

About the author

J. H. Brennan is one of those peculiar people who seem to be living in several different worlds at once... some of which you can enter via the GrailQuest series.

He has always been interested in magic, spells and wizardry, and among his many books has written a number on magic. He is also the author of two Fantasy Role-Playing Games — *Man, Myth & Magic* and *Timeship*, and of two other Solo Fantasy Gamebooks in the 'Sagas of the Demonspawn': *Book One - Fire*Wolf*, and *Book Two — The Crypts of Terror*.

He has used a computer system to help him keep track of this book and others in the series and says that anyone who adventures in them without keeping careful notes of where they've been is asking to be sent to Section 14.

J. H. Brennan

GRAIL QUEST

BOOK THREE

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The Gateway of Doom

*Illustrated by
John Higgins*

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An Armada Original

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*For Murray Pollinger,
a better class of agent than whom
it would be difficult to find.*

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SORCERY ALREADY

Sit still and pay attention. Otherwise this book
may kill you. Probably several times.

It's a magic book.

This book is one long spell. One long exercise in
sorcery. One long operation of wizardry. One
mighty memorandum of magic.

My magic.

My name is Merlin.

I'm also dead, but don't let that disturb you. I'm
not a ghost. I'm just talking to you from another
Time. I was (am) perfectly alive in that other
Time. Perfectly fit and healthy for a man of my
age. Which is quite old. In my Time they call me
Merlin the Druid. Or the Wizard Merlin. Or
Merlin the Magician.

I am casting a spell.

Specifically, I am casting a spell over you.

Don't panic. It's a nice spell. It will help you come
visit my Time. You're quite famous in my Time.
In my Time you were (are) called Pip and you're a
bit of a hero. They call you Pip the Wizard Basher.
And Pip the Dragonslayer.



I am casting a spell
... on you!

In my Time you live quite near to Camelot. Which is near Glastonbury and where King Arthur has his Court. You remember King Arthur? You know him quite well in my Time. Quite intimately. And he knows you, which is more to the point. I shouldn't be surprised if he asks you to join the Round Table soon.

Especially if you manage to close the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead.

But before you can do that, you have to come back to my Time.

And before you can do that, you'll need dice. Ordinary dice. Six sides and spots. Two of them. (Or one if you can't find two.) And paper. And pencil. And a rubber. (They called them rubbers in my Time. In your Time they call them erasers.)

Go get your equipment together and turn the page.



The Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom remains open

Now let's explain what's going on. When the spell works - if it works - your mind will come back to my Time. When it reaches my Time it will occupy another body, the body of a young person, a young *hero*, called Pip.

When you're in Pip's body, you won't be able to carry on the way you do now. Not exactly. You'll be able to get into trouble all right and have adventures and find gold and get yourself killed all right, *but only if you go about it the right way*. Which is the way I'm going to explain.

(If you forget any of my explanations, don't worry. They're all down on the card at the back of the book. All my spell books have that sort of card. Saves a lot of trouble.)

But before I can do that, I need you in my Time...



THE MONDAY MEETING OF THE TABLE ROUND

Monday meetings of the Table Round were not usually up to very much. It was the weekend that did it. Unless there was a war on or a bad season for dragons, most Knights took the weekend off. All but the most urgent Quests were quietly postponed. Notes were sent off to distressed maidens advising them to hang in there just a little longer. Wrongs that could not be righted by the Friday night were scheduled for attention as early as possible in the coming week. The weekend itself was devoted to Pleasure.

At least that's what the Knights called it. Normal human beings might have called it something else, but normal human beings had very little say in the affairs of the Realm in the days of King Arthur. It was the King who ran the show; and under him the Knights. What the Knights did at weekends was hunt and joust and wassail and carouse.

Of these various Pleasures, wassailing and carousing were by far the most lethal. In a joust or a hunt, you usually went fully armoured, which protected you pretty well against boar's tusks or opposition lances. But on Saturday night when you went off wassailing and carousing, it was con-

sidered very bad form to wear full armour - or any armour at all. So you put on your best linen tunic and fresh leggings and a new pair of boots and rode off lickety-spit for the nearest tavern where you wassailed and caroused until the landlord's daughter threw you out.

(The landlord himself could not throw you out, of course, since as a Knight you were Gentry and as a landlord, he was only Trade. But in the Age of Chivalry, no Knight would dream of refusing a request from a gentle maiden, so landlords would wink at their daughters who would take you by the ear and out you would be, in the pouring rain.)

As you can readily appreciate, anyone who spends a weekend wassailing and carousing can't expect



A knight out in the rain

to be in peak condition come Monday morning. Which explains why the Monday morning meetings of the Table Round were always such a mess.

They never started on time for one thing. King Arthur would enter the huge meeting hall promptly at ten to find the only person in attendance was the Senior Polisher, whose duty it was to maintain the high sheen of the table top.

For want of anything better to do, the King would examine the newly-polished surface of his Table Round. It really was a beautiful example of the craftsman's art. The main body of the Table was oak, of course, but teak inlays marked it precisely into twelve segments, each marked with a Zodiac Sign - Aries, Taurus, Gemini and so on all the way round to Aquarius. The original idea - thought up by that old fool Merlin, of course - was that Arthur would choose twelve trusty Knights, each with a different Birth Sign, thus ensuring strict astrological balance. But it had never worked out in practice.

Before Arthur established chivalry, Camelot had been a rather wild place. Half the Knights in the realm hardly knew where they had been born, let alone when, so that the astrological calculation of their Sun Signs proved totally impossible even to a skilled practitioner like Merlin, and the Table Round had become so popular it was evident that the membership would never stop at twelve. Nor did it. Now whenever there was a large attendance (seldom on a Monday morning) the Knights

just sat anywhere they pleased, all squished up together to fit round the Table's rim.

But on this *particular* Monday morning, things were different. It was still a full five minutes before the Roman waterclock would dribble out the hour of ten, yet the Chamber of the Table Round was already packed to capacity. The King was there, of course, so too were all the important Knights - Lancelot, Galahad, Bedevere, Mordred, even Pellinore who had never been known to attend a Monday meeting of the Table, let alone arrive early for one.

The reason for this strange development was that there was a crisis on.

THE BLASTED OAK

While King and Knights of Avalon met in the turret chamber of the Table Round, another meeting of a very different sort was going on in a very different setting.

About five miles as the crow flies from the Court at Camelot, a huge oak tree had grown for centuries beside a crossroads. Because they are easy to find, crossroads are often used as meeting places for lovers, or farmers, or gossippers and a few even become unofficial fairgrounds as wandering pedlars found them a convenient place to sell their wares. Minstrels tended to congregate at crossroads and sing ballads about deeds of valour. But nobody ever gathered at the Crossroads of the Oak. It had a very nasty reputation.

The oak itself had been blasted by lightning sometime in the dim and distant past, with the result that it no longer leafed and presented a monstrous silhouette against the skyline, particularly at night. Then there was the fact that the crossroads had been used as the site of a gibbet until King Arthur outlawed public hangings and was consequently believed to be haunted by the spirits of several generations of criminals who had been hanged, drawn and quartered there. Then

there was the swamp, which produced marsh gas, which in turn sometimes ignited, particularly in summer, to produce those eerie floating lights rural people call Will O' The Wisps. And then there were the coloured flashes often seen to emanate from the blasted oak itself — flashes for which there was no natural explanation whatsoever, not even marsh gas. So people kept away, for fear of losing their lives or their souls.

At least most people kept away. On this misty, eerie, chilly Monday morning, there was one idiot who kept wandering in circles calling loudly, 'Hello ... Hello ... Hello ...!'

The idiot's name was Pip.

MERLIN'S LAIR

'Hello...' you call. 'Hello.... Hello.... Is anybody there?'

You are only vaguely aware of how you got to this ghastly, mist-enshrouded place and not at all aware of what you are supposed to do now you're here.

Merlin said he would meet you here. Or somewhere here. But there's not a soul in sight and absolutely nothing of interest to explore: no landmarks at all except the desolate crossroads itself and the remains of an absolutely gigantic ancient oak tree no longer in the land of living vegetables.

'Hello ... Hello ... Is anybody there? Is anybody here?'

A small milestone cut with Roman numerals tells you how far you are from Camelot. (Too far!) Since the information isn't much use to you, you sit on the stone and wait. The mist is very chill: it soaks into your leggings and creeps past the ties of your jerkin to absorb the heat of your body despite the woollens your adoptive mother, the Goodwife Miriam (or Mary, as she prefers) insisted you wore for this little outing.



Underneath the stone, to your horror, is a monstrous snake

'Hello,' you call, beginning to wonder if you are in the right place at all. For want of anything better to do, you kick a stone near your foot. Underneath it, to your horror, is a snake.

You're in trouble already and the adventure hasn't even started! No equipment, no magic, no weapons except old EJ — Excalibur Junior — your trusty sword from earlier adventures and you've left him toasting his pommel by the fire in your farmhouse home near Camelot. Will you try to reason with the snake? (Go to 8). Run like blazes? (Go to 20). Strangle it with your bare hands? (Go to 30). As always, the choice is yours - after all, it was you who got yourself into this mess.

1

The chamber is in uproar. Mordred, who is a natural trouble-maker, has made a snide remark to Galahad about the intelligence of his father. (In later life, of course, Galahad will become known as the Knight Parfait - the Perfect Knight. He will ride a white horse, wear pristine armour, right wrongs by the cartload and never swear or lose his temper or be even slightly discourteous. In short, he is destined to become an absolutely sickening individual. But at the time of this meeting, Galahad is still young.) He has just hit Mordred on the nose.

Mordred falls back on the toe of King Pellinore, a fiery old warhorse who pokes Mordred vigorously in the ribs. This action is noted by Sir Percival, a

Knight with an interest in fair play, who takes King Pellinore to task for what he sees as an unwarranted action. Sir Lancelot (who is Galahad's father and besides loathes Mordred for several other reasons) proceeds to berate Sir Percival, while the King tries to make himself heard above the rumpus.

'Gentlemen!' King Arthur calls, pounding his fist on the table to restore order.

'Gentlemen. We are here, as you know, to discuss a crisis.'

('Now listen to this,' says Merlin as you stare into his crystal ball. 'Pay close attention because it concerns you. Or it will.')'

'Most of you know the details already,' continues King Arthur, 'but for those of you who have been out of touch—' here he glances at King Pellinore, who is notoriously out of touch with most things. '—I will give a brief outline of the facts.'

'A little while ago our realm, as you know, came under attack by a Brass Dragon. That danger is no more. The beast was slain very efficiently as you are all aware. But the implications of the creature are still with us.

'There are, of course, several theories about the origins of Brass Dragons. Some people hold they result from a clutch of prehistoric eggs hatching out at intervals in the Welsh Mountains. Another school of thought suggests they fly in from the Moon. Yet another claims they are born in Hell. But the fact is, nobody is terribly sure. After the

last one was dispatched, I took advice on the matter from the Druid Merlin who has made something of a study of such things. He is convinced they come from a curious region called the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead.'

['Of course they do. No doubt about it,' mutters Merlin.]

'In so far as I understand it,' King Arthur goes on, thankfully ignorant of the fact he is being spied on, 'this Ghastly Kingdom does not exist in the way that, say, Scotland or Hibernia exist. The Druid Merlin considers it to be a sort of Underworld, an Abode of the Spirits such as the Greeks—'

('No, no. I knew he wasn't listening! It's a different dimension. A parallel world. Perfectly simple. Nothing to do with the Greeks.')

'Be that as it may,' the King is saying, 'the important thing is that the appearance of the Brass Dragon proved there must be a gateway open between the Ghastly Kingdom and our realm. Such a gateway is a very dangerous thing indeed. Anything could come through it. More Brass Dragons. Imps. Wraiths. Wights. Anything. And even when nothing of that sort comes through, the Druid Merlin informs me that there is a wind—'

('I said a radiation!'hisses Merlin.)

'—which blows through constantly and influences events in our own land. This wind causes tempers to shorten and evil to flourish, undermines the foundations of Chivalry, affects the

growth of crops, increases the incidence of accidents, encourages the spread of plague, leads to the proliferation of vermin and insects—'

('Especially fleas,' Merlin remarks, scratching.)

'—and generally does no good at all to anyone. The Gateway has remained open since the Brass Dragon was sighted. It remains open now, even though the Brass Dragon is no more. That is our problem, gentlemen. The question is, what do we do about it?'

'Close it,' says Sir Lancelot promptly.

'As you say,' King Arthur nods patiently, 'close the Gateway. But how?'

King Pellinore surprises everyone by looking up and saying gruffly and sensibly, 'We need a hero.'

'A hero?' asks Mordred.

'A hero.' Pellinore repeats. 'Somebody willing to risk life and limb to get the Gate closed. What about that Pip person who got rid of the dragon for us and did down old Wizard What's His Name?'

'Pip?' asks the King.

'Pip?' asks Sir Percival.

'Pip?' asks Mordred.

'Pip!' repeats Pellinore conclusively.

Turn to 21.

'Now where did I put it....' Merlin asks himself absently when you have chosen all your equipment. He rummages for a moment, then produces a neat little leather-bound book. 'Here it is! Your spells....'

'But I already have spells,' you protest. 'My PIP spell and my POW spell and—'*

'Yes, yes, I know,' says Merlin irritably. 'Those are your standard spells. You'll need a few extra for this adventure, mark my words.'

Never one to look a gift spell in the mouth, you open the book, and start to read.



* See Appendix

Pip's Second Spell Book

Spell

Pip's Patent Lock Picker
(PLOP for short)

Pip's Incredible Duncher
(PID for short)

Pip's Amazing Legume Spell
(PALS for short)

Effect

Will pick one lock per section on a throw of 6 or better on two dice.

Causes the appearance of a magical cap which, when worn will shrink Pip to a height of six inches, thus allowing passages through tiny spaces. Size reverts to normal in next section.

Gives an automatic Friendly Reaction from any attacking vegetable.

Spell

Pip's Instant Levitation
(PIL for short, but not to be confused with the standard PILL spell)

Pip's Obliging Power Sword
(POPS for short)

Effect

Allows Pip to levitate, but only three times per adventure. If used indoors it will lead to banging the head on the ceiling, with concussion and loss of half current LIFE POINTS.

Allows Pip to alter EJ's power. When applied, it will DOUBLE the damage caused by EJ on the next throw, but HALF the damage caused on the roll after that. The spell must be used BEFORE rolling to determine a hit.

'This isn't as long as my first Spell Book,' you protest, having examined the contents carefully.

'Of course it isn't!' Merlin tells you grumpily. 'Spells are expensive - it's the research and development, you know. I'm not made of money. Now, is there anything else?' He stares thoughtfully into the middle distance for a moment before deciding there is not. He turns to you abruptly. 'I don't suppose you brought a decent pair of boots?'

Bewildered, you shake your head.

'Pity. The ones you have on need polishing. Badly. Still, they'll have to do. I don't suppose he'll notice, what with everything else on his mind.'

'Who?' you ask, just the slightest bit alarmed, having had experience of Merlin's peculiar ways of doing things.

'The King, of course! We have to meet him now, before things get completely out of hand.'

'Meet the King?' you exclaim. 'But I'm not dressed to meet—'

But as usual it's too late. Merlin, who seldom listens to anyone but himself, isn't listening to you now. In fact he isn't listening to anyone. His eyes have glazed over and he is waving his arms about in the air while his lips mumble something in High Ancient Druid Welsh, the mystic tongue of all great British magicians.

As he does so, a high wind is springing up, plucking at your jerkin and spinning you round

and round until you are so dizzy you can no longer stand or think or see what's happening to you.

But SOMETHING is happening to you. Turn to 9 to find out what.

3

'Just a moment!' you scream wildly. 'Just a cotton-pickin' minute here! I don't know how to get to the Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead!'

But Merlin's dry voice echoes in your mind, 'IT'S EASY WHEN YOU KNOW THE TRICK. WHEREVER YOU FIND YOURSELF, YOU TAKE THE *least pleasant* DIRECTION. THEN, WHEN YOU STOP, YOU TAKE THE *least pleasant* DIRECTION AGAIN, AND AGAIN AND AGAIN YOU KEEP TAKING THE *least pleasant* DIRECTION. AND SINCE THE GHASTLY KINGDOM OF THE DEAD IS THE MOST UNPLEASANT PLACE YOU COULD POSSIBLY IMAGINE, YOU ARE BOUND TO REACH IT EVENTUALLY. WHEREVER YOU START FROM.'

But where do you start from? No good relying on Merlin's spells: as he told the King, his aim isn't what it used to be. Roll your dice - two of them. If you score 2 to 6, turn to 25. If you score 7 to 12, turn to 45.

4

The village is so small you begin to wonder if everybody who lives there is out in the field playing that stupid game. There is one main street, picturesquely lined with thatched cottages and houses, what looks like a provisions store, a smithy, a church and an apothecary shop/surgery.

Which gives you a pretty wide choice. If you need more provisions and have the cash to pay, you can try the provisions store at 12. The smithy you'll find at 17. The church (and a little bit of prayer might help, considering where you're heading) at 22. And the apothecary's place at 27. And before you ask, none of them looks noticeably more unpleasant than the other.

5

You climb the tree to escape from the Gorilla.

This is known as a bad decision. Gorillas climb trees too — and quite easily, despite their size. Gorillas are so at home in trees they actually build nests in trees and sleep in them.

You have just reached a Gorilla's nest: a huge construction of interwoven twigs and branches, not at all like a bird's nest. In this nest, just waking up grumpily from all the noise you were making climbing the tree, is a second Gorilla, a friend, partner, husband or wife (it's tricky to tell with Gorillas) of the first Gorilla who, incidentally, is climbing up the tree after you.

This is a real mess, Pip. You're supposed to be looking for the Gateway, not mucking about with a herd of overgrown monkeys. If you fancy your chances fighting two Gorillas at once, turn to 51. If you want to try for a friendly reaction, go ahead. If it succeeds, go to 26. If you feel like throwing yourself on the Gorillas' mercy, go to 56.

6

This is better - the place looks positively dreadful. You follow the Clanking Vicar down a flight of rickety wooden steps while dusty cobwebs brush against your face, wait briefly on an equally rickety wooden landing while the Clanking Vicar lights a wooden tar-torch which splutters and spits and gives off a thick pall of heavy smoke and noxious fumes, but little enough light. Then you descend some more wooden steps, walk across a dusty stone-flagged floor and descend yet more steps, worn stone this time, into a musty, Stygian complex of interlinking chambers rather carelessly stacked with coffins, sarcophagi, urns, caskets, broken tombstones and the occasional headless marble angel.

'I'll leave you to your studies, Young Scholar,' says the Clanking Vicar, having obviously taken what you said earlier very much to heart. And off he clanks, fortunately handing you the torch before he does so.

As his footsteps recede, the place is suddenly very quiet. (Which may be only what you would expect, since everybody in the crypt is dead except you, but it is a bit unnerving all the same.) You look around you.

