



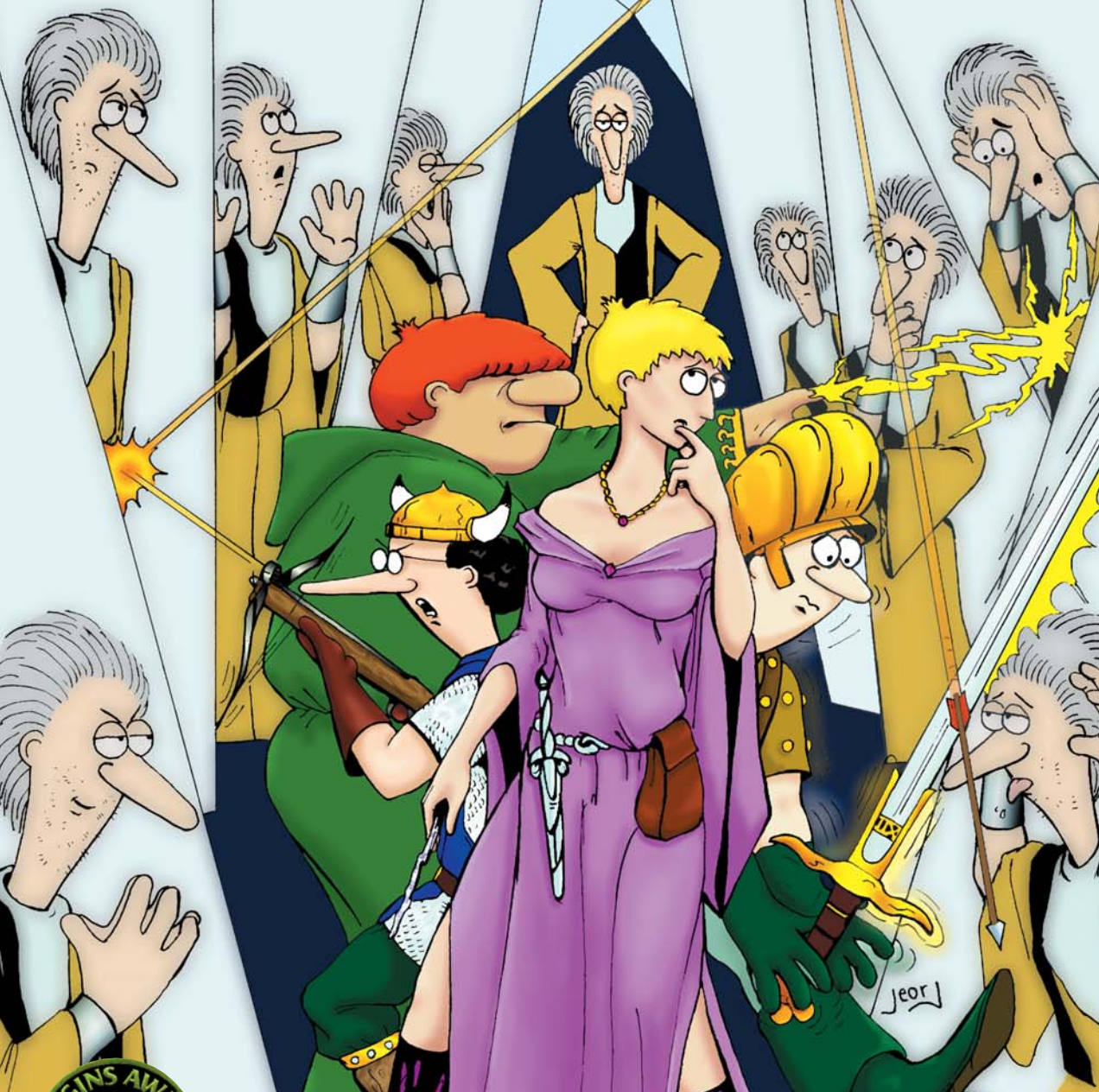
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**No. 42**

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# **K**nights of the **D**inner **T**able™

**M A G A Z I N E**



## **A Hack in Time Slays Nine**



Starting in May, Kenzer and Company, the team that put "able" in Dinner Table, has set their wacky sights on the world of fantasy comics with the release of **HackMasters of Everknight**. Travel through Garweeze Wurd, made famous in the pages of Knights of the Dinner Table, and see the truth behind the rising popularity of the fantasy genre. Like all good fantasy, it begins with a thief stealing something he shouldn't have, characters being forced to flee from an unknown danger, everyone getting wrapped up into something bigger than expected, and the gathering of a team of unlikely heroes... but with a twist... and a pinch.

**HackMasters** takes a skewed look at the fantasy genre in ways that have never been seen before...except for maybe in KODT, Groo, Nodwick and possibly a few others. Kenzer and Company aims to draw in fans from comics with spoofs of popular comic titles, characters, concepts and even creators. Long time KODT fans will enjoy seeing the world of KODT spring to glorious life as illustrated by Manny Vega and can continue to revel in the writing they love from the KODT development team. You'll be splitting your sides as you read the subtle and obvious parodies of popular Gaming Systems and related novels. You'll also enjoy special KODT strips written specifically for HackMasters. "Our goal is to make a fun comic book that everyone can appreciate, even those we're poking fun at. I look forward to dealing with more creators that WANT to be mocked by us," commented Vega, the afore mentioned art monkey. Expect to see appearances from characters from cartoons, TV, movies and even music, new and old school... it's about time they get the (dis)respect they deserve!



**KENZER AND COMPANY**

Knights of the Dinner Table #42  
A Hack in Time Slays Nine  
April, 2000

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**Submissions:** We accept submissions for strip ideas, jokes, cartoons, etc. We are interested in running anything that other gamers and fans would enjoy. Send a S.A.S.E. for writer's guidelines to the address listed above or E-mail [jollyrb@aol.com](mailto:jollyrb@aol.com).

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# Knights of the Dinner Table™

M A G A Z I N E

## A Hack in Time Slays Nine

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

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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). Ten years later, he continues to draw and write strips for the monthly Knights of the Dinner Table™ magazine. Writing KODT strips isn't nearly the lonely job as it was in the past. Since joining the ranks of Kenzer and Company and the formation of the KODT Development Team, the Knights have gone far beyond anything Jolly or the other developers ever imagined. Along the way, he's made some incredible friends and considers himself truly blessed.

# Editorial of a Madman

*"To blazes with you sir! Damn you I say! NO MAN tells SageKraft where he CAN and CANNOT go."*

*Mike Osmond's defiant PC to NPC gate guard shortly before his death.*

In the summer of 1984 I found myself driving through the gates of Fort Bliss, Texas with all my worldly possessions packed in two olive-green duffel bags thrown in the back seat. I'd found myself in this sand-swept oasis all because I had acted upon a bright idea which had come to me to 8 months before — joining the Army.

Actually, I think the idea was placed in my head by that infamous television commercial which was running at the time. (*You know the one — "Be All You Can Be!"*). I was one of those guys who took the bait and signed the pink slip to my soul over to Uncle Sam.

Okay, to be honest, my recruiter didn't really find me to be a hard sell. I'd toyed with the idea of signing up for years but opted to go to college first. By the time I went down to the recruiting office to get the nitty gritty details, I'd pretty much made up my mind to join.

All in all I'd have to say that joining the army was one of the best things I ever did. Boot Camp was a literally a blast. I went through it with a dopey Gomer Pyle grin on my face. It was "just like playing army" I wrote to one of my friends at the time.

And Advanced Individual Training? A cake walk. No drill sergeants and the school was only 60 miles from home. -Sigh- I was able to go home every weekend and in a weird kind of way it reminded me of my college days - only with guns and camo.

When it finally came time for my first duty assignment I was walkin' on cloud nine. This was the big moment I'd been waiting for. Where would they send me? What would it be? Japan? Germany? Hawaii? Home Town Recruiting? You see, the other part of that advertising campaign the Army had beamed into my television set had said something about "*Seeing the world!*" and it was a big selling point for me.

When my First Sergeant handed me my orders I was a bit alarmed to see he was shaking his head slowly like a doctor about to give a terminal patient the bad news.

*"Tough break there, Blackburn! You got Hell's Ass!"* he said apologetically.

*"Hell's Ass?"* I didn't know where that was but I was pretty sure I didn't want to go there. *"Where?"*, I asked.

He quickly put it into layman's terms.

*"You've been assigned to 'Hotel Scorched Earth, son — Fort Bliss, Texas. Sand and Whores!! That's pretty much all they have there.'"*

My heart sank. Texas? There must be some kind of mistake. I was supposed to see the world not TEXAS. In the ensuing weeks before my transfer, I asked around amongst the cadre. Surely one of the old timers had something GOOD to say about Fort Bliss. The answer was always the same.

*"Fort Bliss? Ouch!"*

Even though it's been fifteen years I can still recall how deeply bummed out I was about it all. For crying out loud, I'd seen Texas. Been there many times, in fact. And while many people in Texas would argue that their state is a sovereign country, the great Lone Star just was-

n't my idea of traveling abroad and "seeing the world." (*And as for all you Texan readers out there, don't bother writing in to flame me - I was very young then - and naïve. I'm much wiser now.*)

As it turned out, my stay in El Paso was one of the funnest times of my life. In the short 18 months I was stationed there I made a lot of friends, drank a lot of Tecates in Juarez, Mexico, explored a lot of desert canyons (*almost got snake-bit in one of them - a story for another day.*) and most importantly, I played a lot of AD&D™.

Within days of hitting base I had ferreted out the local gaming store and soon after that I had rounded up enough willing players to start thinking about running a game. And as the poem goes, *"that made all the difference."* Instead of my tour of duty being the *"Hell Assignment"* I was told to expect, it became a moment in time I often look back on with great fondness.

I've been thinking a lot about that old AD&D™ campaign and the friendships it forged - probably because of Dave Kenzer's *Tales From the Table* in issue 40 (*and the reader response in this issue's letters page.*)

For some reason that particular group will always have a warm spot close to my heart. A bit strange really, considering the fact I've played (*and run*) dozens of campaigns over the years.

Perhaps it's because most of the players in that campaign were first-timers and were so wide-eyed with the wonder of it all. They kind of made you wish you could go back and roll up that first character all over again and experience it with new eyes.

Or maybe it was because they were all fresh out of boot camp and had that *"Oooooo Waaaaa"* attitude that most green soldiers have and the fact that they brought it into the game with them.

Typically, this meant that the reminder, *"Ahem - you're a 1st Level, Low Hitpoint Character. Are you SURE you want to do that?"* didn't mean a whole lot to them. If they saw something they attacked it. If they died doing it, they shrugged it off, rolled up a new character and jumped back in the game. (*Often with the promise they were going to kill the "bastard" who took them out .*)

Or perhaps it's just because a bunch of guys who had found themselves transplanted into strange new surroundings with nothing else in common but the 'game' found an excuse to get together, toss some dice and become fast friends. Yeah — I'm sure that must be it.

Whatever, the reason, whenever I get a glimpse of my *Dungeon Master's Guide™* with its frayed edges peeking out from the stack of games on my shelf I can't help but think of those times in Hell's Ass and smile.

I don't know much about that First Sergeant who had pitied me so many years ago but I suspect he wasn't a gamer.

*Jolly R. Blackburn*

Jolly R. Blackburn  
Still gaming after all these years

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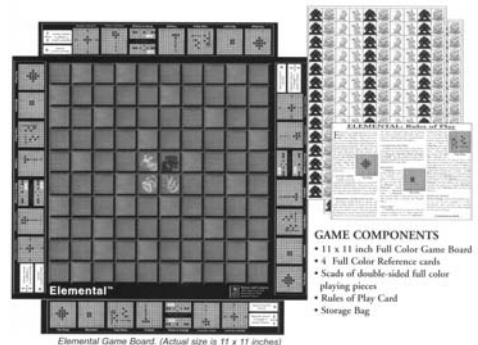
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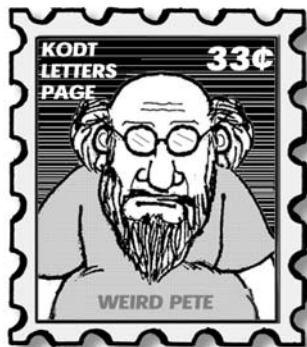
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Dear KODT,

First I want to tell you that I love KODT. That's why I go berserk whenever I get my subscription and discover my favorite comic in such a bad condition.

Listen, I'm not one of those anal comic book collectors who freaks out over the smallest flaw but the last few issues I received looked like they had been run through a meat grinder.

I asked the mail man to be a little more careful but he only shrugged because a lot could happen from Lake Zurich to Youngsville.

After I wrenched my broadsword from his quivering belly I realized he had a point but like Bob, I had no time for remorse. (Besides a mail man has to be worth what? 3 or 4 experience points?)

Is there there any way you can pack subscriptions in better envelopes?

Gutterkin  
via E-mail

*We forwarded your letter to our distribution manager, Samantha and her reply was, "What? You want me to hand carry them to these people? You want me to ship them in steel-jacketed envelopes?"*

*Poor Samantha has been overworked lately but she assured us that getting issues to our readers in good shape is very important*



*Our much over-worked Distribution Manager, Samantha, mailing out the current batch of KODT to eagerly waiting subscribers.*

## Our Readers Talk Back!

*to her. Unfortunately, as you've discovered, the postal system must have their +4 Machine of Mangling up and running again. (A KenzerCo S.W.A.T. team took the machine out of operation in a surgical strike early in 1997.)*

*Obviously we need to go in again. A team of demolitionists will be put into training for a follow-up strike as soon as possible.*

*We'll keep you informed.*

*We are sorry about the problem you've experienced and we are working on a solution. By the way, according to the HackMaster supplement, "The Postman Always Rolls Twice" postmen are actually worth 50 points. Don't cheat yourself on those X.P's.*

Jolly

Dear KODT,

A monster has been created in the Great State of Texas, and I hold you personally responsible.

At 38 years old, I have been gaming off and on (*more off than on lately*) for the last 20 years, ever since my freshman year in college.

It was, therefore, with great pleasure that I picked up my first copy of **Knights of the Dinner Table**. Even though I haven't rolled dice in the better part of a decade, the memories of those glorious knights in the dorm lounge die hard and are brought back fondly.

As I'm sure everyone tells you, you've captured me and my gaming group perfectly. Unfortunately, I made the mistake of showing your comic to my wife.

She has never gained in her life and, although she either actively supports or bemusedly tolerates my hobbies and pastimes, she has never had an interest in

gaming, even on those occasions when I've raised the issue.

All that has now changed.

I can't convey in mere mortal words the depth of change that has come over the woman formerly known as Judy, my wife. After reading KODT (*she's now on her second pass through both Vaults, all four Bundle of Troubles, and all our back issues*), she's determined to become a DM and run her own campaign.

I've unpacked all my old AD&D books and modules for her which she's devouring like a fiend (*Gawd help us all*). She controls the finances in our family and she's threatened to dock my allowance \$10 for each monster of hers that I kill. During our times of spousal intimacy, at the climactic moment, rather than yelling "YES! YES! OH GOD YES!", like she used to, she now yells, "HOODY HOO!"

Any telephone solicitor unfortunate enough to call is quickly silenced with, "*If you ever call this number again, I'LL WASTE YOU WITH MY CROSSBOW!*"

The last time I touched her dice she tried to swear out a restraining order on me (*try explaining THAT to a judge*).

Seriously though, I can't tell you how much we're enjoying KODT. The characters are so vividly drawn and expertly written that it's easy to feel that you know them or that you've gamed with them. Your love of gaming (*and that of the whole Development Team*) really comes through in each issue.

Although I teased her pretty unmercifully in the above paragraphs, I really can't convey just how much this has all meant to my wife.

You see, Judy is disabled, the victim of a degenerative nerve disease, and is finding herself increasingly housebound. As you can probably imagine, life can look pretty bleak with nothing to look forward to except tomorrow's round of TV programs. Now that she's discovered the joys of gaming through KODT, Judy is able to spend her time reading up on rules, creating a campaign, and running me through it. It's given her something new and different to be excited about and has really helped to improve her outlook on life. I know that this isn't the reason you created KODT, but I just thought you should know that sometimes your actions have farther-reaching ramifications than you can know.

For all of the above I thank you.

Your friend,

John E. Petty  
via E-mail

We were very touched by your letter, John. Nothing could make us feel better than to know that something we've done has brightened someone else's life. As one of the staff commented upon reading your letter, "Just knowing we've had such an impact on ONE person is enough to make it all worth while."

Your letter especially touched me because my own daughter is handicapped. She's just about the happiest person you'd ever care to meet and a joy to be around. She's already rolled up a few characters and is anxious to play but hasn't yet taken the plunge. However, I do read KODT strips and idea submissions to her to get her reaction and seal of approval. (Her favorite character is Sara of course.)

Thanks for sharing your tale with us. Sounds like Judy is well on her way to becoming a Master of the Game.

Jolly

Dear KODT,

I just read issue 40 and it certainly was not what I expected. Firstly, because of the title "Hack in the Saddle Again." I expected that the Knights would manage to bring Johnny back to RPGs (it just wouldn't be like the developers to end on such a tragic note) but I never thought it would come about in quite this way.

Johnny's encounter with Crutch at **Hawg Wallers'** was marvelous, paralleling a similar touching moment between **Ed Wood** and **Orson Welles** in my favorite movie **Ed Wood**. It parodied the old dramas with remarkable ease, while still maintaining a bittersweet feel throughout. Their heart-to-heart was moving and melodic and revealed the tender nature of two characters which are not usually thought of as having such (one of them being a bruiser and the other a sneak).

The encounter was wonderful, and I eagerly await my next issue so I can see what happens when the **Knights** welcome Johnny back into their fold and -hopefully- accept Crutch as well.

Right across from that strip was a "Tales from the Table" by David Kenzer.

As I read through the article, I was laughing to myself, thinking "this is almost as good as the fight with the gazebo, hee-hee," and then I read "This February, Ron would have been 33 years old."

I got all choked up and thought "Oh God, this is a memorial?"

And then I continued reading and I was right. Ron sounds like he was a wonderful guy, and I'm sorry I never had a chance to meet him, let alone game with him. I don't think he could have gotten a grander memorial than to appear in the magazine.

You know, a gaming magazine, and a humorous comic-book one at that, should not make you feel this way. Touched, moved, and just all around sad.

What are you trying to do? — Make your readers starting blubbering like babies and

destroying the comic pages due to salty sogginess from tears?

Perhaps this issue most of all, proves that gaming mags can be much more than just gaming and jokes. You continue to show me why KODT won the "Origins Award for Best Professional Gaming Magazine" two years in a row.

Keep up the good work (and pass me some tissues while you're at, \*honk\*).

Yours faithfully,

Bevan Thomas  
via E-mail

David Kenzer called me a few days before we went to press with Issue 40 and said he had a **Tales From the Table** he'd written but that he wasn't sure would fit the magazine's theme.

After reading it to me over the phone it was obvious to me at least that we needed to run it. Not to bring the mood down or to make anyone sad, but because, as Dave put it so well in his story, "people who are close to you become a part of you and they live on as long as you remember them."

I never met Ron Pugs either, but like you, after reading Dave's tribute, I wish I'd had the opportunity.

I'd like to think there's always room in KODT for remembering old friends of the table.

Jolly

Dear KODT,

Well, it was Game Day, and the GM didn't have a plan. I'd been up the night before until it was time for most people to eat lunch, and I counted myself lucky to have arrived at the game center in one piece.

As I began to gather the people to head to the table, inspiration struck.

The **Great Steam Tunnel Foray** that keeps getting people in trouble in the KODT strips - why not a one-shot game around that?

So I gathered a simple set of rules from a LARP game I know, gave everyone the opportunity to describe themselves and told them what was going on.

One person (another avid fan of the comic) groaned and looked for something to throw at me, while the rest looked slightly bored.

Three minutes later, one of the characters had clubbed another with a crowbar and hogtied him with a piece of his own equipment, taking the useful stuff away. Suddenly, interest soared.

The players had split up into three groups to find the treasure on the third level of the steam tunnels. Along the way, each came across boarded up passages that headed down (At the beginning of the game, Nitro explained that the police had boarded almost all of the entrances to the sewers ...)

Two of the three teams decided to go down these forbidden passages and promptly got lost. Each met the **SEWER GATOR** ... though neither saw it plainly until later.

Meanwhile, the poor guy who had been tied up managed (an hour later) to untie himself and

was wandering, lost, trying to find the exit. He kept getting "boffed" by the randomly-placed "monsters" as he wandered deeper and deeper into the tunnels.

About the time one team found their way out of the sewers and back up to the steam tunnels, the **Sewer Gator** struck, thrashing one of the players while his partner screamed for help. This brought the other "lost" team to her side in time to dance around the gator and dash up the tunnel back to "safety."

What they didn't know, of course, was that there was an axe murderer around to complicate matters further.

By the end of the game, two people out of 7 walked out under their own power, one was taken by Nitro to the police for assault with intent to kill (and the need to explain the other missing people) and the rest were dead.

Everyone agreed it was the best one-shot game they'd been in for a while. The person who was crowbar'd insists his equipment list for the next one-shot, no matter what it may be, will include a motorcycle helmet ...

Name Withheld  
via E-mail

Sounds like a good time. However, we were surprised you didn't send them into **Rat Haven** (See issue 22 **The Lost One(s)**) to deal with the rats the size of 'dobermans'.

By the way, in **Live-Action HackMaster**, motorcycle helmets rate as "Helm of Greatness" and are considered magical. Thus your player would have to acquire the item during game play.

Jolly

Dear KODT,

I just received Issue 40 in the mail yesterday and I've got to tell you, this might be among the greatest KODT ever produced. You had everything there.

