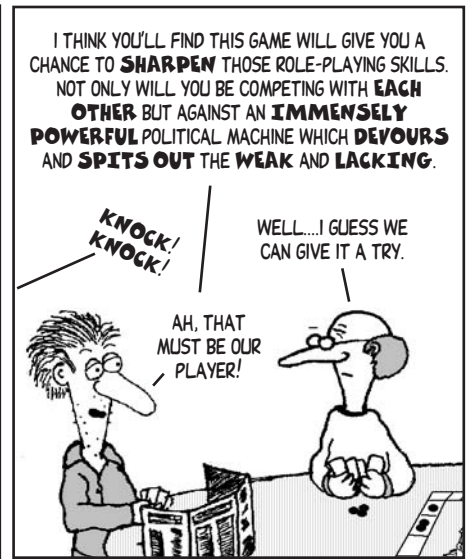
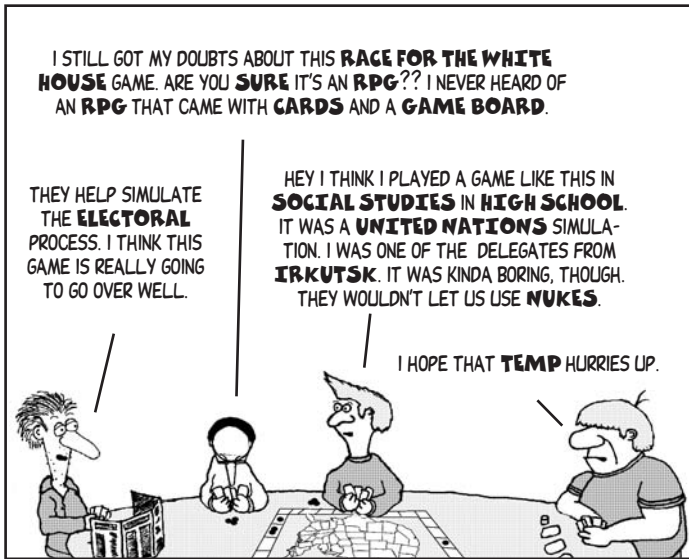
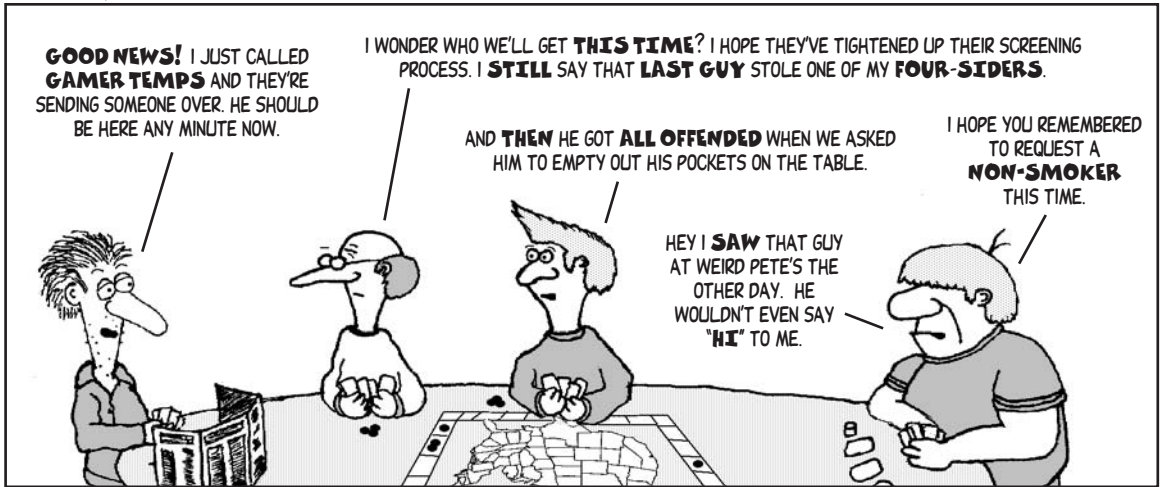
WELL, WE BETTER GET ON THE **HORN** AND CALL **GAMERS TEMP.** WE GOT AN **EMPTY CHAIR!**

THAT'S THE SPIRIT, B.A.! THE GAME **MUST** GO ON!

HEY BRI, YOU STILL GOT THE PHONE NUMBER FOR THAT...UH...ER...

HEY? WHERE THE HELL DID BRIAN GO?





See KODT#10: The Temp
Trivia Item: Who is Ty Ferfel's uncle?
Answer: Nitro Ferguson

UH...WHAT'S WITH THE MAP AND ALL THE CARDS? I THOUGHT THIS TABLE WAS A **HACKMASTER CAMPAIGN** (CATEGORY SIX).

HACKMASTER IS OUR GAME OF CHOICE BUT WE'RE TRYING SOME **NEW** GAME B.A. JUST PICKED UP. IT'S PUT OUT BY **BISON HEAD GAMES**.

WE WERE WAITING FOR YOU SO WE CAN BEGIN ROLLING UP CHARACTERS.

I WISH YOU WOULD HAVE MENTIONED THIS ON THE PHONE.



I HAVEN'T BEEN **RATED** ON THIS GAME. THE AGENCY FROWNS ON US PLAYING GAMES WE HAVEN'T FULLY MASTERED YET. IT REFLECTS POORLY ON THE COMPANY.

OH C'MON, **TY!** WE'VE NEVER PLAYED IT BEFORE EITHER. WE'LL ALL BE IN THE SAME BOAT. NOBODY'S GOING TO THINK LESS OF YOU FOR NOT KNOWING ALL THE RULES.

WELL, OKAY. BUT I WANT YOU TO ANNOTATE MY EVALUATION SHEET THAT YOU **INSISTED** I PLAY.

YEAH, YEAH, WHATEVER. AS LONG AS WE HAVE A GAME.

LET'S ROLL UP THOSE CHARACTERS.



A FEW MINUTES LATER...

OKAY TO GENERATE YOUR **CANDIDATE** YOU GET TO DRAW **TEN CARDS** FROM THE **BACKGROUND DECK** AND **FOUR CARDS** FROM THE **CLOUT DECK**. (WHICH WE JUST DID.) YOU USE THESE CARDS TO DETERMINE SUCH THINGS LIKE YOUR CHARACTER'S EDUCATION LEVEL, MILITARY EXPERIENCE, YOUR STANCE ON SOCIAL ISSUES, ETC. THE **KEWL** THING IS THAT DURING THIS PHASE YOU CAN TRADE CARDS WITH OTHER PLAYERS. YOU CAN ALSO DISCARD **BACKGROUND CARDS** AND CASH THEM IN FOR **POLITICAL COG** TOKENS. THE MORE **COGS** YOU HAVE IN THE GAME THE MORE INFLUENCE YOU HAVE ON THE **POLITICAL MACHINE**. YOU CAN DISCARD UP TO **8 CARDS**.

WE CAN TRADE? THANK GAWD - I GOT A FEW CARDS I WANT TO DUMP RIGHT NOW.

ME TOO!

I'M CASHIN' IN **THREE CARDS** FOR SOME **COG** TOKENS!

HAND ME DOWN **8** **TOKENS!** I'M CASHING IN!!



WHOOAH, **BIG GUY!** DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD WAIT UNTIL THE TRADING IS OVER? YOU MAY BE CASHING IN SOME CARDS I NEED.

YEAH, AND WHO KNOWS? YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO TRADE FOR SOME **AWESOME** CARDS YOU'LL WANT TO KEEP.

NOPE! SORRY, NOT INTERESTED. GIMME MY **COGS!**

WHAT'S YER ANGLE?

JUST PLAYIN' THE GAME.



YOU **FOUR** ARE **PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS** AT VARIOUS STAGES IN YOUR POLITICAL CAREER. YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER WORKING IN TEAMS TO GET **YOUR MAN** IN OFFICE. YOU CAN OPT TO BE A **CAMPAIGN MANAGER**, OR A **VICE PRESIDENTIAL** RUNNING PARTNER, AS **GM** I'LL BE TAKING OF THE ROLE OF THE **SYSTEM** AND THINGS LIKE THE EVER-SWAYING VIEWS AND FEELINGS OF THE **VOTING PUBLIC**.

THIS SUCKS! MY FAMILY HAS TIES TO THE **TOBACCO INDUSTRY?** POLITICAL POISON! I GOTTA DUMP THAT ONE

I'LL TRADE YOU AN **ANTI-CAPITAL PUNISHMENT** CARD FOR IT!



TWENTY MINUTES OF TRADING LATER...

OKAY, I CHANGED MY MIND. I DON'T WANT THIS **"MANSON FAMILY SUPPORTS YOU"** CARD. GIMME BACK MY **"HEAVY DRINKER"** CARD. I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES WITH THE **PRESS**.

SORRY DUDE! NO TRADE-BACKS! THAT CARD GIVES ME A **+5 BONUS TO BACK ROOM NEGOTIATIONS**.

INTERESTING PROPOSAL. LET'S STEP OUTSIDE TO DISCUSS IT A BIT FURTHER.

HEY **TY**, I'D LIKE TO OFFER YOU MY SERVICES. WITH MY **POLITICAL CLOUT** I'D MAKE A **KICK ASS** CAMPAIGN MANAGER.

WE'RE THERE, DUDE!

WHAT THE HELL IS UP WITH **THAT**? SECRET MEETINGS?

THAT **DAMN BRIAN**! HE'S ALREADY FIGURED OUT SOME KIND OF **EDGE** IN THIS GAME. WE BETTER WATCH OUR BACKS.

I AIN'T WORRIED! I TOOK **POLY-SCI 101** MY FRESHMAN YEAR.

YEAH, ME TOO! I JUST HOPE IT'S **ENOUGH!**



TEN MINUTES LATER...

OKAY GUYS, THAT ENDS THE **CHARACTER GENERATION** PHASE. NOW WE GO AROUND THE TABLE AS EACH OF YOU INTRODUCE YOUR **CHARACTER** TO THE REST OF US. **BOB**? LOOKS LIKE YER UP FIRST.