Certainly a lot more promising. Exactly the sort of place you're looking for if you're to find your way to the Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead. But where do you go from here? That's the question. Ahead of you, a gloomy corridor leads to 28. To your right, an



6 You follow the Clanking Vicar downwards to the Crypt

archway opens into 13. To your left is a large oak doorway, half hidden by a pile of coffins, on which (the doorway, not the coffins) is the tattered remnants of a notice scroll; all of which may be reached by way of 46.

7

That was very well done, Pip. Not many adventurers have three Ghouls to their credit, although you've left this part of the Vicar's Crypt in a bit of a mess.

'Let him clean it up!' mutters EJ sourly. 'He should have warned us about the Ghouls.'

The chamber you've been fighting in has no exit, but you poke around in the debris a bit before you leave. Which is just as well, because if you hadn't, you would have missed finding the ruby. It's worth 500 gold pieces and may come in handy for bribery sometime.

Take the ruby, then take your pick of the corridor (28) or the door in the other chamber (46).

8

'Now look here, my dear snake,' you begin with an air of confidence. 'You and I are both reasonable people - well, one of us is a reasonable people: you're a reptile, aren't you? What I mean is we're both reasonable. A reasonable person and a reasonable reptile respectively. And as reasonable - look, let's agree to think of us as people. Or reptiles, if you think that's better. We're both reasonable reptiles, so there's absolutely no logical—'

The snake, Pip, is now crawling up your leg. Are you SURE you want to reason with it? You can still run by going to 20 or strangle it with your bare hands by going to 30. But if you insist on reasoning with it, turn to 40.

9

Gradually you stop whirling, and as the wind dies away you find yourself in a round chamber packed with people. You are standing beside Merlin, on a table.

Of course! This is the Chamber of the Table Round - you are on top of the Table itself, feeling rather dizzy, with a storm of scattered papers subsiding around you.

Tip!' exclaims King Pellinore.

'Pip!!!' roar the Knights excitedly, in unison.

'Pip,' says the King, smiling. Then, remembering his manners, adds, 'And greetings to you, Lord Merlin.'

'Your Majesty,' Merlin acknowledges tersely as he climbs down from the table. 'Forgive the interruption: my aim went a bit off. But since we're here, you can see I have young Pip all kitted out and ready for the next adventure - at least when I fetch his sword, that is.'

'And that adventure involves closing the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead, does it?' the King asks wisely.

'Yes,' says Merlin. 'Yes indeed. All we need is

your blessing and we'll be gone. At least Pip will. I have some urgent business in Scotland. A matter of magical haggis, you appreciate, that can't be handled by anybody else, so I'll just have to leave things to Pip for a change.' He waves his left hand carelessly and plucks Excalibur Junior out of thin air.

'Here, watch what you're doing!' exclaims EJ, then notices the King and falls silent in embarrassment.

'If my blessing is all that detains you,' says King Arthur regally, 'then you shall have it and welcome.'

'Thank you, Your Majesty,' says Merlin. Then to Pip, 'Off you go now, and good luck.' With which he begins waving both arms so that the whirlwind springs up again, surrounding you and spinning you once more into oblivion.

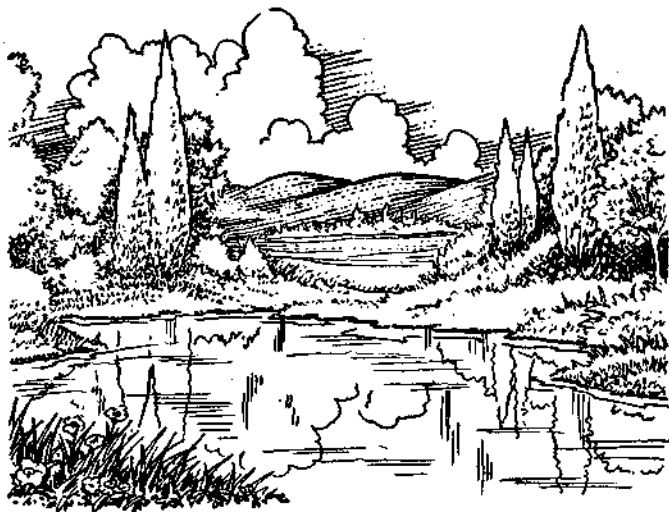
Or, to be more accurate, into 3, which is where you should turn to next.

10

The road west meanders for a couple of miles until you are out of sight of the village then forks north west and due south.

The southern fork doesn't look as if it has been travelled much - the surface is potholed and in pretty bad repair. The north western road looks better and though it's hard to judge, it seems to lead up into the mountains.

If you turn south go to 15. If you turn north west, go to 32.



11

You make a spectacular swallow dive into the still, smooth glassy waters of the lake. *Keeruuunchhh!*

Keeruuunchhh? Surely that should be *Splaaash* or something of that nature? No, indeed. The bad news is the glassy surface of the lake is real glass. Solid glass all the way through. The *really* bad news is that this glass is harder than your head.

Go to 14.

12

Oh drat! There's a notice in the window of the provisions store which says: CLOSED: GONE TO POGOLFIT.

You try the door anyway, but it's locked.

Looks like you're stuck with the provisions you've brought - or haven't brought as the case may be. Your other options now are the church (21) the smithy (17) or the apothecary (27). Alternatively, you can throw your hat at the whole thing and take the road west (10), explore the wood to the east (42) or even join in the pogolfit game at 58.

13

Merrily through the archway, Pip. And merrily straight back again, but it's too late and you know it. They've definitely seen you. Who would have thought a Vicar would allow anything like this in his church crypt? Ghouls. Three of them, all skinny and white and loin-clothed and large eyed and (more important) large toothed. They were sitting round a coffin when you came through the archway, eating bread and cheese, which is not the favourite food of Ghouls. You wouldn't really want to know the favourite food of Ghouls, although you might guess by the hungry way they all looked at you.

This is a fight and no mistake. Nobody in the history of humanity has ever gotten a friendly reaction from even one Ghoul, let alone three, so it's pointless trying. So out with Excalibur Junior—

'Goodie!' exclaims EJ, as you whip him from the scabbard, 'I hate Ghouls.'

—and into the fray.



13 Three Ghouls eye you hungrily

Each Ghoul has 15 LIFE POINTS and the three, in the manner of Ghouls, will attack in strict sequence - although you may get First Strike on any of them with luck. If you win the battle, turn to 7. If you lose, the Ghouls will carry what's left of you to 14.

14

Welcome to the dreaded 14. This is what it's like to be dead. Fortunately you don't have to stay dead too long. What you have to do now is roll up your LIFE POINTS again, exactly as you did before. (You might even get a better total this time, which would be great.) Then, when you've done that, *start out again*. It won't take you long to get back to where you left off since you can safely ignore any monsters or baddies you've already killed. Or you can go in different directions, if you want. This is *your* adventure, so you can make the most of even being dead.

If you were killed within the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead, you have a special choice. Once you've rerolled your LIFE POINTS, you can go direct to 65; or you can explore any earlier section of the adventure that you have not already entered. (And who knows, you may find some useful items to help you in the Kingdom itself.)

15

You know the funny thing about this road, Pip? It doesn't *feel* like a road in Avalon.

It's not the road itself. The road itself is pretty grotty (which is probably why you picked it, eh?)

but there are lots of grotty roads in Arthur's kingdom. (Including the one to your home, to be honest.) No, it's the whole *feel* of the road and the countryside around it.

There's a lot of dust for one thing. And the weather's hot. Surely it wasn't this hot - and this dry - earlier? Is the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead a hot place? The trouble is, nobody's ever told you anything about it: not even Merlin. But it could be hot. And if it is, maybe this hot road is leading directly to it.

It certainly is strange countryside. The further you travel along this road, the odder it gets. No more of Avalon's little pocket cornfields. No more familiar peasant cottages with their thatch dripping with good, honest British rain. Just this barren, dusty dirt-track of a road and a broad savannah sweeping away to the distant jungle.

Jungle?

Has that old fool magicked you right out of the country by mistake? This isn't Avalon, Pip - it's Africa!! That was a parrot that flew overhead. And that's definitely a herd of elephant grazing over by the water-hole. And

Groowl!!!

that's definitely a lion creeping up behind you!

Well, you can always run. Throw two dice for the lion and two dice for yourself. If the lion scores higher or equal, then it catches up with you at 38. If you score higher, then you escape to 52.

16

This is the Gorillas' nest. What a strange place to send you. It looks even bigger now it's empty, with the two Gorillas down below waving encouragement. Why would they want you in their nest?

There is an old-fashioned spinning top in the nest, a spinning top with a whip. You know the sort. You wrap the cord of the whip round the top and snap the whip to spin it, then you whip the top from time to time to keep it spinning.

You reach into the nest and take out the top and whip, holding it up so the Gorillas can see what you are doing. They jump up and down and wave in encouragement. One of them even smiles, which is a sight you wouldn't want to see again in a hurry. They obviously want you to play with the top.

Stupid Gorillas. Or are they? It's your choice, Pip. You can try spinning the top, in which case go to 36. Or you can dive into the glassy lake from the top of the tree and swim for shore, in which case go to 11.

17

'Here, young 'un,' calls the Smith as you approach the forge, 'I hopes you don't want no armour made nor 'orses shod for I be werry late already.' He is a big man, like most smiths, dressed in a heavy leather apron and engaged in trimming the toenails of a placid carthorse.

'Werry - I mean very late for what, sir?' you ask politely.

'Pogolfit, of course. It be my innings soon, once I be finished with Betsy here.' (The horse turns and nods at you briefly at the mention of its name.)

'No, sir,' you say, 'I don't want any armour and I haven't got a horse. But I would like some information, if you have it.'

'If I have it, you shall have it and right willingly, young adventurer. Just so long as it does not take too long in the asking or the telling for it be important to me to make my innings.'

'I was wondering, sir, if you might by any chance know the way to the Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead?'

But no sooner have the words emerged politely from your lips than the carthorse Betsy rears up violently with a fearful *neigh* and falls over on her back in a dead faint with all four feet in the air while the smith turns pale, then green, then clutches his throat, spins round several times and collapses in a heap beside her, quite unconscious.

What a mess this is, Pip. And such a pleasant man, too. (Quite a pleasant carthorse, come to that.) They're both in a dead faint at the mere mention of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead. You could try to revive them, I suppose. A score of 10, 11 or 12 on two dice should do the trick and take you to 29. If you fail, perhaps its best just to creep away quietly, in which case you can take the road west out of the village (10) or

try the provisions store (12) or the church (22) or the apothecary (27) or make for the wood to the east (42) or even take the Smith's innings at pogolfit (58).

18

'Oh dear, oh dear,' says Apothecary Davydd, fanning himself vaguely with one pale hand as you help him back to his feet. 'Dear me. By Jove. What a shock. Yes. Yes, indeed. He's sending you to the Gha— to that place. You poor soul. It really is too bad of him. Oh my. That gave me quite a turn. Yes. Yes, indeed.'

'Is the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead really as—'

(Davydd turns pale and green again and sways, but does not fall this time on account of your hand on his arm.)

'Worse, much worse,' he groans. 'I've never seen anything like it.'

'Just a minute,' you say, very quick off the mark. 'You mean you've actually *been* to the - to the place we're discussing?'

'Oh yes. Yes, indeed. You wouldn't think it to look at me now, but I used to be quite an adventurer in my younger days. One of my jobs was to rescue a maiden from that place. Dreadful experience. She ended up rescuing me. Never went back, of course. Didn't marry the maiden either, come to that. Life is not a fairy tale, Young Person.'

'Then you know how to get to the Gateway?'

18-19

'Oh yes. At least I did. The position changes from time to time, and of course there are several different Gateways. But yes. By and large the answer to your question is yes.'

'But could you tell me how to reach it, sir?' you ask politely, adding, 'It would save me ever so much trouble.'

'And get you into ever so much more,' snaps the Apothecary. 'Still, no use trying to talk sense into an adventurer. If I were you, I'd make my way up to the Village Church, see if the Vicar will let you into the crypt and scabble about a bit down there. That's the route I took.' He hesitates, then adds, 'If you see a rather elderly maiden, you might tell her I'm sorry about the wedding. And try to avoid her left hook.'

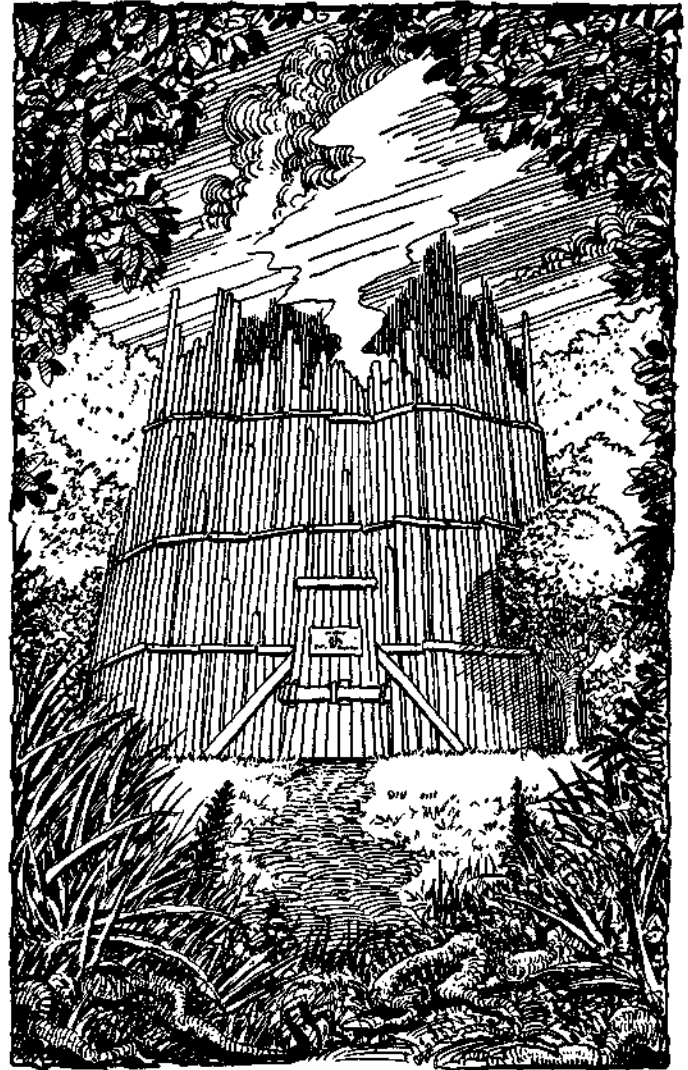
This is fantastic! Directions to your goal already. You might have the Gateway closed and be back home in time for tea at this rate. Off to the Church, are we? You'll find it at 22.

19

No wonder the birds are cackling - they're hens! The path you took wound deeper and deeper into the gloomy, strangled wood, then suddenly emerged into this place, a clearing, in the centre of which is a huge, high wooden stockade with a securely closed gate from behind which, unmistakably, comes the sound of a very large number of hens.

Is this some sort of chicken farm?

You like chickens, of course, having had the job of



19 You enter a clearing in which is a large wooden stockade

19-20

looking after the chickens on the farm of your adoptive parents, Freeman John and Goodwife Mary. But why the huge stockade? And what's that notice on the gate which says,

EXPERIMENTAL AREA: KEEP OUT

There's an insignia on the notice.

If (and only if) you have already adventured through the first Grail Quest book, the CASTLE OF DARKNESS, you can turn to 23 for information on the insignia. If you haven't, you've the option of entering the stockade - which is barred on the outside, but not locked - by going to 33. Or you can press on further into the wood (39). Or you can go back to the village (4) and pick any available option there.

20

You're off!

Before that rotten snake can say hiss, you're off down the road like a jackrabbit; or possibly one of King Pellinore's hunting hounds.

'Stop!' roars the snake. 'Where do you think you're going?'

Do snakes roar? This one definitely did, which is enough to make anybody pause. Especially when it spoke English. (With a Welsh accent, admittedly, but you can't expect snakes to be civilized on top of roaring and talking.) Do you stop? If so, go to 50. Do you continue running like a jackrabbit or a hunting hound? If so go to 60.

PREPARING FOR ADVENTURE

21

'You see,' says Merlin, turning away from the crystal ball which flickers a bit, then fades. 'I knew they'd get around to you eventually. Now we must get you prepared.'

If you have already been on a GrailQuest adventure, you can safely skip to 41. You'll know all about LIFE POINTS and combat and weapons and armour and spells. *[And if you've forgotten, you can always refresh your memory with the cut-out rule card that's included as a bookmark.]*

Remember that if you have any money, treasure or magical weapons from previous adventures, you can bring them with you on this one. But if this is your first quest, then a bit of guidance may not come amiss.

Life Points

To calculate your LIFE POINTS, you roll two dice and multiply the result by four. This will give you a figure between 8 and 48. If you think it's too low - and 8 certainly is too low - then try again. You

can take three tries altogether and pick the best figure out of the three, but more than three tries is not allowed.

LIFE POINTS are important in Combat. If your **LIFE POINTS** are reduced to 5 in combat, you're knocked out. If they're reduced to 0, you're dead. The same thing goes for your enemies, of course.

Combat

To strike an enemy with your fist (or find out what happens when he strikes you), you roll two dice. Score a 6 and you've made contact. Anything you score *above* 6 counts as damage and is subtracted from **LIFE POINTS**.

Before anybody strikes anybody, you need to work out who gets the first blow. To do this, you throw two dice on behalf of your opponent and two for yourself. Whoever gets the highest roll gets the first blow. If you happen to roll the same, just keep going until somebody comes out on top. The only exception to this rule is where **SURPRISE** is involved but you'll be told that during the course of your adventure.

If you're using weapons - and you will be most of the time — the rules change slightly. Your trusty talking sword, Excalibur Junior (EJ for short) is magic and needs only a roll of 4 or better to hit. Furthermore, EJ gets an *additional* 5 points of damage each time you make a hit. This damage is over and above any damage that might be shown on the dice roll.

Weapons and Armour

Wearing armour subtracts from any damage against the person who's wearing it. Merlin gave Pip a Dragonskin jacket in an earlier adventure. If Pip still has it, it deducts 4 from any damage scored.

You'll find a list of weapon and armour damage figures at the back of the book on page 213. This list is mainly useful for calculating how much damage a particular enemy might be doing to you.

Magic and Spells

Sometimes weapons aren't enough in a particularly tough encounter. Merlin has given you a bit of magic as well, which is renewed automatically at the start of every new adventure. This standard magic is:

1. *Firefinger Lightning Bolts*, of which you have 10. You simply point at any enemy in sight and shout 'Firefinger One!' (or whatever the number is) and score 10 points of damage. Firefingers never miss and need no dice rolls, but each can only be used once, so when you've fired all ten, that's it until your next adventure.
2. *Fireballs*. You have two of these mighty magical weapons. Each one scores 75 points of damage. But the problem with Fireballs is that you must roll at least 6 on two dice when you want to use one. If you score less than 6, the

Fireball just fizzles out harmlessly and is wasted.