I got to see Bob & Brian interact with Gordo and Newt. Gordo's tears over the yellow eyes was awesome. And **Faerie Meat** is a game I'm sure you'll be producing in the future. And Crutch has been one of my favorite characters ever since he joined the **Black Hands** for a night of gaming. He needs to be shown more often.

It's great to see that you're bringing Johnny back to the fold. I've gamed since around 1977 so can clearly remember the magic of the early days of D&D. I've seen many friends like Johnny that seemingly lose the love for the game. It was must magic to see it rekindled and hopefully he'll be back for good.

Anyway, this is just a quick attaboy message. Great job!

Terry  
via E-mail

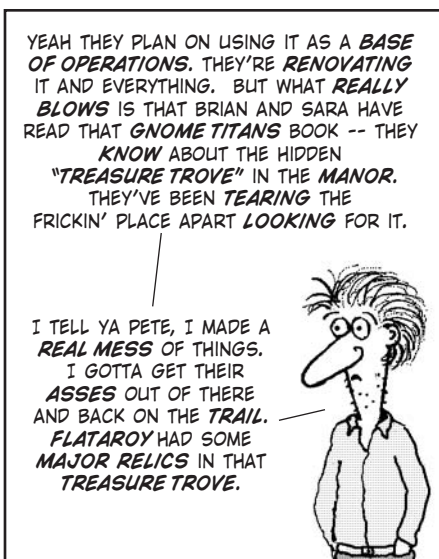
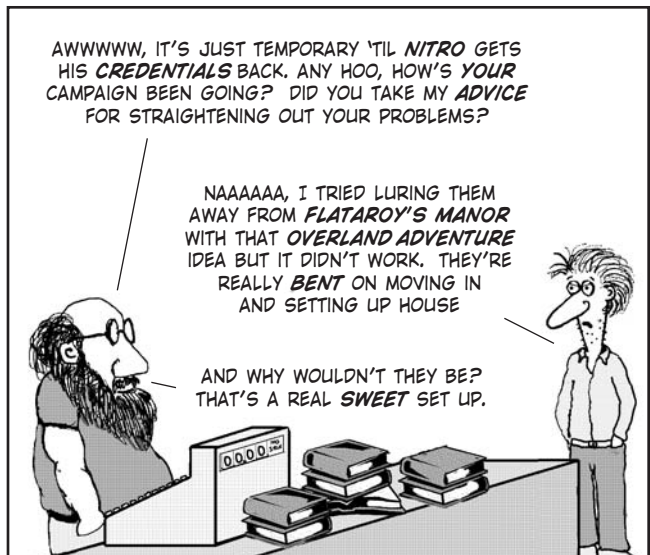
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# The Kryton Principle

BY JOLLY R. BLACKBURN



WELL, I'VE GOT A *MAN...ER..AN NPC* THAT IS, ON THE *INSIDE* - ONE OF THE *SERVANTS* WHO MANAGED TO *EVADE* DETECTION WHEN THE *PLAYERS* WERE *SEIZING* CONTROL OF *LORD FLATAROY'S MANOR!* FIRST I USED HIM TO *RELOCATE* FLATAROY'S *TREASURE TROVE* AND NOW I'M USING HIM TO *HARASS* THE *PLAYERS* BY ATTACKING THEM WHILE THEY *SLEEP.*

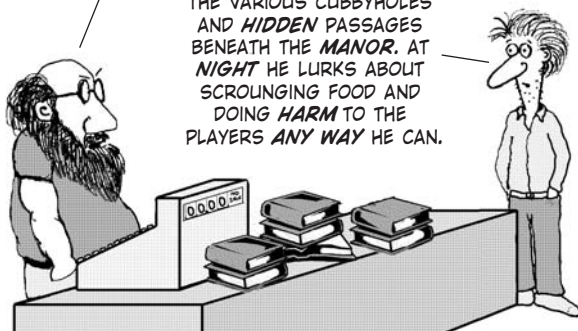
*HAR HAR!!* THAT'S GREAT! AT LEAST YOU *DEPRIVED* THEM OF THE *TREASURE* AND *E.P.S.* TO BE HAD. THAT *ALL* YOU GOT?

YEAH... 'FRAID SO.



WELL YOU CAN BET YOUR *LUCKY TEN-SIDER* THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GIVE UP UNTIL THEY'VE FOUND THAT *TREASURE.* WHERE THE HELL DID YOU MOVE IT TO?

THE *SERVANT* PLACED IT ALL IN A *ROBE OF MANY POCKETS* WHICH HE NOW WEARS. HE *SLEEPS* DURING THE *DAY* IN THE VARIOUS *CUBBYHOLES* AND *HIDDEN* PASSAGES BENEATH THE *MANOR.* AT *NIGHT* HE LURKS ABOUT SCROUNGING FOOD AND DOING *HARM* TO THE *PLAYERS* *ANY* WAY HE CAN.



NICE *STALL TACTIC.* VERY NICE INDEED. BUT STILL..... IT'S A VERY *PRECARIOUS* SITUATION! IF THE *PLAYERS* HAPPEN TO *CORNER* THIS GUY THEY'LL HAVE *ALL* THE *GOODS* AS WELL AS THE *MANOR.* THEN YOU CAN *KISS* YOUR *CAMPAIGN* GOODBYE.

AND IF YOU HAVE THIS *LONE AVENGER* DOING *TOO* MANY HEROIC FEATS THE *PLAYERS* ARE GOING TO *CRY* FOUL SO YOU SHOULDN'T *FUDGE* THE DICE ROLLS IN HIS *FAVOR* TOO OFTEN.

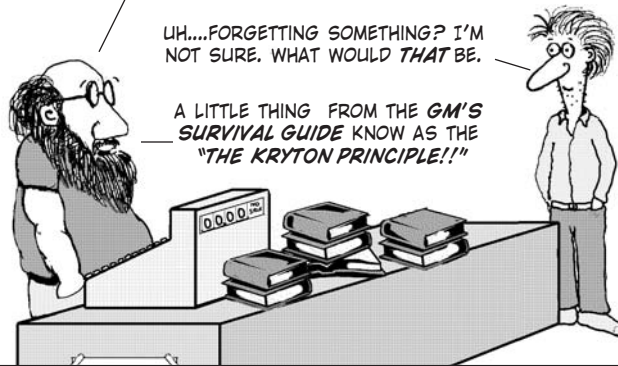
THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY TO.....



*WHOA!!* NOW HOLD ON, SON. THIS IS *LORD FLATAROY* WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE. *AREN'T YOU FORGETTING SOMETHING?*

UH...FORGETTING SOMETHING? I'M NOT SURE. WHAT WOULD *THAT* BE.

A LITTLE THING FROM THE *GM'S SURVIVAL GUIDE* KNOW AS THE "*THE KRYTON PRINCIPLE!!*"



IT GOES A LITTLE SOMETHING LIKE THIS - "A MAN WITH POWER, MONEY, FRIENDS OR ENEMIES FILLS A *VOID* IN THE WORLD AROUND HIM. REMOVE *THAT* MAN FROM THE WORLD AND A *VACUUM* IS CREATED."

SIMPLY PUT, *FLATAROY* WILL BE *MISSED!!*



A *CRAP-LOAD* OF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO WANT TO *FILL* HIS SHOES IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. AND WHAT ABOUT HIS *FRIENDS??* SPILT BLOOD CRIES OUT FROM THE *GROUND* FOR *JUSTICE!*

IF YOUR *PLAYERS* *THINK* THEY CAN JUST *MOVE* IN AND *NOBODY* WILL NOTICE THEY SHOULD GET A *RUDE AWAKENING!*

GEE, I DIDN'T THINK OF IT LIKE THAT.



YOU'RE RIGHT! *LORD FLATAROY* WOULD BE *MISSED.*

HMMMM.....



# A Very 'Delegate' Situation

BY JOLLY R. BLACKBURN

TEFLON BILLY'S JOURNAL --Day 25

After making arrangements to have my comrades-in-arms raised from the dead (making a tidy profit, unbeknownst to them, to the tune of 12,753 g.p.s for my trouble) we have returned to FLATAROY MANOR to secure the grounds and to set about making it a HOME.

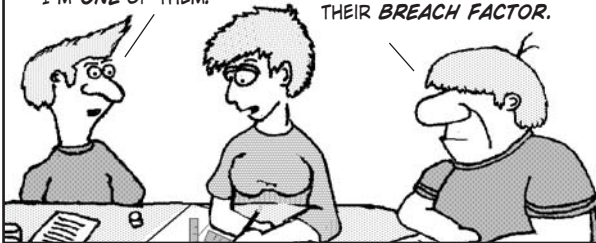
For the past week we have been searching, in vain, for Lord Flataroy's TREASURE TROVE. We're beginning to wonder if it exists at all. We have now turned our attention to renovating the fabulous mountain villa to suit our needs with the hope that while doing so we will DISCOVER where the hidden treasure chamber lies. Our work has been impeded by a mysterious intruder who has somehow managed to gain entry into the MANOR several times in the course of a week. Both Knuckles and El Ravager have suffered multiple BRUTAL attacks in the middle of the night.

It is a mystery that remains unsolved.

...SO IF WE CONVERT THE AUXILIARY STABLES INTO BARRACKS AND EQUIP THEM WITH THEIR OWN KITCHEN AND STAFF WE CAN COMFORTABLY HOUSE A NICE SIZED MERCENARY ARMY IN TIMES OF CRISIS.

KEWL! I'D LIKE TO KEEP A TOKEN-ROOM IN THE BARRACKS JUST FOR APPEARANCES - LET THE TROOPS KNOW I'M ONE OF THEM.

EXCELLENT IDEA, SARA! I'LL ORDER MORE LIMESTONE FROM THE QUARRY. WE SHOULD UPGRADE THOSE STABLE WALLS FROM STAGE ONE TO STAGE THREE TO RAISE THEIR BREACH FACTOR.



OKAY, SO TELL ME AGAIN WHY I CAN'T ENCLOSE THE FRICKIN' BALCONY OUTSIDE MY BEDROOM? THE ONLY REASON I LET YOU GUYS TALK ME INTO TAKING THAT FRIGGIN' ROOM WAS BECAUSE YOU CONVINCED ME I COULD CONVERT THE BALCONY INTO A WALK-IN CLOSET WHERE I CAN STORE THE TOOLS OF MY TRADE ALONG WITH MY VARIOUS THEIVING ENSEMBLES.

BOB, I'VE EXPLAINED THIS A DOZEN TIMES.



AS IT TURNS OUT THERE ARE NO LOAD BEARING SUPPORTS UNDER THAT BALCONY. ADDING SUCH SUPPORTS WOULD BLOCK ACCESS TO THE SOUTH SIDE FOYER WHICH IS WHERE WE AGREED ALL GUESTS WOULD BE GREETED.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH GREETING GUESTS AT THE NORTH FOYER? THEY'LL GET A GREAT VIEW OF THE REFLECTING POOL IF THEY APPROACH ON THAT SIDE.

HE HAS A GOOD POINT! BESIDES THE CROSSBOW TURRET WE INSTALLED IN THE BELL TOWER WON'T COME TO BEAR ON THE STEPS TO THE SOUTH FOYER.

WEREN'T YOU LISTENING, DAVE? I'M HAVING THE NORTH FOYER BRICKED UP FOR SECURITY PURPOSES. WE'VE GOT A LITTLE INTRUDER PROBLEM IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN.



BESIDES BY SACRIFICING THAT *ENTRANCE* WE'LL BE CREATING A *NEW ROOM* APPROXIMATELY 40 BY 40 FEET WITH WALLS 8 FEET THICK. ITS *REMOTE* LOCATION MAKES IT THE *PERFECT SPOT* FOR MY *HAZARDOUS-SPELL RESEARCH LAB!*

A SECOND LAB? *BRIAN* YOU'RE ALREADY TAKING UP 1,276 SQUARE FEET IN THE *WEST WING* FOR YOUR *SPELL RESEARCH*. DO YOU *REALLY* NEED THE *SECOND LAB?*

DO I NEED A SECOND LAB? WELL *DUH!!*

PERHAPS YOU'RE FORGETTING WHAT HAPPENED A FEW MONTHS AGO WHEN MY *MAGIC POTION MISCIBILITY\** EXPERIMENTS WENT AWRY AND LEVELED FOUR *CITY BLOCKS* OF DOWNTOWN *FANGAERIE!*

BY CASTING A *CONTAINMENT SPELL* ON *FIVE SIDES* OF THE LAB I CAN *DIRECT* THE FORCE OF ANY SUCH *ACCIDENTAL EXPLOSIONS* OUT THE *SIXTH SIDE* THUS MINIMIZING THE DAMAGE TO THE REST OF THE *MANOR*.

THE PRINCIPLE IS THE SAME AS A "*GRENADE SUMP*" IN AN *M60-MACHINE GUN ENTRENCHMENT*.

WELL....IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO BRICK UP THAT *NORTH FOYER*. WE HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT WHO SLIT *EL RAVAGER'S* THROAT IN HIS *SLEEP* THE OTHER NIGHT OR WHO *DOUSED* KNUCKLES WITH *FLAMING OIL* WHILE HE WAS SITTING ON THE *PRIVY*. WE DON'T EVEN KNOW KNOW *HOW* HE OR SHE IS *SLIPPING* IN AND OUT OF THE *MANOR*.

*FIRP DING BLAST!!* YOU JUST WAIT TIL I GET MY *FRICKIN'* HANDS ON THAT *JOKER!* PAYBACK IS GONNA BE A *BITCH!!*

IT AIN'T GONNA BE *PRETTY* WHAT WE DO TO THAT GUY.

WELL WE'D BETTER FIND HIM *QUICK* AND SECURE THIS PLACE. IT'S GETTING *OLD* HAVING TO *WIZARD LOCK* MYSELF IN MY ROOM EVERY NIGHT. WHAT IF THERE'S A *FIRE?*

OKAY YOU *CLOWNS!* YOU SUDDENLY HEAR A *RAPPA TAP TAP!!*

IT SOUNDS LIKE *SOMEBODY* IS AT THE THE DOOR.

*DAMMIT!!* IT BETTER NOT BE THAT *PESKY-ASS GNOME* AGAIN! I GO TO THE *DOOR* AND SEE WHO THE HELL IT IS.

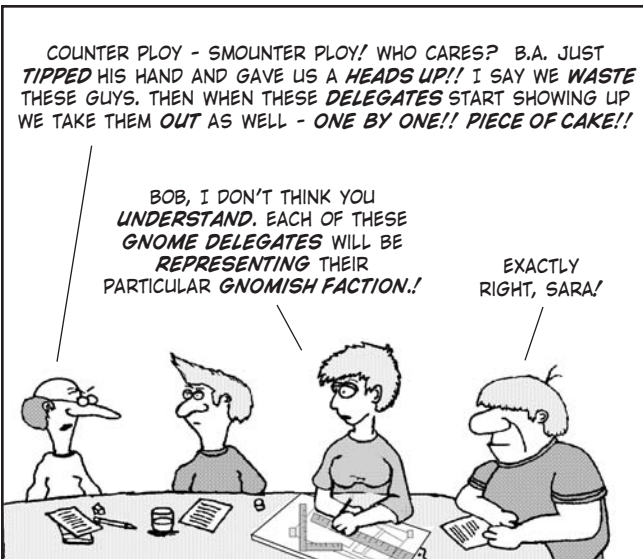
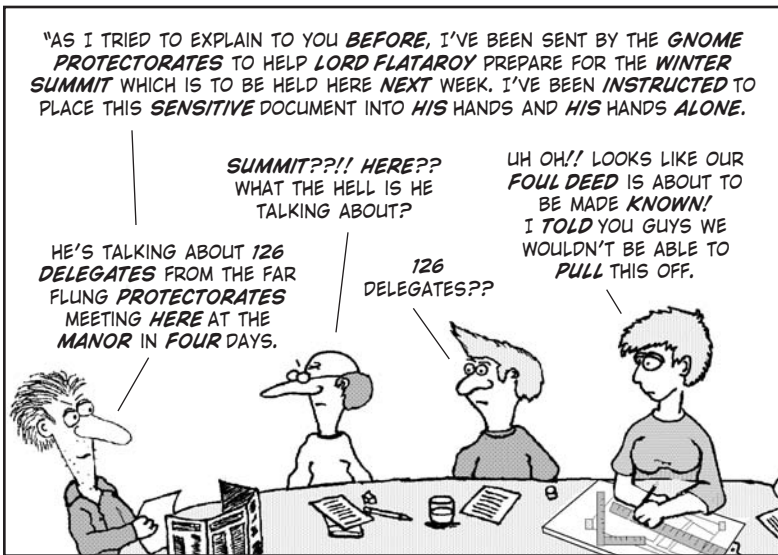
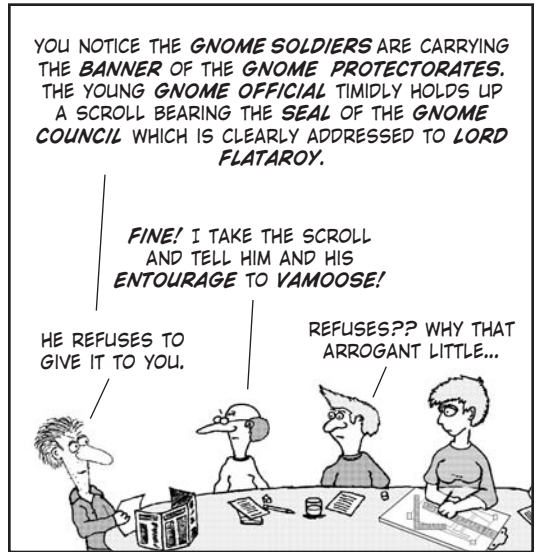
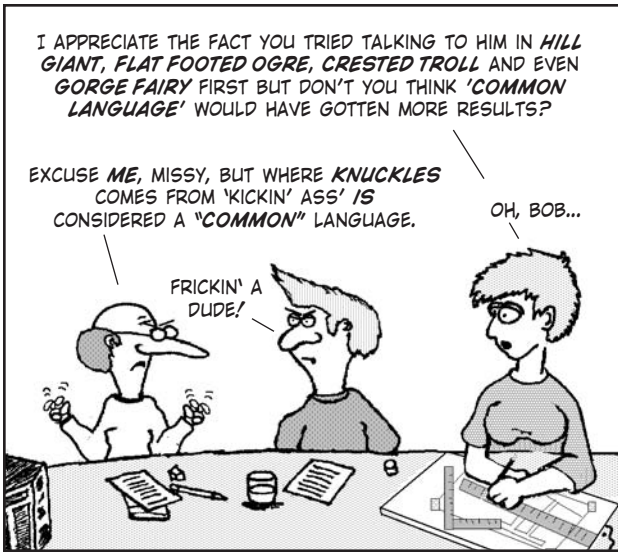
YOU GUESSED IT. IT'S THE SAME *GNOME* AGAIN BUT *THIS TIME* HE ISN'T *ALONE*. HE'S ACCOMPANIED BY FOUR *GNOME SOLDIERS*.

OH I AIN'T BELIEVIN' THIS. YOU MEAN HE HAD THE *NERVE* TO COME BACK *AFTER* THE *ASS-KICKIN'* I GAVE HIM THE *LAST TIME??!!*

WHAT'S WITH THIS GUY? I *DID* LIKE *SARA ASKED* AND TRIED TO *TALK* SOME SENSE INTO HIM. WE SHOULD HAVE JUST *WASTED* HIM LIKE I SUGGESTED THE *FIRST TIME* HE CAME *SNOOPING* AROUND.

I SAID *TALK* TO HIM *BOB*. *NOT* 'WHUP HIM UPSIDE HIS HEAD' AS YOU CALLED IT WITH A *FIRE POKER* WHILE YELLING, "YOU SPEAK *THIS LANGUAGE* PUNK?"

\* For another example of a Potion Miscibility mishap see KoDT#17 "Oil and Water"



I MEAN **DAMN** WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A **LOT** OF FRICKIN' **GNOMES** HERE. THE **GNOME TITANS**, **HOUSE ONYX**, THE **GROVE WARRIORS**, **HOUSE INDIGO**, THE **MOSS WEAVERS** AND A DOZEN OTHER **GMONISH FACTIONS**. THEIR **COMBINED STRENGTH** IS EFFECTIVELY POWERFUL ENOUGH TO **TAKE OVER THIS ENTIRE REGION**. WHY, I DOUBT IF EVEN **LORD GILEAD** COULD STAND UP TO THEM.

HOLY MOLY! THOSE GUYS ARE **TOUGH!** THEY TOOK OUT THE **DWARVEN CLANS OF PRAXTER** WITH **NO PROBLEM** DURING THE **GNOME UPRISINGS**.

FORTUNATELY **LORD FLATAROY** CONVINCED THEM TO LIVE IN **PEACEFUL** CO-EXISTENCE WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS.

DO YOU GUYS REALIZE THAT **B.A.** JUST...



HANDED US THE WORLD IN A HAND BASKET!!

WORLD IN A HAND BASKET??!!  
WHAT THE HELL IS HE UP TO??

TRUTH IS, I'VE GOT A LITTLE **PLAN** I'VE BEEN **MULLING** OVER IN MY MIND. I WAS GOING TO SUGGEST WE **MEET** SATURDAY TO DISCUSS IT BUT THEN IT DAWNED ON ME IT WOULDN'T WORK. IT WOULD HAVE INVOLVED **VISITING** ALL THE **FAR FLUNG** GNOME FACTIONS AND QUITE A BIT OF **POLITICAL INTRIGUE** - SOMETHING WHICH WOULD HAVE TAKEN MONTHS OR YEARS OF **GAMETIME** TO IMPLEMENT.