I'M THE **FORMER GOVERNOR OF UTAH**! I EARNED A REPUTATION OF BEING **TOUGH ON CRIME** AND DOING AWAY WITH **GOOD OL' BOY** POLITICS IN MY HOME STATE. THE **WELFARE REFORMS** I INSTITUTED IN UTAH HAVE BEEN HAILED NATIONWIDE AS BEING **BOLD AND INNOVATIVE!** I'LL BE SEEKING THE NOMINATION OF MY PARTY FOR PRESIDENT.

(SNORT) UTAH?

SEEMS LIKE A SOLID CANDIDATE FOR OFFICE.

GOOD JOB, **BOB!**



MY CHARACTER IS THE **LEAD SINGER** OF A MEGA-POPULAR **HEAVY METAL BAND!** BY COMBINING MY **CONCERT TOUR** WITH MY **CAMPAIGN CIRCUIT** I GET TO MULTIPLY MY **CAMPAIGN FUNDING** BY **THREE** — MONEY I'LL USE TO AIR CAMPAIGN MESSAGES ON **MTV** AND **VH1**. I'M GOING AFTER THE **18 TO 35** VOTE. I'M GOING TO **SPIKE** MEDIA INTEREST IN MY CANDIDACY BY **NOT** ANNOUNCING WHAT MY **PLATFORM** OR **GOALS** ARE.

GEE, I DIDN'T KNOW THIS WAS A **FANTASY** GAME. YOU'RE **WHACKED**, DUDE. NO ONE'S GONNA VOTE FOR YOU.

I STAND BY MY CHARACTER!

GO AHEAD, **TY**! TELL HIM THEM ABOUT **YOUR** CANDIDATE!



BRIAN AND I ARE FORMING THE **POPULAR PARTY!** I'LL BE RUNNING FOR **PREZ** AND **BRI** WILL BE RUNNING AS MY **V.P.** HE'LL ALSO BE ACTING AS **MY** CAMPAIGN MANAGER. WE WILL BE ANNOUNCING OUR **PLATFORM** JUST AS SOON AS WE CONFER WITH **B.A.** AND DETERMINE THE **POPULAR STANCES** FOR **EVERY MAJOR ISSUE!** OUR MOTTO IS, "GIVE THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT!" OUR **PLATFORM** WILL MIRROR THE **OPINION POLLS**, AND CHANGE ACCORDINGLY.

WHAT'S YER POSITION ON ABORTION?

WHAT DO YOU WANT IT TO BE?

GOOD, **TY**, GOOD!



A WEE BIT LATER...

OKAY I'M PLAYING MY **TEAMSTERS: SPECIAL INTEREST CARD**. I'M GOING TO **GIVE IN FOR SIX POINTS OF CAMPAIGN PROMISING** TO GARNER THEIR **SUPPORT**. THAT SHOULD GIVE ME AN ADDITIONAL **COG** AS WELL AS **FIVE REFERRAL POINTS** TO GO TOWARD WINNING THE SUPPORT OF THE OTHER

THE **POPULAR PARTY** ISSUES A STATEMENT ACCUSING **BOB** OF **'BUYING VOTES'** BY THE WAY, DID I HEAR BACK FROM THE **NATIONAL TABLOID**?

VERY NICE! YOU'RE CORNERING THE **BLUE COLLAR VOTE!** YOU MOVE UP **8 PERCENTILES** IN THE **POLLS** TO NUMBER ONE!!

B.A. AFTER PLAYING AT THE **FARM AID** BENEFIT, I'M GOING TO MAKE A **CAMEO** APPEARANCE ON THE **X-FILES!**

AND **DAVE** SEEMS TO BE GOING FOR THE **ALL IMPORTANT FAN-BOY VOTE**.

DON'T WORRY, THOSE **POLLS** SWING **BOTH** WAYS.



OH, I'M GLAD YOU REMINDED ME, BRIAN. YOUR **PLANT STORY CARD** AND THE **5,000 DOLLAR BRIBE** DID THE TRICK. THE STORY AND DOCTORED PHOTOS WILL BE APPEARING IN THE **NEXT** ISSUE.

SORRY BOB, YOUR **DRINKING PROBLEM** HAS COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PRESS AND THEY ARE RUNNING WITH IT. THEY'RE ALSO RUNNING SOME PHOTOS OF YOU AND AN **IHOP WAITRESS** CAVORTING IN A **HOT TUB** AND DRINKING SOME **LONG NECK GUSWEISERS!**

ALRIGHT, MONEY WELL SPENT! OKAY, I'M BEING VERY CAREFUL THAT THE STORY ISN'T TRACED BACK TO US. I'LL PLAY MY **LENNY THE MECHANIC CARD** AND **"OFF"** MY CONTACT WITH THE **NATIONAL TABLOID** AND HAVE HIS OFFICES TORCHED.

DAMN! I SHOULD'VE CASHED IN THAT **"WIFE AND THREE KIDS"** CARD FOR A **COG!** THIS IS GOING TO **MURDER** ME IN THE POLLS.

I'M USING MY **TAMPER WITH EVIDENCE CARD** TO SWING SUSPICION TOWARD **DAVE'S CAMP!**

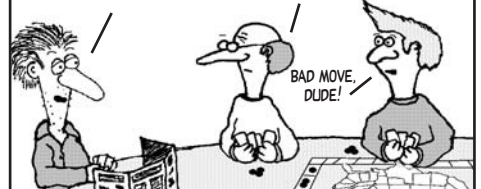
YEP, YOU DROP IN THE **POLLS** A FULL THIRTY FIVE PERCENT!

I'M GOING TO PLAY MY **"WEEP OPENLY"** CARD AND ASK MY SUPPORTERS FOR FORGIVENESS.

???? ARE THEY PLAYING THE **SAME** GAME AS US?

DAMN! I'M BEING SET UP?

BY THE WAY, I SPEND A **COG** SO **LENNY** RETURNS TO MY HAND!



WHOOOPS! YOUR CRYING IS SEEN AS A SIGN OF **WEAKNESS** BY THE PUBLIC, BOB. YOU DROP ANOTHER FIVE POINTS.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU **PICKING** ON ME FOR? HUH? THAT WAS PRETTY LOW, BRIAN. EVEN FOR A **FAT HEAD** LIKE YOU.

B.A. I SPEND A **COG** AND ATTEMPT TO CREATE A **MEDIA FRENZY** OVER **BOB'S CRYING!** I'M PLAYIN' A **LUNCH WITH THE EDITOR OF TYME MAGAZINE CARD** TOO.

OH YEAH? AND I THINK YOU'RE TOO **THIN SKINNED** TO BE THE PRESIDENT. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?

WELL GUESS WHAT? **PAYBACK'S COMING!** YOU'RE A **DEAD MAN** - YOU HEAR ME?

WHAT WAS THAT? I COULDN'T HEAR YOU DOWN HERE.

EXCELLENT PLAY, BRIAN! I'M GOING TO RULE THAT **TYME MAGAZINE** RUNS A PHOTO OF BOB BAWLING HIS EYES OUT ON THEIR NEXT COVER. BOB DROPS IN THE **POLLS** FOR AN ADDITIONAL **10 POINTS!**

YOU HEARD ME! I SAID YOU'RE A **DEAD MAN!**



SKULL BRAWL

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BOB WILL YOU PLEASE PUT THAT HAMMER AWAY? I ALMOST GOT A PIECE OF 'HEPTAR' SHRAPNEL IN MY EYE. DON'T MAKE ME PULL OUT 'BENNIE THE BOUNCER' AGAIN.

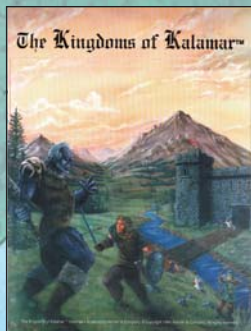
FIRK DING BLAST! WILL YOU QUIT SMASHING MY ARMIES? I'M NOT GONNA TELL YA AGAIN!

AWH, QUIT YER SNIVELING YA WUSS! THE NAME OF THE GAME IS CARNAGE! I'M JUST SIMULATING THE BRUTAL DISFIGUREMENT AND MUTILATION THAT MY BRIGANDISH BULL CAVALRY ARE DISHING OUT ON YER BUTT!

OKAY, I CHANGED MY MIND. MY DOOM GEGKOS WILL ALLY THEMSELVES WITH YOU IF YOU PROMISE WE ATTACK BOB FIRST.

SORRY SARA, YOU SHOULD HAVE TAKEN ME UP ON MY OFFER FOUR TURNS AGO! I DON'T NEED YOUR STINKIN' DOOM GEGKOS' FIREPOWER NOW. BESIDES, YOU LEFT A HOLE IN YOUR LEFT FLANK WHICH I PLAN TO EXPLOIT ON MY NEXT TURN.



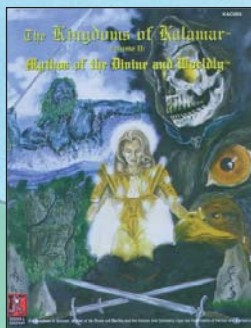


Kingdoms of Kalamar Deluxe Boxed Set

Krono

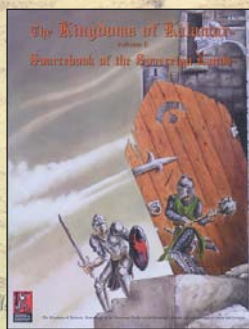
\$29.95

In addition to both of the campaign sourcebooks (Mythos of the Divine and Worldly and Sourcebook of the Sovereign Lands), the Kingdoms of Kalamar boxed set contains two gorgeous 24" x 36" full color maps depicting the lands of Tellene. These maps are printed on extra heavy stock and have been recognized as **the finest fantasy maps on the market**. A hex grid overlay is provided to protect these treasures.