You will also have learned the Rules of Magic and have received your First Spell Book - both of which are included here in case you've forgotten them. See Appendix I (p. 206).

In all probability, Merlin may let you have some extra magic for the present adventure, since it sounds like a very tough one. You'll know about that presently.

Friendly Reaction

Combat is important, but there are lots of times when it makes sense to avoid it. You can do this (with luck) in one of two ways. The first is to try for a Friendly Reaction. To do this, you roll one die on behalf of your enemy and three dice on behalf of yourself. If your three dice together score less than the enemy's one die, then you have a Friendly Reaction and can go on as if you'd won the fight. As you might guess, it isn't all that easy to get a Friendly Reaction from an enemy.

Bribery

The other way to avoid fights is Bribery. This only works in sections marked *B where the asterisk (*) stands for the number of gold pieces your enemy might accept. *B is 100 gold pieces; **B is 500 gold pieces; ***B is 1,000 gold pieces; and ****B is 10,000 gold pieces. (It doesn't actually have to be gold pieces. If you're carrying diamonds

or anything else of equal or greater value, that will do just as well.) You can value any gems you have found by rolling two dice for each gem, multiplying the result by 10, and taking your answer as the value of the gem in gold pieces.

Magical artifacts are more tricky. Generally any magical item should be valued by rolling two dice and multiplying the result by 100. But if the item is a magical weapon or something else which might be used in combat, then your dice roll should be multiplied by 1,000. Very personal magical items (like EJ) are quite priceless (Merlin maintains that sword is worth more than 2,500,000 gold pieces) and should never be sold however much you need the money.

When you want to offer a bribe, you roll two dice. A score of 1 to 7 means the bribe has been *refused*. But refused or not you lose your money. If you score 8 to 12, then the bribe has been accepted and you go on as if you had won the fight, exactly like a Friendly Reaction.

Healing

It's impossible to avoid all fights, of course, so you're going to lose LIFE POINTS at some stage of the adventure. Fortunately there are ways of getting them back. Your standard adventure kit contains 3 bottles of Healing Potion, each of which contains 6 doses - 18 doses altogether. Every time you take a dose of Healing Potion (which tastes foul, by the way) you roll two dice and take the score as restored LIFE POINTS.

Salves work much the same way. Merlin is quite stingy, so your standard kit only contains enough salve for five applications. There's no need to roll dice, though: each application gives you back 3 LIFE POINTS.

Sleep

If you've run out of salves and healing potions, or want to save them for later, you can always risk Sleeping to restore LIFE POINTS. You can Sleep any time you wish, except during a fight. All you do is roll one die. If you score a 5 or a 6, then roll two more dice and take their total as restored LIFE POINTS. If you score less than 5, then you must turn to the Dreamtime section at the back of the book on page 00. This is what makes Sleeping such a risky business. You can quite often *lose* even more LIFE POINTS in the Dreamtime; and sometimes it can actually kill you.

Experience

Whichever method you use to restore LIFE POINTS you can never get back more than you started with. But you *can* add to your overall LIFE POINTS (rather slowly, admittedly) with EXPERIENCE. You earn ONE Experience Point for every fight you survive or puzzle you solve successfully. (And it's up to you to keep track of them.) Once you have collected 20 Experience Points, you can trade them in for ONE Permanent Life Point. A Permanent Life Point is added to your overall LIFE POINTS total; and better yet,

you can carry up to 10 Permanent Life Points with you into your next adventure.

Money

Since it's always useful to have a few gold pieces with you on an adventure, you can make a start by rolling two dice and multiplying the result by 10. This gives you your starting money in gold pieces.

Now turn to 41.

22

It's a nice church. Small, but nice, surrounded by a nice graveyard. (Some graveyards can be very nice if you don't have to live in them.) There is a narrow winding path up to the front door, which is open, as church doors have to be in the Age of Chivalry, since you never know when you'll need to seek sanctuary from some chivalrous Knight who's gone bananas and wants to hack you into stock cubes.

You walk up that narrow, winding path, sniffing the scent of honeysuckle and columbine and wondering why you're going into a nice place like this when Merlin explicitly told you to keep going in the *grotty* direction.

Feeling a little guilty for going in a nice direction, you hesitate right at the church door. But not long, since a huge hand emerges and drags you bodily inside.

You find yourself facing a massive individual

wearing a broadsword, chain mail, helmet, metal gauntlets, metal leggings, spike-toed metal armour boots and a dog collar. In his left hand he holds a spiked mace. In his right, he holds you. It seems you have met the vicar. One suspects he may be a member of the Church Militant.

'Have you come for Service?' asks the Vicar in the sort of voice that rolls up from his boots and reverberates across distant hills.

'No, not exactly—' you begin.

'To make an Offering, then?'

'Well, actually—'

'Bury your dead? Get married? Steal some lead off the roof? Visit the crypt?'

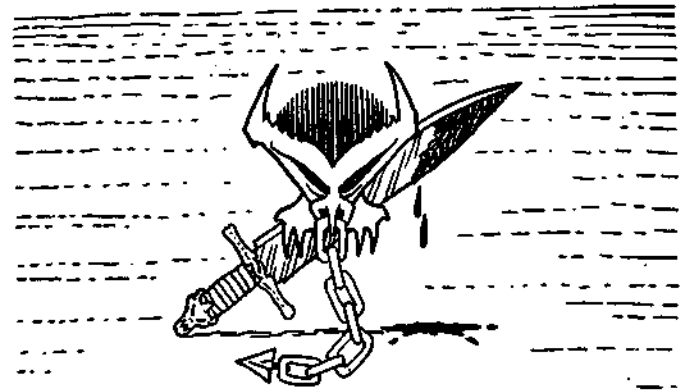
'Not—' But you stop, as a thought strikes you. The crypt sounds a pretty unpleasant place and since you *were* feeling a bit guilty, you may be able to start moving in an unpleasant direction. You clear your throat. 'The crypt,' you say. 'That's it, Reverend Sir: I have come to visit the crypt.'

'Why?' asks the Vicar.

'Because I have an abiding interest in ancient monuments and historical matters pertaining to our Realm as presently established and the Roman occupation preceding it,' you lie glibly.

'Come,' says the Vicar, a man of few words, as he turns and clanks off down the aisle.

Toddle along after him. He's heading for the crypt at 6.



EVREDIMENTAI

23

This insignia looks maddeningly familiar. You peer at it closely, trying to remember. Then it comes to you: it is the family crest of the wicked Wizard Ansalom! You saw it on the gate of his Dark Castle when you had your very first Grailquest adventure.

But the Wizard Ansalom is dead and gone, isn't he? Aply assisted to 14 by no less a hero than your own good self. So what's his insignia doing here on a chicken farm? Perhaps he set up this farm while he was still alive, hiding it in the woods for some evil purpose and now he's dead, nobody knows where it is and it's just been left alone.

Can you remember anything about chickens in the Dark Castle, Pip?

You still have a choice. You can enter the stockade at 33. Or try to go deeper into these woods (39). Or throw your hat at the whole thing and return to the village (4) for a game of pogolfit (58) or any other available option.

24

You are standing on a desolate, fog enshrouded, windswept moor, chill, barren, soggy underfoot, eerie, lonely, gloomy, oppressive, threatening, malodorous and emanating an all-pervading sense of horror, terror and ancient evil.

This is by far the nastiest place you have ever had the dire misfortune to venture into. Which probably means....

Yes! There it is! Over to the North! You've found it, Pip! Looming from the swirling mist are two massive granite pillars and between them a huge brass portal (open!) leading into a confusion of writhing, moaning, multicoloured fog.

This is definitely the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead. This is the place you've been looking for. This is the end of your adventure. This is your road to even greater glory. This is the softest touch you've ever had: all you have to do is nip across and close the Gate. Nothing to it.

Except maybe for that Thing standing in the Gateway.



24 The Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead!
(Complete with Guardian Thing)

I suppose you could always go home now, but it does seem a bit pointless. Or you could ignore the Thing and just saunter casually up to the Gate and close it. (If so, go to 47.) Or you could attack the Thing before trying to close the Gate. (If so, go to 57.) Or you could nip over to 63 and ask EJ what he thinks.

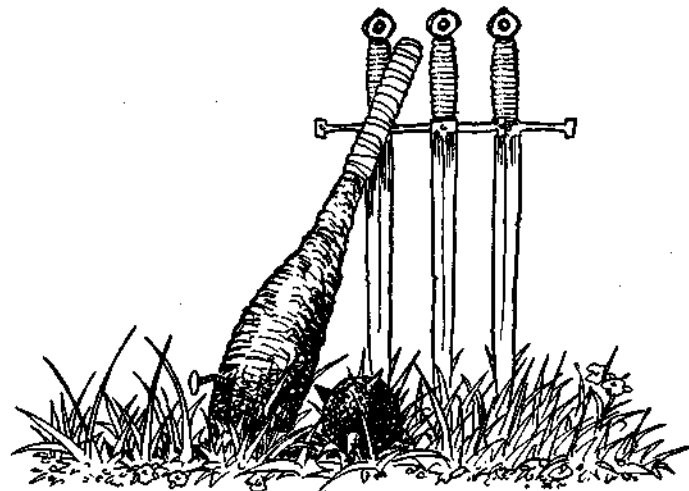
25

What a pleasant way to start an adventure! What an *extraordinarily* pleasant way to start an adventure! Merlin has dispatched you - possibly by accident - to the village green of ... of ... well, of a village somewhere. It's impossible to say quite where, since you've never been here before and there are no signs up.

You are standing in the shade of a large chestnut tree, while in front of you, on the green, some sort of game is taking place.

It's quite a peculiar game, actually, played by a group of rather sturdy young men and watched by a group of rather willowy young women. At one end of the green someone has stuck three swords into the ground side by side. Standing directly in front of these three swords is one of the players, a redheaded youth wearing a padded leather jacket and a metal helmet and carrying a large club with an iron nail stuck through it.

At the other end of the green is another of the players mounted on a pony and carrying a massive wooden mallet.



Between them, on the ground, is one of those spiked iron balls you usually see attached to a mace in Knightly Tournaments. And between the ball and the swords is a net. The rest of the players are scattered about on the green doing nothing in particular.

As you watch, the rider urges his pony into a gallop, heading directly towards the player in front of the three swords. As he reaches the spiked iron ball, he hits it an almighty swipe with the mallet, falling off his mount in the process.

'Tore!' cries one of the other players, out on the field.

The iron ball curves upwards, arching perhaps fifteen feet off the ground, clearing the net before dropping towards the player at the swords, who steps forward to meet it, swinging his club wildly. He is obviously trying to hit the ball, but instead the ball hits him, crashing down directly on his metal helmet with a reverberating clang that echoes across the green.

The player with the club keels over, unconscious. The player with the mallet (who had fallen from his pony, you recall) is carried off with, apparently, a broken leg.

'Hozzat?' calls another of the players on the field.

An old man, wearing several hats one on top of the other, emerges from the side of the green and walks across slowly to examine the three swords, one of which has been knocked slightly askew by the unconscious player with the club.

'Out!' calls the old man. The willowy women applaud politely. What a strange game.

'Love one,' calls the old man, then adds, 'New ball, please.'

But interesting though all this might be, you have an adventure to advent. What was it Merlin said? The *least pleasant* direction? You look around you.

To the north (judging by the lie of the sun) are the thatched cottages of the village itself, a drowsy rural setting, with honeysuckle climbing up the walls and roses in the gardens. To the west a road which winds away into the distance between

serene meadows towards a bright valley between two gentle hills. To the east, a small wood full of birdsong. And to the south, the green. Nothing very unpleasant here, not anywhere.

Claaaaaang! Crash! Clunk!

'Hozzat!'

'Out!'

Someone else seems to have bitten the dust.

One of the willowy young maidens has appeared beside you. 'Do you play pogolfit?' she asks without preamble, presumably referring to the peculiar game. Then, without waiting for a reply adds, 'Only they seem to be out of clubberswingers and since you seem an athletic type, I thought you might like to join in ...'

What a crazy situation. Three different directions, all of which seem equally pleasant and an invitation to join in some stupid village game. And while you're trying to make up your mind, the Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead remains open, spreading its evil and corruption like a creeping plague through Avalon. Better make some sort of decision quickly. If you go north into the village, turn to 4.

If you take the road westward, move to 10.

If the wood to the east seems your best bet, try 42.

And if you must waste your time playing pogolfit, go to 58.

Whatever the dice says, that hulking great brute lumbering towards you doesn't look very friendly. You have a few seconds before it reaches you, a few seconds to make a life or death decision.

If you mistrust your successful Friendly Reaction roll and decide to fight the Gorilla anyway, turn to 51. If you decide to stay friendly, having come this far, go to 56.

What a funny place. The shop entrance is down a flight of eight stone steps and there are six more steps (wooden, this time) into the dim, musty interior. Mind your head on that stuffed crocodile hanging from the ceiling.

You walk down the creaking steps. As your eyes become accustomed to the gloom (and your nose to an almost overpowering smell of dried herbs) you can see the apothecary himself, a little wizened man in a skullcap, scrunched up on a stool behind the counter, fiddling with a jar prominently labelled 'Mummy Dust'. He peers up at you shortsightedly over the top of steel-rimmed bifocals.

'Who are you? You must tell me your name, otherwise I won't know who you are,' he says testily, with just a hint of a Welsh accent.

'Pip, sir,' you say, a little taken aback both by his attitude and your surroundings. What's more, there is something vaguely familiar about him,

although you're sure you've never met him before.

'Pip? Pip? An odd name. Yes. Yes, indeed. Now stand still. Don't fidget. And tell me what you want.'

Stand still? Don't fidget? Merlin used to say that all the time. Could this be Merlin, metamorphosed into an apothecary?

'Merlin? Is that you, sir, ?' you ask, frowning.

'Davydd!' snaps the apothecary. 'Davydd ap Gwilliam, look you and mind your manners. Do I look like Merlin?'

'No, but you certainly sound like him.'

'That's because the young rascalion is my brother,' says Apothecary Davydd. 'Did he send you to see me?'

'No, not exactly,' you say. 'He sent me to this district, but he never mentioned he had a brother living here.'

'Not surprised. Always was a forgetful boy. Used to wander out without his trousers - did he ever tell you that? And get lost. Of course he doesn't wear trousers now since he took up this magic business instead of learning an honest trade. It's all robes now and pointy hats. Yes. Yes, indeed. I suppose you're one of his adventurers? One of the ones who do all the dirty work while he gets the credit, eh?'

'Well, yes....' you say uncertainly, although you hadn't really thought of it that way.

'Where's he sent you off to, then? Somewhere nasty, I'll be bound. Some dark castle or some dragon's den, eh?'

'Actually,' you say, 'he's sent me looking for the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead.'

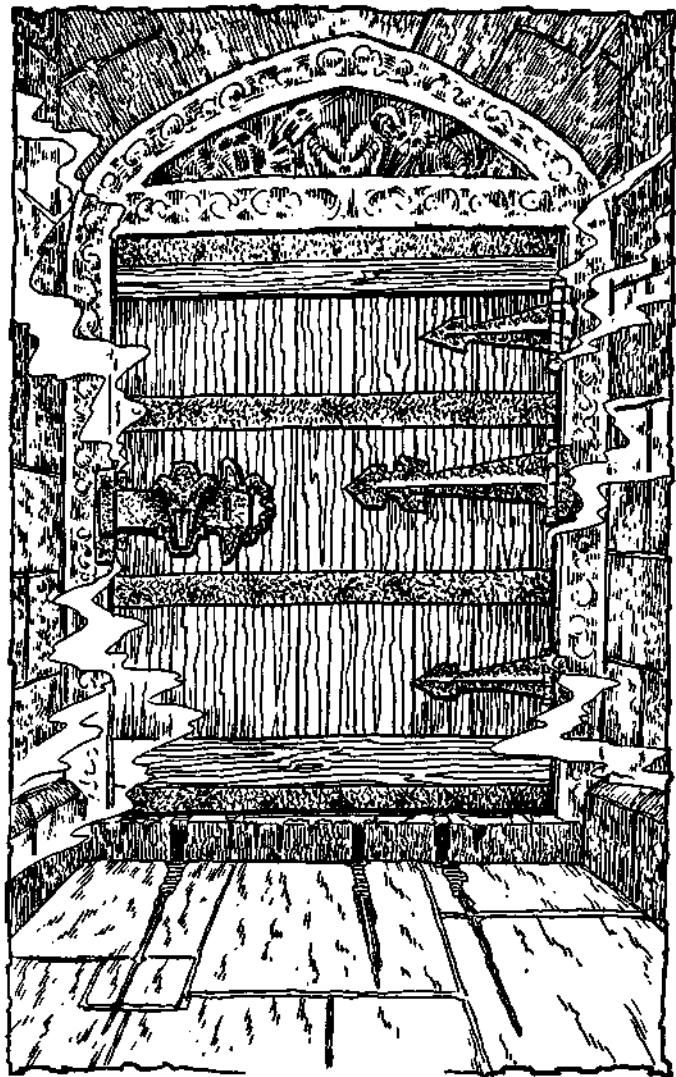
But no sooner have the words emerged from your lips than Apothecary Davydd turns pale, then green and abruptly disappears from sight as he falls off the stool behind the counter in a dead faint.

What a mess this is. In a dead faint at the mere mention of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead. You could try to revive him, of course. A score of 10, 11 or 12 on two dice should do the trick and take you to 18. If you fail, perhaps it best just to creep away quietly, in which case you can take the road west out of the village (10) or try the provisions store (11) or the church (11) or the smithy (17) or make for the wood to the east (41) or even try an innings at pogolfit (58).

28

This corridor goes on forever! Gloomy, dank, smelly and dead straight. (Well, perhaps not *dead* straight: that was an unfortunate turn of phrase.)

You follow it with an increasing feeling of dread, noting that the floor seems to be climbing upwards gently as you continue on. Eventually you reach a heavily barred door. For a moment you hesitate, for the door is massive, bound in iron bands and obviously built to withstand the onslaught of a dinosaur, let alone the efforts of a



28 You reach a door built to withstand the onslaught of a dinosaur

single adventurer. But then it occurs to you that it has been barred on the inside, so all you have to do is slide back the bolts.

Which is what you do, of course, since you've never been one to make a sensible decision like going home to bed.

The great heavy door swings slowly open....

Go to 24.

29

'Look what you done to that poor horse!' wails the Smith, pointing to the carthorse which still has not revived.

'I'm sorry,' you say sheepishly. 'I only wanted to know the way to the Ghast—'

'Don't say it!' screams the Smith. 'Never mention that place by name round here! That was the place made our Apothecary daft. Be off with you! Have a game of pogolfit to take your mind off it.' He begins to pound the anvil with his fist in rage and frustration, cracking the metal surface in a most alarming manner.