BUT NOW??? IT SUDDENLY APPEARS **THEY** ARE COMING TO US?

**SWEET!!**  
HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO...

OKAY **B.A.**, FIRST THINGS FIRST. WE **WARMLY** INVITE OUR **GNOME** FRIEND AND HIS LITTLE **BUDDIES** TO COME **RIGHT** ON IN TO HAVE A **SEAT** IN THE **WAITING ROOM**. I POUR THEM A BOTTLE OF MY **BEST WINE** AND TELL THEM TO **KICK BACK** AND **RELAX** WHILE I **FETCH** MY '**MASTER**'.

UH OH, I **FEEL** A '**BRIAN MOMENT**' COMING ON.

OKAY GUYS, LET'S TAKE A **RECESS** AND MEET IN **PRIVATE** ON THE **BACK PORCH**. I'LL FILL YOU IN ON THE **DETAILS** OF THE **PLAN**.



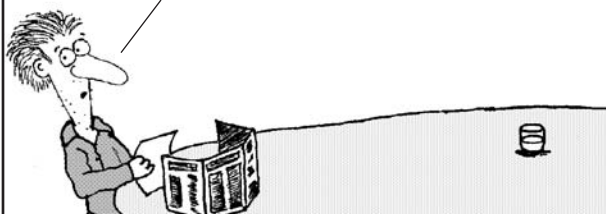
**A FEW SECONDS LATER...**

**WHOO HOO!!** BRIAN YER DA MAN!!!

**AWESOME!!**  
LET'S DO IT!

I'VE GOT A **BAD** FEELING ABOUT THIS.

WOW! THAT IS **SOME** PLAN, BRIAN.



**A WEE BIT LATER...**

OKAY, B.A., I'M DRAFTING A LETTER WHICH TRANSFERS THE TITLE "CHANCELLOR OF THE GNOME PROTECTORATES" FROM LORD FLATAROY TO TEFLON BILLY. I USE MY FORGERY SKILL TO FAKE HIS SIGNATURE AND THEN I'LL USE THE SEAL-RING I TOOK FROM HIS CORPSE TO SEAL THE ORDER AND MAKE IT ALL OFFICIAL LIKE.

MEANWHILE I'M UP IN MY ROOM GULPING DOWN A VIAL OF POLYMORPH TO GNOME POTION. WHEN I GO BACK DOWNSTAIRS I'LL INTRODUCE MYSELF AS FLATAROY'S LONG LOST NEPHEW.

THE REST OF US ARE GOING TO EXPLAIN THAT FLATAROY WAS KILLED BY AN ASSASSIN AND THAT HIS 'NEPHEW' ASKED US TO COME HELP AVENGE HIS DEATH.



**AN HOUR LATER...**

WHEN THE DELEGATES ARE ALL SEATED I CAST STIRRING ORATION ON MYSELF AND PROCEED TO GIVE A SOUL-STIRRING SPEECH ON GNOMISH VIRTUES AND BROTHERHOOD WHICH MOVES THE AUDIENCE TO TEARS!

THEN I SERVE CRAB CAKES AND JUICE!



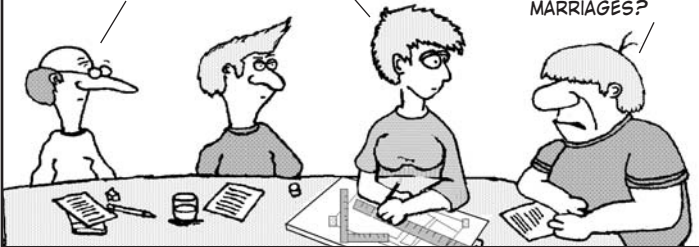
**EVEN LATER STILL...**

OKAY BOB, I GOT YOU THAT APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDER OF THE GNOME TITANS BUT I WANT YOU TO TAKE IT EASY FOR A WHILE. IT WASN'T EASY PUSHING A DWARF ON 'EM. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO WORK ON GETTING YOUR LOYALTY MODIFIERS UP AND WORK ON MORALE BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO TAKE THEM INTO ANY REAL COMBAT.

YEAH, YEAH, I UNDERSTAND. THANKS BIG GUY!

WHAT ABOUT MY AMBASSADORSHIP?? YOU DID BRING IT UP DIDN'T YOU?

YEAH BUT IT COST ME A FEW FAVORS. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ARRANGED MARRIAGES?



WHAT'S WRONG DUDE?

-SNIFF- OH, NOTHING. I'M JUST SO DAMN PROUD OF KNUCKLES. THAT'S ALL. COMMANDER OF THE GNOME TITANS - WHO COULD HAVE IMAGINED.

AIN'T THAT SOMETHING.



**LATER THAT SAME NIGHT.....**

YA KNOW, SOMETIMES I ACTUALLY FEEL SORRY FOR HIM. LOOK AT HIM. SOBBING LIKE A LITTLE BABY!

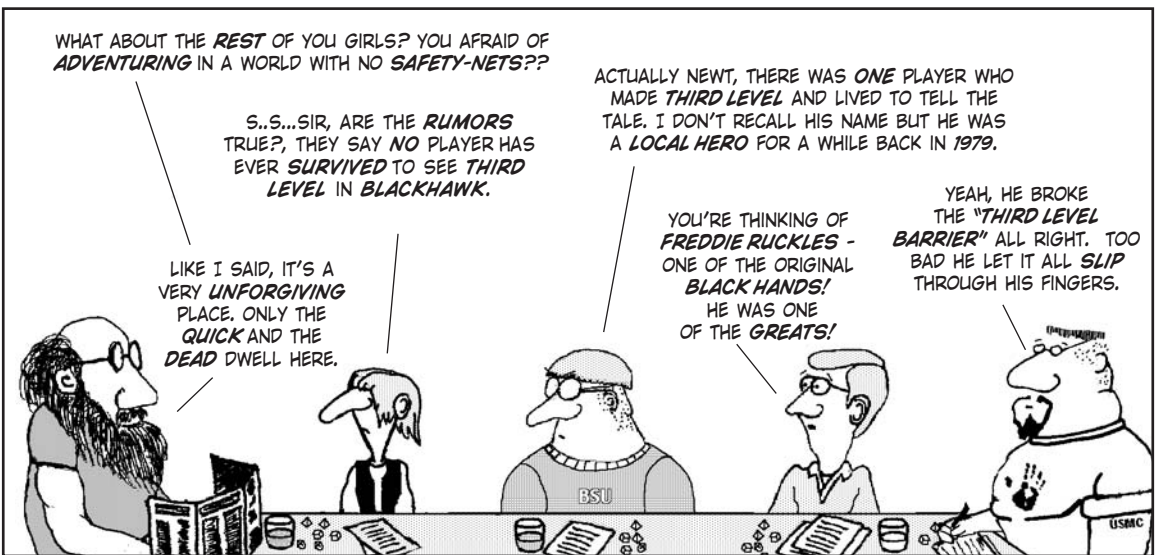
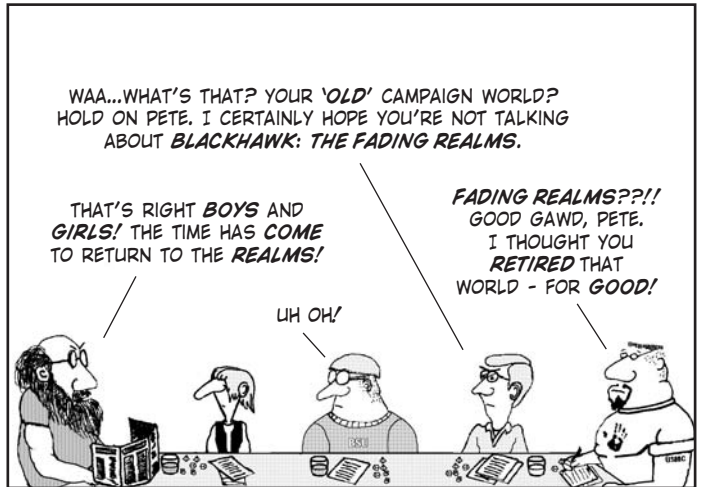
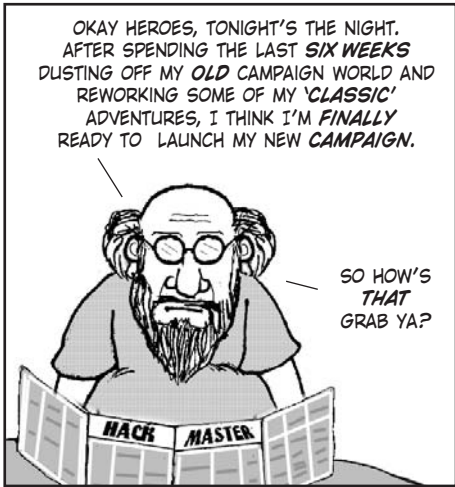
OKAY, SO NOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN APPOINTED CHANCELLOR OF THE PROTECTORATES WHAT ARE OUR PLANS?

GEEZE, I DUNNO. SETTLE A FEW OLD SCORES MAYBE? I WAS THININ' MAYBE WE SHOULD PAY OUR OLD FRIEND LORD GILEAD A VISIT.

SNORT!!

I DUNNO WHY HE TAKES IT SO HARD. I SAID IT WAS THE BEST DAMN ADVENTURE HE'S EVER RUN.





\* See *Bundles of Trouble Volume One* [KoDT #2] "The Guest GM" Referring to Freddie Ruckles, Dave claims that after playing in Pete's adventure, "He now stutters and walks with a limp."

SLIP THROUGH HIS FINGERS?  
WHAT HAPPENED?

THE **IDIOT** GOT CARELESS - **THAT'S** WHAT HAPPENED. HE WAS WADING ACROSS A **MUDDY STREAM** WHEN A COUPLE OF **LEVEL-DRAINING MUCK LEECHES** WORKED THEIR WAY INTO HIS **TROUSERS**.

HE WAS NEVER THE SAME AFTER THAT.



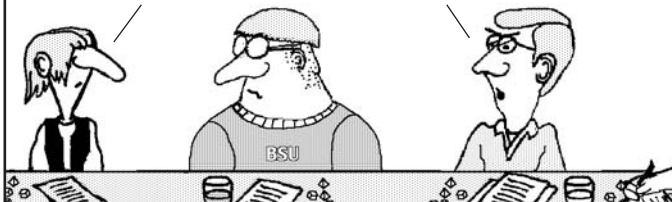
ONE MINUTE HE'S ON TOP OF THE WORLD! THE NEXT MINUTE HE'S A **ZERO-LEVEL** HAS BEEN.

EEEEWWWW - SOUNDS TRAGIC. HOW DID IT TURN OUT?

WE TRIED KEEPING HIM ON AS A **TORCH BEARER** BUT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT. WE ENDED UP **SHOVING** HIM INTO A **DRY WELL** AND **SPLITTING** HIS BELONGINGS.

YOU **MURDERED** HIM?

**MURDER??!!** HELL NO! IT WAS A **MERCY KILLING!**



WE COULDN'T STAND WATCHING HIS **TORMENT** ANY LONGER. IT'S BAD ENOUGH HAVING A **PC** WALKING AROUND TALKING ABOUT HIS **GLORY DAYS** BUT TO HAVE HIM WORKING FOR **FIVE SILVER** A DAY AS A LOWLY **TORCH BEARER??!!** I ONLY **WISH** IF I EVER SUFFER THE SAME **SAD FATE** MY **FRIENDS** WOULD HAVE ENOUGH **COMPASSION** FOR ME TO DO THE SAME. BESIDES, **PETE** RULED THAT AS A **PLAYER CHARACTER** FREDDIE WAS ENTITLED TO **EQUAL SHARES OF EXPERIENCE AND TREASURE**. SHYA' RIGHT - LIKE WE WERE GOING TO LET **THAT CRAP FLY**.

**FREDDIE** NEVER FORGAVE US. HE STOPPED SHOWING UP FOR THE GAME AFTER THAT AND WE DRIFTED APART.

I WONDER WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO HIM?

I'LL TELL YA WHAT HAPPENED TO **FREDDIE!** HE PLAYS SOME **FREESTYLE RPG** NOW - ONE OF THOSE **MUDS** ON THE INTERNET. THEY SAY HE SITS AT HIS **KEYBOARD** ALL DAY LONG ROCKING HIMSELF IN A **DAZED STUPOR**.



NOW YOU GUYS COULD ALL END UP THE **SAME** WAY SINCE YOU'RE AFRAID TO VISIT **BLACKHAWK**. MY GAWD - THIS IS A REAL **OPPORTUNITY** YOU HAVE HERE. MY WORLD IS ONE OF THE **OLDEST** CAMPAIGN SETTINGS THAT EXISTS. YOU HAVE **ANY IDEA** HOW MANY GAMERS FIRST CUT THEIR TEETH IN **THE REALMS?** I COULD'VE **SOLD** THIS WORLD YA KNOW. **GARY** HIMSELF WANTED THE RIGHTS TO IT BUT I WOULDN'T GIVE IT HIM.

I'M NOT AFRAID, PETE. IN FACT I'D CONSIDER IT A REAL **HONOR** TO RUN IN YOUR WORLD. I WOULDN'T MIND TAKING A **CRACK** AT BREAKING THAT **THIRD LEVEL BARRIER** MYSELF.

WELL, WELL, AT LEAST **SOMEBODY'S** SHOWING SOME **SPIRIT** HERE TONIGHT. WELL DONE, NEWT.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT SHOWING **SPIRIT** BUT HE'S **DEFINITELY** SHOWING HIS **BROWN NOSE** AGAIN.



WELL? WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE? ARE WE GOING TO TAKE A LITTLE TRIP INTO **BLACKHAWK** OR DO WE ALL **PACK UP** OUR DICE AND GO HOME?



IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE YOU'RE GIVING US ANY **OPTIONS**, PETE.

DO WE AT **LEAST** GET A CHANCE TO ROLL UP **NEW** CHARACTERS TO **FACE** THE CHALLENGE?

HEH, HEH, NICE TRY, STEVIL. BUT YOU **ALL** HAVE PERFECTLY **GOOD** CHARACTERS\* **ALREADY** - **REMEMBER?** NOTHING'S CHANGED. YOU'RE **STILL** STUCK WITH THEM.

DARN! I WAS HOPING TO **DUMP** MIKE THE FIGHTER AND PLAY SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE **SUITED** TO MY **TASTES**.

PETE, COULD YOU AT **LEAST** SEE CLEAR TO ALLOWING THOSE OF US WHO'D LIKE TO **SWAP** CHARACTERS TO DO SO? **STEVIL** DOESN'T KNOW THE **FIRST** THING ABOUT RUNNING A **PIXIE-HYBRID!** HE WOULDN'T LAST **FIVE SECONDS** IN **BLACKHAWK!**

SORRY FOLKS. YOU **PLAY** WHAT YOU WERE **DEALT!** NO SWAPPING. **PERIOD!**

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I CAN LAST A LOT LONGER THAN.... **FIVE SECONDS???**

HEEEYYYYY, I THINK I JUST FOUND MY **TICKET** TO SHEDDING MYSELF OF THIS FRICKIN' **PIXIE-BROWNIE!** ALL I HAVE TO DO IS **FLUTTER** IN THE FACE OF **DANGER** A FEW TIMES AND I'LL BE PULLING OUT A **NEW** CHARACTER SHEET IN **NO** TIME.

BUT PETE SAID WE CAN'T **KAMIKAZE** OUR CHARACTERS. YOU KNOW THAT.

NO, NO, YOU DON'T GET IT!! THE MAN SAID WE COULDN'T "**INTENTIONALLY**" KILL OFF OUR CHARACTERS.

BUT THIS IS FRICKIN' **BLACKHAWK**, MAN! ALL I GOTTA DO IS PLAY **ORCHID BLOSSOM** AS THE **ARROGANT**, **SWORD-HAPPY** TYPE AND **PETE** WILL DO MY **DIRTY** WORK FOR ME.

HMMMMM, COULD WORK.

HEY!!! WHAT ARE YOU **TWO** WHISPERING ABOUT DOWN THERE?

YOU KNOW I DON'T PUT UP WITH THAT **NONSENSE!**

OH...ER...UH, WE WERE JUST COMMENTING ON HOW **GREAT** IT WAS GOING TO BE PLAYING IN **BLACKHAWK** AGAIN, PETE. THAT'S ALL.

WELL **HALLELUJAH**, I'M **GLAD** TO HEAR IT. YOU GUYS HAD ME **WORRIED** THERE FOR A MOMENT. GUESS IT JUST TOOK A FEW MINUTES FOR IT TO **SINK** IN. **SO WE HAVE A GAME?**

YOU BET! WE'LL STEP UP TO THE **PLATE** AND TAKE ON ANYTHING YOU CARE TO **DISH** OUT!

**HERE HERE!!** I'LL **SECOND** THAT! LET'S **GIT IT ON!!** THESE **DICE** ARE **GITTIN' COLD!**

\* See KoDT#39 "Trading Places" [Weird Pete took over as GM for the BlackHands subsequent to Nitro's GM credentials being suspended after his involvement in the Games Pit Riot was made known to the HackMaster Players' Association. After rolling up new characters, Pete had the players 'trade' character sheets. Since then the group has been playing pre-generated adventures while waiting for Pete to pull together his 'new' campaign.]

HAR HAR!!! HO'KAY HOT SHOTS!! NOW THAT YOU'VE GOT YOUR DANDER UP I SUGGEST YOU GIRD YOUR LOINS AND PREPARE YOURSELVES FOR AN ACCOUNTING OF YOUR METTLE!!

BECAUSE YOU'RE ABOUT TO ENTER....



THE TEMPLE OF HORRENDOUS DOOM!!†



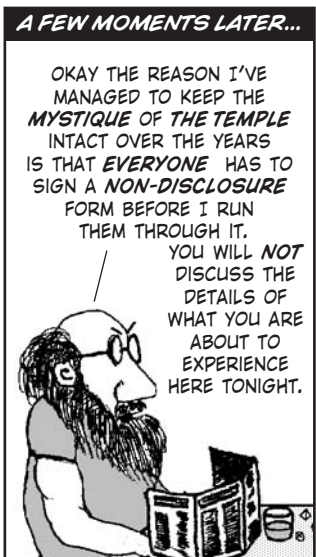
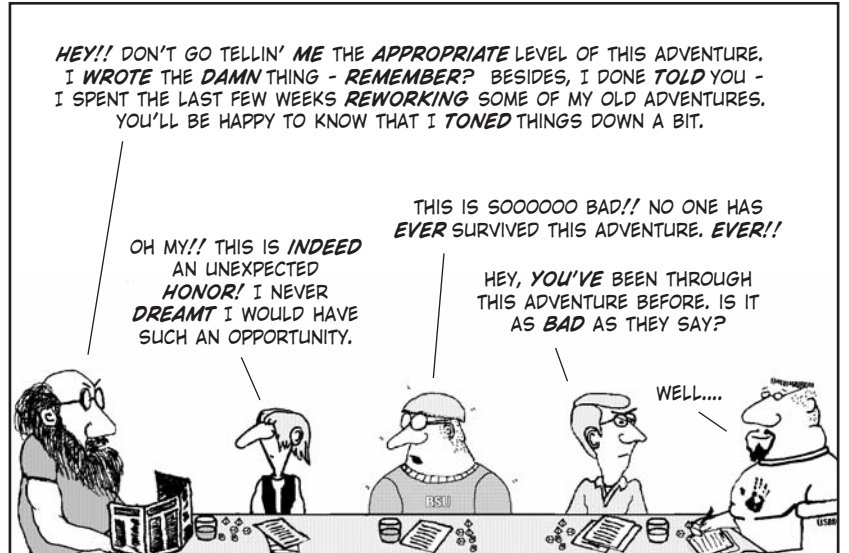
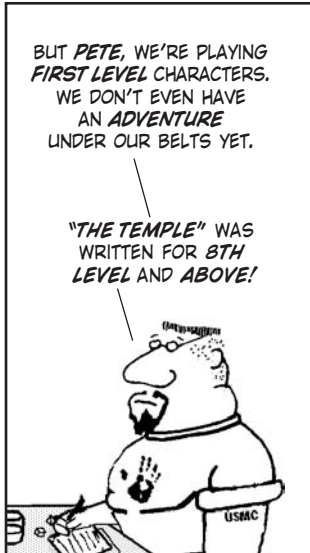
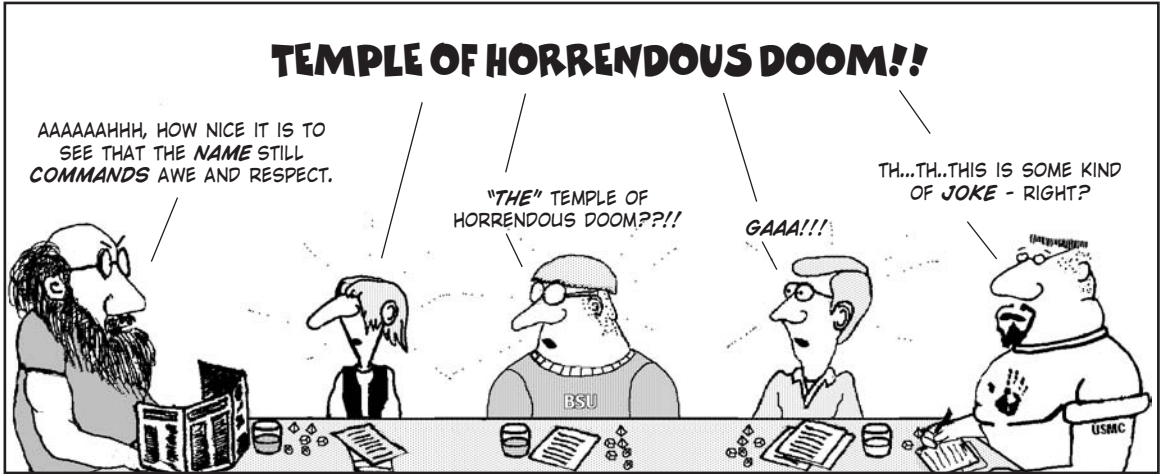
Above: One of sixteen maps sheets detailing Weird Pete's infamous "Temple of Horrendous Doom".