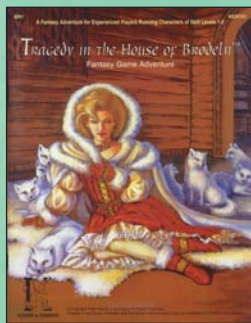
Mythos of the Divine and Worldly

This 88 page guidebook painstakingly describes the 44 deities and religions of Tellene. Volume II also includes details on Tellene's major secret organizations, rune-sets for 11 languages, constellations, astronomical marvels and an all-inclusive eight page index. \$10.95



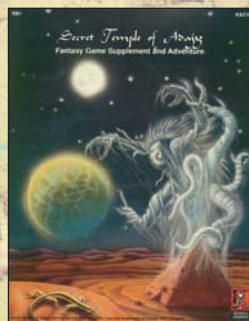
Sourcebook of the Sovereign Lands

This 100 page tome details the history of the peoples and nations of Tellene. From the depths of the mysterious Vohven Jungle to the vast savanna of the Drhokker horse-lords, this book describes every kingdom, race and topographical feature of Kalamar's world. \$11.95



The Kingdoms of Kalamar

all products listed available now at better game, hobby and comic shops



K&C101 Tragedy in the House of Brodeln

\$9.95

A 1st-3rd level adventure set in Kalamar, this adventure supplement is made expressly for use with HackMaster, AD&D or any other fantasy RPG. This 56 page adventure contains: ImageQuest adventure illustrator, 5 player aids and handouts, NPC portraits and backgrounds, a flowchart for a difficult encounter, encounter tables, a full glossary, a complete village, a timeline of events, 8 3-Dimensional dungeon maps, and 5 sample player characters with complete backgrounds.

K&C102 Secret Temple of Adajy

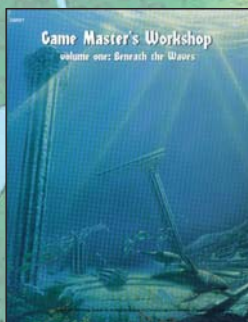
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A mid to high level adventure set in Kalamar, this adventure supplement is made expressly for use with HackMaster, AD&D or any other fantasy RPG. Similar in style to Tragedy in the House of Brodeln, this exciting 72 page adventure contains *two* complete and distinct dungeon adventures in addition to the extras you expect from Kenzer & Company: the ImageQuest adventure illustrator, player aids and handouts, NPC portraits and backgrounds, encounter tables, a full glossary, a city and 10 maps.

K&C201 GameMasters WorkShop

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volume one: Beneath the Waves



Game Master's Workshop (GMW) is a series of source material designed for use with any role-playing system. This edition of GMW is set in the Kingdoms of Kalamar Fantasy Campaign setting in Whimdol Bay on the southern shores of the Elos Desert. Standard features of GMW include Close Encounters of a Random Kind (random encounter or event tables), Bait, Snare & Bag (brief plot lines for adventures presented in a simple format) and The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (detailed descriptions of NPC personalities, motivations and basic abilities). A multitude of new items (both normal and magic), spells, races and monsters are also included.

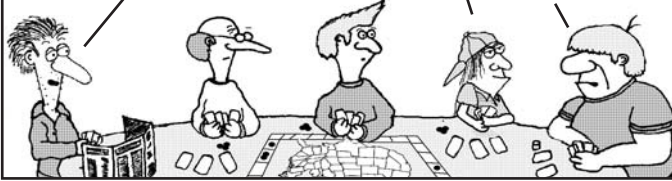
This volume describes a detailed society of Mermen including their lives, their interactions with surface dwellers, and both the mundane and extraordinary plights they face.

OKAY **TY** NOW'S THE TIME TO PLAY THAT "**CAUGHT ON AUDIO TAPE**" CARD YOU'VE BEEN HOLDING. **BOB** JUST THREATENED A **PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE** AND WE GOT IT ON TAPE! I'D SAY THAT **POLITICALLY** HE'S DEAD MEAT. WE CAN TURN OUR **FULL** ATTENTION TOWARD **DAVE** NOW.

I MUST SAY, I'M **GLAD** YOU'RE IN MY **CAMP**, MR. VANHOOSE. **LORD** KNOWS I'D RATHER HAVE YOU AS AN **ALLY** THAN AN **ENEMY**!

OKAY **TIME OUT**, GUYS!
THIS IS **BRUTAL**.

HEY WE'RE A **TEAM**!
I JUST WANNA SEE
YOU **RISE** TO POWER.



BOB! DAVE! YOU GUYS ARE GETTING YOUR **BUTTS** KICKED! YOU'VE GOT TO REMEMBER THAT THIS GAME ISN'T PLAYED IN **TURNS**! YOU SHOULD BE THROWING DOWN CARDS AND TRYING TO **COUNTER** BRIAN'S ATTACKS. YOU'RE JUST SITTING THERE GETTING **SHELL SHOCKED**!

I GOT **NOTHING**! ALL I GOT IS **CRAP**! NOBODY TOLD ME WE COULD ATTACK EACH OTHER.

YER RIGHT, B.A.! IT'S TIME TO **FIGHT** BACK.



OKAY B.A., I'VE BEEN HOLDING THIS CARD FOR **JUST** THE RIGHT MOMENT. I'M PLAYIN A "**CHARACTER ASSASSINATION**" CARD ON BRIAN. I'LL SPEND **ALL** FOUR OF MY REMAINING **COGS** TO MAKE IT STICK.

ARE YOU **SURE** THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT TO DO, DAVE?

GET 'EM DUDE! FOR ME!

DAMN STRAIGHT THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO DO!



HAR HAR! YOU GOOF! I'M **NOT** RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT! ATTACKING THE **VEE-PEE** RUNNING MATE WONT HAVE ANY **APPRECIABLE** IMPACT ON **TY'S** POPULARITY. **HAR HAR!** YOU BLEW **ALL** YOUR POLITICAL INFLUENCE FOR **NUTHIN**!

BESIDES I **BLOCK** YOUR CARD BY PLAYIN A "**TEFLON REPUTATION**" ON BRIAN. HE SHAKES OFF YOUR ATTACK AND COMES OUT SMELLING LIKE A **ROSE**!



LATER THAT NIGHT...

I'M SORRY DAVE BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE TO RULE THAT BRIAN CAN COMBINE HIS "**EXPOSE DECEPTIVE ACTION**" CARD WITH TY'S "**SCANDAL**" CARD. THE MEDIA IS SOON **HOPPING** WITH THE BREAKING STORY THAT YOU **LIP SYNC** AT YOUR CONCERTS. YOU **LOSE** THE **YOUTH VOTE** AND TICKET SALES TO YOUR CONCERTS **PLUMMET**!

(SIGH) ANOTHER VICTIM **MAULED** BY THE **BULLDOZER** TACTICS OF AN **UNETHICAL** OPPONENT!

I'M AFRAID NOT, DAVE.

DAMN! ALL I CAN PLAY IS THIS "**NO COMMENT**" CARD. DOES THAT DO ANYTHING FOR ME?

GUESS WE BETTER START PREPARING OUR **VICTORY SPEECH**!

YOU DA MAN!



LATER STILL...

OKAY **TY** FINISHES UP THE **INAUGURATION CEREMONY**. YOU ARE NOW **OFFICIALLY** THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. CONGRATULATIONS.

WELL I GUESS ABOUT **ALL** I CAN DO IS PLAY THIS **"BOOK DEAL"** CARD AND WALK AWAY WITH SOME POCKET CHANGE.

I'M PUTTIN' A **BULLET** IN MY BRAIN AND ENDING MY CHARACTER'S **MISERY!**

GOOD GAME GUYS! I THINK I'LL PICK UP A COPY OF THIS ONE.

UH...HOLD ON GUYS!



HATE TO BREAK OUR LITTLE **ALLIANCE**, TY, BUT IT'S TIME TO MAKE MY MOVE. I'M PLAYING MY **LENNY THE MECHANIC** CARD ON YOU. THE COUNTRY **MOURNS** YOUR DEATH BUT FORTUNATELY THEY HAVE A **STRONG, NEW LEADER** (I STILL GOT **TWELVE COGS**) TO LEAD THEM THROUGH THIS DARK PERIOD.

THIS GAME **KICKS ASS!**



THAT WAS AN **EXCELLENT** PLAY, MR. VANHOOSE. COURSE I SAW IT COMING. I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO HAVE TO PLAY MY **"BODYGUARD TAKES THE BULLET"** CARD ON MYSELF.

OOPS! SORRY, I'M AFRAID MY **"SECRET SERVICE COMPLACENCY"** CARD CANCELS OUT YOUR CARD! THANK YOU FOR PLAYING - **LOSER!**

WELL, YOU **CERTAINLY** MASTERED THIS GAME RATHER QUICKLY. MY HAT'S OFF TO YOU, SIR. GOOD GAME!

I'VE ALWAYS PICKED THESE THINGS UP QUICKLY.



YEAH BRIAN, IF IT WASN'T FOR THE FACT THIS IS A **NEW** GAME ONE MIGHT THINK THAT YOU'D **PLAYED** THIS GAME BEFORE. OF COURSE THAT WOULD BE AN **UNFAIR ADVANTAGE**. I MEAN, **IF** YOU HAD PLAYED BEFORE AND FAILED TO MENTION IT TO ANYONE.

WELL...LIKE YOU SAID, IT **IS** A NEW GAME. WHAT CAN I SAY? WHEN YOU'RE GOOD YOU'RE GOOD. **HAR HAR!** AND WHEN YOU'RE A LOSER YOU'RE A **LOSER!**



AFTER THE GAME...

YOU KNOW BRIAN, I COULDN'T **HELP** BUT NOTICE **YOUR** NAME IN THE BACK OF THE RULEBOOK. SO..... HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A PLAYTESTER FOR **BISON HEAD GAMES?**

OKAY WHAT'S YOUR **PRICE** FOR SILENCE?

HOW ABOUT ONE OF THOSE **ROCK N' RYE FAYGOS** YOU GOT IN YOUR BRIEFCASE?

YEAH, YEAH, JUST SAVE THE **BOTTLE** FOR ME. THERE'S A **FIFTEEN CENT** DEPOSIT ON IT.



THE **DRAGON** SEEMS TO BE A BIT **DERANGED**. HE HAS A **SOCK PUPPET** ON ONE OF HIS FRONT TALONS AND HE'S **TALKING** TO IT. HE SAYS, "DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?" THE **SOCK PUPPET** SORT OF SHRUGS AND SAYS, "NO, I DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING DID YOU?" AND THE DRAGON SAYS, "WELL, I **THOUGHT** I HEARD A NOISE." THE SOCK PUPPET COMES BACK WITH, "I SUPPOSE IF YOU **THINK** YOU HEARD SOMETHING, WE'D PROBABLY BETTER CHECK IT OUT. DON'T YOU THINK?" THE DRAGON SAYS, "I DUNNO! I'M PROBABLY JUST BEING SILLY!" AND THE SOCK PUPPET SAYS....