Better get out of here before you do any more damage. You can take his advice and try pogolfit by moving on to 58. Or you can take the road west out of the village (10) or try the provisions store (12) or the church (22) or the apothecary (27) or make for the wood to the east (42).

30

With a lunatic rush, you launch yourself upon the snake, seizing its throat and squeezing with all your might.

'Aaahrrrgh!' gasps the snake. Then, to your intense surprise, adds, 'Will you kindly stop doing that at once!'

In the shock of the moment you relax your grip. 'You can talk!'

'Of course I can talk. Most people will tell you I never do anything else. No indeed. Although I'm finding it quite difficult just now: you seem to have crushed my larynx with your impetuous move.' And the snake slithers away a few feet out of attack distance and coughs.

A horrible suspicion is dawning in your mind. 'You're—' You swallow. 'You're Merlin, aren't you?'

'Merlin? Yes, of course I'm Merlin! Who did you think I was?'

'I thought you were an adder,' you say honestly, squinting at the reptile through the mist. It certainly *looks* like a snake. At least it looks more like a snake than it does like a wizard.

'What? Oh yes. Right. Well, I can see how you might be confused. The sort of mistake any idiot could make, I suppose. Keep clear: I shall obviously have to metamorphose.' With which the outlines of the snake begin to shimmer, growing larger and rearranging themselves into a distinctly non-reptilian shape. For a moment the

thing hangs before you, similar in almost all respects to a giant ostrich wearing plus-fours and a deerstalker, then the magical mutation lurches to a conclusion and you are looking at a tall, white-bearded old man with glittering blue eyes. He is wearing long white robes and a pointed hat, on both of which have been embroidered a remarkable selection of mystical symbols. He waves a skinny hand in your direction. 'There, is that better?'

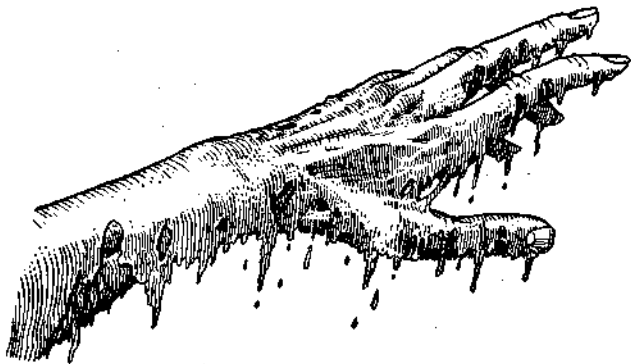
'Yes, thank you, sir,' you say politely. (Even if this is *your* first adventure, you should know that *Pip* knows Merlin of old — and has learned it doesn't pay to get the old fool too annoyed.)

'Good,' says Merlin. 'Now, we'll say no more of that little incident, shall we. You just come with me.'

'Where are we going, sir?'

'To 55,' says Merlin.

There's no arguing with that. Turn to 55.

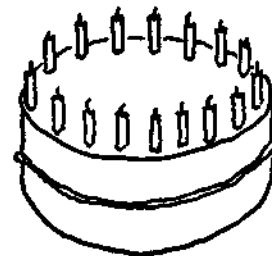


31

The two Gorillas watch you curiously. You thump your chest. 'I,' you say. You fall on your knees, adopting an attitude of supplication. 'Want,' you say. You hold up two fingers, taking great care not to make it a rude sign, Gorillas being notoriously sensitive about such things. 'To,' you say. You circle the little island, peering closely at the ground before whooping with joy and picking up an imaginary object. 'Find,' you say. You throw your arms wide, as if opening a huge portal. 'The Gateway,' you say. You pull a horrible face then fall down flat. 'Of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead,' you say.

One Gorilla looks at the other and taps its forehead lightly with its finger, as if trying to make a point. But then it leans forward and draws something in the sand.

Look at the picture of what the Gorilla draws, and see if you can figure out where to go from here.



North West it is, and heavy going since the road deteriorates into a track and the track climbs upwards into those mountains so that fit and youthful as you are, you become quite breathless and have to stop frequently to rest.

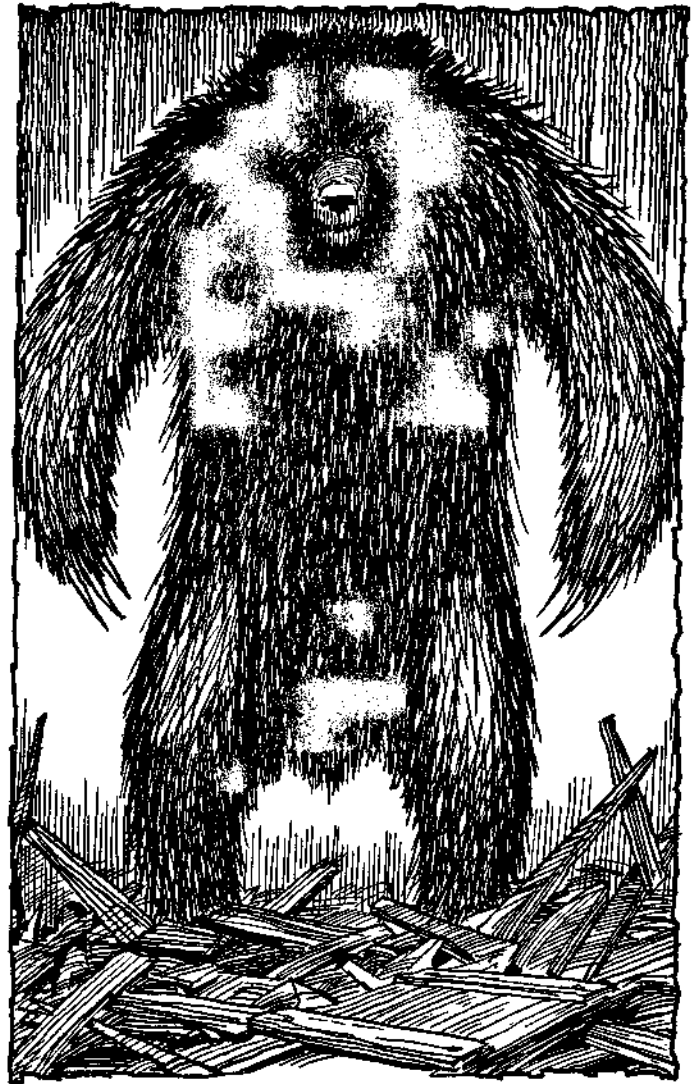
It is difficult to determine whether the direction you are going in is more grotty than the one from which you have come. It is grotty all right, but perhaps not really *more* grotty, although when you're talking grot it's quite difficult to judge.

But you persevere anyway until, near the top of the mountain, you reach a deserted shack.

A deserted shack? Who in their right mind would live up here on the top of a mountain? (Nobody. Maybe that's why it's deserted.) And since you could never resist a puzzle, you go in.

The place is a shambles. It looks as though one of Merlin's whirlwinds has hit it. Although the real cause of the shambles might just be the bear which is lumbering towards you, arms outstretched in a fond embrace.

If you think it might be a Dancing Bear inviting you to waltz, you are sadly mistaken. This is an extremely savage Brown Bear of the type which used to keep down the dragon population in the realm of Avalon. A vastly dangerous creature with 50 LIFE POINTS which does +2 damage with its claws and hugs you every third round of combat for +4 damage. You have just time to whip out EJ and your dice before it falls upon you, rending, biting,



32 This is not a Dancing Bear inviting you to a waltz

crushing and so forth. Determine the outcome of the combat. If the bear wins, leave it in peace and go to **14**. *If you win, you may as well search the shack by moving on to **43**.*

33

Dumb move. The stockade is full of Savage Chickens! This is the experimental breeding farm of the Wicked Wizard Ansalom, now long dead, thank heaven, but survived by many of his monsters which are largely indestructible until they meet up with a hero of your calibre.

Savage Chickens are the worst of the lot, of course. They attack by pecking off just one LIFE POINT but there are always so many of them that you have to be extremely LUCKY to avoid death.

*Roll two dice now to find out how LUCKY you are. Score 12 and you can go back to **19** and try some other option. Score anything else and the Chickens peck you to death: go to **14**.*

34

You are in a tunnel, suffering from a splitting headache and amnesia. But as you stagger forward, your memory gradually returns. It seems that when the caber struck you, it drove you through the ground into some sort of underground cavern, from which you wandered dizzily into a maze of subterranean tunnels of which this is only the latest. Where you are, you have not the slightest idea. Where you are going, you have not the slightest idea. How to get out, you have not the slightest idea.

But there is light ahead, even if distant and dim, so with nothing better to do, you move towards it.

*And in so doing, eventually emerge at **24**.*

35

'What do you think you're doing?' roars the lion, as you launch yourself upon it, swinging EJ in an arc above your head.

You halt your charge in surprise.

'And more to the point, where do you think you're going?' asks the lion, now shape shifting into the horribly familiar figure of the Wizard Merlin. 'I thought I told you to look for the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead? What? What?'

You lower EJ and your head, much at the same time. 'Yes, sir, you did.'

'Then what are you doing here?'

'Looking for it.'

'But this is Africa!' exclaims Merlin in exasperation. 'Heaven alone knows how you managed to wander so far off course. Messing about, I'll be bound. Chasing butterflies and so forth, as young people are wont to do. But you can't stay here, you know, however warm the weather. There's a job to be done and I certainly haven't time to come chasing after you every time you decide to go off globe-trotting.'

And in his annoyance, Merlin does a terrible thing. He waves his arms in the air and casts a transportation spell.

Roll a single die, Pip. Score 1-3 and go to 4. Score 4-6 and go to 45.

36

This is real kid's stuff, but rather fun. You climb down out of the tree and look for a flat bit of stone since no way will the top spin on sand. The Gorillas, who are very excited by now, are grunting and jumping and scratching themselves and pointing to a flat rock.

You wrap the cord of the whip around the top and snap the whip so the top spins on the flat rock. Except it doesn't. The top drops on the rock, but stands quite still. You stare at it for a moment in disbelief before *you* start to spin. Faster and faster, so that the Gorillas and the island and the lake and just about everything else becomes a total blur and you feel you must be on the point of losing consciousness completely.

Spin your way to 25.

37

There is something decidedly familiar with this set-up. A touch of the old *déjà vu* as Monsieur Sir Lancelot du Lac was wont to say in his native France. The Crypt of the Fiend, eh? Surely this can only be the ubiquitous Poetic Fiend, famed throughout the length and breadth of Avalon as the author of the worst verse that ever fell like a pound of suet on a human ear!

If it is, he's a dangerous character unless you're careful to praise his poetry. As against that, he can be very generous at times if you lie a little.

The Crypt itself is rather tastefully done in pink-veined marble with the odd purple velvet drape to break the monotony. The casket, set on a dais in the centre of the chamber, is a curious mixture of oak, ebony and walnut, with highly polished brass handles and a bronze plaque set into the lid.

You step inside, cautiously; and as you do so, the door swings closed behind you. You turn instinctively at the sound and find yourself reading a poetic poster pinned to the door by a dagger plunged into the wood. (Thrilling!) The poster reads:

Friend, or enemy

Well anyway,

You, who now read this script

Have entered in the marble crypt

Of Avalon's Poetic Fiend

Although it seemed

To him you cannot leave, go home or rest

Until you yourself have passed a test.

Quite a decent offering for the Fiend, really, which gives you some indication of the rubbish he usually writes. You try the door and sure enough, it is locked. So as the poem promises, you're in for some sort of test before you can get out again. (Hope you can pass it. The Fiend has a nasty habit of fanging adventurers who fail.)

You move forward cautiously to the casket, from which emerges just the lightest hint of snoring, and bend forward to read the inlaid brass plaque.

The wording, in ornate copperplate engraving, reads:

*It isn't the cough
That carries you off
It's the coffin
They carries you off in*

Which may be vaguely amusing, but it certainly doesn't get you anywhere. Fortunately, there is more to the engraving. Unfortunately, it seems to be some sort of mathematical formula:

$$\begin{aligned} &(15+16+5+14+9+14+7) + (3+15+6+6+9+14) \\ &= (19+5+3+20+9+15+14) + (6+15+18+20+25) \\ &+ (6+15+21+18) \end{aligned}$$

Now that's a sticky one. If you can solve the puzzle, you may be able to go on somewhere. If not you're stuck here until you die of starvation, in which case the only way out is the dreaded 14.

38

The lion leaps, huge mouth gaping, huge fangs glistening, huge claws slashing, but tiny brain fortunately working at no more than half power so that it misses you completely, passing over your head to twist catlike in mid air and land facing you like a sentinel of doom.

So what's it to be now? That lion looks as though it has a million LIFE POINTS and doesn't know a friendly reaction from a plate of

egg and chips. But if you're to find the Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead, you can't really turn back from a little thing like a lion, can you? Let's forget friendly reaction rolls for once, whip out old EJ and make a name for ourselves, eh? You can attack the lion viciously in 35.



39

The undergrowth becomes thicker and thicker until it seems you won't be able to go any further. But you persevere, like any brave adventurer, hacking a little here, cutting a little there, squeezing through somewhere else.

And for all that effort, you find yourself back at 25.

40

'What I am really trying to say,' you continue, your voice rising slightly with hysteria as the snake slithers all the way up your leg and crawls on to your lap, 'is that we must approach this situation sensibly, like adults. Not that I am suggesting for a moment you are not an adult. Or, indeed, that you are. I am not actually expert on snakes. Not that I have anything against snakes. Some of my best friends are ...'

'Do stop talking nonsense,' remarks the snake. 'We'll have to listen to quite enough rubbish when we go to Camelot without you starting it now.'

'You can talk!' you exclaim. 'You're a talking snake!'

'I'm a talking wizard in the shape of a snake,' says the snake grumpily. 'There's a lot of difference between the two.'

'Merlin?' you ask hesitantly.

'Of course, Merlin. Who ever heard of an English grass-snake with a Welsh accent?'

'Excuse me, sir, but you're not a grass-snake - you're an adder.'

'Am I? Good thing I didn't bite you then. Now, I expect you'd be more comfortable if I was in my normal form....' The snake slithers off your lap, wriggles a short distance and, in a spectacular puff of pink smoke, changes to a tall old man in white robes and pointed hat. He strokes his white beard and stares at you with glittering blue eyes. 'You're

late. There's no time to waste. Come with me.' And off he strides.

There's no sense arguing with the old fool, so you may as well follow him. He's headed for 55.

41

'Now first things fir—' Merlin stops abruptly, frowning. 'Where's your sword?'

'I - uh, I left it at home,' you admit guiltily. (Although why you should be feeling guilty is a mystery.)

'What a silly thing to do. Supposing you'd met a monster - what then? You'd be eaten, that's what. But never mind, I shall teleport it to you before we go.'

Go? Go where? But you don't dare ask yet.

'Now,' says Merlin briskly, 'you'd better sort out your equipment. I came into a little money from a grateful gnome the other day, so I don't have to charge you for it. But I'd better warn you not to load yourself down too much. This business with the Gateway has affected the Law of Gravity, so every item you carry will deduct one from your SPEED. You can find your basic SPEED right now by rolling two dice and doubling the result. Then deduct one from your answer for every item you decide to carry. If you drop below half SPEED for any reason, you can only strike every other turn in combat, so don't take too much. Now, roll up your *stats* and LIFE POINTS if you haven't done that already; then take your pick from this list....'

And he produces a parchment inventory of the following useful items:

INVENTORY

Axe
 Artificial Aardvark
 Backpack
 Blanket
 Bandages
 Bookworm
 Blue powder
 Carpentry hammer
 Cooking utensils* (counts as 4 off SPEED)
 Container of oil
 Climbing spikes
 Change of clothes
 Change of boots
 Clickstick
 Dog collar
 Fish-hooks
 Food rations* (counts as 4 off SPEED, but one LIFE point comes back each time you eat)
 Gold braid
 Harp
 Healing potion (1 dose)
 Hasp
 Joke Book
 Knife
 Leather thong-thing
 Lute
 Parchment (12 sheets)
 Powdered ink
 Quill pen

Rope (15 m coil)
 Sack (per six)
 Saw
 Tent (counts as 5 off SPEED)
 Tinderbox
 Waterbag
 Xylophone

'Excuse me, Merlin, sir,' you say politely, 'there are some items here I don't understand....'

'Really? Seems clear enough to me. What are they?'

'Well, the Artificial Aardvark for one thing....'

'A little invention of my own,' says Merlin proudly. 'It's a sort of mechanical mouse that eats ants.'

'What about the bookworm?'

'That's a worm that eats books - I should have thought you'd have known that.'

'But why...?' But Merlin is looking impatient, however, so you only ask, 'Blue powder?'

'Handy stuff that. You throw it behind you if you're being chased and if you roll a 6 or better on two dice, whatever's chasing you will slip and break it's neck. I can only spare enough for one use though.'

'Clickstick?' you ask.

'Another of my inventions. It enables you to communicate with crickets.'

This is getting sillier and sillier. 'Why should I want gold braid, a joke book or a xylophone?'

'Why should you want a hammer or a saw?' Merlin asks in return.

'Because they might come in handy.'

'So might gold braid, a joke book and a xylophone,' Merlin says dogmatically. '*Anything* might come in handy in an adventure like this. But it's up to you what you take.'

So make your choice carefully, Pip, enter the details in your Quest journal, then turn to 2 where Merlin has more surprises for you.

42

This looks promising - it's a very gloomy, brooding sort of wood. It's very tangled and overgrown and the path looks as if nobody has dared to use it in years. The tree branches are all intertwined and there are a great many creepers as if all the trees and plants were engaged in slowly trying to strangle each other. As you stand here nervously, you can hear strange noises in the undergrowth — strange slithery noises. And there are birds in there too, except they aren't singing: they're cackling.

If you want to take the path into the wood, turn to 19. If not, you can always go back to the village and play pogolfit (58), go to Church (11), visit the Apothecary (27), visit the Smith (17) or try the Provisions Store (12).

43

Most of the contents are rubbish (and smashed up rubbish at that) but in the bottom of a blackened

cauldron, you find an interesting looking ring, which tingles when you put it on your finger.

A tinglering!

Adventurers sometimes find them, although nobody has ever discovered what they do. And since you can never take them off once you put them on, you might as well wear this one.

And now, since there is nothing more up here on the mountain (not even another bear) and no way down except the way you came, you'd better go back to the Village at 4 and decide on some other course of action.

44

Something funny is happening. Well, perhaps funny isn't exactly the right word, since the lid of the casket is slowly opening and out of it is rising a slim, deathly pale figure in white gloves, evening suit and an opera cloak, staring at you with deep-set red eyes and smiling at you with top teeth so long they actually come down over his lower lip.

*'Hail, Adventurer Bold,
Come in out of the cold
Having solved the formula
As swiftly as a primula,'* he says.