† See Bundles of Trouble Volume One (KODT #2) "The Guest GM". Pete wrote his adventure, "Temple of Horrendous Doom" around the Predator-Dæmon Pang, a soul-harvester borrowed from the Divine Mythos of Garweeze Wurd.

According to Pete's notes, Pang constructed the Temple with the aid of blind dwarven slaves (to keep its secrets) as an elaborate trap to lure adventurers so that he could 'collect' their souls. The Temple is 'powered' by the life forces of those who perished here. The soul of anyone who dies within the walls is trapped in the 'Chamber of Lost Souls' [area 5] until freed or set loose. The chamber is a generator of sorts which produces the powerful magical aura which permeates the entire Temple and feeds its many magical traps. Pang himself dwells deep in the bowels of the Temple and watches over those collected. Souls trapped in the chamber slowly degrade as their powers are leached to feed the Temple. Eventually the soul itself dies and all hope of being raised is snuffed out.

# The Temple of Horrendous Doom

BY JOLLY R. BLACKBURN



FREDDIE RUCKLES' PARENTS THREATENED PETE WITH A LAWSUIT AFTER HE BROKE HIS HIP RUNNING THROUGH THE TEMPLE OF HORRENDOUS DOOM!

W..WHAT??!! THE KID BROKE HIS HIP? IN A ROLE-PLAYING GAME??!! HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?

ACTUALLY HE WAS RUNNING FOR THE DOOR AT THE TIME, YOU SEE HE....



AH, AH, AH, NITRO!!! NEED I REMIND YOU THAT THE NON-DISCLOSURE YOU SIGNED AT THE TIME IS STILL IN EFFECT? AS A MATTER OF FACT YOU WON'T EVEN HAVE TO SIGN A NEW ONE. SINCE YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON HERE TO HAVE RUN THROUGH THIS ADVENTURE PREVIOUSLY I'M GOING TO ASK YOU NOT TO REVEAL ANY SECRETS TO THE OTHER PLAYERS. I'LL EXPECT YOU TO RUN PETRONIUS THE HUNTER-GREL BASED ONLY ON THE KNOWLEDGE HE WOULD HAVE AND NOT YOUR OWN. SO CONSIDER YOURSELF ON NOTICE!!

OH...YEAH. SURE, SURE, PETE. SORRY ABOUT THAT.

SIR, I MUST PROTEST. PART OF THE THRILL OF ROLE-PLAYING IS BEING ABLE TO TELL-THE-TALE AFTERWARDS. THIS BLOWS! I LIKE TO WRITE UP MY CHARACTER ADVENTURES AND POST THEM ON THE WEB FOR ALL TO READ AND ENJOY.



OH...GEE, I'M SORRY, NEWT. I WASN'T AWARE OF THAT. I'LL GIVE YOU A STORY TO SHARE WITH YOUR WEB-GEEK FRIENDS. HOW BOUT TELLIN' 'EM HOW I RAN YER SCRAWNY LITTLE MOP-HEAD OUT OF HERE FOR BEING A WHINEY-ASS??!! HUHP? DON'T YOU THINK THAT WOULD MAKE GOOD READING?



AND IF YOU'D LIKE I COULD GO GET MY CAMERA AND HAVE SOMEBODY TAKE PICTURES OF ME THROWING YOUR BUTT OVER THE CHAIN LINK FENCE OUT BACK INTO OL' MAN PAVEY'S BACKYARD SO YA KIN GIT ACQUAINTED WITH HIS PITBULL! HOW'S THAT SOUND? YOU COULD POST THOSE ON YOUR WEBPAGE AS WELL.

UH..ER.. NO!! THAT'S OKAY. I'LL SIGN - I'LL SIGN!!!

THAT'S JUST GREAT!!



MY GAWD! I'D FORGOTTEN HOW THE OLD MAN IS TRANSFORMED WHEN HE CLIMBS BEHIND THAT SCREEN.

ACTUALLY, I WAS JUST THINKING HE'S MELLOWED A BIT SINCE THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM GM. IN THE OLD DAYS HE DIDN'T ISSUE WARNINGS!



LATER ON THE "ROAD" TO ADVENTURE...

OKAY AS YOU CLEAR THE FOREST YOU DISCOVER YOU ARE AT THE EDGE OF A LARGE CLEARING - IN THE CENTER OF WHICH ARE FOUR HUGE GATES. THEY KINDA LOOK LIKE THAT 'ARCH DE' TRIUMPH' THING THEY HAVE OVER THERE IN PARIS. NOW, THE GATES ARE ARRANGED SO THAT THEY STAND ON THE FOUR POINTS OF THE COMPASS IN RELATION TO EACH OTHER. HUGE BRONZE LETTERS OVER EACH ARCH BEARS THE NAME OF EACH GATE; TRIAL, TRIBULATION, ORDEAL AND JUDGEMENT. YOU REALIZE THESE MUST BE THE "THE FOUR GATES OF HARBINGER!" INDICATED ON THE MAP TO "THE TEMPLE" YOU PURCHASED FROM THE TOOTHLESS FLETCHER IN TURD-HAVEN.

I LOOK AROUND. DO I DETECT ANYBODY ELSE IN THE AREA?

I CROUCH DOWN IN THE FERNS AND TRY TO HIDE IN SHADOWS!

EXCELLENT! ORCHID BLOSSOM JUMPS ON HER BUTTERFLY MOUNT -GROAN- AND FLUTTERS TOWARD THE GATES TO INVESTIGATE MORE CLOSELY!



**FIRRRPPPPP!!!! FWAAAAPPP!!!**  
STEVIL WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?  
THE **TOOTHLESS FLETCHER** TOLD US  
THIS PLACE WOULD BE **DANGEROUS!!**

I'M JUST GOING TO **FLUTTER**  
AROUND A BIT FOR A **QUICK**  
LOOK-SEE. I THINK I'LL PLAY  
MY **PAN FLUTE** WHILE I'M AT IT  
TO **DRAW OUT** ANYTHING THAT  
MAY BE **HIDING** NEARBY.

BUT...  
BUT...



P...P.. **PETE!!** AS A **WOODLAND BARBARIAN**  
I BELIEVE **TREY** IS **REQUIRED** TO **DEFEND** ALL  
FAERIES. I'LL **MAKE HASTE** AND GO **RUNNING** AFTER  
**ORCHID** TO MAKE SURE SHE'S **SAFE**.

ACTUALLY. **GORDO**,  
I DON'T **THINK** YOU'RE  
**REQUIRED** TO DO THAT.

ARE YOU **SURE** ABOUT THAT?  
DIDN'T THE **THIRD EDITION**  
**BARBARIAN'S MANUAL** SAY  
SOMETHING ABOUT....

YOU'RE **REACHING**,  
**GORDO**. LET **STEVIL**  
PLAY HIS **FAIRY** THE  
WAY HE WANTS TO.

STAY OUT OF THIS  
**NEWT!** I DON'T  
NEED YOUR HELP.



DON'T EVEN **THINK** I DON'T **KNOW** WHAT YOU'RE UP TO 'COS I  
**DO!!** YOU'RE TRYING TO GET **ORCHID BLOSSOM** **KILLED!!** THAT'S  
WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO! AND **PETE** SAID YOU CAN'T DO THAT.  
BESIDES, **ORCHID BLOSSOM** WOULD **NEVER** ENDANGER HERSELF.

**BACK OFF, TREE HUGGER!** I'M PULLING THE  
**STRINGS** ON THIS **BITCH!** AND I'M PLAYING THE  
**LITTLE GAL** THE WAY I SEE FIT. I SEE HER AS THE  
**CAREFREE, HEADSTRONG** TYPE - THROWS  
**CAUTION** TO THE WIND AND IS **QUICK** TO RUSH IN.

**GASP!** YOU  
CALLED HER  
THE "**B**"  
WORD!

HEY, I  
THINK I  
**LIKE** HER.



OKAY LISTEN UP BOYS AND GIRLS!  
AS **SOON** AS **ORCHID BLOSSOM** FLIES OUT  
INTO THE **CLEARING** THERE IS A **BRILLIANT**  
FLASH OF **ELECTRIC BLUE LIGHT!** IN THE  
**BLINK** OF AN EYE THE **ENTIRE PARTY** IS  
**IMMEDIATELY** TELEPORTED!!

TELEPORTED???! I CLOSE MY  
EYES AND TRY TO **DISBELIEVE!**

I **PRAY** TO MY **GAWD**  
FOR **INTERVENTION!**



OH GOOD THINKING YOU **TWO!** I LIKE IT  
WHEN A PLAYER THINKS **QUICK** ON HIS FEET.

OH THANKS, **PETE!** DO WE GET TO MAKE A **SAVING**  
**THROW** OR ANYTHING FOR OUR **QUICK** ACTION?

IF IT MAKES YOU **FEEL** BETTER, I SUPPOSE YOU  
COULD GO THROUGH THE **MOTION** OF ROLLING  
SOME DICE BUT IT REALLY WON'T DO **ANY** GOOD.

HANG ON, GUYS!  
THIS IS WHERE  
THE **FUN** BEGINS.



YOU FIND YOURSELVES  
STANDING **SQUARELY**  
BETWEEN THE **FOUR GATES!**  
**LIGHTNING CRACKS!**  
**THUNDER ROARS!** A **HARD**  
**RAIN** BEGINS TO FALL FROM A  
**DARKENED SKY** AND **PELTS**  
YOUR SKIN LIKE A **MILLION**  
LITTLE **PIN PRICKS!!**



FEAR CONSUMES YOU! YOUR KNEES **QUAKE!** YOU **CLUTCH** EACH OTHER LIKE **FRIGHTENED** SCHOOL CHILDREN! THEN A VOICE FROM WITHIN THE **GATE OF JUDGEMENT** CRIES OUT! **"WHO SEEKS THE ROAD TO THE TEMPLE OF HORRENDOUS DOOM?!!"**

OH YES!!  
HERE IT  
COMES.  
**SWEET DEATH**  
SET ME FREE!

**SCREW THIS!!**  
I TURN TOWARD THE  
**FOREST AND RUN!!!**

I.....I....I'M RIGHT BEHIND  
YOU **NEWT!!** I HAVE  
**CHEETAH-SPEED** SO I CAN  
**TRIPLE MY MOVEMENT RATE!**



**"FOOLS!!! YOU THINK RUNNING CAN SAVE YOU?"**

YOU START TO RUN BUT SUDDENLY **INVISIBLE HANDS** GRAB YOU AND **TEAR** AT YOUR **BODIES!!** YOUR **LEFT ARMS** ARE **WRENCHED** FROM THEIR **SOCKETS** AND THEN THE **LIMBS** ARE **TUCKED** INTO YOUR **BELTS!!**. THEN YOU ARE **VIOLENTLY HURLED** BACK TO **REJOIN** YOUR PARTY.

THE VOICE **ROARS** WITH **LAUGHTER** CAUSING THE **GROUND** TO SHAKE.

**"SEEKETH THOU THE TEMPLE AND FINDETH IT YOU SHALL!** EACH MAN MUST CHOOSE HIS OWN PATH. EACH MAN HIS OWN **GATE!!** ONLY THEN SHALL YOU **FIND** THE TEMPLE!!"

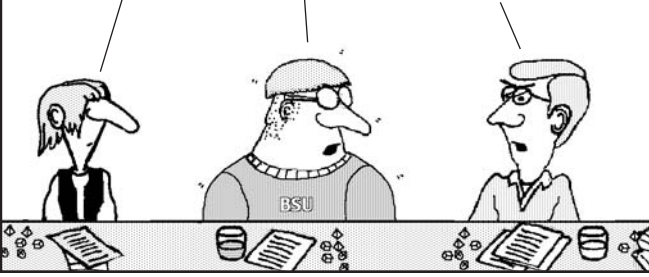
**"THERE IS NO ESCAPE!!!"**



OH NO!!! IT'S A **SET UP!!** CAN'T YOU SEE? HE'S GOING TO **FORCE** US TO **SPLIT UP!!** WE'RE **DOOMED!**

WHO CARES? I SAY WE **STICK TOGETHER**. ON MY **COMMAND** WE **ALL JUMP** THROUGH ONE OF THE **GATES TOGETHER!!**

WHAT'S THE **DIFFERENCE?** IT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME. WITH **FIVE HITPOINTS** IT'S NOT LIKE THE **OUTCOME** WILL BE ANY DIFFERENT **WHATEVER** I DO.



**CHOOSE YOUR PATH!**

OR A PATH WILL BE **CHOSEN FOR YOU!** YOU HAVE **TEN SECONDS!!!**

TICK.....TOCK.....TICK.....TOCK.....



TICK! TOCK! TICK! TOCK! YOU HAVE FIVE SECONDS!! TICK! TOCK!

OKAY WE DO THIS ALL TOGETHER!! WHEN I SAY "NOW" WE ALL JUMP INTO THE "TRIAL GATE". YOU WITH ME?

THE TRIAL GATE??!! WHY THAT ONE? I SAY WE GO WITH THE TRIBULATION GATE. IT DOESN'T SOUND AS THREATENING.

JUST PICK A GATE AND JUMP!



TISK, TISK, TISK! TOO LATE, GENTLEMEN! YOUR TIME HAS RUN OUT.

YOUR PATHS WILL BE CHOSEN FOR YOU!



**CLAP! CLAP! \***

HEY??!! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE LIGHTS??!!

YOU HAVE BEEN **PLUCKED** FROM THE **WORLD OF LIGHT!!** YOU HAVE THE **UNEASY** SENSATION THAT YOU ARE BEING **PULLED** THROUGH A **LONG, DARK, TUNNEL!!**

??!!

T...T...THIS ISN'T FUNNY, PETE. -WHEEZE-

YOU FIND YOURSELF IN **PITCH BLACKNESS!!** IT IS **SO DARK** YOU CAN **FEEL** IT ON YOUR **SKIN!!!** YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE YOUR **HAND** BEFORE YOUR FACE.

ALL AROUND YOU, YOU CAN **HEAR** DEEP **GUTTURAL** GROWLS AND SNARLS. AT TIMES YOU CAN EVEN **FEEL** AND **SMELL** THE DAMP **FOUL BREATH** OF SOMEONE OR SOMETHING **PANTING** OVER YOUR SHOULDERS.

THEN **SUDDENLY** THERE IS **STONE COLD SILENCE!!** EXCEPT FOR THE **THUMP THUMP** OF YOUR RAPIDLY BEATING **HEARTS** IN YOUR **CHESTS** YOU CAN'T HEAR A THING.

-WHEEZE-  
-WHEEZE-  
-WHEEZE-

FRICKIN' KEWL!!

**GORDO??!!** PLEASE TELL ME THAT'S YOU WHEEZING OVER THERE.

\* The sound of Weird Pete 'clapping' his hands. Apparently he got "The Clapper" for Christmas a few years ago.



SIR???! IF I YELL OUT REAL LOUD!!  
DO  
ANY OF THE OTHERS HEAR ME???

SSSSHHHH!!! NO TALKING!  
THAT GOES FOR EVERYBODY!!  
FOR THE NEXT TWENTY  
MINUTES YOU'RE BEING  
HURLED THROUGH A VACUUM

-WHEEZE-  
-WHEEZE-  
-WHEEZE-

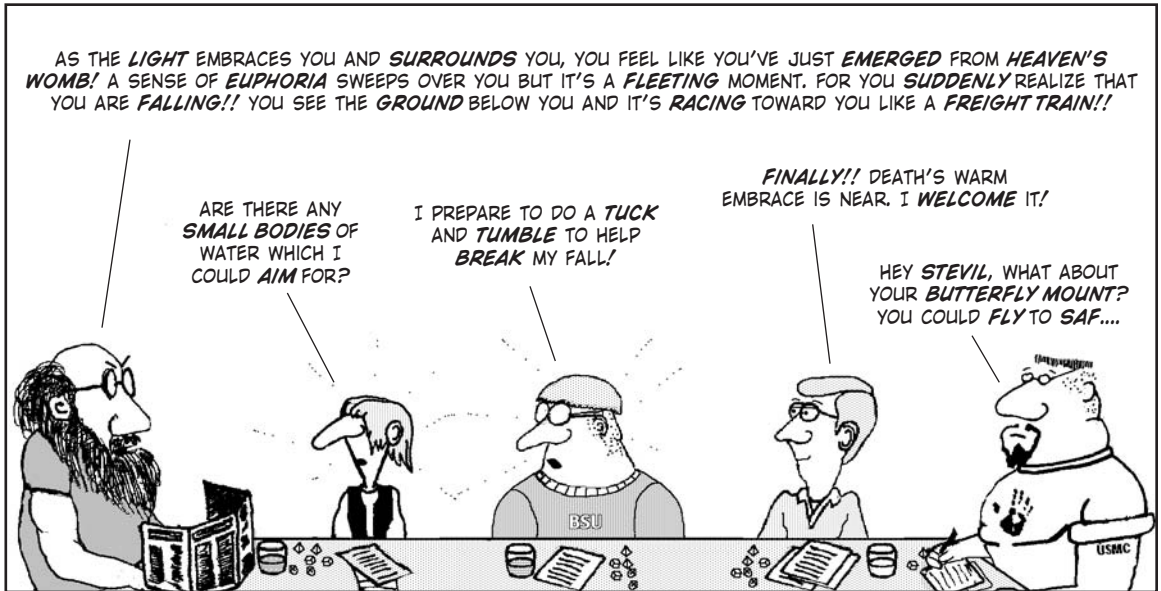


TWENTY MINUTES LATER...

OKAY YOU SUDDENLY HEAR THE ROAR OF A  
TREMENDOUS GALE!! THE WIND TEARS AT  
YOUR CLOTHING AND YOUR HAIR!!  
IN THE DISTANCE YOU SEE A SHIMMERING  
LIGHT RUSHING TOWARDS YOU.....

THANK GAWD! THIS WAS  
BEGINNING TO REMIND ME OF  
THOSE SENSE-DEPRIVATION  
EXERCISES I SIGNED  
UP FOR IN COLLEGE.

CLAP!  
CLAP!



ARE THERE ANY  
SMALL BODIES OF  
WATER WHICH I  
COULD AIM FOR?

I PREPARE TO DO A TUCK  
AND TUMBLE TO HELP  
BREAK MY FALL!

FINALLY!! DEATH'S WARM  
EMBRACE IS NEAR. I WELCOME IT!

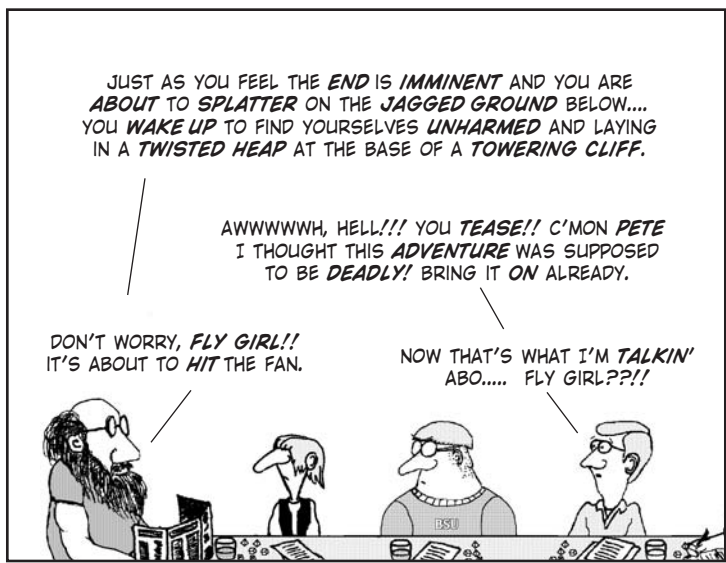
HEY STEVIL, WHAT ABOUT  
YOUR BUTTERFLY MOUNT?  
YOU COULD FLY TO SAF....



HEY!!!! SHUT UP, MAN!!  
YOU'RE BLOWIN' IT FOR ME.

OH....YEAH.  
SORRY!

GEEZUS!!



JUST AS YOU FEEL THE END IS IMMINENT AND YOU ARE  
ABOUT TO SPLATTER ON THE JAGGED GROUND BELOW....  
YOU WAKE UP TO FIND YOURSELVES UNHARMED AND LAYING  
IN A TWISTED HEAP AT THE BASE OF A TOWERING CLIFF.

AWWWWWW, HELL!!! YOU TEASE!! C'MON PETE  
I THOUGHT THIS ADVENTURE WAS SUPPOSED  
TO BE DEADLY! BRING IT ON ALREADY.

DON'T WORRY, FLY GIRL!!  
IT'S ABOUT TO HIT THE FAN.

NOW THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKIN'  
ABO..... FLY GIRL??!!