REMEMBER THE GOOD OL' DAYS WHEN **DRAGONS** JUST **BLASTED** YOU WITH FIRE BREATH OR SOMETHING?

YEAH, INSTEAD OF TALKIN' YER HEAD OFF AND STUFF.

OOOOOOOH. HE'S SO CUTE. I BET HE'S LONELY. MAYBE WE COULD BEFRIEND HIM.

I'M ATTACKING THE **SOCK PUPPET!!**

LISTEN UP PEOPLE! I'M MISSIN' ONE OF MY **TWELVE SIDERS**. THE **METAL-FLAKE** ONE WITH A **DEATH'S HEAD** ON IT FER A **NUMBER ONE!**



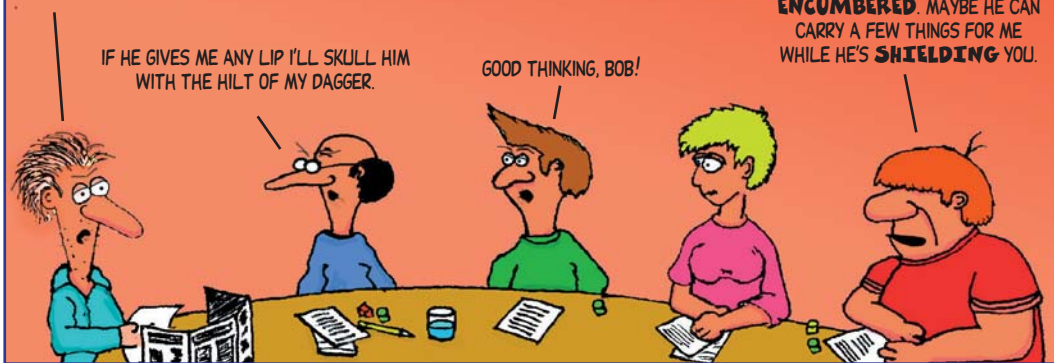
I WANT IT **BACK!** OR **NOBODY** GETS OUT OF THIS ROOM **ALIVE!**

DUDE! THAT WAS THE BEST DAMN **CRIT** YOU EVER ROLLED! I SURE WISH I'D HAD A CAMERA.



HEY, LET'S RUN DOWN TO **WEIRD PETE'S** AND TELL HIM **ALL** ABOUT IT!

YOU...YOU...YOU'RE USING THE **BEGGAR**, THE **BLIND BEGGAR**, AS A **HUMAN SHIELD**? IS THAT WHAT YOU SAID? YOU **DO** REALIZE HE'S AN **EIGHTY YEAR OLD MAN!**



IF HE GIVES ME ANY LIP I'LL SKULL HIM WITH THE HILT OF MY DAGGER.

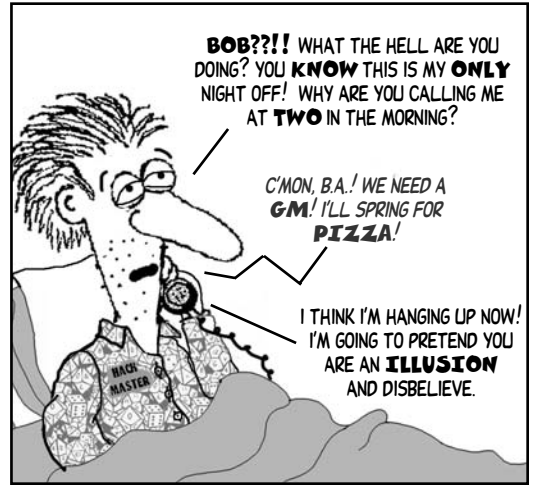
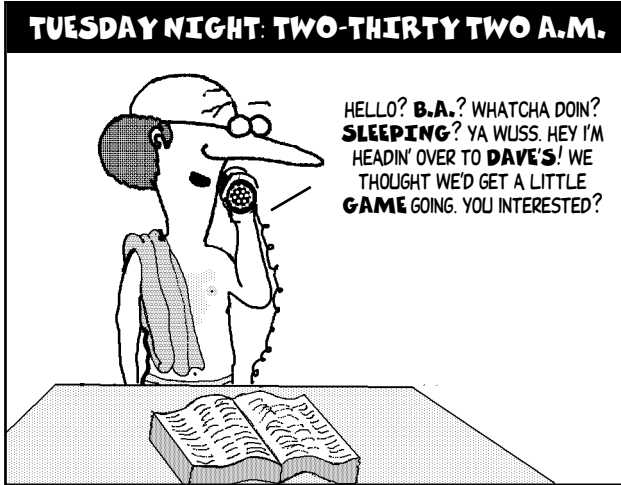
GOOD THINKING, BOB!

HOLD UP, BOB! I'M FAIRLY **ENCUMBERED**. MAYBE HE CAN CARRY A FEW THINGS FOR ME WHILE HE'S **SHIELDING** YOU.

Clash of the Iron Clads

BY JOLLY R. BLACKBURN

TUESDAY NIGHT. TWO-THIRTY TWO A.M.



LATER THAT NIGHT...

THIS SUCKS! WE COULDA HAD A **GAME**! WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH **B.A.** AND **BRIAN**? THEY **ALWAYS** USED TO BE DOWN FOR A **PICK UP GAME**. ANY HOUR OF THE DAY OR NIGHT.

WELL **B.A.** **DOES** HAVE MORE RESPONSIBILITY AT WORK SINCE HE GOT THAT **PROMOTION**. I GUESS HE NEEDS THE REST.

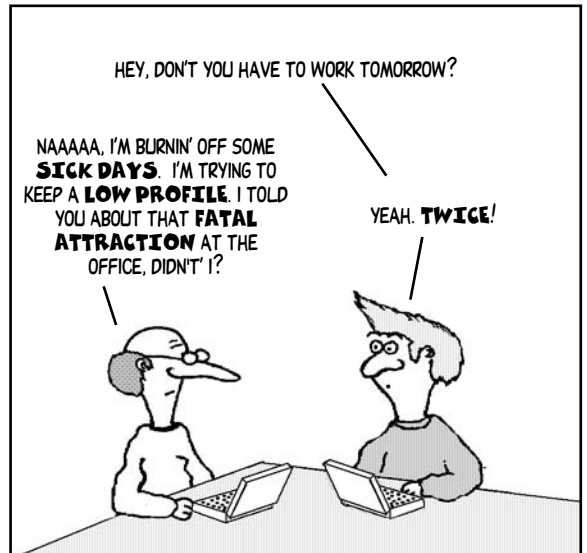
THAT DON'T MAKE IT RIGHT!



HEY, DON'T YOU HAVE TO WORK TOMORROW?

NAAAA, I'M BURNIN' OFF SOME **SICK DAYS**. I'M TRYING TO KEEP A **LOW PROFILE**. I TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT **FATAL ATTRACTION** AT THE OFFICE, DIDN'T I?

YEAH. **TWICE!**



OKAY, IF WE'RE GONNA PLAY **BATTLESHIP** LET'S GET GOING. I'M **BLUE** SO I GET TO GO FIRST.

WHY DOES **BLUE** GET TO GO FIRST?

I DUNNO. COZ IT'S AN **AMERICAN COLOR** OR SOMETHING. LET'S SEE NOW....WHERE ARE YOU HIDING??

THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT. I'M **RED**! THAT'S AN AMERICAN COLOR.

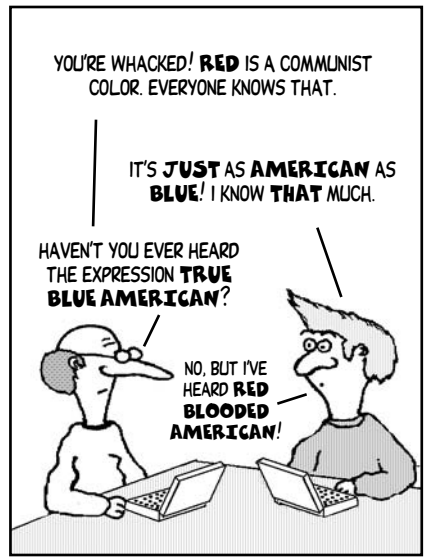


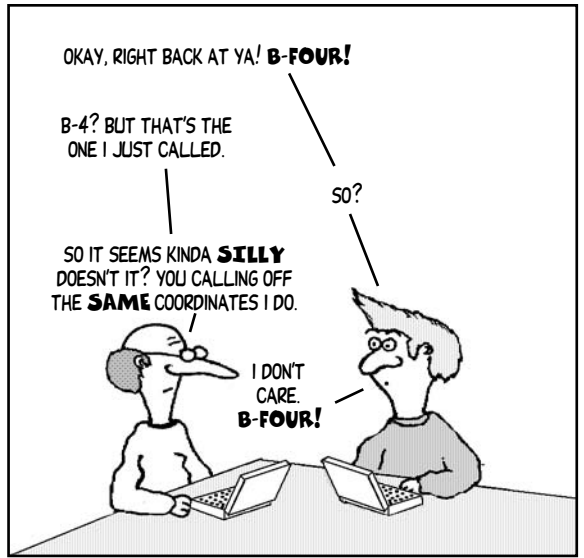
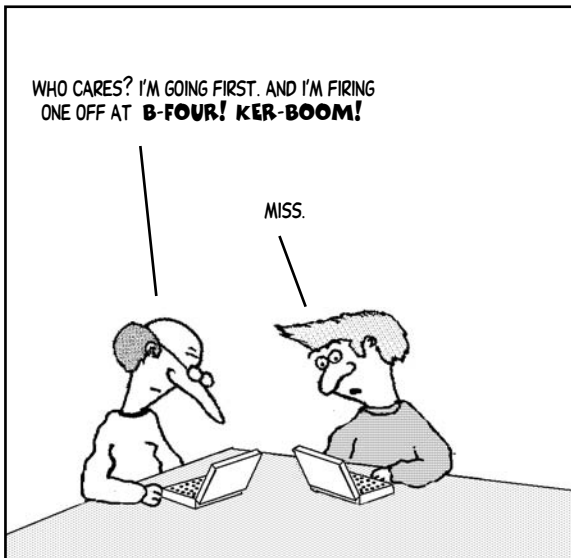
YOU'RE WHACKED! **RED** IS A COMMUNIST COLOR. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT.