Swiftly as a primula? You curb your natural revulsion at such bad verse and bow, for this is surely the Poetic Fiend.

'Well spoken!' you exclaim. Then, since you know which side your bread is buttered on, you

add, 'And may I express my profound respect for the lyrical quality, scansion, style and meter of your words? Exquisitely poetic, I found them.'

'Why thank you,' says the Fiend, obviously well pleased by all this rubbish. 'I have been looking for an adventurer of your taste and discernment for a long time. I wonder if I might beg a simple favour from you?'

'Anything!' you cry, getting quite carried away.

'The fact is,' says the Fiend, 'that I am in quite urgent need of a poster to advertise my next Poetry Reading. Something simple, yet elegant, you appreciate, with perhaps some decorative drawing and wording stating that the Reading shall be in the Crypt on Thursday evening, Dress Optional. Do you think you could draw up such a poster for me?'

'Well, yes... 'you say uncertainly.

'Good!' says the Fiend. 'And since advertising work is extremely well paid these days, you may take it that I will reward you handsomely for your endeavours.'

What an interesting development. Who would have thought an Arthurian adventurer would have ended up in the advertising business. Use the blank page opposite to design your poster for the Fiend's Poetry Reading, then, when you have finished, turn to 53.

Here's trouble and no mistake. Merlin's sense of direction must have slipped up badly. You are on a

PIP'S POSTER FOR THE FIEND

tiny, barren island in the middle of an ornamental lake, its still surface smooth as glass. There are two other things on the island (which is only a few yards across at best, incidentally). One is a leafless tree. The other is a gorilla.

A gorilla? Has the old fool sent you to Africa? No time to worry about that now: the gorilla is lumbering towards you. Better make up your mind fast what to do - he's HUGE. Will you climb the tree to escape? Go to 5. Will you dive into the lake and swim for shore (it isn't very far)? Go to 11. Dare you try for a friendly reaction? If you do and succeed, turn to 26. Will you fight the beast? Turn to 51.

46

You clamber over the coffins then pause at the door to read the tattered notice scroll. It says:

CRYPT OF THE FIEND

(Please Knock)

Do you really want to go in here? If so, knock politely, then turn to 37. If not, you can always change your mind and go through the archway (13) or take the gloomy corridor (28).

47

Casually you saunter up to the massive Gateway. Whistling innocently, you begin to push the Gateway closed.

Smiling grimly, the Thing pulls you inside the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead.

Now stop messing about and go to 59.



47 Smiling grimly, the Thing pulls you in

48

First adventure, eh? According to the atomic pudding formula, you should throw two dice. Score 11 or 12 and go to 54. Score 2 to 10 and go to 62.

49

Second adventure, eh? According to the atomic pudding formula, you must roll two dice. Score 9,10,11 or 12 and go to 54. Score 2 to 8 and go to 62.

50

You stop. Who wouldn't when they start to imagine snakes are talking to them? (You haven't been drinking, have you?) You turn in time to see the snake rearing up ... and changing.

Changing quite dramatically at that, growing taller and broader, shifting its outlines and colours until in place of the snake you are looking at a tall, thin old man with glittering blue eyes, a long white beard, similar robes and a pointed hat with funny symbols on it.

'Merlin!' you gasp. 'Is it you?'

'Of course it's me! Who else would be silly enough to go around as a snake in this weather? We snakes feel the cold you know: very bad circulation and no fur. But there's a reason for my appearing as a snake. A very important reason. Unfortunately I can't quite recall it now. But that's no matter. We don't have time to discuss snakes. Come with me.'

And he turns on his heel and strides away, leaving you to follow.

Which, of course, you do. If you move quickly before he disappears from sight, you will find him at 55.

51

Splat!

That's the sound of you losing a fight with a Gorilla.

Go to 14.

52

Phew! That was some run, Pip. You feel as if you've run miles and miles and miles. But at least you've outdistanced the lion. Of course there's nothing like being chased by a lion for bringing out the best in a sprinter, but it was still a sterling effort.

Now, where are we...?

If you look around carefully, you will find you are actually in 4.

53

The Fiend strikes his forehead violently with the back of his hand, gasps, reels and pales - all, apparently, because you have just shown him the advertising poster you drew up.

'Magnificent!' he exclaims. 'Superb! Or, in the idiom of the artwork, new and improved! What appeal! What enticement! What inducement to

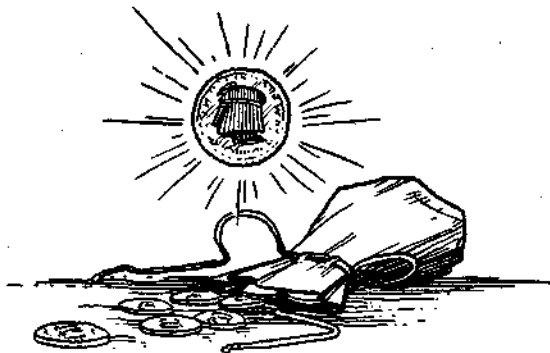
attend my reading. Dear friend, I am so excited, I can feel the Muse arising in me.'

Which is bad news since it usually means he is going to spout poetry; but there's no way of stopping him, so you stand quiet and smile grassily as he strikes a pose and declaims:

*Young Pip, an adventurer hearty,
Drew crowds to a Poetry Party
The Fiend was the host there
But it was Pip's poster
That got them all coming so smartly!*

Not a bad little Limerick at all, especially when you remember the monstrosities the Fiend usually composes. You applaud enthusiastically and the Fiend makes a smiling, sweeping bow.

'Well now,' he says, 'this is all extremely jolly, but it won't get the bills paid. Starting with yours.' At which he produces from the folds of his opera cloak a small leather drawstring purse which



clinks and chinks delightfully, strongly suggesting there is gold inside; and quite possibly a good deal of it. The Fiend drops the purse into your greedily outstretched hand. 'Here are one hundred golden pieces,' he tells you, confirming your suspicion that this is a fat-cat reward. 'Ninety-nine of them are perfectly ordinary spendable golden pieces which you may use for bribery or anything else you wish. But one is a magical gold piece. If you are lucky enough to find it, it could do you a lot of good in the trials and tribulations which undoubtedly await you.'

*Sounds fascinating. Wonder what the magic coin does? But best find out if you can find it among all the others, Pip. Now pay attention, because this is a bit tricky. First, you must calculate your chances of finding the coin. You do this by using Professor Einstein's famous formula $C = (P \times D^2)/(GQ \times PA)$ where PA cannot be > 3 . (Don't panic.) This formula, which very nearly led to the invention of an atomic pudding, means that the Chances of Pip finding the coin are equal to two dice rolls divided by the total number of Pip's GrailQuest adventures. If this is your first adventure, go to **48**. If it is your second, go to **49**. If it is your third, go to **61**.*

54

Frantically, you search through the coins, weighing them in your hands to find subtle differences in weight, biting them to see if one might be softer (or harder) than the rest, polishing

them to find out if any one shines more than the others, testing their temperature to discover if one might be colder or hotter and generally making a completely logical approach to the problem before you luck out and *find the magic coin!!!*

And what an incredible little coin it is. It's actually alive (you feed it on cheese and breadcrumbs.) If you throw it at a monster during combat, it will add 5 whole points of damage to your score every time you have a successful hit with sword or spell. The coin cannot be destroyed and it comes back to you automatically after each fight. Put it away carefully and don't forget to use it when you're in trouble. Now, since your business with the Fiend is finished, better toddle back to 6 and pick a different direction.

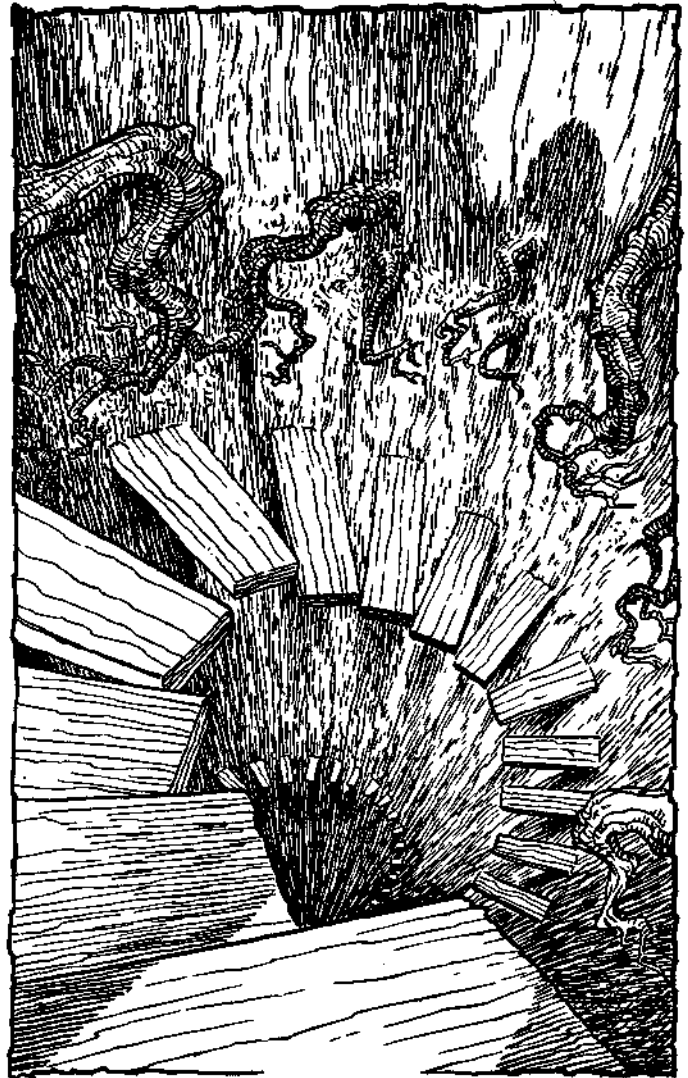
55

He's walking towards the oak tree. He's walking *into* the oak tree! There's a hole as broad and tall as yourself in the trunk of that huge old dead tree, Pip, and if Merlin has to stoop a little, he can still fit through easily enough.

So you follow him, feeling like an overgrown squirrel.

Would you believe, he's had stairs put in! A sort of spiral staircase that winds upwards to the top of the tree and downwards into the bowels of the earth.

'Excuse me, sir,' you say hesitantly, 'but where are we going?'



55 A spiral staircase winds down the inside of the oak tree

'Down,' says Merlin brusquely. 'Up takes us to the observatory, but we won't be needing astrology just at the moment.'

'Down into the roots?'

'Roots? You do rabbit on. Down to my living quarters, of course. My laboratory. My oraculum. My transmogrification chamber. My food store. My fuel store. My kitchens. My library. My...'
But what else is down there must remain a mystery for the moment since he is already well down the spiral staircase and his voice is fading.

So he lives here, in this oak tree. An eccentric wizard to be sure, since you know he also lives (sometimes) in a log castle and (sometimes) in a crystal cave. But not wishing to be left behind, you follow him quickly — almost too quickly since the running round and round the spiral staircase makes you feel distinctly dizzy.

The staircase ends in a hallway and while there is no sign of Merlin you notice a doorway ajar and go in to find him seated at a table in the middle of a surprisingly comfortable room, hunched over a large crystal ball which is emitting a weird blue-green light.

'Look at this,' he says, gesturing you over. 'Look. Look.' He bends forward short-sightedly, his spindle of a nose only an inch away from the surface of the glowing crystal.

Across you go and peer into the crystal over his shoulder. To your surprise, it is rather like looking into a room through the wrong end of a

telescope. And what an interesting room, for it is full of Knights and in the centre is a table that can only be the famous Table Round. The Knights seem very excited, for several of them are gesticulating wildly and most of the remainder show expressions of worry and concern. Only the King (whom you recognize instantly) appears calm.

'I wonder what they're saying,' you murmur absently.

'Just a moment,' Merlin says, 'I'll turn up the sound.' He makes a mystic pass over the crystal and at once a clamour of voices fills the room.

Turn to 1.

56

You (gulp!) throw down your sword—'

'Here, what do you think you're doing?' asks Excalibur Junior, but you ignore him.

—and stand in mute, helpless appeal, hoping your youthful charm will be sufficient to calm the fury of a gorilla. (Are you sure you really want to do this?) You stand still, head bowed, waiting, totally defenceless, feeling the ground tremble beneath your feet as something huge approaches.

Two massive muscular arms enfold you. A great ugly fanged face bears down towards your own.

Smack!

You have just been kissed by a gorilla, Pip!

Collect your wits and go to 64.

57

'Have at you, foul beast of Hades! I, Pip, the adventurer, will smite you into oblivion and have your guts for garters!' you cry heroically as you launch yourself upon the Thing.

Which runs away.

Can you believe that? The horrifying Thing just up and ran away! Not so much as a snap in your direction!

Excitedly you run after it, still hurling abuse and heroic jibes.

Which is possibly a big mistake, as you may discover when you turn to 59.

58

'Anyone mind if I join in,' you remark cheerfully, as you step on to the pogolfit pitch.

All heads swing in your direction. All eyes regard you suspiciously for an instant. All foreheads crease in sudden frowns. 'Are you prepared to bat?' somebody asks hesitantly. 'Yes!' you exclaim with confidence. All mouths stretch in dazzling smiles,

'We got a batter!' the word goes round excitedly.

'And only just in time,' remarks the player crouching behind the three swords, a middle-aged man with a drooping moustache and bird-like eyes.

'In time for what?' you ask, with just the slightest

doubt at your decision beginning to nibble at the edges of your mind.

'To face the Visitors,' the player says.

'Visitors?'

'The Scots team. We've been warming up until they arrived. But they're here now. At least they soon will be: you can tell by the distant howl of the haggis and the smell of whisky.'

In point of fact, you can hear nothing and the only smell you notice is peat smoke, easily explained by a small chimney fire in one of the village cottages, but you say nothing, assuming these people must know their own business. And indeed they do, for as you take your place before the swords, there is a sudden skirl of bagpipes (which the villagers, deprived of your education, may well have mistaken for the distant howl of a haggis) and on to the pitch marches a huge contingent of brawny men in kilts, bobbles bobbing on their bonnets, sporrans swinging with military precision, dirks stuck down their leggings and flashing in the sun.

They are a terrifying lot.

The Scots form a tightly-knit circle in the centre of the pitch and remove their bonnets gravely while a long piper squeezes out a plaintive lament. One by one, the great bearded heads bow as if in silent tribute.

'What are they doing?' you ask curiously.

'Paying respect to the dead,' says the sword-wicket-keeper grimly.

'Has somebody died?' you ask, looking around you curiously for a coffin.

'Not yet,' says the wicket-keeper, refusing to meet your eyes.

The piping stops. 'Hogmanay!!!' roar the Scots visitors in unison. There is a pattering of polite applause from the maidens underneath the oak tree. Then the largest of the visitors breaks away from the group and struts towards you. He stops no more than a yard or two away, flexes massive muscles and remarks, 'Machoot, och aye, braw bricht nicht the noo.'

You nod politely, not understanding, but assuming it to be a Gaelic greeting. He nods back tersely, then lumbers off to where several of his fellow visitors are taking sections of a collapsable caber from their sporran pouches and busily assembling them into something resembling a tree trunk. You watch with growing trepidation as the caber grows longer and fatter. The Machoot (he of the massive muscles) takes the finished assembly, staggering a little under its incredible weight, totters backwards, catches his balance, then begins a slow, bow-legged run in your direction.

'Here, just a minute—' you start to protest, realizing abruptly there are rules of pogolfit nobody has bothered to mention to you.

But it is too late, all too late.

'Sassenachs!!' roars the visiting team in unison as Machoot hefts the mighty caber in a vast arc in your direction.

'Don't take your eye off it,' advises the wicket-keeper grimly, as he dives for cover.

But it is unnecessary advice. You stand transfixed, horrified. The huge tree trunk drops from the sky, growing larger and larger, until it makes contact with your head, driving you into the soft turf like a fence stake.

Go to 34.



59 What perils await you in the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead?

INTO THE GHASTLY KINGDOM OF THE DEAD!

59

That's done it! That's torn it and no mistake! You are in a vast, gloomy underground chamber, measuring 40 feet square. The floor, walls and ceiling are composed of large black granite slabs. The only light is a single flickering torch set in a bracket on the north wall.

There is nothing in the room (except you, of course) and most upsetting of all, *there is no door out!!*

Is this it? Is this the end? Is this where the brave adventurer ends up, wasting slowly in some dank chamber of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead, lonely, miserable, cold, unhappy, facing no brighter prospect than the final solemn journey to the dreaded 14? No, of course it isn't. Pull yourself together. If you look in the south western corner you'll find a scrap of ancient parchment on which there is a map. Go to 65 and study it carefully. It may show you a way out of this mess. (And probably into an even worse one, but that's a different story.)

Talking snakes may be of considerable interest to a naturalist, but to an adventurer like yourself, all they suggest is trouble. So you don't even pause in your stride but continue racing down that misty road like a Vicar hunting for a missing Knight on Sunday.

But somehow the snake gets ahead of you.

It's impossible, but there it is, rearing up in the middle of the road.

You make a racing turn, your boots squealing on the road, and race back the way you came.

But once again the snake is ahead of you!

Are there two snakes? A glance over your shoulder convinces you there are not. You turn again. And again that pesky snake is in front of you.

'A simple matter of bilocation,' remarks the snake as you screech to a bewildered halt. 'Being in two places at the same time, that is. But enough of this intellectual chatter—' And without further ado, the snake dissolves into a cloud of glittering particles which resolve themselves into the shape of a tall old man, white-bearded, blue-eyed and dressed in long white robes and a pointed hat.

'Merlin!' you exclaim delightedly, for while the shape is not yet distinct, it could be no other than the old shape-shifter.

'Yes,' he says. 'Yes, indeed. But no time to discuss it further — we're late as it is. You come with me.'

And he turns and strides away, continuing to solidify as he does so.

You'd better stride after him, I suppose. He's going to 55.

61

Third adventure, eh? You're getting very experienced in this sort of thing now. According to the atomic pudding formula, you should roll two dice. Score 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12 and go to 54. Score 2 to 6 and go to 62.

62

Frantically, you search through the coins, weighing them in your hands to find subtle differences in weight, biting them to see if one might be softer (or harder) than the rest, polishing them to find out if any one shines more than the others, testing their temperature to discover if one might be colder or hotter and generally making a complete idiot of yourself since you can find absolutely no difference at all.

You've lost out on this one. You haven't found the magic coin. Never mind, you've still got 100 gold pieces to spend, which isn't too bad for knocking up a grotty old poster. Now, since your business with the Fiend is finished, better toddle back to 6 and pick a different direction.

63

'I think we should go home to Camelot,' EJ says.

Which may be excellent advice, but hardly the

sort an adventurer would take. Better go back to 24 and make up your own mind.