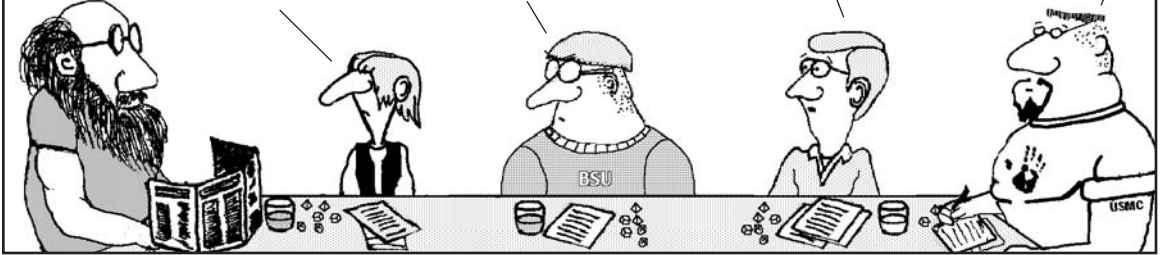
AS YOU CLIMB TO YOUR FEET AND LOOK AROUND YOU NOTICE A HUGE NOTCH HAS BEEN CUT AWAY INTO THE ROCK FACE ITSELF FORMING A COURTYARD LINED WITH TALL COLUMNS ORNATELY CARVED WITH AN ANCIENT TONGUE. BETWEEN THE COLUMNS RUNS A REFLECTING POOL. AT THE END OF THE POOL A HUGE PORTAL BECKONS TO YOU.\*

-GULP- I GUESS THIS IS THE TEMPLE OF HORRENDOUS DOOM THEN.

TREY FEELS THERE ARE STRANGE POWERS AT WORK HERE. SOMEBODY WENT TO A LOT OF TROUBLE TO BRING OUR CHARACTERS HERE.

WHOAH! THIS IS SO KEWL! I MEAN WE'RE ACTUALLY STANDING HERE. ON THE STEPS OF THE INFAMOUS TEMPLE.

WELL, FOLKS, BETTER SAY YOUR HAIL MARYS AND SO FORTH.



'COS WE'RE DEFINITELY NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE!

AS YOU BEHOLD THE SIGHT BEFORE YOU THE WORDS OF THE BLIND FLETCHER BACK AT TURD-HAVEN SUDDENLY RING TRUE.

"ALL PATHS LEAD TO THE TEMPLE OF HORRENDOUS DOOM FOR THOSE WITH THE COURAGE TO SEEK IT!"

IS THAT JUST ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING WE HAD NO CHOICE IN COMING HERE?

SO THIS IS REALLY IT, HUH?

ER, SOMETHING LIKE THAT!



-GULP- WELL, GUYS. TREY'S KEEN BARBARIAN SENSES HAVE GIVEN HIM A PREMONITION. HE KNOWS THAT HIS TIME HAS COME AND THAT HE WILL NOT LIVE TO SEE THE SUN SET AGAIN.

I JUST WANT TO SAY, ORCHID BLOSSOM, THAT WHILE TREY DOESN'T FULLY UNDERSTAND YOUR DEATH WISH, HE ADMIRES THE STRENGTH OF YOUR CONVICTIONS AND YOUR.....

IF DEATH WANTS THIS WARM BODY HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO FIGHT ME FOR IT!

OH NO!!! PLEASE!! PLEASE DON'T ADDRESS ME 'IN CHARACTER.' I FIND IT QUITE DISTURBING - ESPECIALLY NOW!



MOMENTS LATER...

AS YOU CAUTIOUSLY APPROACH THE DOORS TO THE TEMPLE....



\* See Area 1 (one) of the map on page 17

# THE PAVEMENT STONES SUDDENLY DROP AWAY REVEALING A SPIKED PIT!!!

QUICK!!! WHAT'S YER MARCHING ORDER!!! WHO WAS IN FRONT??!!!

I WAS IN BACK! I DEFINITELY SAID I WAS IN BACK!

NEWT! STEVIL! THE TWO OF YOU TOPPLE HEAD OVER HEELS INTO THE PIT AND DISAPPEAR!!

UH...ER...UH....



DON'T BOTHER ROLLING ANY SAVING THROWS!!! NOTHING CAN SAVE YOUR SORRY ASSES HERE.

**YOU'RE DEAD!!**



WELL, THAT'S THAT! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! HOW 'BOUT HANDING ME A BLANK CHARACTER SHEET.

ISN'T THERE A TRADITIONAL MOURNING PERIOD BEFORE MOVING ON TO THE NEXT CHARACTER?

JUST HAND ME A SHEET.



87 SECONDS LATER...

SORRY GORDO! WHEN YOU SLAMMED THE TEMPLE DOORS SHUT YOU DISLODGED A HIVE OF CARNIVOROUS HORNETS YOU FAILED TO NOTICE JUST ABOVE THE DOOR. THEY SWARM INTO YOUR HELMET AND BLIND YOU WITH THEIR VENOMOUS STINGS. YOU STAGGER BACKWARDS AND PLUNGE INTO THE PIT.

CAN I ROLL TO SEE IF I WAS ABLE TO USE MY GENTLY-FALL ABILITY?

NO, YOU'RE DEAD!

TOUGH BREAK, GORDO.



FIVE MINUTES LATER...

WELL, YOU PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT NITRO BUT THOSE WERE-GOATS WERE JUST TOO MUCH FOR A FIRST-LEVEL CHARACTER TO HANDLE.

DIDN'T PETE SAY SOMETHING ABOUT TONING DOWN THE ADVENTURE? IF THIS IS THE SCALED-BACK VERSION I'D HATE TO THINK WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED TO US IN THE FULL VERSION.

WHO CARES? LOOK, IF WE HURRY AND ROLL UP OUR NEW CHARACTERS WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET BACK IN A GAME TONIGHT. WHAT DO YOU SAY?



WHOAH, WHOAH **WHOAH!!** HOLD ON THERE GUYS. IT AIN'T **OVER**.

SURE IT'S **OVER!** WE'RE **ALL DEAD**, PETE. TIME TO ROLL UP **NEW CHARACTERS** - **RIGHT?**

NO, YOU GUYS DON'T SEEM TO **UNDERSTAND**. YOU SEE THE **FIRST PREREQUISITE** FOR ADVENTURING IN THE **TOMB OF HORRENDOUS HORRORS** IS THAT YOU'RE **DEAD!** THE **FUN** IS **JUST BEGINNING!**

S-S-SAY WHAT?

YOU MEAN YOU DIDN'T **KNOW??!!** I FIGURED AT **LEAST** THAT MUCH **LEAKED** OUT THROUGH THE **GRAPEVINE!**

IN THIS **ADVENTURE** YOU PLAY **DISEMBODIED SOULS** WHO ARE TRYING TO **REJOIN** WITH THEIR **MORTAL BODIES!**



IT WON'T BE **EASY** HOWEVER. **FIRST** YOU'LL HAVE TO **ESCAPE** FROM THE **CHAMBER OF LOST SOULS!** THEN YOU WILL HAVE TO WORK AS A **TEAM** - **LITERALLY!** ONLY BY **JOINING** YOUR **ECTOPLASMIC-ENERGIES** TOGETHER TO BECOME **ONE** SENTIENT BEING WILL YOU BE ABLE TO **MUSTER** THE POWERS NEEDED TO THROW OFF YOUR **BONDS** AND EXPLORE THE **SIXTEEN LEVELS** OF THE **TEMPLE** IN SEARCH OF YOUR **BODIES**. ONLY **THEN** WILL YOUR **CHARACTERS** LIVE AGAIN! AND **ONLY THEN** WILL YOU BE ABLE TO **LEAVE** THE **TEMPLE OF HORRENDOUS DOOM!!**

YOU MEAN WE'LL ALL BE PLAYING **ONE CHARACTER** WHO WILL ESSENTIALLY BE A **GHOST???**

**NOW I UNDERSTAND** WHY **NOBODY** HAS EVER **SURVIVED** THIS ADVENTURE WITHOUT **DYING!**

THIS CAN'T BE **HAPPENING!**

**EXACTLY!!**



**PETE!!** ORCHID BLOSSOM IS **HEADING TOWARD THE LIGHT!!** THERE'S **ALWAYS** A **LIGHT** - YOU KNOW LIKE IN THAT MOVIE, **POLTERGEIST???** I'LL JUST **FLUTTER** IN THAT **DIRECTION** AND GO BE WITH MY **ANCESTORS** OR SOMETHING. HOW'S THAT SOUND?

SORRY STEVIL! THERE'S **NO LIGHT**. BESIDES YOUR **SOUL** IS **TRAPPED** IN THE **TEMPLE**. **DOOMED** TO AN **ETERNITY** OF **EXILE** UNLESS YOU CAN SOMEHOW **FREE** YOURSELF!

WHATEVER **KILLS** YOU ONLY MAKES YOU **STRONGER!**

OH THAT'S JUST GREAT - SOUNDS LIKE MY **JOB!!** NOW WE'RE **SIMULATING** MY **REAL LIFE?**



SO I'M **STUCK** WITH A **STINKIN' FEMALE PIXIE-BROWNIE?** EVEN IN **DEATH??!!!**

AND JUST THINK - WITH **SIXTEEN LEVELS** TO EXPLORE IT COULD TAKE **MONTHS** BEFORE WE FIND OUR **BODIES**.

OH YOU THINK THIS IS **FUNNY** DON'T YOU?

OH I THINK IT'S **FRICKIN' HILARIOUS** MY **PIXIE-SWEETS!!**



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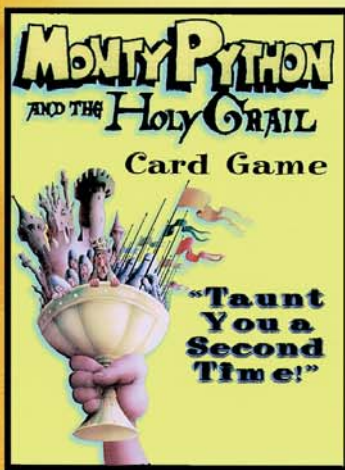
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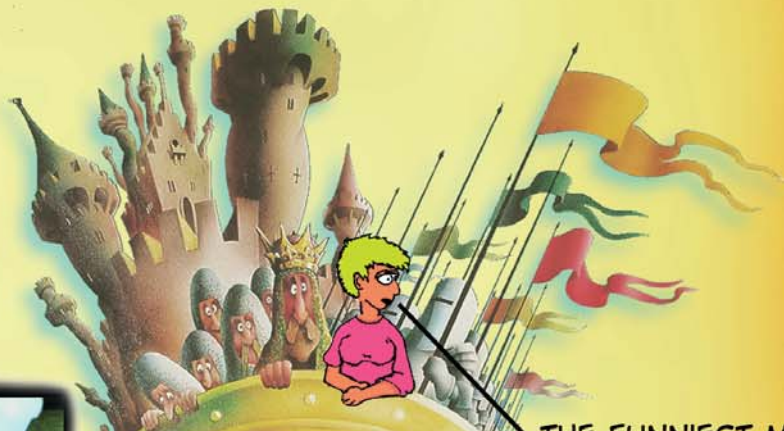


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I don't want to talk to you no more, you empty-headed animal  
food troughwiper! I fart in your general direction! Your  
mother was a hamster and your father smelt of elderberries.

Now go and get your own deck or I shall...

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**CAULDRON OF MOLTEN IRON??**  
THAT'S SURVIVABLE - RIGHT??

SURVIVABLE? BOB YOU FELL INTO IT **FACE** FIRST. LET'S BE **REAL** ABOUT THIS. YOU'RE **TOAST** - LITERALLY.

WHAT???! NOT EVEN A SAVING THROW?

EEEEWWWWWWW!! BOB LOOKS LIKE YER **DWARF** JUST BECAME ANOTHER **SHRIMP-ON-THE-BARBEE**

OH, THAT'S SO **SWEET**, BRIAN. **JUSTINA** THANKS YOU FOR THE LOAN OF THE **SUEDE JACKET**. SHE OFFERS TO BUY YOU **DINNER** AT THE **INN** IF YOU WOULD CARE TO ACCOMPANY HER.

UH...ER...-GULP-SURE! YOU BET.

OH, MAN. SHE **DIGS** ME.

WELL???! YOU JUST GONNA **STAND** THERE **ALL DAY** AND **GAWK** AT ME?

SORRY, PETE. WE WERE JUST OVER AT **GAMIN' DICK'S** AND HE SAID YOU GUYS USED TO **GAME** IN THE "**OLDEN DAYS**" BEFORE THEY HAD **POLYHEDRONS** AND STUFF.

YEAH. HOW THE HELL DID YOU KNOW IF YOU EVER **HIT** ANYTHING OR NOT?

OH I HAD A LITTLE **MONKEY** WHO WOULD FLY OUT OF MY **BUTT** AND ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS. HE'D EVEN PUT **SUGAR CUBES** IN MY COFFEE. NOW HOW 'BOUT YOU TWO **MORONS** TAKIN' A **HIKE**??!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER....

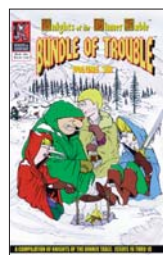
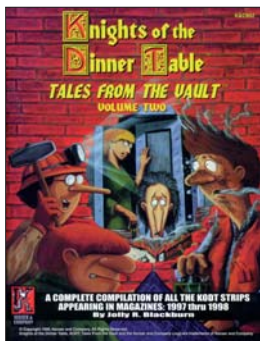
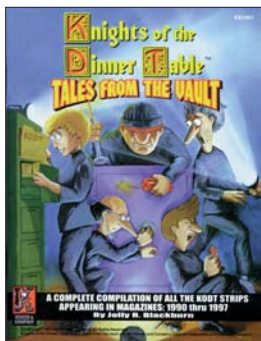
HEH, HEH, HEH. **SUGAR CUBES!!** I'VE BEEN WAITIN' TO USE THAT LINE FOR **THREE MONTHS**.

YEAH AT **HACKCON '87** I **LOST** MY ASS IN THIS GAME. I SPENT THE **ENTIRE** GAME MOVIN' WHAT I **THOUGHT** WAS A **SHAMBLING MOUND REGIMENT** AROUND FOR A **FLANKING** ACTION. TURNED OUT IT WAS JUST A **FURBALL**.

OKAY SO TO GET A GOOD **MENTAL IMAGE** OF WHAT **KRAGIN THE THIRD** REALLY LOOKS LIKE JUST THINK OF **KEITH PARTRIDGE** ONLY WITH MUCH LONGER HAIR AND A **SEAN CONNERY** ACCENT.

OH AND **FIRE ORCHID** LOOKS LIKE A YOUNG **BARBARA STREISAND** - LIKE IN **FUNNY GIRL**.

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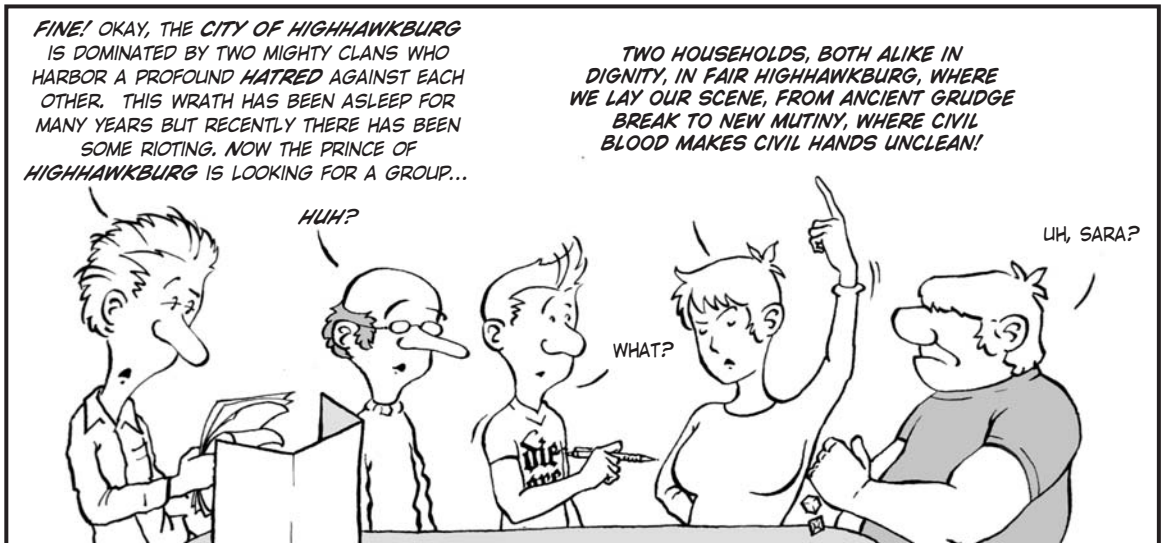
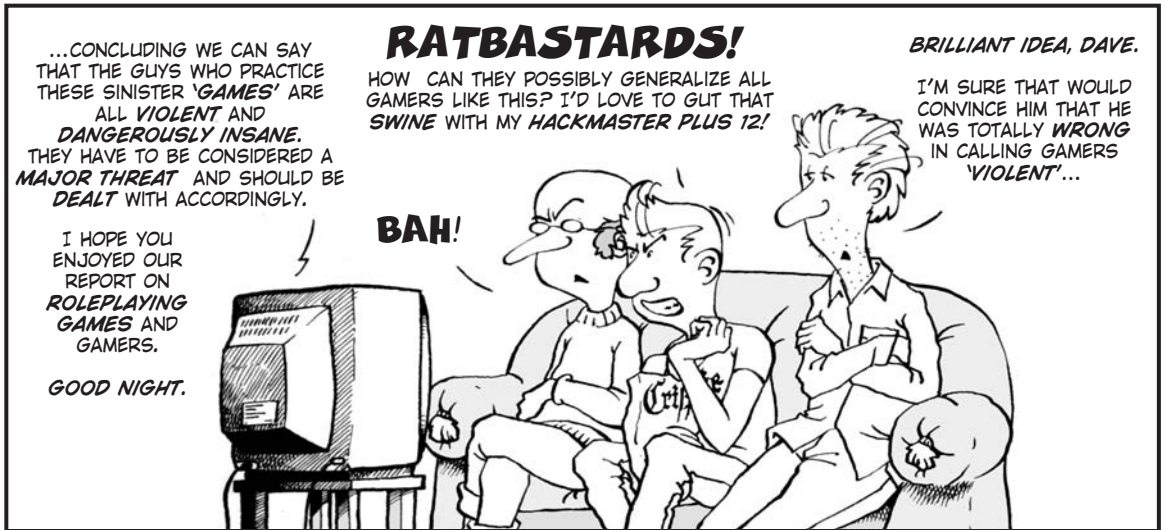


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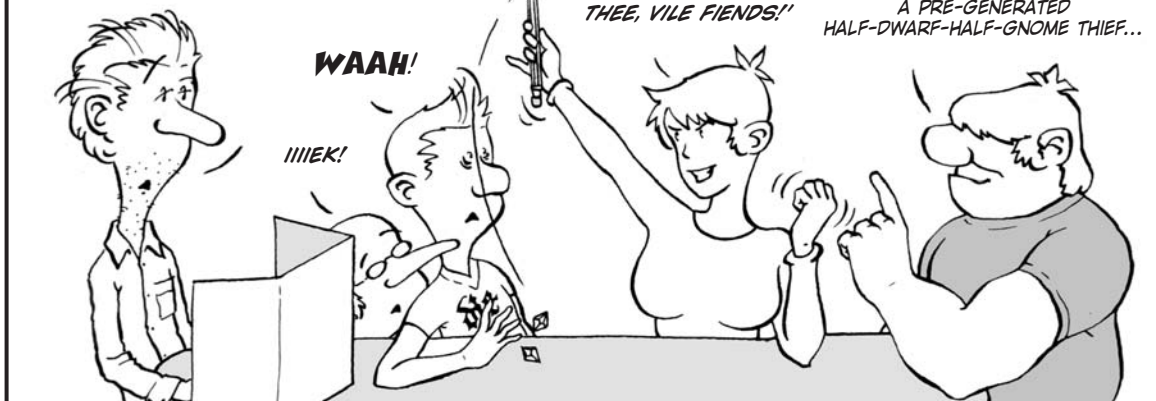


**LATER...**

SARA, YOU GET ANOTHER 150 XP FOR YOUR **EXCELLENT** PERFORMANCE OF **GUDRUN THE PALADIN**. FINE, YOU ARE IN A CUL-DE-SAC AND THE WAY OUT IS BARRED WITH NINE FIERCE FIGHTERS OF **HOUSE TELLPAC**. WHAT ARE YOUR ACTIONS?

**PERFECT!**  
I DRAW STEEL AND SHOUT **'BEGONE WITH THEE, VILE FIENDS!'**

HEY, SARA, YOUR PERFORMANCE REMINDS ME OF **GARYCON 1981** WHERE I HAPPENED TO PLAY A PRE-GENERATED HALF-DWARF-HALF-GNOME THIEF...



SARA JUST ROLE-PLAYS HER CHARACTER **BRILLIANTLY!** LIVE WITH IT AND STOP **TOUCHING** ME, OR I COULD REMEMBER **PETE'S** SYSTEM OF DEMERITS!

I **DEMAND** YOU STOP GIVING HER XPS FOR THIS CRAP!

ENOUGH, **MISSY!** YOU DO THIS AGAIN AND YOU WILL BE **VEEEEERY** SORRY FOR HARASSING US WITH THIS ACTING-NONSENSE. **UNDERSTOOD?!?**

DURING THE WHOLE GAME I SPOKE WITH A **TINY VOICE** AND THE **GM** WAS SO PLEASED, THAT AT THE END OF THE FIRST DAY HE GRANTED ME **1000 XPS** FOR GOOD ROLEPLAYING...



SARA, YOUR **PRAYER** IS HEARD AND YOU GAIN **PLUS 3 STRENGTH** FOR THE BATTLE. THE **TELPACS** CHARGE, CRYING THEIR **BATTLECRY** AS LOUD AS THEY CAN.