IT'S **JUST AS AMERICAN AS BLUE**! I KNOW THAT MUCH.

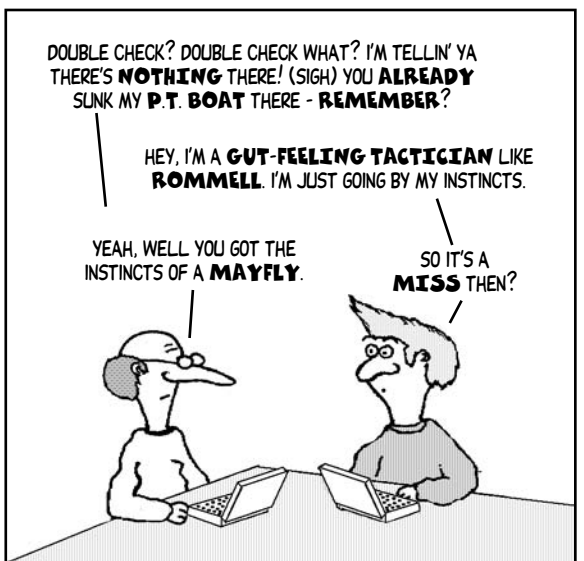
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD THE EXPRESSION **TRUE BLUE AMERICAN**?

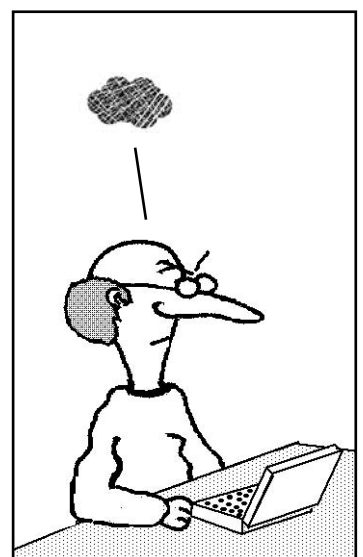
NO, BUT I'VE HEARD **RED BLOODED AMERICAN**!



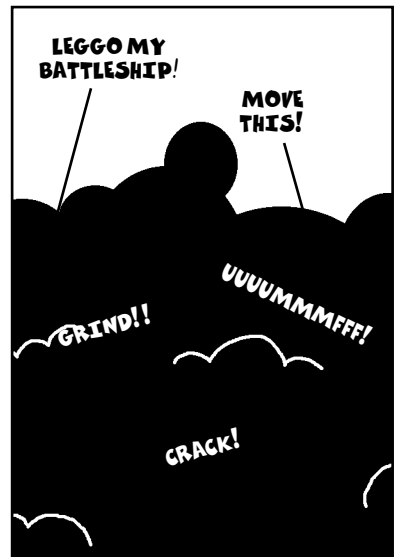


A WEE BIT LATER...





TWENTY MINUTES LATER...



LATER THAT WEEK...



Simply Irresponsible

BY STEVE JOHANSSON & JOLLY R. BLACKBURN



OKAY, **HEROES!** YOU'VE BEEN **HOLED UP** IN "**DIDDLE WOODS**" FOR TWO WEEKS NOW — **NURSIN'** YER WOUNDS. YOU SHOULD **ALL** BE HEALED UP NOW AND **FIT TO FIGHT!** SO TALK TO ME. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I SUPPOSE WE'LL BE MOVING ON THEN. I PERSONALLY THANK THE **LORD OF THE WOODS** FOR HIS GENEROSITY AND KINDNESS. I SLIP HIM MY **+3 DAGGER OF WHITTLING** AS A GIFT.

YEAH, YEAH, HE'S **THRILLED** TO HAVE IT. HE SAYS, "THANKS"

HEY, **MY PEOPLE** ARE A **NOBLE** AND **GENTLE** FOLK. AND THEY **WERE** KIND ENOUGH TO GIVE US **REFUGE** FROM THE **GRUNGE ELVES**. WHY CAN'T YOU BE **GRATEFUL?**

THANK GAWD! ONE MORE NIGHT IN **DIDDLELY SQUAT** AND MY CHARACTER WAS GOING TO SLIT HIS WRISTS FROM **BOREDOM!** THIS IS THE **LAST FREAKIN'** TIME WE ACCEPT THE HOSPITALITY OF THE FRICKIN' **PIXIE FAIRIES!**

GRATEFUL? FOR **BARK SOUP**, **ACORN TEA** AND A BED OF **PEAT MOSS** TO SLEEP ON? WE WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF FINDING A HOLE IN THE GROUND TO HEAL UP IN.



OKAY, I WANT **RAZ** AND **MEPHISTO** TO START PACKING UP OUR GEAR AND SADDLING UP THE HORSES WHILE **FIRE BLOSSOM** AND I TALK WITH **SHANTU** THE **ORACLE**. WE'LL LEAVE AT **SUN RISE**.

BE SURE TO REFILL OUR **WATER BAGS** WITH FRESH WATER. THERE'S A NATURAL SPRING IN THE BOTTOM OF THE **GULLY**.

WHOOAH! **HEY!** DID YOU FORGET ABOUT MY **HERNIA?** HUH? I TOLD YOU A **DOZEN TIMES!** I CAN'T LIFT OVER **20 LBS**. BESIDES, I'M STILL FEELING **ILL**. I THINK MY CHARACTER SHOULD GET A LITTLE MORE **BED REST** IF WE'RE LEAVIN' IN THE MORNING.

AND KEEP IN MIND MY CHARACTER HAS "**ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER**" IF I HAVE TO WORK **ALONE** I'M LIKELY TO GET DISTRACTED OR SOMETHING. HARD TELLING **WHAT** I'LL END UP DOING.

BY THE WAY, I'D LIKE TO MAKE **PARLEY** WITH THIS **SHANTU** FELLOW MYSELF. YOU KNOW - ONE **SAGE** TALKING SHOP WITH ANOTHER?



OH NO, YOU'RE NOT RIDING **THAT DEAD HORSE AGAIN!** WHAT HAPPENED TO THE **THREE THOU IN GOLD PIECES** I GAVE YOU TO HAVE THAT **RESTORATIVE CURE-ALL SPELL** CAST ON YOU AND **MEPHISTO**?

WHAT DO YOU **THINK** HAPPENED TO IT? I'M A **PROBLEM DRINKER** - REMEMBER? YOU **NEVER** SHOULD HAVE SENT US TO SEE THAT JOURNEY TO FIND THAT **MAGE** ON OUR OWN. WE MAY BE **HENCHMEN** WITH GOOD INTENTIONS AND ALL, BUT WE'RE A BIT IRRESPONSIBLE.

YOU **DRANK UP** OVER 3,000 IN GOLD? BY YOURSELF?

NOT EXACTLY.

WE LOST OUR **ASSES** AT THE, (SNICKER) **ROULETTE TABLE**. AND WE **BOTH** LOVE TO PLAY THE **PONIES**. DON'T WE **JUNIOR**? **SNORT - HAR HAA!!**

HAR HAR!! OUR WAR CRY FOR THE EVENING WAS, "**LET IT RIDE!**" (SNICKER) WE ENDED UP SLEEPING IN THE **STREET!**

BUT WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? WE'RE JUST A COUPLE OF **DUMB** HENCHMEN. **HA HA!!**

OH YOU THINK IT'S **FUNNY**? WELL I GOT **NEWS** FOR YOU. THAT **THREE GEE'S** IS COMIN' OUT YOUR SHARES OF ANY PARTY TREASURE WE GET IN THE FUTURE. NOT ONLY THAT, I'M **DOCKING** YOU ON YOUR SALARY AS A LESSON.

THERE YA GO, **NEWT!** THAT'S MY BOY! **STAND UP TO 'EM!** GIVE 'EM BOTH BARRELS!!

C'MON GUYS!! YOU'RE JUST ABOUT THE **WORST** HENCHMEN WE'VE EVER HAD. YOU'RE BOTH **ROLE PLAYERS** TOO. YOU CAN CAN DO **MUCH** BETTER THAN THIS.

WHY, I'M **OFFENDED!!** I **AM** ROLEPLAYING MY CHARACTER. HE'S A **BACKWOODS, UNEDUCATED, THREE-TIME LOSER** WITH A **DRINKING PROBLEM**, A **RUPTURED HERNIA** AND JUST A BIT **PISSED OFF** AT HIS **LOT** IN LIFE AS A **HENCHMAN**.

I THINK YOU PLAY THE ROLE **BEAUTIFULLY, STEVIL.**

LOOK MR. VAN HOSTLE, WE **ALL** KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING. YOU'RE TRYING TO MAKE THINGS **MISERABLE** FOR THE REST OF US SO WE'LL RELEASE YOU FROM YOUR **HENCHMEN** STATUS. BUT IT'S **NOT** GOING TO WORK. I'M GOING TO **PERSONALLY** ESCORT YOU TWO TO **TREVOR THE MAGE** AND HAVE **ALL** THESE **AILMENTS** AND **FLAWS** CURED. THEN YOU WON'T HAVE ANYMORE **EXCUSES** TO FALL BACK ON.

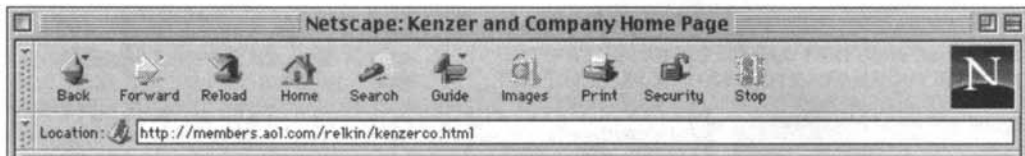
WHY CAN'T YOU JUST **LOVE** ME THE WAY I AM? DON'T I GET ANY NEGATIVE **LOYALTY MODIFIERS** FOR BEING OBJECTED TO YOUR INCESSANT CRITICISMS??

DAMN THIS IS EXHILARATING PUSHING THE KID'S BUTTONS BUT WE'VE **GOT** TO FIND A WAY TO SHED OURSELVES OF THIS **HENCHMAN** STATUS. DID YOU COME UP WITH ANYMORE IDEAS FROM THAT **UNDERLINGS MANUAL** ON SOME OTHER ANGLES.