64

Sometimes you get yourself into the oddest situations. You are sitting on a tiny island in the middle of a glassy lake, trying to establish some sort of understanding with two Gorillas, the second having climbed down from a nest in the solitary tree.

You point to your chest. 'I am Pip,' you say. Then, since you know the sort of thing that impresses Gorillas, you add, 'Lord of the Jungle.'

EJ sniggers slightly in his scabbard.

'Uungh!' says the first Gorilla.

'Uungh-ungh!' says the second Gorilla.

As an intellectual discussion, this cannot be said to be going well.

But at least you're not being eaten by Gorillas. Will you try sign language? If so, go to 31. Or will you give the whole thing up as a bad job, dive into the lake and swim for shore, leaving the Gorillas to get on with their coconut bashing or whatever they do on the little island? If so, turn to 11.

65

Now there's something to get your teeth into! This looks as though it might turn into an interesting adventure after all. The scrap of parchment seems to be a map of the ghastly place you're in

(see Appendix p. 219). You'll notice 65 is marked as a 40' x 40' room, exactly as you've discovered it to be. But the map shows no less than four secret doors out. Two of those doors lead into rooms, two into corridors. And the various rooms all have section numbers so you'll know where to go.

(Don't do anything yet, Pip - it's dangerous to rush into things down here.)

At the bottom of the parchment somebody has scrawled a message in blood, or possibly tomato ketchup:

*'I have opened the Gateway and hidden the Key!
Find it if you can, Sucker!'*

Yours in Chivalry,
The Black Knight of Avalon.

So that's where the trouble started. The dreaded Black Knight of Avalon, the most wicked noble in the Realm. Looks as though he was the one who opened the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead and let loose that Brass Dragon you killed a while ago. He must have used this map to find his way around the Ghastly Kingdom, so maybe you can do the same until you discover where the Key is hidden.

Now turn the parchment over - there may be something on the back.

There is something on the back: a set of instructions for adventuring in the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead. The handwriting is

different to that of the Black Knight, so you should be able to trust what they say. What they say is this:

LEVEL 1

Study the map carefully. You start from the room marked 65. You may pick any of the four secret doors shown as your exit.

If a door leads directly into a room, turn to the section number shown to discover what you find there.

If a door leads into a shaded area, you will find yourself in a gloomy 10' wide, 10' high corridor with worked stone walls and stone slabbed floor.

For every 60' (6 squares) you have to travel along a corridor to reach wherever you are going, you must roll two dice to find out if you have encountered any Wandering Monsters. Check the result on the Table headed 'Level 1 Wandering Monsters' in the Appendix.

Sometimes the roll will show you meet no Monsters. Sometimes it will show you do. Wandering Monsters are too stupid to be bribed, and too bad tempered ever to give you a Friendly Reaction, so when you meet any, you must fight to the death.

If you kill the Wandering Monsters, you may continue along the corridor (still checking every 60' in case you meet some more.)

If the Wandering Monsters kill you, then it's off to **14** to re-equip and roll up new LIFE POINTS. *But -and this is important — if you are killed anywhere* in the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead, you do NOT have to start the whole adventure again. Instead you return to **65** and start from there. (Or rather here, since this is **65**.)

One more thing. The torch in the wall bracket of this 40' x 40' chamber is almost burned out. If you have no torches, lamps or other light sources in your equipment, you must travel in the dark. You'll be able to find your way all right, but you will not fight nearly so well as usual. You will score damage normally, but you will need to roll an 8 or better to hit, even if you're using EJ.

That's the bad news about Wandering Monsters. The good news is that they usually carry a bit of gold around with them and if you manage to kill them, you can add their gold to your own store. The Table shows how much gold each class of Wandering Monster usually carries.

That's it for the corridors. Now the rooms.

What you'll find in the rooms is anybody's guess.

Good luck.

TREASURE ROOM

That's what it says, Pip! Right there on the door! Who knows what loot and goodies you'll get now to bring home to your adoptive parents with the



66 'Welcome,' says the Nerd

story of how you eventually found the Key and closed the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead!

You rash in eagerly to the 10' x 30' room to find yourself confronted by a very thin, bespectacled Nerd wearing the traditional red cape and spats of the species, seated behind a wooden desk on which are papers and a large bell.

'Welcome,' he says. 'What treasure have you come to give me?'

'Give you?' you echo. 'Give you?' This isn't a real Treasure Room at all - at least not the sort you thought. This stupid Nerd wants you to give *him* treasure, while you were perhaps thinking there might be a bit you could nick.

'Your sword, perhaps - a magical item, I'll be bound if you've survived this far. Or you may have a Tinglering secreted about your person. Or—'

'I have not yet made up my mind to give you anything, Ignoble Nerd,' you tell him pompously, looking around for anywhere he may have concealed treasure, or possibly a key.

'In that case, I shall be forced to ring my bell,' says the Nerd. He blinks at you mildly. 'I'm sure you wouldn't want me to do that.'

Well, would you? Certainly you can't let him have EJ, but he looks the sort of Nerd that would accept a hefty bribe — a 100 gold pieces, say. Or you could always hack him into Nerd cubes before he has a chance to ring the bell.

Or you could let him ring the silly thing anyway and see what happens.

You can try to bribe the Nerd 100 gold pieces. If you succeed you may leave the room safely.

You can let him ring the bell and go to 101.

Or you can hack him into Nerd cubes at 124.

67

No secret door yet, but you've found the source of the smoke. Somebody has been burning poisonous laburnum leaves in an open brazier in the middle of the room. Getting this far has cost you one tenth of your current LIFE POINTS and the smoke is getting thicker.

Continue searching at 139.

Or return to the corridor minus one tenth of your LIFE POINTS.

68

Chirp! says the cricket. Chirp. Chirp-chirp. Chirp.

'The creature suggests yob might like to make your way to 80,' translates the clickstick in a rather academic Oxford accent. 'There you may find something of benefit to your current endeavours.'

Chirp! Chirp-chirp-chirp. Chirp-chirp.

'The creature appears to have formed some affection for you and has consequently suggested it should formulate a medicinal libation to aid you in this adventure,' translates the clickstick.

'Pardon?' you say.

'A healing potion,' sighs the clickstick. 'Do you want the little beast to make you a healing potion?'

'Yes please,' you say, healing potions being most useful things, not to say expensive and certainly safer than the Dreamtime.

In a moment the cricket hands you up a six-dose healing potion compounded from plankton, peanut butter and tomato ketchup. It tastes better than it sounds and will heal a double dice roll of LIFE POINTS each time you use it.

Return to 97 and use any door.

69

A peculiar room this, peculiarly shaped and with a deep purple velvet curtain closing off the northern section.

Cold, isn't it?

There are little glittering crystals on the walls, like ice, except they are green and pink. You touch one curiously and promptly get a cold burn. This stuff is colder than ice, colder than anything you've ever experienced. You're shivering already. You head for the curtain fast before you freeze to death.

If you race for the curtain, throw two dice. Score above 3 and you make it to 138. Score 3 or below and you're a block of pink and green ice, thawing out slowly in 14.

Or you can go back out into the corridor the way you came.

70

Wow! This is the largest chamber you have ever seen for sure! A full 70' across and 90' long with a colonnade of granite pillars supporting a vaulted ceiling.

At the end of the colonnade is a black granite throne on which sits a satin cushion on which sits....

(No, not a Monster—you're getting paranoid.)

... a glittering emerald as large as a duck egg!

The chamber is otherwise empty and there is no exit other than into the corridor from which you came.

That emerald looks as though it might be worth a fortune. Are you going to snaffle it?

Snaffle emerald by going to 128.

Return to the corridor from which you came.

71***

These are very long stairs. Very long, very steep and very dark.

'The sort of place you'd likely find spiders,' whispers EJ, who is a bit nervous of spiders.

But you press on bravely, brushing aside webs—

'Spider webs,' groans EJ.

—knowing perfectly well that any spiders you are

likely to meet will be quite harmless little fly catchers who wouldn't do any harm to a brave—

'Here it comes!' shrieks EJ as two fiery red eyes approach you like an express train from the darkness ahead.

It's a giant spider, of course. What else could it possibly be in a place like this. Only 13 LIFE POINTS, but the bite is poisonous so that if the Spider manages to hit you three times in a row without you hitting back, then you're lethally poisoned and the Spider's next meal. The Spider hits on 6 or better and has surprise automatically since this is its home territory. Curiously enough, it is susceptible to Bribery, as you may have noticed by the asterisks, but it will demand an awful lot of gold. If you get past the Spider, go to 74. If not, try 14.

72

Through the secret door merrily and into a huge 30' x 80' chamber full of pot plants.

Pot plants?

That's what they look like. Rubber plants and ferns and creepers, the occasional flowering cactus and stuff like that, all laid out neatly in aisles like some sort of underground greenhouse. The ceiling of the chamber has crystal globes imbedded - blue, green, pink and white — shining down on the plants to give them a bit of light.

This could be quite a pleasant place if it wasn't for the scruffy looking old fool shuffling towards you with a pitchfork.

73-74

You can either leap on him vigorously and get an automatic surprise attack by going to 103.

Or take a chance that he might be harmless (harmless!) at 132.

73

Mmm. Seems the chest was trapped, Pip.

Nothing serious - just a poison needle. It certainly hasn't killed you; not yet. The problem is you will now lose 1 LIFE POINT for every 10' you travel until you can find some sort of anti-poison potion or spell. Successfully Sleeping or a healing potion will restore LIFE POINTS but not cure the poison.

As a small consolation, the chest contains 50 gold pieces, a hunk of cheese and an old boot (left foot).

Return to 115 and take it from there.

74

At the bottom of the stairs you find yourself in a 20' x 30' chamber with a door in the south wall. The entire place is piled high with the bones, skulls and rusting weapons of previous adventurers. This is not a good omen, Pip.

But pinned to the wall with a broken spear is a tattered sketch map ... (see Appendix, p. 223).

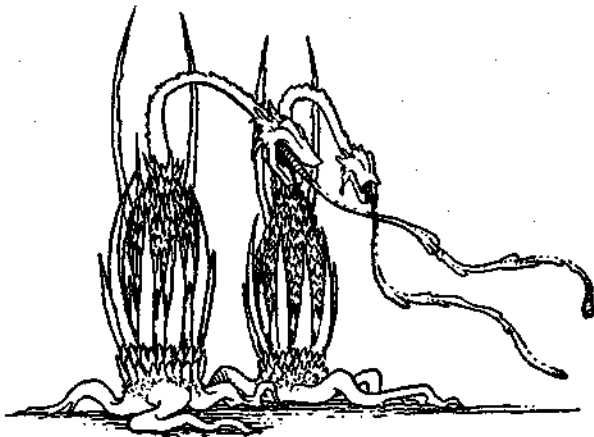
You will find in the corridors of this level that you must make a Wandering Monster roll every 50 feet (5 squares) not every 60 as on the level above.



Results should be read from the Level 2 Wandering Monster table (see Appendix, p. 00).

Try the door?

Or return to 138 and Level 1.



75

Cough, cough, hack.

That's the sound of you coughing, Pip, the reason being that this room is full of smoke. The map shows it as an 80' x 30' chamber, but you'd never know it from what you'd see. The map also shows no other door than the one into the corridor, but there might be a secret door somewhere if you searched. The thing is, do you want to search and risk choking yourself on this smoke - it really is foul and probably dangerously bad for the lungs.

Risk searching for a secret door at 67.

Or return to the corridor and make your way to another section.

76 (each)**

Good grief, Pip - it's a den of Manticores! The clicking of their claws on the stone-flagged floor should have warned you before you opened the door, but it didn't and now it's too late.

There are three of them, Mum, Dad and Little Baby Manticore, a six-foot long toddler, which gives you some indication of the size of Mum and Dad. They do not look at all pleased to see you, probably on account of the chest they are guarding.

This is a tricky one. If you happen to have any blue powder with you, you might use it to make them slip and hence run back to the corridor (slamming the door securely shut behind you). If you haven't, you could run anyway by rolling two dice: score 2 to 6 and the Manticores rip you to pieces which they post to 14; score 7 to 12 and you get back to 129 intact. Or you could be really brave and fight the Manticores. Mum has 30 LIFE POINTS, Dad has 25 and Little Baby has 15, but all hit successfully on a 6 and score +3 damage. What's more, Little Baby has a Fireball similar to your own, which he will fire immediately either of his parents are killed. If they slaughter you, it's off to 14. But if you survive, you get to loot the chest at 107.

77

This looks interesting. A 20' x 20' room with a chest in the middle of the floor. An *unguarded* chest in the middle of the floor. How about that? The monster must be on its tea break.

The thing is, Pip, do you risk trying to open the chest? It may have some sort of nasty trap all ready and waiting to send you back to **14**.

*Risk trying to open the chest by going to **104**.*

*Go through the north western door to **92**.*

Go through the southern door into the corridor.

78

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the south and west walls.

*Take the door south to **129**.*

*The door west to **118**.*

79

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, south and west walls.

*Go east to **121**.*

*Go south to **98**.*

*Go west to **88**.*

80

You find yourself in a dingy, rather cramped 20' x 20' room, stacked floor to ceiling with broken furniture (none of it particularly good-looking even when it was new, so far as you can judge).

Since there are no apparent exits, you turn to leave. But some instinct urges you to search around a bit.

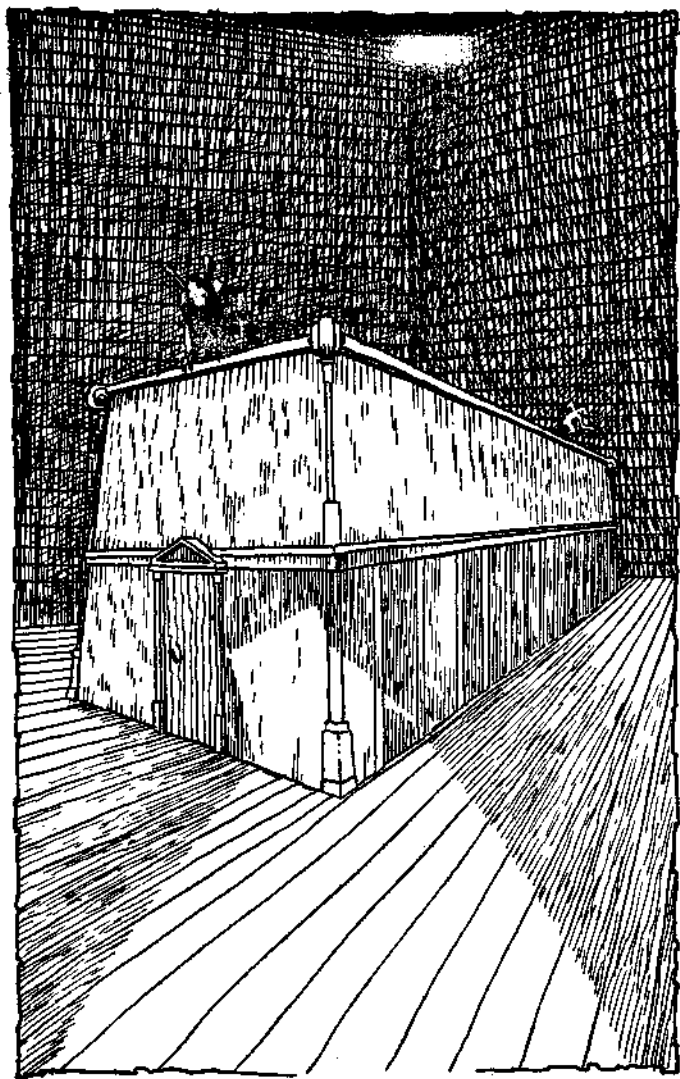
Good instinct, Pip. You've found another piece of parchment with another map! (see Appendix, p. 221) And this map not only shows you two secret doors in Room 80, but also shows you a good few other rooms and corridors that weren't on your first map.

Looks like the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead is a bigger place than you imagined. Study your new map, decide where to go ... and good luck.

81

This vast chamber with its high ceiling has, would you believe, a second long thin room actually built in the middle of its floor. (The Mad Architect strikes again!) There are two doors into this thin room, one at the western end, one at the east. Each is guarded by a smallish Winzing, a squat stubby-winged creature with leathery skin and a sword that's not much longer than a dagger.

*The Winzings will not attack unless you try to enter **117**. If, however, you do and get into a hassle, it's as well to know the Winzing you'll be fighting has 15 LIFE POINTS, hits on 7 and does +1 damage with that little sword. You*



81 A room within a room — complete with winzing guards

don't HAVE to go to 117, of course, but there's nothing else in 81, so your only other option is to return to 135.

82

An empty 10' x 10' room with two doors. Nice surprise: you don't even risk a Wandering Monster.

83

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, north and west walls.

Take the door east to 129.

The door north to 118.

The door west to 89.

84

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, north and west walls.

Go east to 98.

North to 88.

West to 91.

85

You have entered a 30' x 40' chamber, not so big as the one you just left, but big enough and with a higher ceiling.

You have also walked into a web, the strands of which are thick as cables and very sticky. Spinning a new strand down from that high ceiling is a spider the size of a Great Dane.

That's the bad news. The good news is that the Great Danish Spider hasn't reached you yet, so you have time to make a dice roll to find out if you're stuck fast in the web.

Score 1 to 4 and you're not stuck. Score 5 or 6 and you may as well go direct to 14.

Even if you're not stuck, there's still that Spider, which is a lot nearer now. It has 15 LIFE POINTS, strikes on 5 or better and does +2 damage. Because of the situation, no Surprise is involved here on either side. EJ, who is afraid of Spiders, will score one less than his normal damage on account of shivering.

Go to 14 if the Spider kills you.

If you win, go back to 65. (There may be a lot of gold in this chamber, but you cannot search safely on account of the webs.)

86

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, north and west walls.

Go north to 121.

East to 89.

West to 98.

87

How interesting. There are stairs in this room, Pip, leading down into the dark depths of 150. There are also three doors, one leading south into a corridor, one north to 113 and one east to 102.

88

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, south and west walls.

Go east to 79.

South to 84.

West to 106.

89

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, north and west walls.

Go north to 93.