WHERE IS MY **TWENTY SIDER OF DOOM?** I ATTACK SARA WITH MY **HACKMASTER PLUS 12!**

I **WASTE** HER WITH MY **CROSSBOW!!!**

**PLEASE, NOBLE GODS,** HEAR YOUR **HUMBLE SERVANT** IN HER HOUR OF NEED! **GRANT ME STRENGTH TO CRUSH MY ENEMIES FOR YOUR GLORY!**

HOWEVER I WANTED MY **GNOME** TO HAVE A LITTLE MORE **FIRE-POWER** AND THUS DECIDED TO MAKE HIM A **SPELL-CASTER**. THEREFORE I SEWED MYSELF A POINTED CAP OUT OF AN OLD **T-SHIRT**, WHICH BROUGHT ANOTHER **1000 XPS**...



-SIGH- I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN. OKAY. **BOB**, YOUR **BOLT** PIERCES **GUDRUN'S** **ARMOR** AND HITS HER HEART. **DAVE**, YOU HIT HER WITH A **DEADLY BLOW** FOR **60 POINTS** OF DAMAGE. **SARA**, ANY LAST WORDS?

**HAR HAR! EAT THIS, MISS ACTOR-QUEEN!**

**A CRIT!** DID YOU SEE THIS? MY **BOLT** WILL **TEACH** YOU TO **INGRATIATE** YOURSELF WITH **B.A.**, **HEHEHE!**

MY THANKS FLY HIGH TO YOUR HOLY REALM, BELOVED GODS! MY SPIRIT WILL HENCEFORTH BE INVINCIBLE AND NOTHING SHALL SHATTER MY STRONG BELIEF IN...

**HUH? GUYS, WHAT...**

AND WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT I REFUSED TO **SHAVE** AS LONG AS I PLAYED MY **GNOME**, HE GRANTED ME THE **500 XP** I NEEDED TO LEARN MY **FIREBALL-SPELL**. -SIGH- THOSE WERE THE DAYS...



**SARA**, THIS IS SO **BEAUTIFUL!** **PAINED** BY YOUR **UNJUST DEATH**, THE **GODS** DECIDE TO **REVIVE** YOU AFTER THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN **DEFEATED** BY THE **OVERWHELMING ENEMY!**

**O DEATH, O DEATH** ROCK ME ASLEEP, BRING ME TO QUIET REST, LET PASS MY **WEARY, GUILTLESS GHOST** OUT OF MY **WOEFUL BREAST**. **TOLL ON THE PASSING BELL**, RING OUT MY **DOLEFUL KNELL**, LET THE **SOUND MY DEATH TELL**, FOR I MUST DIE, FOR I MUST DIE, I DIE...

DEAR GODS, WHAT HAVE I DONE? I AM A **MONSTER!**

**\*SOB\***

**HUH? SARA?**

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?



I TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT **ACTORS!** THEY ARE ALL **VIOLENT** AND **DANGEROUSLY INSANE!**

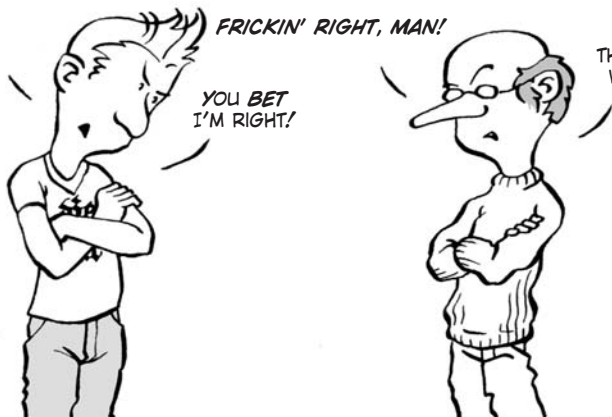
EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM! THEY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A **MAJOR THREAT**, IF YOU WANT MY OPINION!

JUST LOOK WHAT THIS **STUPID ACTING** THING DID TO **POOR SARA!**

**FRICKIN' RIGHT, MAN!**

**YOU BET I'M RIGHT!**

THEY SHOULD BE **DEALT** WITH **ACCORDINGLY!**



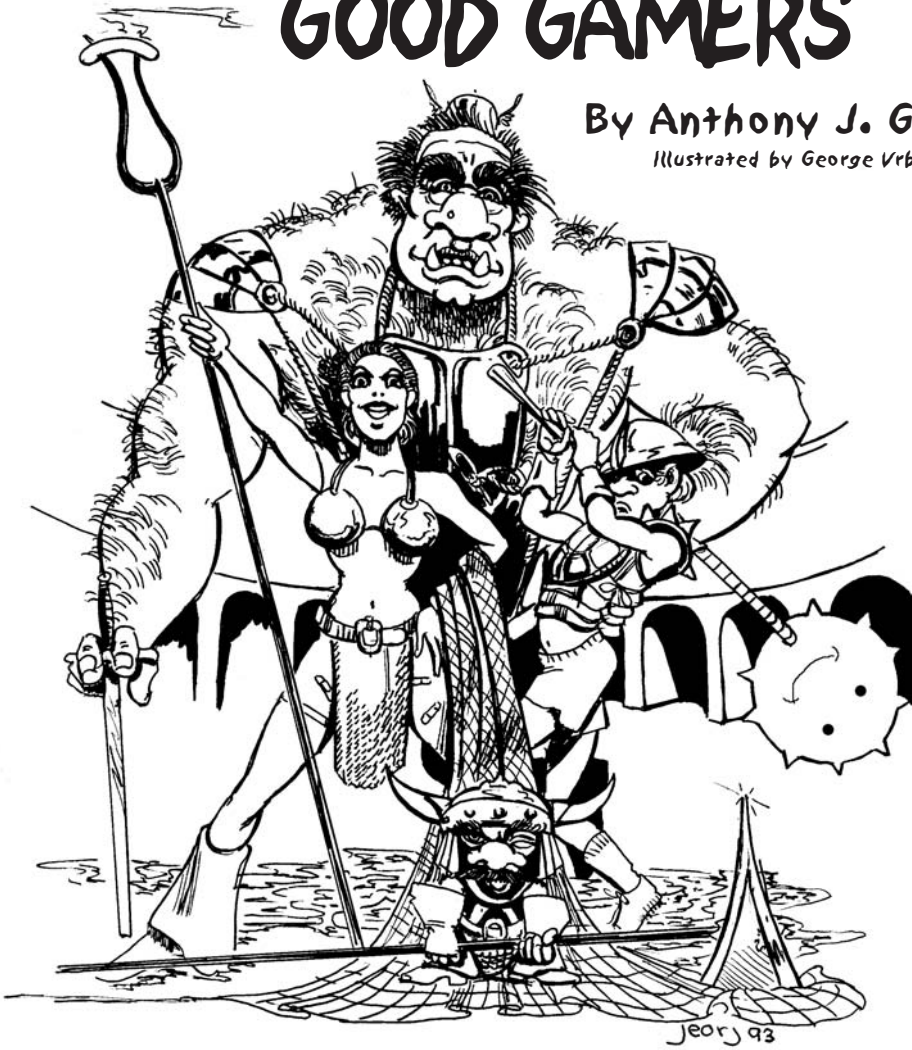


## The Make-Up of Good Referees, Players and Gamers

# GOOD GAMERS

By Anthony J. Gallela

Illustrated by George Urbanic



It has oft been asserted that admirable groups of people have similar characteristics. This belief has led to books like *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. Turning the axiom that successful people share certain traits toward the gaming community yields some interesting results.

It is true that good referees and good players tend to share common traits.

Good referees have concern for others, flexibility, dedication and a sense of drama. Players want to have fun and are *"into the game."*

### REFEREES

If a referee fits in well with her group, and her group likes the way she does things, she doesn't need to pos-

sess any of the following characteristics. There's a symbiotic relationship that transcends all else.

But that's not what we are talking about. What we are talking about is the type of person who most everyone considers a good referee. What qualities does she possess in common with other good referees? Well, I've looked back on my 20 years of roleplaying and have observed that the following traits exist in all good referees:

#### Concern for Others

The most important quality of a good referee is concern for her fellows. In her personal life, this may manifest itself in several ways. She's the type of person others describe as a caring friend. In an RPG, she is attentive to each person's needs. She makes sure that every-

one is involved, and that they are getting what they want out of the game. This is not always a conscious thing for a good referee.

She may be an entertainer and feel the players are her audience. This audience needs to be drawn in and their attention held.

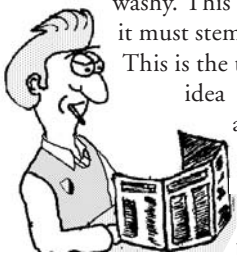
Involving them in the game does this. But even in this instance, her behavior is still a manifestation of a concern for others.

Part of concern for others is fair-mindedness. A good referee is generally thought of as the type who makes fair decisions in her dealings with people.

This, of course, translates well in gaming, as fundamental distinctions need to be made.

### Confidence

A good referee has a strong ego. He delivers his adventures with an assured demeanor; not at all wishy-washy. This can't be a false confidence — it must stem from a consistent worldview.



This is the type of person who has a solid idea about how the world works and is not constantly changing his mind about it. When translated into running a game, he will be firm in the presentation of the scenario — he will stand by his decisions, view of the genre and application of the rules.

Now, let's be clear on something: a good referee is not arrogant. He will not refuse to change his mind when solid evidence is brought to bear on a given issue. Instead, he will see his mistake and have the self-confidence needed to make adjustments without letting his ego get in the way. This often requires a bit of improvisation on the part of the referee.

### Flexibility

Good referees are the types who are adaptable and willing to compromise. They are also able to roll with the punches. Being quick on her feet, a good referee can deal with the inevitable clogs-in-the-works players are so well known for. Players often don't notice the flexibility of a referee; they simply notice that things run smoothly, or that the referee seems to have anticipated their every move. With this trait, a referee doesn't even need to be a good "storyteller." She can often let the players tell the story and rely on her flexibility to help keep up with them. There are two things that help the referee's trait of flexibility: forethought and a sense of drama.

### Dedication

A good game requires an amount of forethought. Forethought requires an amount of dedication. A good referee tends to stick with things and give them the attention they need. In roleplaying, they know the rules, are knowledgeable in the genre and are prepared for the session. It's their trait of dedication that makes them know the rules and the genre and be prepared for the game.

### Sense of Drama

Some people think a good referee needs to be an entertainer; where this can certainly help, it's more basic than that. A good entertainer has several qualities. Some that help in refereeing are wanting to have fun, skill in acting and doing voices — but in an entertainer, all of these qualities are run through the FILTER of drama. Whether it's a comedy or deadly serious game, the PACE of a good referee's adventure gives a SENSE of drama. A good referee does not need to have any of the other skills one might attribute to an entertainer. That's to say he doesn't need to be a good actor or do voices, he simply needs to feel the pace of a game, of a story, and guide the players dramatically.

### PLAYERS

What qualities do good players have in common with each other? I think the list is much shorter and it may be less demanding...

#### Wants to Have Fun

This trait can be seen in all the activities a good player participates in. It's curious to me that not all of the good referees I've known are people who want to have fun in everything they do — but good players are. More than that, they also want others to have fun.

#### Into Their Character and the Game

One would hope that if someone were not into their character or the game, they would do something about it. This, as we know, is not always the case. A good player does do something about it. Now, you could argue that this is really just their "wanting-to-have-fun" trait coming out. A good player will create a character they will have fun with. They will also play in a way that gains them enjoyment. I've included it separately because not everyone who WANTS to have fun is the type to MAKE SURE they do. A good player will influence the game, make their needs known and make sure the game is enjoyable.

### GAMERS

So, what makes an all around good gamer? Wanting to have fun, and wanting the same for others. The key ingredient for a good referee is concern for others. The key for a good player is wanting to have fun. The combination of the two makes for a good all-around gamer.

Take a look at the good referees, players and gamers you've known in your life. I think you'll agree they have the qualities I've suggested. The rest of us should not despair. All of these traits can be learned — you don't have to "be born with them." Emulate good gamers and you'll become one.

*Anthony J. Gallela is a partner in Backstage Press, a producer of ManaFest, a freelance writer, a game designer, and a creative consultant. (He's also a Virgo and likes Ska music.) □*



# The Shields of Bandran

DAY

ON ENTERING THE CITY-STATE OF P'BAPAR, POSEN, LORALE AND GAREN TURN OVER THEIR PLAYED-OUT STEEDS AND HASTILY MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE STREETS.

AS A GUEST OF HIS ALLY, E'DOS, ARCHDUKE OF NEIGHBORING P'BAPAR, PRINCE KIRASI AND HIS MOST TRUSTED ADVISERS DISCUSS RENEWING THE TWO DUCHIES' DIPLOMATIC ALLIANCE.

YES, YES. THIS AMENDMENT TO OUR TREATY IS BENEFICIAL TO BOTH DUCHIES. ONCE I AM CROWNED, I WILL SEE THAT IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT IMMEDIATELY.

SIRE, MY SINCERE AND HUMBLEST APOLOGIES FOR THE INTRUSION.



DAVID DAY



WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS OUTBURST?

FORGIVE US MY PRINCE, BUT WE HAIL FROM THE RED TOWER.



AHHH, MY VILNA GUARDS. AND HOW IS OUR DEAR BARON ORSEN?



I AM SORRY TO REPORT THAT BARON ORSEN HAS FALLEN!



THE RED TOWER NO LONGER STANDS!



WE THREE ARE ALL THAT REMAIN OF THE VILNA GUARDS!



WE HAVE COME TO COMPLETE OUR MISSION.

TO DELIVER TO YOU THE SACRED SEALS OF LIDA.



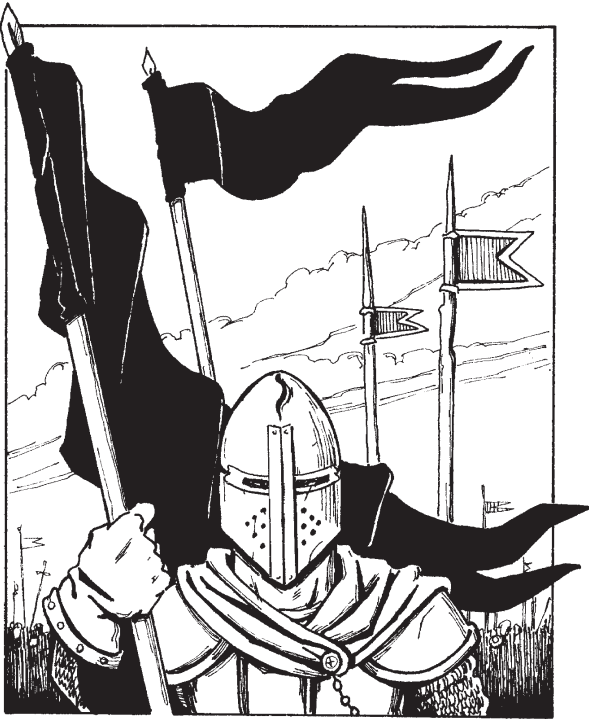
BUT WE WERE INFORMED THAT THE VILNA GUARDS WERE LEISURELY MARCHING HERE TO ESCORT ME BACK TO BANDRAN FOR MY CORONATION. - HOW WERE WE KEPT IN THE DARK OVER YOUR SITUATION?

BECAUSE HOBGOBLINS HAVE SEVERED THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION, AND SOME ARE WITHIN TWO DAYS' RIDE FROM THIS VERY CITY.



CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

authored by the KODT Development Team of Jolly, Brian, David & Steve



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**-The Brood boyz**



"WHAT DELIGHTFUL FELLOWS! LOCUST IS SO AMUSING, I ALMOST FORGOT HE BANISHED ME TO THE LAND OF SHADOWS TO SUFFER FOR ETERNITY!"

**-The Oni King**

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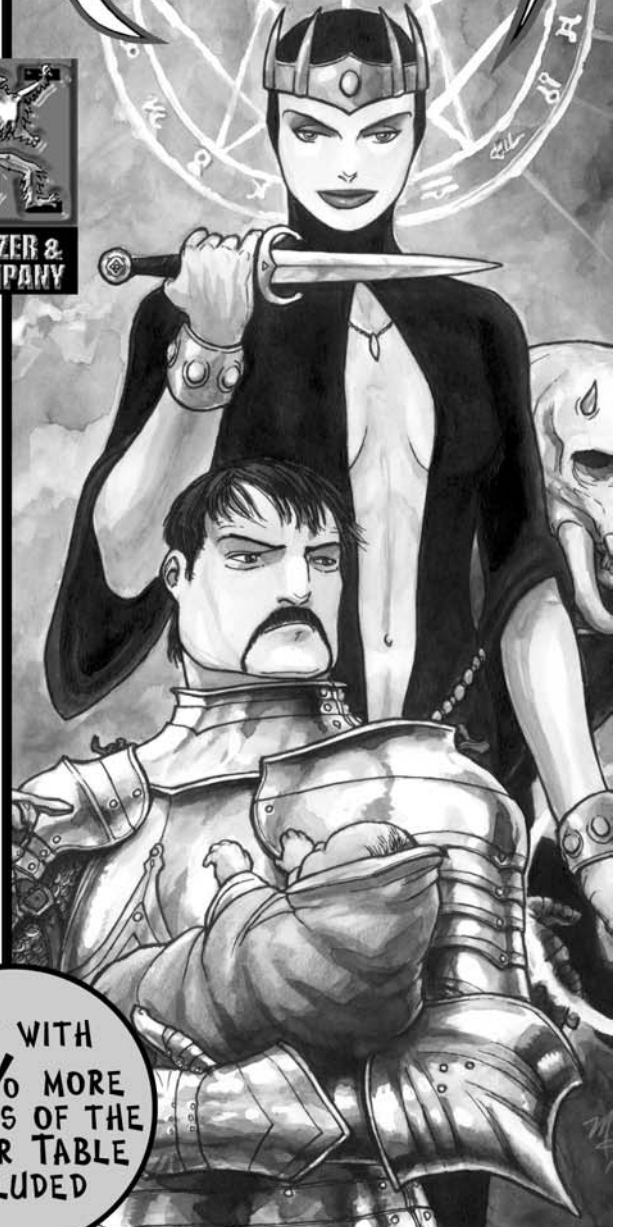


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# Exploring Cthulhu's cyclopean web

Kenneth Newquist

**C**THULHU is an immense, mind-numbingly terrifying monstrosity that can strip humans of their sanity with just a glance. And that's pretty much how most folks would describe the Web at one time or another.

Fortunately, just as a few souls are willing to brave the pages of the *Necromancicon* learn more about the *Great Old One*, there are a few of us willing to plunge through the depths of the Web for nuggets of information. With this column I'm hoping to bring some of those nuggets to the surface, highlighting resources for gamers and by gamers. I'm looking for sites that make game master's lives easier, provide more background for players and showcase cool stuff that people have done in their games.

Since I'm gearing up to launch a 1920s **Call of Cthulhu™** campaign, I figured I'd start with the big "C".

## READER'S GUIDE TO THE CTHULHU MYTHOS

One of the best sites I found was Edward Berglund's **Reader's Guide to the Cthulhu Mythos**. Fans of Chaosium's CoC RPG can find dozens of links to game-related write-ups, utilities, and scenarios.

Lovecraftian addicts can find even more resources, including bibliographies, indexes and more. The site also includes **Nightscares**, a regularly published mythos webzine.

The guide's pages can be a little hard on the eyes and its sprawling nature makes it an easy metaphor for **Miskatonic University's** own rambling stacks of mythos material. But while it's not pretty, the **Reader's Guide** is one of the most comprehensive on the Web.

## MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY

Folks hoping to make babbling incomprehensibly and drooling profusely their life's work should consider applying to **Miskatonic University**. The site for the fictional university has a nice clean look, and offers the links you'd expect to find on a real university site -- admissions, research, background, etc. The best part is the "*Pickman Art Institute*" exhibit called **Propping up the Mythos**. It offers tutorials on how to create props for your next CoC game and it's a truly excellent resource. Not so excellent are the site's occasional dead link and incomplete sections, but the site is off to a good start.

## CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CTHULHU

Anyone interested in bringing the *Great Old Ones* to their own institute of higher learning should check out the **Campus Crusade for Cthulhu**. The site offers suggestions on what to do with enemies of the state ("*they will all be eaten*"), how to spot *Cthulhoids* (actual question: "*Did it need to tear the roofwalls off the building to get into the room?*") and more. It's an excellent release for keepers who've run one too many sessions or are starting to think their cat is a *Servitor of the Outer Gods*.

## DELTA GREEN

Adding a modern feel (and a lot more fire power) to Cthulhu is *Pagan Publishing's* **Delta Green** Web site. The site supports the CoC RPG books of the same name, in which a rogue government agency fights cyclopean evils.

The site rarely breaks character as it chronicles the adventures of **Delta Green** and offers up summaries, links and graphics that will help anyone running a modern horror game.

## CALL OF CTHULHU HOME PAGE

And finally there's Chaosium's own **Call of Cthulhu** RPG home page. It's not nearly as impressive as **Delta Green's**, but it does have a few resources worth noting. Visitors can find links to current projects, a few adventure and character sheet downloads, and a number of good (*and accurate*) mythos links.

## THE DARK GULF OF N'KAI

I was surprised how many CoC campaign Web sites have succumbed to the soul-numbing effects of entropy. One that hasn't is **The Dark Gulf of N'kai**. It's has an excellent look to it and some nice extras like spells and house rules, but its saga section is "*under construction.*" (*or at least it was*).

Like much of the Web, searching for Cthulhu-related items is hit and miss, but these sites prove that there are excellent resources out there to be found ... if you're willing to look.