YEAH, NO TIME TO EXPLAIN NOW BUT JUST FOLLOW MY LEAD WHEN THE TIME COMES.

YOU BET!

See KODT#29: Workin for the Man!



HEY HACK JOCKIES!!
CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE



- SYNOPSISSES OF EVERY ISSUE OF KODT
- PREVIEWS OF WHAT'S COMING UP IN THE FUTURE
- THE OFFICIAL **KODT FAQ**
- **MAIL ORDER** BACK ISSUES AND OTHER KEWL **KODT** MERCHANDISE
- CHECK OUT OTHER EXCELLENT PRODUCTS FROM KENZER AND COMPANY INCLUDING THE **KINGDOMS OF KALAMAR™** FANTASY CAMPAIGN SETTING AND **MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL™** COLLECTIBLE CARD GAME

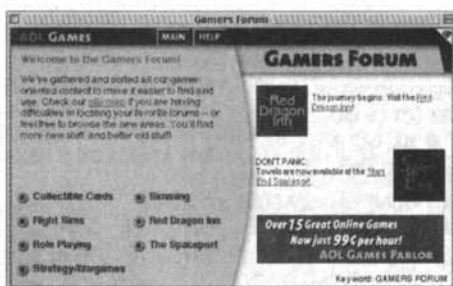


AOL MEMBERS: GET IN ON THE **KODT** DISCUSSION GROUP

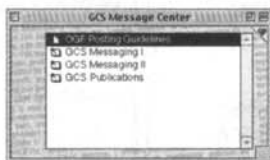
GO TO KEYWORD: **aol://5863:126/mB:147414**

or if you prefer to navigate through the gaming section...

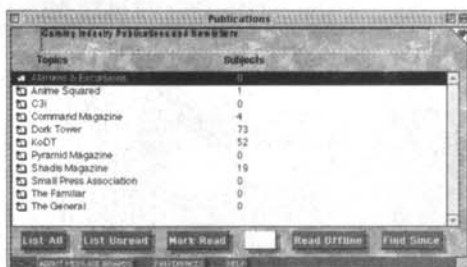
GO TO KEYWORD
GCS AND THEN
CLICK ON **ROLE
PLAYING**



THEN CLICK ON **COMPANY
SUPPORT MESSAGING**



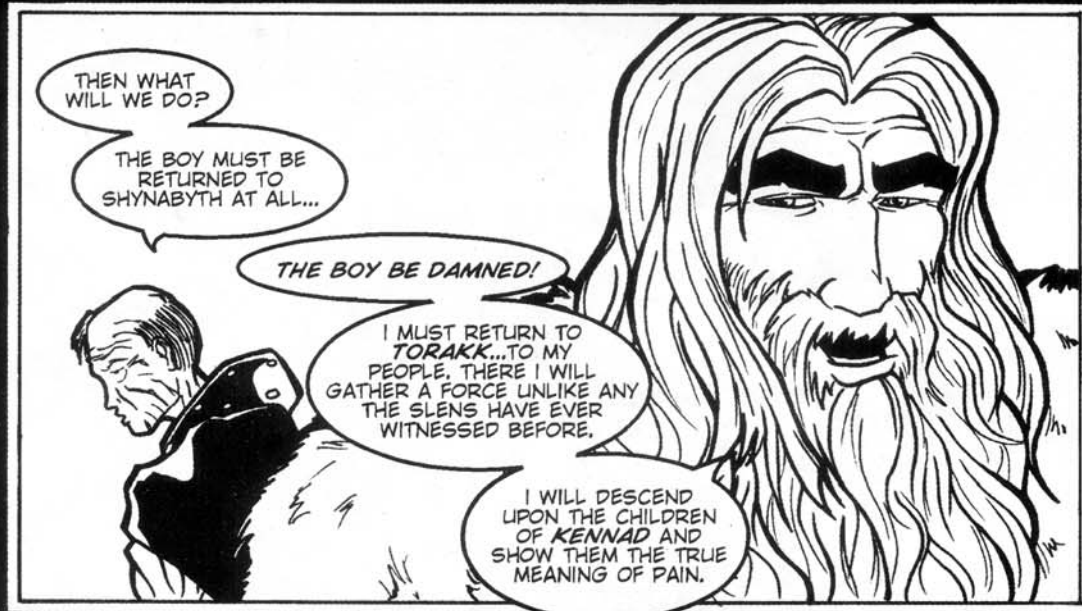
FNALLY, CLICK ON **GCS
PUBLICATIONS**
AND THEN **KODT!!**



SHARDAR

story & art
Manny Vega





THEN WHAT WILL WE DO?

THE BOY MUST BE RETURNED TO SHYNABYTH AT ALL...

THE BOY BE DAMNED!

I MUST RETURN TO TORAKK...TO MY PEOPLE. THERE I WILL GATHER A FORCE UNLIKE ANY THE SLENS HAVE EVER WITNESSED BEFORE.

I WILL DESCEND UPON THE CHILDREN OF KENNAD AND SHOW THEM THE TRUE MEANING OF PAIN.



SPARE ME YOUR DELUDED IDIOCIES BARBARIAN. HAS IT NOT OCCURED TO YOU THAT WE MEAN NOTHING TO THE ORDER OF AGONY?

WE ARE MERELY NUISANCES THAT PREVENT THEM FROM FULFILLING A POWERFUL RITUAL.

THE BOY WAS TO BE THEIR FOCAL SACRIFICE, HE IS THE ONE THEY WANT.



YOU AND I, WE ARE JUST BLOOD FOR THEIR GOBLETS.



THEN WHY BURDEN OURSELVES? LEAVE THE BOY. GIVE THEM THEIR CURSED SACRIFICE.

BELIEVE ME ANGWAR...YOU DO NOT WISH TO SEE THIS RITUAL COMPLETED.

NO ONE'S HERE, AND AIN'T NO ONE BEEN HERE.

YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU LET ON, OLD MAN! YOU MASK YOUR TRUE INTENTIONS BEHIND THE VEIL OF PROPHECY AND SUPERSTITIONS. YOU WILL TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW!

DAMNIT ANGWAR! WHERE THE HELL IS THE KID?

YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.



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a game like this**

KODT: IN YER FACE EVERY FREAKIN' MONTH!!



Issue 31: Don't Fear the Reaper
Available May, 1999

"I READ MINE WITH THOSE
LITTLE FUDGE CANDIES THEY
GIVE OUT AT THE DRIVE UP
WINDOW AT THE BANK AND
A LITTLE ROOTBEER SNAPS!"



Issue 32: Tales from Hog Wallers
Available June, 1999

"WHAT DO YOU READ YOURS WITH??!!"

Are You Expendable?

Or would you like to be expendable?

Do you possess basic motor functions and a heartbeat?

If so, we have the job for you! Supernatural Entity Monthly is seeking investigative reporters in a wide variety of areas.

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GATECRASHER
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In the *Gatecrasher* universe, High Tech and High Wizardry struggle for supremacy. Armored knights board space shuttles to pursue their chosen dragons across the solar system. Lycanthropes on Saturn's moons howl at the full planet overhead while cybernetic orcs inspect their power armor in preparation for storming a wizard's enclave....

Welcome to *Gatecrasher*, where anything can happen – and often does! A complete role-playing game, *Gatecrasher* includes a magic system, spaceship design rules, Supernormal Powers for player characters, Random Icky Things (monsters), and more! #GGG3001, \$18.95.



Grey Ghost Press, Inc.

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

Ask your local game store to carry Grey Ghost™ Games! Or send check or money order (include \$3 shipping) to Grey Ghost Press, Inc. P.O. Box 838, Randolph MA 02368.

News, Rumors and Industry Buzz plucked



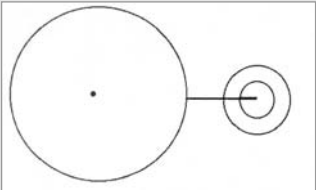
HEY KIDS!!

Be a KODT
GameVine Cub Reporter!!
Send your news items to
gamevine@aol.com



WADIZITZ™

Wadizitz are simple abstract drawings. The challenge is to guess what that drawing is. Some Wadizitz may have more than one correct answer.



• ANSWER •

Aerial view of a man under an umbrella peeing in a well.

SO WHO DO YOU WANT TO HACK TODAY???



Orcs at the Gates™ is a boardgame based on *Kenzer and Company's Knights of the Dinner Table* comic strips. Players take on the role of the comic's characters in their quest to *loot, pillage and wander* the countryside trying to find valuable treasure and defending themselves from the rampaging orcs and their king, **Ahk-Tang**. Players win by accumulating *Treasure cards* and by killing *orcs*. Treasures can include the **Hackmaster +12**, the **Ring of Hefty Damage**, or the **Crossbow of Slaying**.

One of the players gets to be the **Gamemaster** and command the orcs, throwing traps and surprises into the path of the players. And there's nothing like the lunacy of *B.A. Felton's Critical Hit Tables*. The game also includes *Gary Jackson* and over 150 other references to the KODT comic strip. And best of all, the game will have the pressure of a real-life time limit. No game will last more than two hours. That makes it great for a social evening of gaming or if time constraints are pressing.

Here's what you get:

- Art provided by Jolly Blackburn
- 30 Orc Tokens
- 8 Player Tokens
- 4 double sided player reference sheets
- * 4 double-sided, full-color modular map boards
- 100+ player cards * Dice (of course)
- 8 page rule booklet

PICK OF THE WEB

Our favorite websites for the Month!

KODT Fan Produced Sites

Need a KODT fix between issues? Wanna know how many different varieties of the Fireball Spell Teflon Billy has cast? How about an inventory of every item Brian has mentioned as being in his brief case? Well, you can find all that and more at the following websites. Be sure to give the hosts some feedback on their hard work. Enjoy!

<http://members.aol.com/reikin/kodt.html> (The Official site)
<http://busch.ucaqld.com.au/~peterp/Topics/Comics/KODT/KODT.htm>
 [<http://saglac.qc.ca/~rush/KODT.htm>]
<http://www.lvdi.net/~zellig>



HEY YA DOOFUS! KENZER AND COMPANY WANTS YOU!!