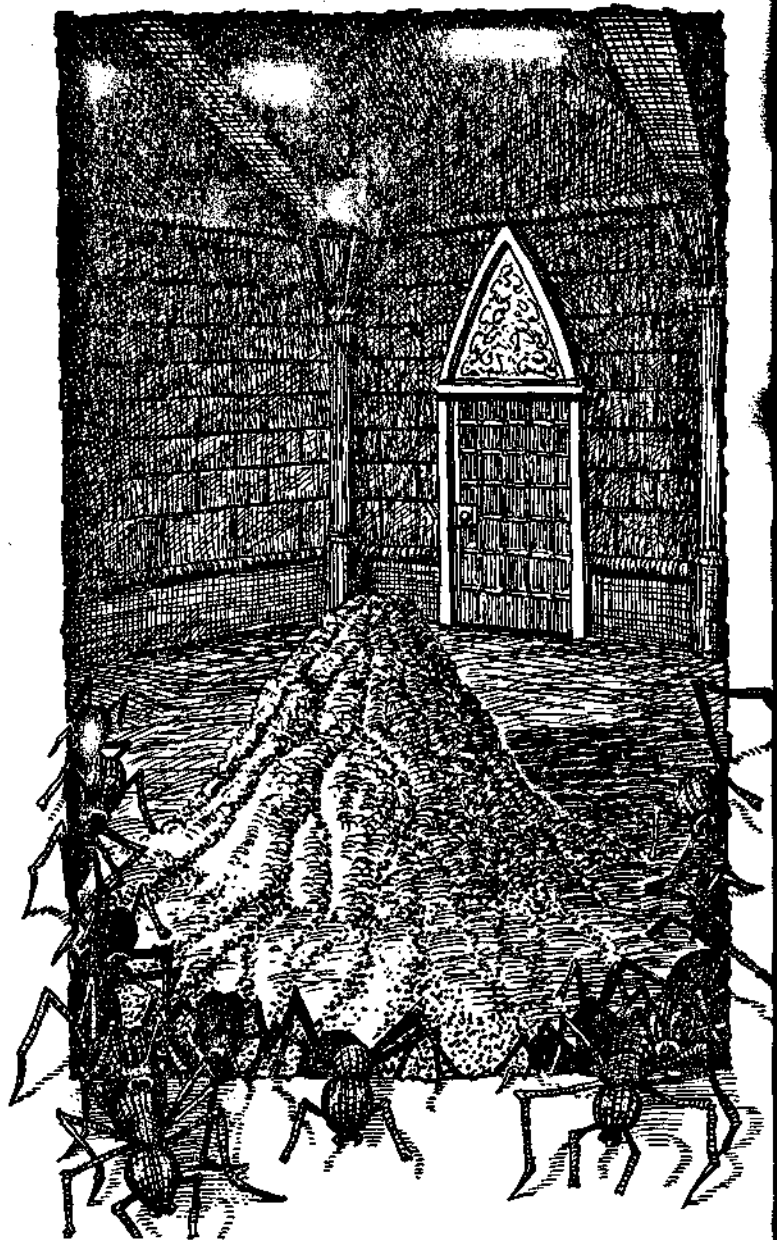
East to 83.

West to 86.

90

Well, at least there's an exit door in this 50' x 20' chamber. There's also a funny-looking sort of mound in the middle of the floor. Curious, you move forward to inspect it, giving it a little poke with EJ.

Now there's trouble. You've disturbed a colony of ants!



Roll two dice and multiply the answer by 10 to find out how many are attacking you. Each has only one LIFE POINT, but is very hard to hit so you will need to score 8 or better to squash it. The ants, in their turn, score on a 6 and do 1 damage each successful strike, irrespective of what damage the dice show.

If you want to try for a Friendly Reaction, you must roll for each ant separately, so it hardly seems worth the trouble. Of course, if you happen to be carrying an Artificial Aardvark in your backpack, it will eat 20 ants every time you wind it up, which you can do by rolling a 6 or better.

If the ants kill you, go to 14.

If you survive, you may leave by either door.

91

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, north and west walls.

Go east to 84.

North to 106.

West to 129.

92

You have entered a Gallery of Mirrors, 20' wide and a full 80' long. Not ordinary mirrors, of course: not in a place like this. They are all dis-

torting mirrors, the sort you get at carnivals where you look in and see yourself as a fat dwarf or a thin giant. Except they aren't *exactly* like carnival mirrors. Carnival mirrors are fun. These reflections show you all gnarled and deformed and nastily distorted, wizened and twisted and yuuuch.

In fact, they're making you feel as though you really *were* all gnarled and wrinkled and—

'They're magic mirrors, Pip!' shouts EJ, somewhat muffled from his scabbard. 'Don't look into them!'

Fool sword: never gives good advice and when he does; it's too late. You're looking in the mirrors, Pip, and gradually changing into something ghastly. Throw two dice quickly to find out if you have the willpower to look away.

Score 2 to 6 and go to 109.

Score 7 to 12 and go to 130.

93

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, south and west walls.

Go south to 89.

East to 118.

West to 121.

94

You have entered a 10' x 10' chamber and the door behind you turns out to be one-way, so you can't use it to get back out. What's more, you have fallen down a pit. It's not difficult to climb out again, even if you don't have a rope, but you lose one die roll of LIFE POINTS.

The door north is also one-way and leads back to **81**, but you cannot use it to enter the room again.

The door ahead leads to 122.

95

There is only one door to this 30' x 30' chamber (the one you came in) and it swings tight shut behind you. Not that this should bother you greatly since your attention is taken up by the fact that the floor has just opened up beneath you, dropping you into a 20' deep pit. Deduct a double dice roll of damage from your LIFE POINTS (and go to **14** if this kills you) then sit down on the floor of the pit, which is littered with the dried bones of previous adventurers, and try to figure your best way out.

Try climbing out without ropes. To do this you roll two dice. Score 11 or 12 and you will succeed in getting safely to the top. Anything else and you fall, with a double dice roll of damage.

Use a rope if you've brought one. To do this, roll two dice. Score 2 to 10 and you make it out of the pit; 11 or 12 and you fall with a double dice roll of damage.

If you climb out safely, you may leave through the door.

If you kill yourself, go to 14.

96

*Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrrrrrrrrrggggggggggggg
hhhhhhhhhhhhthud!*

That was the sound you just made falling down a pit, Pip. The whole 40' x 20' chamber is one big pit. Deep too, to judge from the time it took you to hit bottom. Deduct half your LIFE POINTS right away and pick yourself up so you can consider the situation calmly.

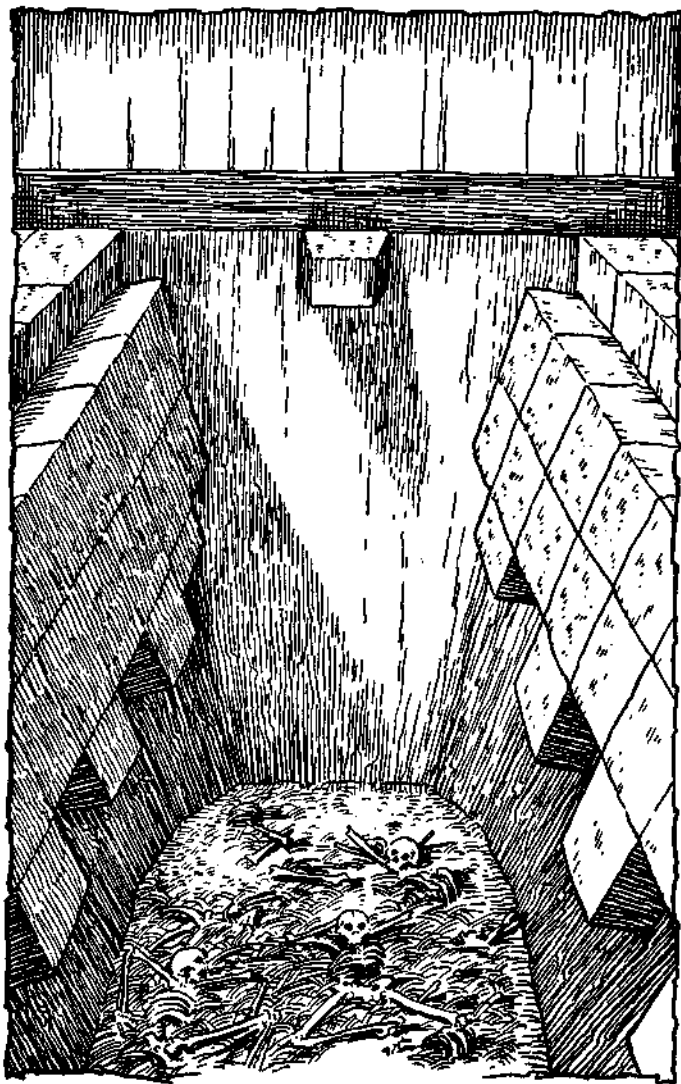
That's long enough for calm. Now you can panic. The situation is that unless you are carrying climbing spikes, rope *and* hammer, you will not get out of this pit. (Although you might, of course, try a Levitation spell if you're prepared to lose half your remaining LIFE POINTS, this being very definitely indoors.)

Assuming you do get out somehow, you may leave through either the western or the eastern door. Assuming you don't, you may go to 14.

97

There is a door in each wall of this 10' x 10' room. There is also a funny smell, similar in many respects to fish and chips.

Although the room seems quite empty, you search diligently and eventually discover in a crack in the floor, a cricket engaged in the unusual occupation of frying up a fish supper. (A



95 The floor has dropped open beneath you

very small fish supper - plankton mainly - since crickets have small appetites.)

If you happen to have a clickstick with you, go to 68.

Otherwise you may use any of the four doors since the cricket will certainly not launch a vicious attack on anything your size.

98

Another 10' X 10' chamber. Doors in the east, north and west walls.

Go east to 86.

North to 79.

West to 84.

99

You have entered a 10' x 10' chamber and the door behind you turns out to be one-way, so you can't use it to get back out. What's more, you have fallen down a pit. It's not difficult to climb out again, even if you don't have a rope, but you lose two dice rolls of LIFE POINTS.

The door north is also one-way and leads back to 81, but you cannot use it to enter the room again.

The door ahead leads to 119.

100

There's a little old lady in here, Pip. She's sitting in a rocking chair in the middle of

this 30" x 30' stone-lined chamber, her little old feet resting on a sea chest and a long strip of Aran knitting trailing down from her lap. (She must be working on a scarf by the length of it. Either that or she's forgotten to cast off.)

She glances up at you as you enter, peering short-sightedly over the top of gold-rimmed bifocals. 'Hello, young stranger,' she greets you in a quavering voice. 'Who might you be then?'

'I am Pip the Adventurer, sent here by command of King Arthur and his wise advisor, the Druid Wizard Merlin, to close the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead and thus rid the realm of foul emanations,' you reply long-windedly. Then, remembering that you have not been formally introduced, you add politely, 'May I have the honour of learning who you are, Ma'am?'

'I'm the Little Old Lady Monster,' says the little old lady. 'It is my duty to guard this chest which contains a great many valuables. I suppose, as an adventurer, you'll be trying to steal it, won't you?'

'Oh no, Ma'am,' you reassure her. 'Nothing of the sort. I would never dream of such a thing.'

'Even if it happened to contain the Key to open the Gateway?' asks the Little Old Lady Monster slyly.

Which is an interesting point.

'Does it contain the Key?' you ask curiously.

'Not telling you!' says the Little Old Lady Monster smugly. 'Now you'll have to try to steal

the chest. Come on, then — I haven't had a good punch-up in ages.' With which she produces a rolling pin from underneath her knitting and leaps up from her rocking chair shouting 'Banzai!!!'

So much for the Age of Chivalry. They don't seem to have learned the rules down here. But you're stuck with the fact of the matter and it's a nastier fact than you might have imagined, since that is a lethal rolling pin with +3 damage. The Little Old Lady Monster hits on only 3 first round, but needs a 6 thereafter on account of her eyesight. She has 50 LIFE POINTS and will batter you to death if she can.

If you survive the Little Old Lady, you can move on to 136 to open the chest. If not, you can think things over in 14.

101

The Nerd reaches out a slim hand and rings the bell which sounds with a delicate, though penetrating, tinkle.

'There,' he says primly, 'I did warn you.'

But warn you about what? Perhaps it has something to do with the massive shape slowly solidifying in a corner of the chamber. At first it looks like swirling smoke, but gradually it takes on the form of a bearded, turbanned giant, naked to the waist, green skinned and carrying a scimitar. It looks like a cross between Sinbad and the Incredible Hulk, and with your luck is almost certainly a Djinn.



101 A massive shape slowly solidifies in the corner of the chamber...

'Another adventurer needs bashing, Master?' the Djinn says to the Nerd.

'Precisely,' says the Nerd. 'Bash, hack, slay then throw the pieces to the crows, making sure to keep any gold, weapons, magical items or other valuables for our leader's Treasure Repository.'

'Now just a minute—' you protest, holding up your hands in horror, this being you they are talking about bashing, hacking and slaying. It's not that you're frightened of course, but that Djinn looks as though he might have a million LIFE POINTS so a fight is definitely to be avoided.

But circumstances are largely outside your immediate control at this point. It's doubtful if you can kill the Djinn (or even the Nerd, come to that) so the only thing that really counts is whether or not one of those hands you held up in horror happened to be wearing a *Tinglering*.

If you are wearing a Tinglering, either collected during this adventure or during any previous adventure in the GrailQuest, then you should turn to 127.

If you don't have a Tinglering, then you're in big trouble. The Nerd has 20 LIFE POINTS and a concealed dagger that does +5 damage on account of its being made from finest Sheffield steel and lightly poisoned. He is a poor fighter and hits on 8 or better. The Djinn, while it does not have a million LIFE POINTS, certainly does have 100. What's more, it hits on 5 and does +3 damage with that scimitar. Neither will accept a bribe at this point, so you're going

to have to try to kill them. If you manage it you can go back out through the door to 133 and count yourself lucky. If you don't, pick up the pieces in 14.

102

Well, at least there are two doors out of this 30' x 20' chamber. (Three, counting the one you came in.) But that's the only good news. The bad news is that the chamber is full of Minches.

The trouble with Minches is that they don't look particularly dangerous. They never grow more than a few inches long and they're furry, fat and cuddly. They're also very friendly. *Very* friendly. And very stupid. A Minch genius would have an IQ of 1 if it could only count that far.

It's a well-known fact (among adventurers at any rate) that your average Minch will try to snuggle up to anything that comes near it - another Minch, a human being, a Tyrannosaurus Rex . . . anything. Which possibly explains why Minches are so rare.

Being snuggled by a Minch is a very pleasant experience. But being snuggled by several thousand Minches all at the same time is usually lethal, since they suffocate you.

There are several thousand Minches in this chamber. They are all snuggled up together in the middle of the room. They are turning their friendly eyes towards you and smiling their friendly smiles and wiggling their friendly bodies with delight. They are beginning to move in your direction, Pip.

103-104

*The doors from this room lead to **113**, **126** and **87**. You can go back to the section you were last in without any problem, (just remember to slam the door.) If you decide to head for a different section then you must make one die roll for every 10'. square you have to cross to find out if you're fast enough to avoid suffocation by the Minches. Score 1 to 4 and you'll make it safely. Score 5 or 6 and you'd better go to **14** to get your breath back.*

103

'Have at you, you scuffy old fool!' you cry gallantly, as you launch yourself upon the scuffy old fool. 'Take that!' And you land the first blow with old EJ, which may even be enough to kill him since he has only 7 LIFE POINTS to his name.

The scuffy old man is extremely shortsighted so that he needs an 8 or better to hit and the pitchfork is so blunt it does no extra damage other than that shown by the dice.

*If you get really unlucky and he kills you, go to **14**.*

*If, as is far more likely, you kill him, move on to **111**.*

104

The chest is open and you're still here. No trap at all.

Inside there is a vial of a light blue liquid which, when you take the stopper out, smells of old socks. You're going to have to risk testing that

105-107

liquid if you want to find out what it does. But if you taste it, you'll also risk the possibility that it's the most potent poison known to humanity and it might kill you outright.

This is known as Hobson's Choice, Pip.

*You can taste the liquid by going to **141**, take the north eastern door to **92**, or take the southern door into the corridor.*

105

There are two archways in this 20' x 30' chamber, neither of which is closed off by a door. The room is empty, but you must make one Wandering Monster roll to cross it.

106

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, north, south and west walls.

*Go east to **88**.*

*North to **144**.*

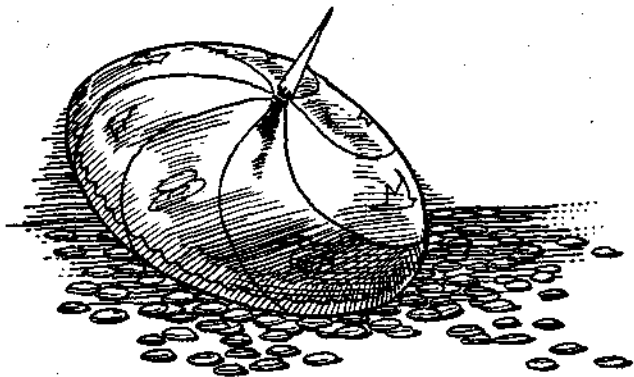
*West to **78**.*

*South to **91**.*

107

There are 150 gold pieces and an umbrella in the chest. At least it looks like an umbrella. Or a sunshade. One of those ridiculous candystriped things you see on the beach at Cannes in summer. Except that it doesn't have a handle.

Wait a minute, Pip - this isn't an umbrella: it's a collapsible shield; and magic to boot. If you use it



during combat, it will stop you being hit by every third blow, however much damage the dice may show for that blow. What's more, it's so light it won't affect your speed so you can carry it however much other equipment you may have.

Nice find.

The only door from this chamber leads back out into the northern corridor.

108

This is such an oddly shaped room, like an upside down L, that you're going to have to work out the dimensions for yourself. You're also going to have to work out what to do about the Golls, one of which looks Korean.

They are, in the manner of their kind, fiddling with an infernal machine, parts of which are strewn untidily all about the chamber. The machine itself is steam driven, this being long before the days of electricity, and has a large red

indicator with the needle set to 'DETONATION IMMINENT'. Beside the indicator is a lever pushed forward to the ON position.

This is a tricky problem, Pip. If that Goll is as Korean as he looks, he probably knows karate and could kill you with one blow even if you were standing behind a brick wall, which you're not.

Should you decide to fight the Golls before trying to do anything about their infernal machine, it may blow up at once and kill you all.

But if you decide to go for the machine first, both Golls have a free hit against you without your being able to hit back.

If you decide to switch off the machine first, take your hits and if they don't kill you, go to 137.

If you decide to fight the Golls first, go to 116.

109

No luck, Pip. Your gaze is locked tight on that mirror as a barnacle to a boat's bottom. And since even 14 would be better than what you're turning into, you'd better go to 14.

110

Make one Wandering Monster roll in this 10' x 10' chamber. If the dice show no monsters present or you win through the encounter, you may leave by any of the three doors shown.

111

Bravely fought! (If a bit of an anticlimax.) You have gallantly slaughtered the scruffy old man with the pitchfork. Now see how you get on with four of his pot plants which have taken umbrage at your actions and are climbing down out of their pots with a murderous look about the set of their leaves.

These plants may not be so easy to dispose of, actually. Each has 12 LIFE POINTS and hits on a 5 or better. They only score dice damage since they aren't carrying any weapons, but the first of them is a poisonous pot plant which will kill you outright if it gets in three successful hits.

If you're killed by the pot plants, go to 14.

If you manage to dispose of them, you may go through the secret door to 80 since there are no other doors out of this chamber.