### READER'S GUIDE TO THE CTHULHU MYTHOS

<http://www.toddalan.com/~berglund>

### MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY

<http://www.miskatonic.net/>

### CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CTHULHU

<http://www.locksley.com/cthulhu/>

### DELTA GREEN

<http://www.delta-green.com>

### CHAOSIUM: CALL OF CTHULHU

<http://www.chaosium.com/cthulhu>

### THE DARK GULF OF N'KAI

[http://members.xoom.com/eggo\\_v\\_eggo/nkai.html](http://members.xoom.com/eggo_v_eggo/nkai.html)

Editor's Note: Summon Web-Scryer is the newest addition to the magazine's line up. Each month Kenneth Newquist will be searching the vast expanse of the web to track down strange locales of interest to gamers and sharing them here. If you wish to aid his quest, E-mail your suggestions to [gamevine@aol.com](mailto:gamevine@aol.com)

□

# A Look at the Fantasy Short Fiction Market

by John O'Neill

I think Stephen King said it best in the introduction to his collection, **Nightmares and Dreamscapes**: if reading a novel is like a long and satisfying affair, then a short story is a kiss in the dark from a stranger. And if you're tired of the cold embrace of the latest never-ending fantasy saga, you might just be in the mood for a quick smooch from an exotic beauty.

Some of the most famous fantasy fiction ever crafted originally appeared in fantasy magazines -- including, for example, virtually all of the original **Conan** tales by Robert E. Howard, the classic **Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser** stories by Fritz Leiber, and many others. The tradition of the great fantasy mags is being carried on today, although you may have to hunt a bit to find them. In this month's article I'll have a look at the best fantasy magazines for the discriminating gamer, and fill you in on how to locate a copy or two.

## To the Dark Side

Dark fantasy -- stuff that borders on horror, from trendy vampire fiction to the short work of Stephen King -- has fallen in and out of favour over the last few decades. But there are a small number of terrific publications keeping the tradition of the creepy tale very much alive, and they're all worth your attention.



My current favourite of the bunch is **Weird Tales**, published by DNA Publications (see their website at [www.sfsite.com/dnaweb/WTcurr.htm](http://www.sfsite.com/dnaweb/WTcurr.htm) for subscription info). In the 1930's **Weird Tales** published the original **Conan** tales, H.P. Lovecraft's famous **Cthulhu** yarns, and many more. Current editor Darrell Schweitzer -- a fantasy author of some note himself -- has kept up the pace admirably with a smorgasbord of satisfying fiction from such authors as Thomas Ligotti, Ian Watson, Tanith Lee, Ramsey Campbell, and many others. It's probably the best place to find

what used to be called "heroic fantasy" -- tales of swords & sorcery from some of the most talented writers in the business. But **WT** also offers a fine blend of fiction in the tradition of such authors as Clark Ashton Smith -- tales of decadent civilizations, ancient sorceries, and **Times and Places Which Never Were**. If it weren't for **Weird Tales**, most of these odd pieces would never see print, which would be a real shame. As it did decades ago, **WT** is laying the groundwork for the future classics of the genre.

A little further out on the horror limb is **Cemetery Dance** (at [www.cemeterydance.com](http://www.cemeterydance.com)), edited by Richard Chizmar. **Cemetery Dance** is in fact the best way to keep in tune with what's going on in horror and dark fantasy in general, with a wide assortment of columns, interviews and reviews covering the field in books, movies and etc. Tyson Blue's column "Needful Kings & Other Things," specializing exclusively in upcoming material from genre titans Stephen King, Dean Koontz and the like, is one of the most popular features. But the real draw here is the fiction. Over the last few years **CD** has published tales from Peter Straub, Stephen King, Joe R. Lansdale, F.Paul Wilson, Dennis Etchison, Poppy Z. Brite and numerous others.

**CD** doesn't pull any punches with its content -- it's aimed squarely at an adult audience -- and is often a tough find at your local bookstore, but it's well worth the extra effort.

Another small press magazine I've been extremely impressed with recently is **TaleBones** ([www.fairwoodpress.com](http://www.fairwoodpress.com)), edited by Patrick and Honna Swenson. Casting a wider net than either **Weird Tales** or **Cemetery Dance**, **TaleBones** offers its readers a diverse selection of fantastic literature -- including science fiction, ghost stories, dark fantasy, and a lot of territory in between. By its very nature **TaleBones** tends to be a little less commercial than the competition, meaning its authors are free to take a



few more risks. And in the field of fantasy literature, risky fiction is often where the action is.

Like **Cemetery Dance** above, **TaleBones** is fairly adult in content, and finding it at your local magazine rack is iffy. The best bet is to subscribe.



## Taking the High Road

High fantasy is the other big genre category -- an artificial division if I ever saw one, but who I am to argue with legions of marketing experts. "High fantasy" is usually reserved for epics of court intrigue and grand scale, as opposed to doughty barbarians with a thyroid condition (*in other words, Tolkien and Terry Brooks, not Robert E. Howard or Michael Moorcock*).

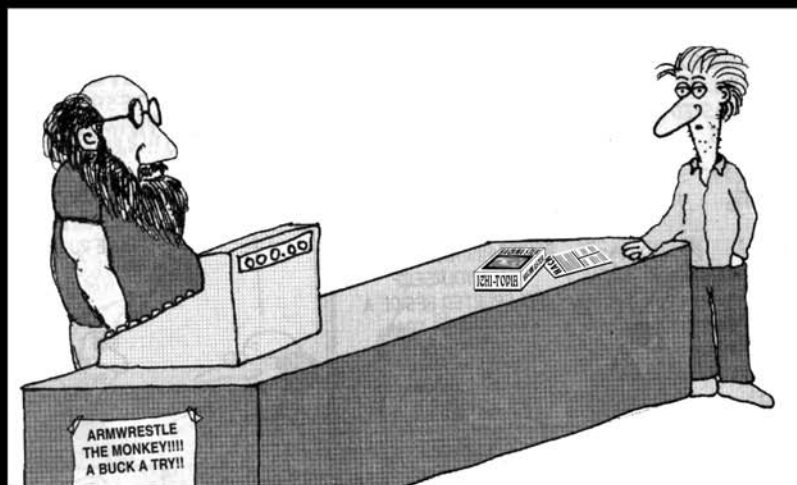
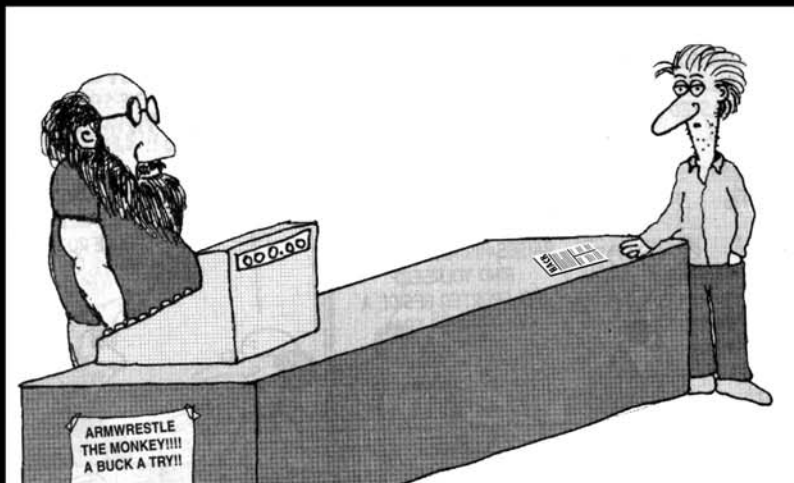
While high fantasy is the hottest selling commodity on the shelves these days -- witness the forest-clearing success of Robert Jordan, David Eddings, George R.R. Martin, just to name a few -- it's less well represented in the magazine stands. **Realms of Fantasy** (published by *Sovereign Media*, with no website -- *what are they thinking?*) is the most popular zine in this territory, and deservedly so. It's also the most well-produced publication in this survey, with glossy pages, gorgeous color interiors, consistently good cover art, and high editorial standards. In addition to top-notch fiction **Realms** also includes a lot of media coverage, everything from movies to books to collectible art cards. It also has excellent distribution -- relatively speaking, anyway -- so it's easy to pick up a sample copy. **Realms of Fantasy** is edited by Shawna McCarthy.

Marion Zimmer Bradley's **Fantasy Magazine** ([www.mzbfm.com](http://www.mzbfm.com)) has a slightly lower circulation, and is a little more specialized in its fiction, but is still a great find when you can get it. The late Marion Zimmer Bradley was the

continued on page 49

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**THERE ARE SOME THINGS MONEY CAN'T  
BUY, FOR EVERYTHING ELSE THERE'S MOM'S**

*HackMasterCharge*

# THE TALKING STICK

by Paul Sillanpaa

I just wanted to tell you about one of my more interesting gaming experiences in hopes that you might find something in it with which to torment the **Knights**. This happened a few years back when I was playing **AD&D** with a bunch of guys out in Hull.

It was generally a pretty civilized group (*in that none of our arguments ever broke down into all-out brawls*) but it was a very loud one. At any given time there would typically be at least two conversations/disputes/arguments/shouting matches going on that had nothing whatsoever to do with the game. Needless to say our DM, a guy named Dominic, was very frustrated (*he was one of those guys who likes order*). So one day he decided to try and enforce a rule against talking out of turn, and to accomplish this he brought in "**The Talking Stick!**"

Basically the idea was that no one (*except the DM*) could speak unless he or she was holding *The Talking Stick* (*which was actually a wooden spoon from the kitchen*). Anybody who spoke out of turn would be penalized in experience points. This, he hoped, would help streamline play. At first we all laughed at this, but then he started rolling dice and deducting experience, which shut us up pretty quickly. For a while it seemed that we were doomed to play out our AD&D campaigns in nice, orderly silence. But you can't keep a good bunch of lads down for long, and we soon found a way to turn the vile stick against its

master.

The solution was this: We used *The Talking Stick* for everything. When Dominic asked us if we understood a particular detail, we all solemnly passed *The Talking Stick* around, each waiting until we had it firmly in hand before declaring "Yes." It quickly became standard practice to pick up the stick for every single utterance, including "Uh-huh" and "Hm-m-m-m-m," and since each one of us had to wait his turn, we ended up wasting a LOT more time than usual on totally trivial things. On top of this, it became standard practice when one wanted *The Talking Stick*, to express his want by gesturing wildly at the stick and grunting like an ape in heat (*grunting isn't talking after all*). This became particularly frustrating when one of us would go completely nuts trying to get the stick passed to him only say something completely pointless (*such as "That's cool" or "Well I'm out of ideas"*) when he got it. I'm proud to say that I provided the grand finale when (*after some frantic gesturing*) I seized *The Talking Stick* for the purpose of letting out a long, rattling belch. At this point the whole table broke down laughing and Dominic returned *The Talking Stick* to its rightful place in the kitchen where it remains to this day.

Which was just as well since our next plan was to have all five Players grab the spoon at once (*it was long enough*) and start talking as usual. □

## THE KOBOLD WHO WOULDN'T DIE

by James Booth

The other night when playing with our regular group our party cleric decided he was going to jump in the action and "get him some" when we ran up against some lowly kobolds.

Normally one to sit in the middle of the pack, "Mike" (*that's really his cleric's name, and a whole 'nother story*) decided that he'd "whup up on some kobold wussies" so he could get some extra X.P.'s. Well, after three rounds, we had laid waste to the 20 plus kobolds - except the one "Mike" was in mortal combat with.

We announced we were going to rush over to kill the kobold, but Mike (*the player character of "Mike"*) shouted us off - "*Back off, losers, this is my battle! You're not taking my X.P.'s!*"

We happily left Mike to his kobold and went about looting and searching bodies.

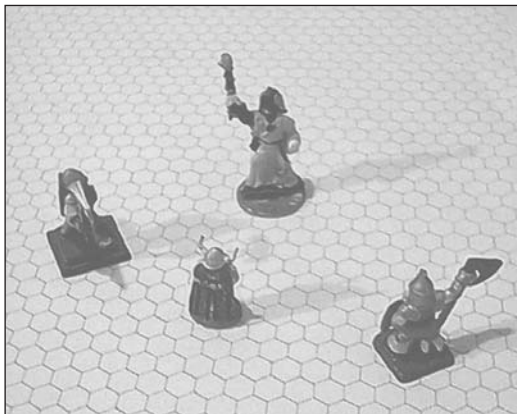
Ten rounds later, when Mike still hadn't even rolled a hit (*needing an 11 or better to hit*) and had taken an unlucky critical hit, he called the party mage to off the kobold with a magic missile.

We proceeded to make fun of both Mike the player and "Mike" the character saying such things as "*Dude, you just got wuss-slapped by a kobold!*" and

*"You need to pray to your god and see if he can do something about you being such a wuss" -*

Suddenly, Mike, who had been studying the dice which had failed, stood up and threw the dice in disgust.

Turns out he had been rolling a twenty shaped dice that went up to 10 twice!!!! □



Mike the cleric fending off the Kobold onslaught



# The Origins of Gaming

By Rick Moscatello

Way back when, this dude named *Darwin* hopped a boat and went someplace that was isolated from the mainland he knew. There, he saw many fascinating new creatures, and touched upon the foundations of the notion of evolution.

Could this concept apply to gaming? It's easy to believe it doesn't, since it's so hard to conceive of games the likes of which you've never seen. But, it's true. As anyone who's ever played *Settlers of Catan* (a fine board game from Germany) will tell you, European gamers seem to have different notions of how to make a game. The same, apparently, is true of computer gaming as well.

**1602 A.D.** is the latest "amazing hit from Europe" to find its way onto the stack of computer games beside my computer. The basic premise of the game is it's 1602, and you're leading colonists to an island in the New World. Once there, your goal is to build up your island, producing an ever more-varied assortment of commodities to keep your people happy. Unfortunately, there are several other groups of colonists out to do the same thing.

With that description, a first guess is this is going to be a lot like **Imperialism**, or maybe **Colonization**. Well, uh, no, it isn't. The big difference, among many, is that the game is in real time, in fact the game even bills itself as "real time strategy".

Real time strategy? Now one has to think of **StarCraft**, **Command & Conquer**, or any of a dozen other clones. And, once again, the similarities just aren't there. **1602 A.D.** is a new beast entirely, one that, apparently, comes from a place different from the computer games we Americans are familiar with.

Top-selling games in Europe often don't do well here, most importantly because the instruction manual is poorly translated. Alas, **1602 A.D.** holds to this paradigm, as the manual only just barely tells you enough to get by, with very little of the strategic advice that would make the game so much easier to learn. A quick run to the 'Net for tips was fruitless for me—the game is known as "**Anno 1602**" in the old world, and I don't speak nearly enough German (at least, I *\*think\* that's the language*) to translate whatever wisdom the fan sites have to say. At least the manual has the basics, and by putting the game in "Easy" mode things were forgiving enough.

So, after muddling through the tutorials, I fire up the game, explore an island worth settling, and commence to building up my city. And then it hits me, this game is mostly like **SimCity!** You have to lay out your roads in advance, in preparation for the needs of your citizens as your colony grows. There are even options to build ornamental trees and "squares", and, since these, as near as I can tell, serve no functional

purpose beyond decoration, the parallel holds. The game is **SimCity**, but with a renaissance flair. The scope is a bit bigger than just the city, as to satisfy your people's needs for cloth you'll need to set up sheep farms, and then weavers to, well, weave the wool. Then you set up a marketplace and roads on top of that! As the city improves, you'll need a tailor to make clothes. Similarly, you'll need cattle farms and butchers, tobacco farms and cigar factories, and more, and more, and more. The sheer variety of commodities is amazing, and takes a bit of experience (especially since the manual offers no help) to set up things so that you'll have what you need more or less when you need it. There are certainly no "American" games that come close to this level of trade complexity (with the closest being **Capitalism**, a rather cool game that you might yet find in the discount rack or as shareware).

No matter how well you plan, you'll almost certainly need to trade with your neighbors for some commodities, and, mercifully, this is easily accomplished. Just sail your ship over to their dock, pick up what they have to sell, pray that they're buying whatever you have, and head back to your harbor. There's even a way to automate the trade routes, although it takes a good reading of the manual to do it.

You'll spend several hours just building up your city before you can even consider engaging in anything remotely military—show me a real time strategy game where there's no way to launch an attack in the first hour!

Combat is different for another reason—there's very little of the "build up a massive army and assault" tactics. There are only 4 different land military unit types, and 2 different naval military unit types. There's none of the "research" stuff that is in every single "normal" RTS. If you've managed to accumulate the resources to build cannons, then, by Gawd, you can build cannons. The notion of being able to research and implement new technology in 60 seconds always kind of irked me, anyway.

There are no veteran units, special units for each country, or any of the bells and whistles of other games. Just one group of muskets, swords, cavalry, and cannon, against another, and, as near as I can tell, the larger army will tend to win—and "large" means an army of perhaps 8 units.

So, after several games, I'm still not sure if **1602 A.D.** is a good game. I'm still not sure what kind of game it is. All I can say is, if you're in the mood for something different, check it out, although it might not be for everyone.

I still find myself playing too much **Asheron's Call**. It's funny how poorly designed this game is. The most amazing thing about the game is, it has so

MANY design flaws, they all cancel out.

One of the major flaws in the game is sword-swingers are at a hideous disadvantage. They can't compete with war mages for damage dealing—but magic costs twice as many skill points to learn. They can't compete with archers for damage dealing, either, although sword skill costs as much as bow skill.

The final humiliation is they can't compete with unarmed fighters. There's nothing more annoying than seeing some boxer come up and punch out a gigantic golem before you can even take a swing with the artifact sword you went on a major quest to achieve (*not that it does as much damage as a decent bow or spell*). So, while you can't really be a good swordsman and successful in the game, thanks to the flurry of other flaws, there are still plenty of choices.

I wrote last time about how enchanters got the short end of the stick; they did, although I found a flaw in the game that lets me have infinite mana — when your spellcasting power increases 2500%, things look really good no matter what else is going on! That's my big secret for the game — figure out which gaping hole in the rules you want to exploit, and go for it full tilt.

Unfortunately, the designers are trying to fix their game in progress. I'm still amazed that they didn't notice the above mistakes in the months of playtesting they did, in addition to a half dozen other major boners I'm not up to

pointing out here, and a few score minor ones as well. I do have to give them credit for trying to fix the problem now, when all the dungeons are packed with archers and boxers.

Why aren't war mages in the dungeons? Well, last month they sort of fixed that mistake, making mages somewhat weaker. On the one hand, I'm all for balancing the game, but I really do feel for all the players who were screwed over when they “nerfed” (*slang for when something's power is reduced*) the mages.

Next on their agenda is nerfing the boxers and the archers. They learned from the justified complaining of the mage players, and are planning on merely increasing the fighting prowess of the other classes, but the end result will be the same.

Actually, there will be an added benefit to making the other classes more powerful. After 3 months, I can pretty much go wherever I want, alone, whenever I want, and kill almost everything in the game. I think this is an advantage over other online games — I can stop playing now and claim to have seen almost the entire game. If they do make the other classes more powerful, things will become even easier.

So, even with all the flaws, *Asheron's Call* is still the best online game, if for no other that you can actually “finish” it in a sane amount of time. If you have the money to pay \$49 for the game, and another \$10 a month for 3 more months, it's a worthy deal. □

## Book Review: continued from page 45

author of numerous popular fantasy novels, and is best remembered for her Darkover series. In many respects the magazine still reflects her style of writing -- high literary standards, strong characterization, and a love of romance. MZBFM isn't all unicorns and elves -- there are a surprising number of strong stories which cross genres within its pages, and it's well worth your attention.

## Mainstream

Mainstream means little when you're talking about fantasy, but in terms of the fiction market it's easier to describe: those publication which avoid any of the particular sub-genres. And here at the core of the field we find two of the finest zines the industry has to offer: *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* and



Asimov's Science Fiction.

F&SF (*subscription info at [www.sfsite.com/fsf](http://www.sfsite.com/fsf)*), edited by Gordon van Gelder, is the longest running and most distinguished periodical in the field of modern fantasy. Founded in 1949, it has published some of the most famous fantasy of the last half century -- including Daniel Keyes “*Flowers for Algernon*,” Walter M. Miller's “*A Canticle for Leibowitz*,” *Starship Troopers* by Robert A. Heinlein, Fritz Leiber's first tale of Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser, “*Ill Met in Lankmar*,” Harlan Ellison's “*Jeffy is Five*,” Stephen King's *Dark Tower* series, and much, much more.

Today F&SF continues this rich tradition. If you can only afford to subscribe to one magazine on this list, F&SF is the one to pick.

Your other sure choice is *Asimov's Science Fiction*, edited by genre stalwart Gardner Dozois ([www.asimovs.com](http://www.asimovs.com)).

True, *Asimov's* publishes primarily science fiction, but let's overlook that for the moment. Dozois has demonstrated an admirable weakness for the fanciful tale and -- most especially -- the literate fantasy. With terrific work each month from such authors as Ursula K. Le Guin, Michael Swanwick, Robert Reed, Harry Turtledove, and Robert Silverberg, there's more than enough here to keep the hard-core fantasy fan satisfied.

## Web Resources

If your leisure reading time is primarily limited to moments at your computer when the boss is looking the other way, you can still enjoy some of the best that the fantasy field has to offer. Most of the above magazines are hosted online at the SF Site ([www.sfsite.com](http://www.sfsite.com)), with story excerpts, news, editorials, and more. As we approach the awards season, many of the magazines have begun posting their finest stories from the past year in their entirety for the benefit of voters.

And lastly, for a general overview of what's on the shelves each month, drop by FictionHome ([www.fictionhome.com](http://www.fictionhome.com)), which provides summaries and links to all the major SF and fantasy magazines on the market. You're sure to find something you like.