That's right, we want you to join the on-going 'Celebration of Gaming' you are holding in your hands. KODT Magazine (and you thought it was just a comic) is expanding its page count so we can bring you even more fun and excitement each month. That means we'll need new material to fill those pages. Things like cartoons, articles on gaming, industry news, reviews — you name it!

Email KenzerCo@aol.com for our writer's guidelines.



FIELD REPORT

*Store Signing — Outer Limits/White Cap Comics
Grand Rapids, Michigan*

Cosmic forces seemed to be working against Jolly doing this store signing. After a series of fumbled emails, stubborn deadlines, car trouble and having his shoe laces stolen, Jolly finally arrived (an hour late) at the store looking the worse for wear.

After being interrogated for over two hours, ("But I AM Jolly - I swear!) he finally presented photo I.D. and was allowed to sign copies of KODT for fans. What happened next isn't exactly clear (something about Jolly attempting to 'sign' a few blank checks he found behind the counter) but Jolly was driven just outside the city limits, given bus fare and a cheese sandwich and bid farewell.

Seriously, the folks at the Outer Limits were wonderful hosts and it was an excellent opportunity to meet some fans and thank them for their support. Many thanks to Priscilla and the gang for putting up with Jolly and getting him out of our hair. □



"Who the hell is this guy and why is he sitting in our seat?"

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Want to check out this store? Here's the info; THE OUTER LIMITS, 1120 Burton SW Wyoming, MI



LOOK WHO'S TALKIN'

"So what are you saying? I gotta start a freakin' body count just to alarm you!?"

Steve Johansson, In-house E-mail

"Women are appalled in general at whatever we [gamers] do. But it doesn't seem to keep them from dating and marrying us."

Posted on KODT Folder on AOL

You'll have to excuse me. I'm desperately trying to figure out why kamikaze pilots wore helmets.

Dave Edison

If a woman has to choose between catching a fly ball and saving an infant's life, she will choose to save the infant's life without even considering if there is a man on base.

Dave Barry

Did you ever walk in a room and forget why you walked in? I think that's how dogs spend their lives.

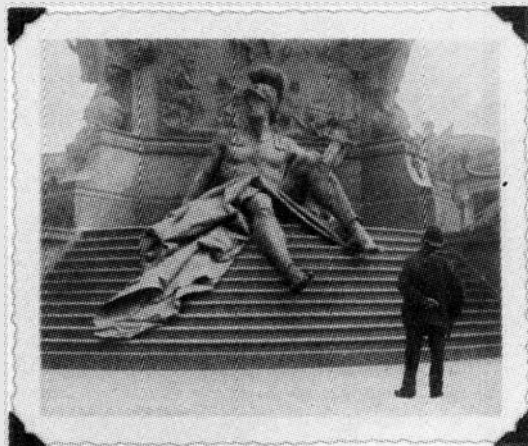
Sue Murphy

□

A Moment in Gaming History #16

When Isaac Blackburn took over his uncle's **PolyHedron Foundry** (see *A Moment in Gaming History # 36 - KODT#19*) in 1921 he was shocked to learn the company was near bankruptcy. The market had changed. Novelty dice were passe'. Isaac knew, if he was to save the company, he would have to find a new product line. After a series of failures he finally stumbled upon the answer he was looking for when he read an article about the growing popularity of imported British tin soldiers and miniature figures.

Isaac decided to compete. His figures, he boasted, would be better! and BIGGER! In fact, he claimed they would be "Frickin' Huge!" A man of his word, Isaac soon had the PolyHedron Factory retooled and was turning out his 'Frickin' Huge Miniatures' line. Unfortunately the concept never took off and Isaac was forced to sell his company to a competitor. Three years later, still bitter over his losses, Isaac was killed while trying to set fire to the foundry he used to own. □



Isaac Blackburn gazes at his latest miniature - Hill Giant in Armor - Reclining. (catalog # 1077A). Unfortunately the piece never sold and had to be destroyed to make room in the warehouses.

BAILIWICK

Bailiwick
Enterprises
P.O. Box 2723
Brandon, FL
33509-2723



This strategy board game is an easy to learn "race against other players" type of game. The goal is to move all of your playing pieces through concentric rings to the safe area in the center of the board.

It conjures great old memories of playing Aggravation where you send your opponents back to start when you land on them.

The multidirectional board is complex compared to the linear Aggravation board but this only makes the game more interesting by adding possibilities for movement and foiling other players. My favorite optional rule - In order to avoid being sent back to start when someone lands on your piece, the person landed on must remove an article of clothing.

Brian's Rating: Fun for the whole family.



HEROES OF ASFAR

Artistically Inclined
3905 Wesley Drive
Fort Worth, TX,

Heros of Asfar is a traditional (non-collectible) card game of warriors, cutpurses and magicians battling monsters and each other. The basic boxed set includes 60 character cards, 140 play deck cards, a rules booklet and a cast of characters booklet. This game is ideally for 4 to 8 players although you can play with fewer. Each player begins the game with 6 character cards in play. The object of the game is to subdue an opponent's character cards, thereby scoring the points indicated on the subdued card. This is done using cards from one's hand depending on what characters one has in his or her own rogues gallery. For example, each character is proficient with one or more weapons and one must have a proficient character in play to use a particular weapon from one's hand. Similarly, a spell caster must be in play for a player to cast spells from his or her hand. This game reminds me of the old Mayfair classic, Encounters. It really is fun to have on hand for a party, killing time in between RPG adventures or events at a con. Game designer and artist, Mark Metroka has also come out with three expansion sets, the College of Magi, the Bag of Chaos and Finieous Fingers! All these new cards really add whole new dimensions to the game. I highly recommend you and your friends check this out.

Brian's Rating: A great little game.

MURPHY'S WORLD

Peregrin
83 Boston Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M4M 2T8 Canada
\$19.95
peregrin@io.org

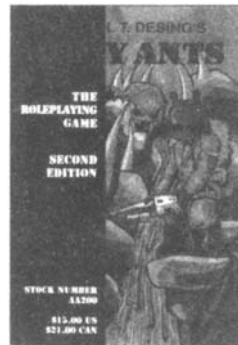


Here's one you might have missed. **Murphy's World** is a wacky RPG campaign setting designed to inject a bit of humor into your game and put complacent players back on their toes. Forget how physical laws work in your current campaign setting (or even the real world), it doesn't apply on **Murphy's World**.

That said, you can use **Murphy's World** with your existing RPG rules or use their rules for a campaign beginning there. This is a nice product to use if your current campaign has gotten a bit stagnant or repetitive.

The production quality is high and well worth the price of admission. You might consider checking this book out even if you don't plan to use it right away just for the humor value. It even comes with a complete adventure to get you started.

Brian's Rating: Check it out.



ARMY ANTS

Teddy Bear Press
PO Box 866
West Seneca, NY 14224-0866
tbpress@friedalive.com (\$15)

Army Ants is a complete RPG with a 128 page rule book. It is a unique setting in which players choose to play one of several technologically advanced, war-like insect races.

Detailed yet simple character development is a hallmark of the book along with information on skills, advancement, weapons and vehicles. It also comes with a well developed scenario to get new GMs and players rolling right away.

My only complaint is that there is no explanation of how these intelligent insects developed modern technology to the tune of helicopters, machine guns and grenades. But when you come down to it, what difference does it make how they got them. The point is, as a player, you've got the opportunity to get involved in espionage, special missions or all out, in your face, blow things up combat. All in the privacy of your own backyard.

This RPG is a refreshing change from the standard settings we've all become used to.

Brian's Rating: A fun alternative to standard Hackmaster.

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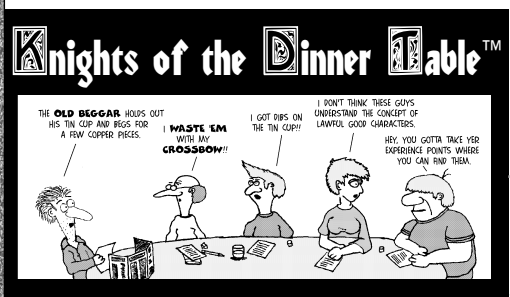
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YOU'VE GOT SUMPIN ON YER
MIND, BOY? BESS' SAY IT
AND JES' GET ON WID IT!

An Opinion Arena and Open Forum

Welcome to *Gamin' Dick's Back Room*. As the subheading indicates, this new addition to the KODT line-up is to be a sounding board where gamers can give their two-cents' worth on whatever seems to rile them. We tend to agree, which is why we love feedback. There are no rules here, except for one! No personal attacks can be made. If you disagree with someone tell us why - but no name calling.

Gamin' Dick was chosen to be the moderator/mascot for this column because we've always admired his say-what's-on-you're-mind, pull-no-punches attitude. We felt his presence would set the proper tone and make readers feel more comfortable about voicing their opinion.

So pull back the curtain and come on in the Back Room. You can leave that thin-skin at the door but be sure to bring your opinions with you.

You asked readers to respond to Alan's letter (to recap: He chided Jolly and the staff for the **Brotherhood of the Black Hand's** hazing of Newt Forager). Here's my two-cents worth:

1) KoDT is a comic book, not a gaming primer. Its entire premise is to point out the funny and / or embarrassing things that can happen during gaming. And, like the movie "**This is Spinal Tap**" it's made even funnier by the fact that much of it is based on things that really happened.

2) Even if one were to look at KODT for examples of model gaming behavior, the **Knights of the Dinner Table** would have to be considered shining examples of good play, compared to the **Black Hands**. I mean, for crying out loud, that entire group plays Chaotic Evil characters! The GM is a convicted criminal (something about blowing up a building?), who alternates between killing the characters at the drop of a hat and letting his players get away with murder (for example, letting Stevil buy all of Mephisto's magic items away from him when Bob was running the character). Yeah, the way the **Black Hands** treat Newt is "mean-spirited" (to quote Mr. Miller), but then, those characters *are* mean-spirited! Anyone who would look at how the **Black Hands** play and say to himself, "hey, that's the way I should do things" is in need of serious help.

3) In Issue #26, Newt does exact his revenge for the hazing, so I suppose that there is some sort of "you will reap what you sow" message there.