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□

# News, Rumors and Industry Buzz plucked



**SEND YOUR NEWS  
ITEMS TO  
GAMEVINE@AOL.COM**

## \$500 REWARD FOR RETURN OF ESCAPED INTERN



Kenzer and Company is offering a \$500 reward for any information leading to the apprehension of an intern who fled from a training seminar.

Fitz Mulligan, (pictured above) a 46-year-old unemployed pipe fitter from Hammond, Ind. was participating in an Intern Confidence Seminar as part of the training/indoctrination all new interns are required to complete before being assigned duties at the home office.

Steve Johansson, who was conducting the seminar says, "We were working on teamwork skills here at my house, which involved ripping out the floorboards in my bathroom and putting in some glazed terra cotta tiles. I sent Fitz out to the tool shed to get more grout but he never returned."

Upon learning of the escape, Dave Kenzer was justifiably angry. "It hurts! Ya know? We bring these guys in and try to teach them something and look how we're repayed!"

Despite the recent rash of escapes, Kenzer and Company plans on continuing its Intern Program.

"We're gonna invest in some good chain link fence" commented Jolly Blackburn.

"That's right!" agreed, Brian Jelke, "They've got to learn you can't QUIT the Program." □

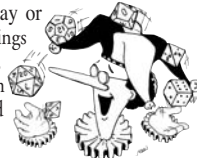
## INDUSTRY NEWS COLUMNIST(S) NEEDED



Knights of the Dinner Table Magazine will be undergoing some dramatic changes in the coming year. One of those changes is to be a dedicated and more comprehensive industry news column. Alas, the KenzerCo staff has faced reality. We are simply too busy and strung out to handle the chore of gathering such material from month to month and do the column justice. That's why we're looking for someone to head up GameVine. Do you know the ins and outs of the gaming industry? Are you handy with a webbrowser and have a nose for news? Well maybe you're the person we've been looking for. (And hey, we're willing to pay in real cash). Email jollyrb@aol.com if you're interested in the job.

## JOIN THE FUN AND MAYHEM!

That's right. Working on KODT is like a big freakin' party! The fun never stops around here. Really! It's like every day is a Saturday or something. And we want to share that FUN! Got ideas for things like cartoons, articles on gaming, adventures, industry news, reviews, etc.? And we just raised our rates - among the highest in the industry. Hoody Hoo! Well, quit playing with those dice and drop an e-mail for our guidelines to: KenzerCo@aol.com.



## KODT PEWTER MINIATURES NOW AVAILABLE IN STORES.



After months of litigation and self-doubt, Atlantis Miniatures and Kenzer and Company are pleased to announce that the Knights of the Dinner Table miniatures are now available at game and comic stores everywhere.

The six-figure set is cast in pewter (Not just pewter but "Eating grade Pewter") Pewter, incidentally, is an alloy composed of 97.5% tin, 1.5 % zinc, 1% copper and .5% silver. Mmmmm- tasty!

According to Hal McKinney of Atlantis (the company, not the lost city of legend), "We had planned to do this sooner but we discovered our first batch of the figs contained, 'Chenerobolinium' which is a kind of hyper tech alloy composed of 'Toxic Waste' and 'Plutonium 287' along with trace elements of radioactive arsenic. We were really surprised when we discovered our mistake and promptly buried our entire inventory at a non-disclosed off shore site"

Hal went on to say, "For those who bought the contaminated figs there is NO need for alarm. The stuff is extremely safe, unless ingested, inhaled, or somehow it comes into contact with unprotected skin."

Interest in the figures has been so great that there are plans to follow up with a Black Hands set for a GenCon '00 release. □

## HOMEBREWED KODT WEB SITES

- <http://www.hoodyhoo.com> — Here, you'll find some kewl animated KODT cartoons.
- <http://pages.infinite.net/kodt/kodt.htm> — A KODT web site with lot of stuff to see
- [http://members.tripod.com/~mythical\\_ventures/kodt](http://members.tripod.com/~mythical_ventures/kodt) — A Dedicated Weird Pete Fan Page
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from the vine for your reading enjoyment

## KNIGHTS OF THE DINNER TABLE ILLUSTRATED

What madness is this? Your favorite KODT strips illustrated? That's right - readers have been asking for years to see a comic based on the characters Bob, Dave, Sara and Brian run in B.A.'s campaign.

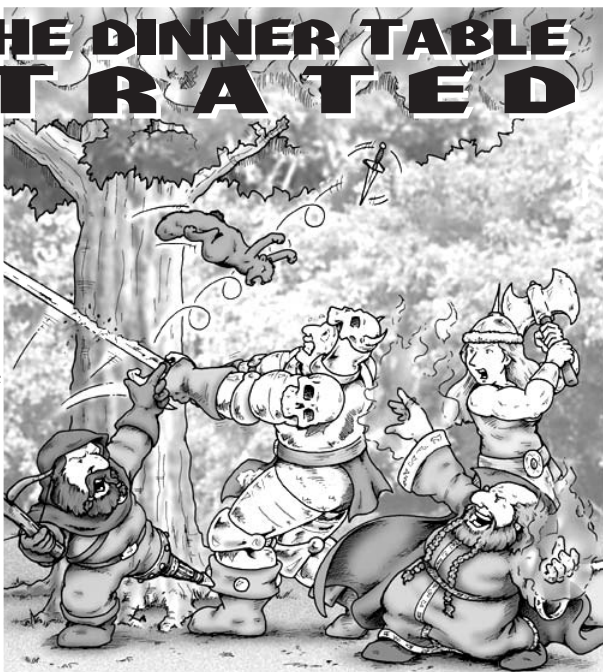
It's an idea that's way past due — the bad boys of Garweeze Wurd now have their own series, *Knights of the Dinner Table: Illustrated*.

Now you can actually watch as the fireballs explode over friend and foe alike. View the absolute hackfest that haunts Zayre's every waking moment. Know the bitter anger of a dwarf with only one leg. And Hack, the impossible Hack, with an insanely large sword.

Coming in June, *The Knights of the Dinner Table* get a new look courtesy of the KODT development team and fan favorite Aaron "Nodwick" Williams.

Each issue of *Knights of the Dinner Table: Illustrated* will re-tell, and expand upon, adventures that the Knights have experienced in the original KODT strips. Some stories will follow along with their counterpart, offering a new look at the same situations. Other stories will go beyond the pages of KODT, a kind of "behind the scenes" look, that will help further expand the adventures of B.A. Felton's warped mind.

Faced with ravenous fans who simply cannot get enough *Knights*, the Kenzer Krew hopes to satiate them with *Knights Illustrated* and put an end to their incessant wining and begging. So be sure to ask your favorite game/comic shop to order a copy or two for you and join us for some wild and hilarious adventures, new and old, from the flip side of the GM's screen. Hoody...freaking...hoo. [Contact Information: [kenzerco@aol.com](mailto:kenzerco@aol.com)] □



## KenzerCo goes Bigtime

(Well, we got off our duff and finally snagged a real URL)

Check out Kenzer and Company on the web at [www.kenzerco.com](http://www.kenzerco.com)

*Drop on by and let us know what else you'd like to see!*



- Warner Brothers has ordered 22 new episodes of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel* for next season. Creator Joss Whedon will be more involved with the writing on *Angel*, before concentrating on *Buffy* later in the summer.
- HBO is developing *Creature Features*, a series of 5 films inspired by 1950s monster movies.
- Wes Bentley (*American Beauty*) is slated to play the lead role of the vampire Lestat in Warner Brother's adaptation of Anne Rice's *Queen of the Damned*.
- TouchStone Pictures has acquired the feature film rights to the '80s TV series *Greatest American Hero*.
- Oliver Stone is hoping to direct Nicolas Cage in the revived *Superman* feature film. The new script, drafted by Bill Wisher (*Terminator 2*, *Judge Dredd*) is described as being "more *MATRIX*-like."
- Jamie Lee Curtis has agreed to play the role of Sara Felton in the upcoming feature film, *Knights of the...* (Sorry, just checking to see if you were paying attention.) □





**PUBLISHERS!!**

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**The Game Masters Collection: Sound Effects for Roleplaying Volume Two: Monsters**  
**Toxic Bag Productions**  
 P.O. Box 2207, Des Plaines, IL 60017-2207  
 email: sales@toxicbag.com



In issue #27 I told you about **Volume One** of this product line (*Twentieth Century Sounds*) and raved quite a bit over it.

The second installment in the series, **Volume Two: Monsters** is just as good, if not better.

For those of you not familiar with Toxic Bag's **Game Masters Collection**, it is a series of audio CD's containing sound bytes which can be used to enhance the enjoyment of the game for players.

This CD features 63 sounds organized into seven groups. (*Creatures, Undead, Denizens of Hades, Cursed Voices, Evil Machines, Terror from beyond the Stars and Fantastic Creatures.*) I gotta tell ya, this is a pretty creepy collection of sounds — especially the “Denizens of Hades” tracks (22 thru 29). Some of them literally made the hair on my neck stand on end.

**Brian's Rating:** A Must Have!

**RPG SOURCEBOOK**

**...and a 10-Foot Pole**

**Iron Crown Enterprises**  
 P.O. Box 1605, Charlottesville, VA 22902  
 E-mail: www.ironcrown.com Cost: \$20

What do you call a book which gives roleplayers and game masters access to everything from a wood axe to an iron breastplate and even the kitchen sink? You'd call it I.C.E.'s new equipment sourcebook. Within its 190 pages, the book has statistics on just about anything you can think of for all eras from the Stone Age to the Modern Age.

If, for instance, some daring Middle Age-era adventurers want to buy themselves a nice meal in a quality inn, the gamemaster could use this book to look under Food Items in the Middle Ages Equipment section of the book and tell them that they can get a pound of fresh veal for 8 cp and that it would take two hours to butcher and prepare. On the other hand, if a group of top government agents want to get themselves a set of fine quality lock-picks, they would find that they cost \$75, they weigh a pound and can be found in a city. This book is jam packed with stuff!

And, while the book is made to be used with I.C.E.'s fine Rolemaster Standard Rules System, it is useful with any game system. No more will a player or gamemaster wonder how much it would cost to have a castle remodeled or outfit an expedition into the unknown regions of the Dark Continent.

**Brian's Rating:** A great reference book for any gamer who wants to have it all.



**LEGENDS AND LOOT**

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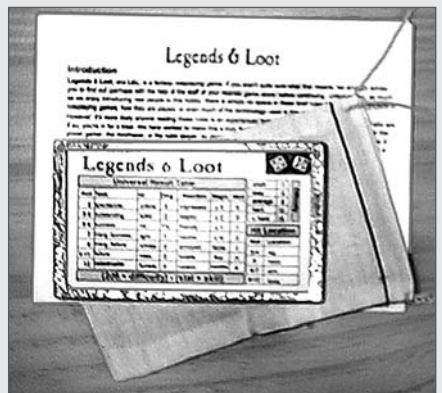
**Legends and Loot** is a really unique medieval fantasy RPG that fits in your back pocket. (*All the basic rules fit on a single, double-sided 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper!*) The rules clearly state that this is “not” a game for the power gamer, the min/maxer or the rules lawyer; and that “by design”, there are many loopholes.

Well, I don't know about you but I consider this statement a challenge — a dare, if you will. How could I resist a game that boasts loopholes; by design!? For me it's like solving a puzzle. In my continuing perusal of the rules, what I found was an incredibly-detailed, (*for its size*) yet easy to understand system, just waiting to be exploited. It brought me back to the days when I first learned *Metagaming's* “Melee” rules way back when.

Aside from the rules, the game also comes with a handy carrying pouch, an attractive sealed plastic case that doubles as a rules quick reference card as well as a dice shaker. I think my set must be loaded 'cause I keep failing my rolls.

There is no setting, scenario information or even art provided with this bare-bones rpg — just the basic rules along with some common equipment and spells. But that's really all a creative player or gamemaster really needs to get started isn't it? Sometimes it's fun to have to fill in the blanks and fall back on your own ideas and ingenuity. **Legends and Loot** also makes an excellent travel or last minute ‘pick up’ games when you and your friends find yourself with nothing to do.

**Brian's Rating:** A quick and dirty alternative to Hackmaster.



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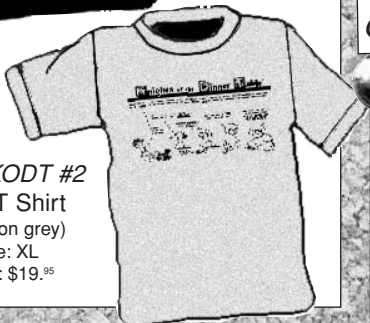
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 Gamefest XX, 3954 Harney St., San Diego, CA 92110

## Attention Convention Organizers

KenzerCo is currently pulling it's year 2000  
 Convention schedule together. If you  
 are interested in having one of the KODT  
 Developers as a guest contact Brian Jelke  
 (restin@aol.com) or call (847) 540-1970.  
 We'd love to come do some KODT Live-Readings, Demos and  
 dance like monkeys for peanuts in front of an angry mob.

## WEIRD PETE'S BULLETIN BOARD

is a meeting place where readers may pass along information, barter, trade and gossip. Readers are invited to place classified ads, announce group meetings, seek out other players, etc. Subscribers of KODT may place classified ads free of charge with a limit of one ad per issue and a maximum of twenty-five words. Non-Subscribers may place ads at the rate of 50¢ per word with a limit of 25 words. Companies may place ads at the following rates: [5.5" x 2" - \$160], [2.75" x 2" - \$80], [1.5" x 1" - \$40]. Non-profit organizations (serving the gaming community) and Conventions or Seminars may place ads for free. All ads are placed on a first-come first-served basis with subscribers having priority.



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

## An Opinion Arena and Open Forum

As the subheading indicates, this is a sounding board where gamers can give their two-cents' worth on whatever seems to rile them. 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.

Okay. This is my first email to the creator of the Knights. I wanted to mail you before, but lacked something interesting to write. This is solved now. I want to tell you about the "Brian syndrome".

I've been mastering all kinda games for some time now, and have also read the Knights a lot. My favorite character was Brian. (I say was, because it changed, read on...) I felt the competition between B.A. and Brian added an hilarious aspect to the stories, and of course, I liked, even admired Brian for his ability to always find a loophole in the rules somewhere, or exploiting them to the last trickle of XP.

I didn't EVER think that for a moment, I would be in B.A.'s ridiculous position facing a king of shoddy rules exploitation... Alas! Little did I know...

I had decided to GM "Call of Kachooloo". Of course I knew one of my players was an ex-GM at this game. But heck, we all knew the Call very well! Except for a newbie player, a girl we had invited. Well, the ex-GM arrived one hour late. He saw I was in a hurry to begin the game, so he quickly put together a character. I had asked him to design an investigation-oriented character, and trusted him to do so, therefore I only gave his character sheet a cursory glance before we began the game...

I was terribly wrong: He built the most incredibly powerful fighting machine I have ever, ever seen in a Kachooloo game. Not only this, he was on a lucky streak with dice. And on top of it all, he used his extensive knowledge of the mechanisms of Kachooloo to screw my scenario up, by guessing the solution in the very first minutes of the game, and acting accordingly, so that he could hack just like Bob... Guess what the newbie's reaction was?

LET ME POINT SOMETHING OUT TO YOU, **BOBBY-BOY!** I'M A GAMER WHO JUST SO HAPPENS TO BE A **WOMAN**. YOU GOT A **PROBLEM** WITH THAT? 'COS IF YOU **DO**, I SUGGEST WE SETTLE IT **RIGHT HERE - RIGHT NOW!**

I TOLD YOU NOT TO CALL HER "**MISSY LAWFUL GOOD TWO SHOES**" BOB.

**GAAAAA!!!!** N, N, NO PROBLEM. REALLY. I'M FINE WITH THAT.

**CONVINCE ME!!**



Now I can understand what terrible ordeals B.A. suffers at the hand of Brian. That last character has ceased being my favorite.

But vengeance will strike, because I have decided to run an *Over the Edge*™ game (my favorite game, rules-light system). Let's see how that "Briany" player can fight it out on MY turf. Perhaps B.A. could try the same for Brian...

Thanks in advance for publishing my mail, because there ARE some Brians out there, and we poor GMs must defend ourselves...

Ludovic SCHURR  
via E-mail

I fall into that small but hopefully growing category of intelligent, beautiful women to whom gaming (of all varieties) is a grand passion.

My brother Michael turned me on to it as a kid, but in true "big-brother" fashion, he rarely let me play -- and when he did, he inevitably kicked my butt in every game.

Undaunted, I expanded my search for players who could overcome their initial shock (and often, sheer disgust) that a girl would actually want to invade THE GAME.

I've dumped my fair share of boyfriends who couldn't (or wouldn't) hack, and endured all the criticisms, snide remarks and outright sabotage from male gamers who couldn't stand the fact that a woman can possess a highly-strategic mind.

I'll be 28 this month, and I'm still gaming strong. Better yet, my current group of players includes a second gorgeous, brilliant woman, and we're about to get a third — for an even 3-3 split. Hoody-hoo!

In our vocabulary, "geek" is a badge of honor. One who geeks is a cut above the mundane; disregarding the dubious benefits of conformity, we pursue our passions without apology & hold our heads high. Yes, we ARE geeks, and proud of it!

To add to your 'definitions', I'd like to submit the following:

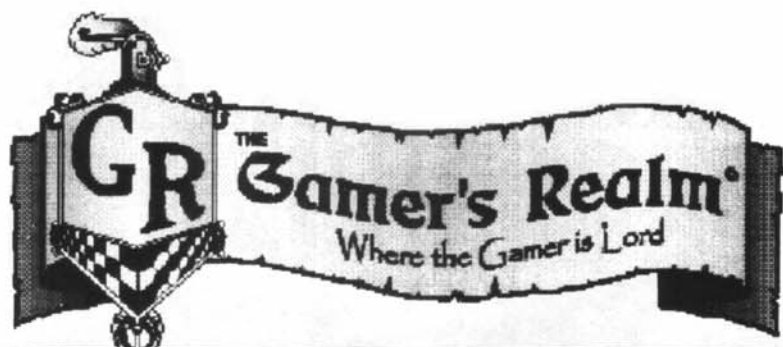
geek: v. 1. to game 2. to be passionately, shamelessly interested in an activity that the general populace considers functionally useless or socially retarded. 3. To relate long, drawn-out tales of adventures undertaken in another realm (usually to someone who has no idea what you're talking about).

Jolly, Brian, Steve & David; thank you so much for putting out a consistently outstanding publication. Every issue is anxiously anticipated, heartily laughed over and always identified with.

You're getting better all the time.

Angelene Hernandez  
Scottsdale, AZ





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# DEVIL WENT DOWN TO GENCON

Sung to the tune of Charlie Daniels', "Devil Went Down to Georgia"

The Devil went down to GenCon, he was lookin' for a soul to claim.  
 He was in a bind 'cuz he was way behind and he was willin' to play a game.  
 When he came across this young kid playin' **Magic** and playin' it hot.  
 And the Devil jumped up on the card table and said, "Boy, let me tell you what."  
 I guess you didn't know it, but I'm **Magic** player, too.  
 And if you care to take a dare, I'll make a bet with you.  
 Now, you've built yourself a damn good **red deck**, boy, but give the Devil his due.  
 I'll bet a 1st Ed. **Black Lotus** against your soul, 'cuz I think I'm better than you.  
 The boy said, "My name's Timmy" and it might be a sin  
 but I'll take your bet; you're gonna regret, 'cause my deck's fine-tuned to win.  
 Timmy, choose your side-board well and lay your first land down,  
 'Cause Hell's broke loose at GenCon, and the Devil owns this town.  
 And if you win, you'll get this here mint **Black Lotus** card,  
 but if you lose, your soul will go down haaaaard...  
 The Devil opened up his Ultra Pro binder and he said I'll start this show.  
 And fire blew from his fingertips as he flashed a **Contract From Below**.

And he pulled a **Lord of the Pit** from his deck and a **Royal Assassin** too.

Then a **Demonic Attorney** joined in and soon another **Bayou...**

When the Devil finished Timmy said "This is gonna hurt "Evil" One,  
 sit back down in your chair, and I'll show you how it's won.

(Chorus)

*'Fireball's on eight Mountains run, Lord, run  
 The Devil's mana only adds to one  
 Lay another White Land for a 'Serra Angel Attack!'*

*Devil, can you say "Circle of Protection Black?"*

The Devil bowed his head because he knew that he'd been beat.

And he laid that Black Lotus ante on the mat in defeat.

And Timmy said, "Devil, your game is pretty weak, hardly even fun.

I said it before and again, guys like you should stick to **Pok-e-mon**.

He played....

(Chorus)

*'Fireball's on eight Mountains run, Lord, run  
 The Devil's mana only adds to one  
 Lay another White Land for a 'Serra Angel Attack!'*

*Devil, can you say "Circle of Protection Black?"*

## DEATH

Sung to the tune of Kiss', "Beth"

Death I hear you calling  
 But I can't go down this round.  
 Me and the boys are fighting,  
 And we just can't slay this Droooooow  
 Just a few more segments,  
 And I'll get right back with you.  
 I can hear our Cleric falling,  
 Oh Death what can I do?  
 Death what can I do?  
 You say my HPs are gone now  
 'Cus I failed some saving throooooows?  
 I'm sure THAT was someone else,

And I really think this bloooooows.  
 Just another called shot  
 And I think this Drow is through.  
 Then we'll call it even,  
 Oh Death, how's that sound to you?  
 How's that sound to you?  
 Death I know you're hungry,  
 But I think you'll do all right  
 'Cus this is a real deep dungeon  
 And me and the boys will be melee-ing all  
 niight

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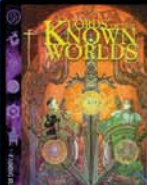
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