So, in short, yeah, I do find the behavior of the **Black Hands** to be bad, but, hey, that's what they're about! If the **Knights** are a caricature of *hack-and-slashers* (Dave and Bob) and rules-lawyers (Brian), then the **Black Hands**, particularly Bitter Stevil, are caricatures of every anti-social schmuck you've ever been unfortunate to run across in an RPG.

I thought it was funny, and when Newt kept coming back, I knew you guys were building for a story in which he got revenge.

Keep up the good work.

Mike Mistele
mjmistele@aol.com

I just received Issue #27 today and am writing in response to Alan Miller's letter. I agree with him that Newt has been treated very poorly as of late. When he first showed up, he was a perfect foil for Stevil. Lately he seems to have undergone a personality transplant, getting repeatedly shafted in the games, yet keeps coming back for more. I can't see why he would. It's been stated that there are other gaming groups in the area; Newt hasn't shown a personality that would alienate everyone.

The other person treated badly in KODT is Sara. Her character description says she has to resort to bullying and threats to make her point, but she hasn't done that in ages. Worse, the rest of the **Knights** really seem to abuse her good nature. After the Hacknoia debacle I was amazed she returned, considering even her cousin B.A. seemed determined to give her a hard time. Now I can't blame her if she doesn't come back after Issue #27. One statement of support by Brian ("I don't like you guys callin' her those names either") isn't enough. Maybe B.A., Newt and Sara could start their own, brand-new gaming group, since the three of them seem to be the only people interested in good-aligned roleplaying -- not just hack and slash, but character interaction. There's got to be other roleplayers who would sign up alongside them. (I would.) Actually, this might make an interesting story -- how would the other **Knights** feel if this happened?

Back to the topic at hand. The whole comic seems to be getting more mean-spirited. Brian actively advocating beating people? I know, I know, he's just "playing his character". But I've found that how you play your character often reflects back on you.

I hope this is not an example of a continuing trend for KODT. I've enjoyed the comic a lot over the past two years and, until this issue, planned to buy all the KODT merchandise I could lay hands on. I won't cancel my subscription, because I believe in second chances, and I'm hoping the nastiness in recent issues is just an aberration.

Grace Punska
via E-mail

You requested comments about Alan Miller's email in KODT 27. My comment is: He made valid points but I don't know that they're pertinent. I look at the KODT characters - ESPECIALLY the **Black Hands** - as being parodies - satires - of what good role playing is... If they do it, likely it SHOULD'N'T be done. When I read of their abuse of Newt, my reaction is;

a) I know somebody like that and b) if it ever happens in MY game, there'll be lightning bolts to play (with)... Yes, it's extreme and yes, Newt gets it in the shorts on a regular basis; how else to illustrate the darker sides of many experienced role players? Keep up the good work!

Bill Rutherford
worj@erols.com

I just picked up 27 and I must say that BA is vying with Nitro to be the world's worst DM. I wholeheartedly agree with Alan Miller - reading about the **Black Hands** is like watching Neon Genesis Evangelion, except that while the poor kid (Newt) is just as screwed up as those psychotic 14 year-olds, he doesn't have the necessity of saving the human race to at least give him a good reason. At least he got his own back, but he was seriously hanging around with those four creeps for months just to get in-character revenge?

He should have just torched the **Games Pit** or something. In BA's case, his conduct regarding the **Lyrion's Academy** setup was pretty appalling. First he promises a great adventure and delivers an alienating, argumentative situation. As any idiot could have seen, the reaction of *any* roleplayer, not just Brian would be to do something really adversarial.

Sure Bob and Dave were pretty stupid but he knew them and should have known better. And equally, has BA ever heard of how much a perfectly preserved original Shakespeare would go for today? The 'obscure' rule Brian pulled out was obvious and BA had no right to get angry about something he should have foreseen. I'll pay that the cross-campaign trick was a good way of solving the problem, although he made it way too easy for Sara to figure out the situation (*otherwise it would have worked*).

All else having failed, his response to the second trip to Lyrion's Academy was nothing short of petty and vindictive. He owed them that two million, which he was stupid enough to give them in the first place. Incidentally, as the same characters destroyed the world and then travelled back in time to repeat, they actually 'experienced' the situation. According to my AD&D Monstrous Manual the average peasant is worth 15 XP, with one in ten being 1st level, one in a hundred being second, and so on... Let's see BA get out of that — Without finding his cat in the pot a la Fatal Attraction.

Muhahahahaha

Rohan Tolstrup
via E-mail

I am sending this as a general e-mail to the organizations that have been informed of the incident on the January 21st episode of "Jesse", a sitcom produced and broadcast by NBC.

As of today, January 25th, 1999, an official protest against NBC has begun. The protest's website will be at <http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Dungeon/9016/index.htm>

NBC's portrayal of **Dungeons & Dragons**™ players was inappropriate and uncalled for. The gaming community - at least the portions of it I have communicated with - objects strongly to this, and we will not tolerate it any longer.

This is the straw that broke the camel's back, and we are drawing the line here. I would ask that you inform your organizations of the protest - our movement needs publicity more than anything else right now. Please forward this to whoever you think needs to know about it.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Spencer M. Lease
talaysen@usa.net

I wanted to respond to Alan Miller's letter in **KODT #27** about "mean-spiritedness" and hazing of new players in the strips about Newt and the **Black Hands**. Well first, the **Black**

Hands are meant to represent (*at least I believe so*) a dysfunctional group, not a normal (or semi-normal) one like the **Knights of the Dinner Table**.

There are groups like the **Black Hands** which exist. One of my friends, while in college, was part of a similar group. There was constant infighting. A bully in the group once robbed my friend's halfling character of armor that he could not possibly fit into. Later, the group got into an argument over who would possess the map to the dungeon they were headed to, and that night, while my friend's character was sleeping, the bully's sorceress crony tried to steal the map and slit his throat. A brawl erupted among the characters over the map, and they ended up tearing it in half and giving one half to each faction. When they were finally in the dungeon, fighting broke out again. My friend's Kobold companion managed to behead the bully, but the Sorceress (at 1000 to one odds) resurrected him and later murdered the Kobold. Clearly the **Black Hands** are not alone in infighting or picking on particular players. (*And on a side note, I think Newt very nicely got his revenge in KODT #26; I didn't know Newt had that cruelty in him*).

The point in having the two groups in **KODT** is for them to contrast with each other. The **Knights** are a typical group that can usually work together toward a goal (*though not always*), while the **Black Hands** are a kind of "nightmare" group that lets gamers appreciate their own groups.

Josh White
via-Email

Alan Miller brings forth some very relevant comments in regards to the treatment of new faces at the gaming table. Mainly that it seems that the **KODT** themes are negative towards having new blood and that this is counterproductive to the gaming community as a whole. I agree that heavy hazing of new gaming blood to a group is counterproductive; **KODT** shows this type of behavior predominately with **The Black Hand**. Otherwise, the **KODT** gang shows a different approach: guarded welcome with quick acceptance.

What **KODT** is showing us, is that a dichotomy, in the least, exists in the hobby we all enjoy. The reasons for this are numerous and beyond the scope of this forum (for now, at least). The bottom line is: more down to earth and friendlier gaming groups exist (*such as the KODT gang*) and elitist groups (**TBH**) form the counterbalance for the culture. By observing the behavior of **TBH**, we can see what we do not wish to mimic in our games; the **KODT** group represents all that we love about the game and what we hope to have every time we gather to roleplay (or play board games, or cards, or etc).

We should all take to heart the lessons about human interaction we observe in the **KODT** strips, and learn from the mistakes we observe. By reading this comic we all gain a laugh, but most importantly, we can all gain wisdom that we can take to our own gaming groups and make our games that much richer. Let us be thankful that it is the characters of these comic strips that must toil in these dichotomic environments, while we read and laugh, but most importantly, learn something about ourselves.

Rodney Hart
aka TSRO_Rexx at TSR Online
tsrorexx@jps.net

□

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WARNING: consumption of alcohol may leave you wondering what the hell happened to your trousers.

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WARNING: Consumption of alcohol may actually CAUSE pregnancy.



More Things to Do in an Elevator to Freak People Out

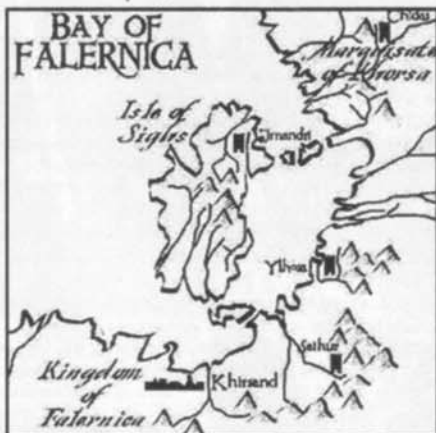
- When people get on, ask for their tickets.
- When there's only one other person in the elevator, tap them on the shoulder and then pretend it wasn't you.
- Push the buttons and pretend they give you a shock. Smile, and go back for more.
- Ask if you can push the button for other people, then push the wrong ones.
- Hold the doors open and say you're waiting for your friend. After awhile, let the doors close and say, "Hi Greg. How's your day been?"
- When the doors close, menacingly announce that "It's going to be a bumpy ride."
- Roll dice on the floor and yell, "I saved!" Then turn to the other passengers and say, "Now you roll."
- Drop a pen and wait until someone reaches to help pick it up, say "that's mine!"
- Stand in the corner reading a telephone book, laughing.
- Take pictures of everyone in the elevator.
- Turn off the lights in the elevator to "conserve energy."
- Leave a box in the corner, and when someone gets on ask them if they hear something ticking.
- When the doors close, announce to the others, "It's okay. Don't panic, they open up again."
- Push your floor button with your nose.
- Stand alone, and when the doors open tell people trying to get on that the car is full and that they should wait for the next one.
- Swat at flies that don't exist.
- Ride naked.
- Push the top floor button and announce that you tried to kill yourself yesterday but the other building wasn't high enough.
- Talk to people about the "golden age of elevators in the 50's."
- Jump rope.
- Stand really close to someone, sniffing them occasionally.
- Ask, "Did you feel that? I felt a rumble."
- Clean your gun.

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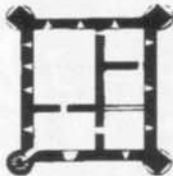
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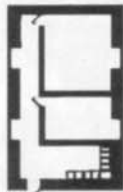
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