112

'Hold on, Princess - I'm coming!' you shout bravely, drawing EJ and leaping forward in true adventurer style.

'Here, just a minute!' EJ protests. 'I don't believe that's a princess at all - it looks like a vampire carrot to me.'

'Exactly as I told you,' the man says calmly. 'You should listen to your sword. It seems to be a very sensible weapon.'

'But I'm a princess!' wails the carrot. 'You can't just leave me here to be eaten!'

You hesitate, the reluctant EJ pointed in the direction of the man's throat.

Do you still want to rescue the carrot, despite what EJ thinks? If so, go to 145. If not, you should return to 123 and pick another option.

113*(Special)

What a vast room. 50' x 60' if it's an inch. Pity it's empty.

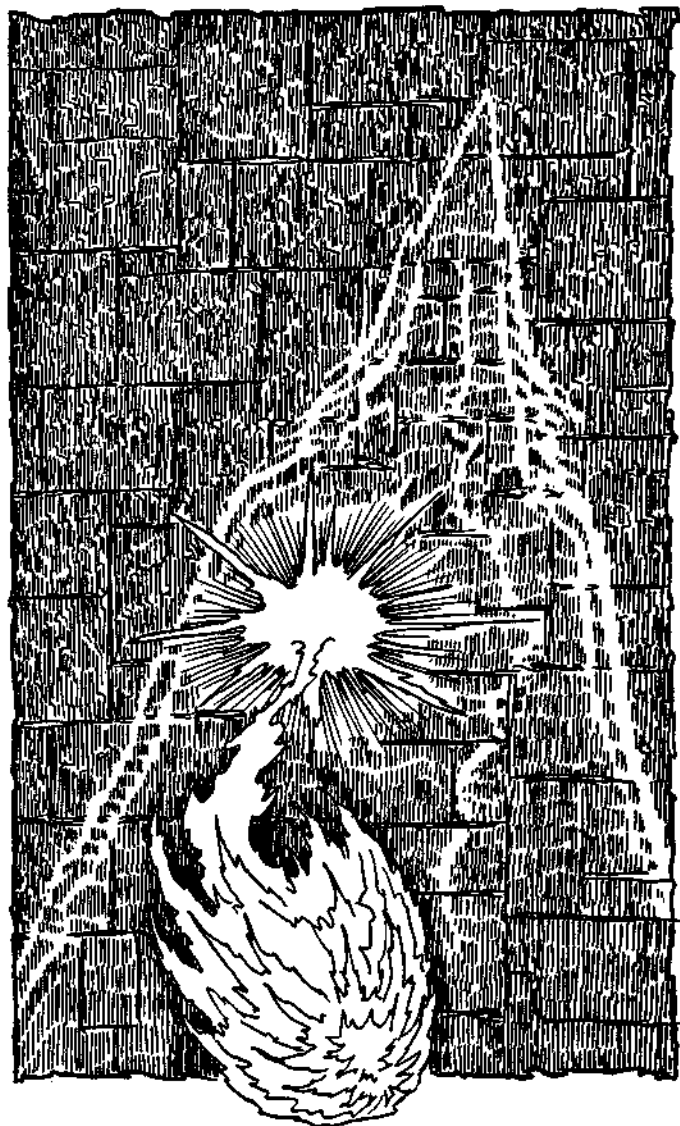
Or is it? There's just the slightest hint of a shimmer up by the northern wall. By the time you reach it, there's nothing there at all, but being a curious sort of soul, you reach out and feel where the shimmer was.

Hate to tell you this, but you are feeling the outline of a tall, thin man with a pointed head. (Or possibly a pointed hat: it's difficult to tell since he's invisible.)

'Get your grubby little hands off me!' a remarkably unpleasant voice hisses out of nowhere. Remarkably unpleasant and oddly familiar. If you hadn't killed him on your very first adventure (those were the days, eh?) you could swear it was the voice of the Wicked Wizard Ansalom.

You leap back and draw your faithful sword. 'Show yourself, sir!' you challenge brusquely. 'Otherwise I shall be forced to slit your gizzard!'

But all you get in answer is a sneering laugh as a fireball materializes out of nowhere and whizzes past your ear.



113 A fireball materialises out of nowhere and whizzes past your ear

This may not be the late Wizard Ansalom, but it's certainly an invisible wizard of some sort. And angry too.

The only way to avoid a fight with the Wizard is to offer him a bribe. But he will only accept a magical item. If you don't have any you're prepared to give away, then you're into a combat situation.

The Invisible Wizard has 40 LIFE POINTS. He will not use weapons, but knows every spell in PIP'S FIRST SPELL BOOK and will certainly use them until his LIFE POINTS run out. He does not, however, have anymore Fireballs and his Lightning Bolts are of a very poor quality which do only +2 damage.

Should the Wizard kill you, go to 14. Should you kill the Wizard, go to 142.

114

The door behind you smashes open. Both the man and the carrot flee without a moment's hesitation, crashing through the other door into the corridor and racing off as fast as the man's legs will carry them both.

You spin round and find yourself facing a squat, rather toad-like creature about five feet high and six feet broad. It carries a club which hits with +3 damage, strikes on 6 and has 50 LIFE POINTS.

It *hates* xylophone players.

If you survive the encounter with the

115-117

ampitherian, you may take the door to 92 or the other door into the corridor.

If not, you can take your broken xylophone to 14.

115

*There's a chest in here, oak by the look of it, with brass banding. Want to open it? If so, roll two dice. Score 2 to 6 and go to **73**. Score 7 to 12 and go to **134**. If you decide not to open the chest, you can leave through the door by which you entered.*

116

BOOM!

There goes the infernal machine. You will find yourself accompanied by two Golls in **14**, but fortunately they'll be too dead to make trouble. As will you, for that matter.

117

You have entered a 10' x 10' chamber and the door behind you turns out to be one-way, so you can't use it to get back out.

What's more, you have fallen down a pit. It's not difficult to climb out again, even if you don't have a rope, but you lose one die roll of LIFE POINTS.

118-120

*The door north is also one-way and leads back to **81**, but you cannot use it to enter the room again.*

*The door ahead leads to **94**.*

118

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the south, west and east walls.

*Take the door east to **78**.*

*The door south to **83**.*

*Or the door west to **93**.*

119

That's odd: you haven't fallen down a pit.

*But you have been teleported to **87**, which may be just as bad. Or may not.*

120

Trouble. There's a Shark in here, Pip. You discover it by falling into the pool which comprises the whole of this eccentric chamber.

You now have several interesting problems, Pip.

First roll one die to see if you drown. Score 1, 2 or 3 and you do. (Off to **14**.) Score 4, 5 and 6 and you don't.

Next roll one die to see if you freeze, the water being very cold. Score 1 or 2 and you do. (Off to **14**.) Score anything else and you don't.

121 - 123

Finally, see if you can cope with the Shark, which has 20 LIFE POINTS, hits on a 5 or better and bites +4 chunks of damage out of you. If the Shark kills you, go to **14**. If you kill the Shark, don't forget to pull its teeth which, when powdered, are a sure cure for poison.

121

Another 10' x 10' chamber. Doors in the east, south and west walls.

Go south to 86.

East to 93.

West to 79.

122

You have entered a 10' x 10' chamber and the door behind you turns out to be one-way, so you can't use it to get back out. What's more, you have fallen down a pit. It's not difficult to climb out again, even if you don't have a rope, but you lose one die roll of LIFE POINTS.

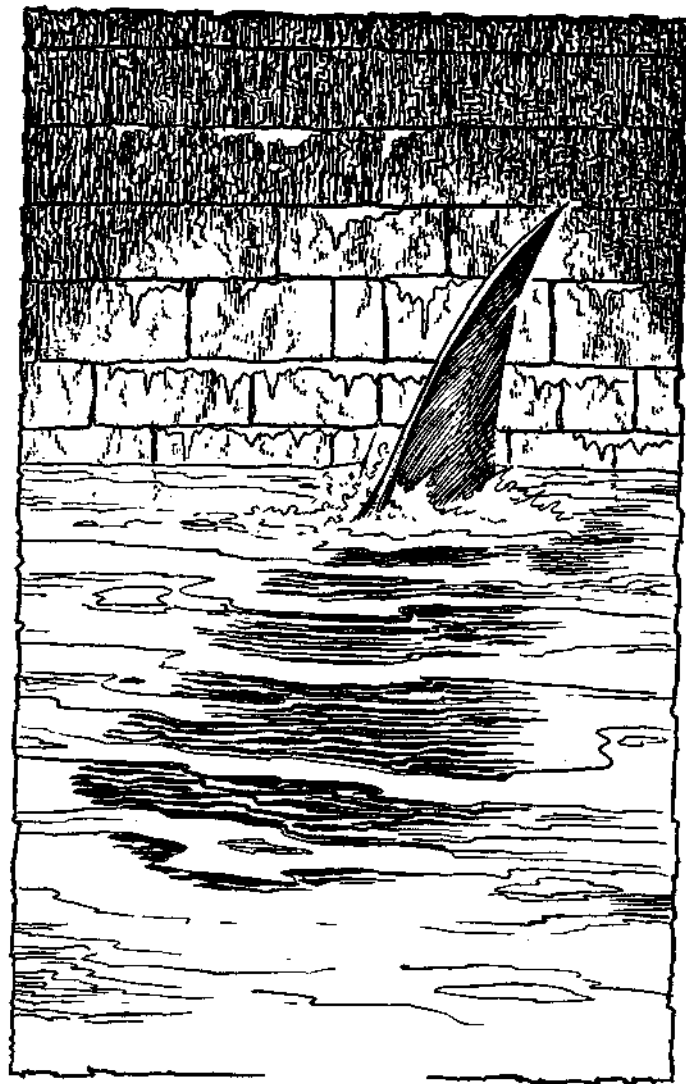
The door north is also one-way and leads back to 81, but you cannot use it to enter the room again.

The door ahead leads to 131.

123

There's a man eating plant in here.

The plant he's eating is a carrot and it's screaming for help. This Ghastly Kingdom gets more like a loonybin every step you take.



120 There's a shark in here

'Help!' screams the carrot.

'Ignore it,' remarks the man, with a friendly nod in your direction. 'This is one of the most appallingly evil carrots ever to pollute the face of the globe. I shall die instantly when I finish eating it, but I willingly sacrifice myself for the good of humanity which will be all the better for the demise of this evil carrot.'

'I'm not evil! I'm not evil!' shouts the carrot. 'I am a beautiful young princess bewitched by an Invisible Wizard who haunts this Ghastly Kingdom. Please rescue me!'

'You will be making a terrible mistake if you try to rescue this carrot,' says the man mildly. 'It's a vampire carrot.'

'He's lying,' shrieks the carrot desperately.

But is he? Or is it? Or are they both? Desperately you look around for some clue to help you make your decision. Your eye catches a prominent notice on the southern wall. It says:

RESCUE THE CARROT!

You reach for EJ, but then you catch sight of a second notice on the western wall. It says:

DON'T RESCUE THE CARROT!

You allow your hand to fall away in confusion. You glance upwards. A huge poster pasted on the ceiling says:

PLAY YOUR XYLOPHONE!

Which seems as sensible a course as any in this lunatic situation, provided, of course, you brought a xylophone.

So what will you do ?

*If you decide to rescue the carrot, go to **112**.*

*If you decide to ignore the whole affair and try to find a saner room, go to **143**.*

*If you happen to have a xylophone with you and feel like playing it, go to **149**.*

124

Roll one die. Score 1 to 3 and the Nerd manages to ring his bell: go to **101**. Score 4 to 6 and you get in the first blow, thus preventing his ringing the bell and starting yet another hassle.

The Nerd has 20 LIFE POINTS, hits on 6 and carries a stiletto with paralysing poison on the blade so that you miss one strike back each time he hits you successfully.

*If you manage to kill him, you will find 100 gold pieces in his boot but no other treasure, and may leave the room through the door to **133**.*

*If he kills you, it's **14**.*

125

This is a 10' x 30' chamber, empty except for a pile of straw on which lie a skull and a few

crumbling human bones. There is no door out except the one by which you entered.

Seems the crumbling bones must have belonged to a previous adventurer. Hope you don't end up the same way. If you search the straw, you will find 10 gold pieces, which is something. (Not much, but something.)

Return to 65.

126

As you step in, the door of the huge chamber slams shut behind you.

And locks!

You can always blow a few LIFE POINTS on a lock-picking spell, of course, but if you don't, you have an intriguing and complicated problem. There are five Bota-Botas in this chamber, black, sparkling and deadly, one in each of the five southernmost squares of the room.

Like Bota-Botas everywhere, they move in unison, one square north at a time. According to the ancient lore, if a contingent of Bota-Botas manages to make six moves forward, they will have accumulated enough earth energy to let loose their lethal war-cry ('BOTA-BOTA!') which kills anything within earshot outright.

Fortunately, they have no other form of attack, so you can hack at them as much as you like without getting damage back. Unfortunately, it only needs one Bota-Bota to give the war-cry and you're dead.

Hanging on the wall behind the row of Bota-Botas

is a key and a scroll. The Bota-Botas (those which remain alive) will make one move forward in the time it takes you to strike one. Each has 5 LIFE POINTS and so isn't too difficult to kill, but you're going to have to be pretty efficient to kill all five before they move six squares forward.

If you decide to pick the lock and leave (providing you can manage the spell before the Botas move six forward) go to 102.

If any Bota makes six moves and thus manages its war-cry, go to 14.

If you waste the Botas before any of them shouts, go to 146.

127

'Hold on, Master,' says the Djinn in amazement. 'This one is wearing ... a Tinglering!'

'A Tinglering?' gasps the Nerd, turning pale.

'Yes, a Tinglering!' you roar, wondering what all the fuss is about, but well able to take advantage of what seems to be an unexpected turn of fate in your direction. 'So you had both better watch out!'

'Not the dreaded Tinglering!' screams the Nerd, drawing a poisoned dagger from his sleeve and attempting unsuccessfully to stab himself in the back.

'I am your Obedient Slave,' says the Djinn, bowing deeply in your direction. 'Your wish is my command, O Wearer of the Tinglering.'

'You're not pulling my leg are you?' you ask hesitantly.

'Never that, Mighty One,' says the Djinn. 'Shall I crush this weedy Nerd, my ex-Master, as a token of my devotion?'

You nod enthusiastically, being a blood-thirsty sort of adventurer, but it's too late since the Nerd has run out of the room screaming, first into **133**, then down the long corridor until he disappears into darkness.

'You're really my slave now, are you?' you ask curiously.

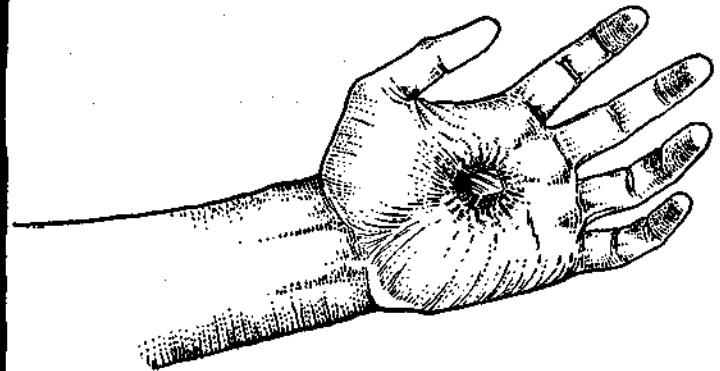
'Assuredly, O Greatest of the Great. And very handy I am too, since any time you get into a hassle, you can call me up by rubbing the Tinglering and I will appear to fight the monsters for you. I have 100 LIFE POINTS, strike successfully on 5 and do +3 damage with this scimitar. The only thing is, my Union does not permit me to fight more than three times during any one adventure. However, so long as you retain the Tinglering, I shall accompany you invisibly on any adventure in the future. What's more, I cannot really be killed. So even if I lose all my LIFE POINTS, that only stops me fighting until you call me again. Just so long as you don't call me more than three times in any one adventure.'

*What a reassuring development, Pip. As the Djinn vanishes (until you decide to call him with your Tinglering) you may return through the door to **133** and make your way ever onwards from there.*

Oh, no - it's a cursed emerald!!

You can tell the minute you take it in your greedy little hand. Desperately you try to dash it on the floor, but the emerald will not be dashed. Once you've picked up a cursed gemstone, you're stuck with it for life. Which may not be all that long, actually, since it deducts 4 from damage you score in any encounter from now on.

Return to the corridor from which you entered 70.



129

Despite what the map shows, you are in a 10' x 10' room with doors in the north, west and east walls.

The door east leads back to the corridor.

The door north to 78.

The door west to 83.

130****

There's willpower for you! With a massive effort, you drag your gaze away from the distorting mirror and find, to your relief, that your body begins to untwist and un wrinkle and ungnarl until you change back into the incredibly fit, handsome and athletic person you have always been.

The only problem is the Thing that is stepping out of the mirror you've been looking into.

It's the gnarled, wrinkled, twisted version of you that you have just been looking at. It's open to a four-star bribe, since it shares your lust for gold, but apart from that, you'll never get a Friendly Reaction. What you need to do here is fight, Pip. Fight the ghastly version of yourself. Fortunately it only has half your current LIFE POINTS, but apart from that it is you in every respect, including the twisted version of EJ that it carries, so it won't be an easy fight.

If you kill the twisted you you will find your distorted replica carries the same amount of gold and booty you do, so everything you have is automatically doubled. If you can cope with



130 A horribly distorted shape steps from the mirror

the weight, you can stagger off to **123** *through the door to the south, to 77 through the door to the west or into the corridor through the northernmost door to the west.*

If you kill you (that is, if the real you gets killed by the twisted you) one of you had better get on down to 14.

131

You have entered a 10' x 10' chamber and the door behind you turns out to be one-way, so you can't use it to get back out. What's more, you have fallen down a pit. It's not difficult to climb out again, even if you don't have a rope, but you lose two dice rolls of LIFE POINTS.

The door north is also one-way and leads back to 81, but you cannot use it to enter the room again.

The door ahead leads to 99.

132

'What be 'e doing here, young adventurer?' asks the scruffy old man, setting the pitchfork down carefully on account of his bad back.

'I seek to find the route that will forever close the Gateway to this Ghastly Kingdom, Scruffy Old Sir,' you declaim politely.

'Ahr, that be what most of them be arter right enough. Does 'e like pot plants?'

'Ahr,' you reply, which he takes, quite correctly, to be an affirmative reply.

'So does I, ahr. Friendly things, pot plants, if 'e doesn't mess with them. Not like people, nahr. Nor monsters neither. Closing the Gateway, is it?'

'Ah-I mean, yes.'

'Won't manage that here, young 'un, nahr. The way be guarded. Guarded by the Black Knight hisself, ahr. But take this bottle of my patent weed-killer and rub some on your sword, ahr. It gives 'e double damage the first time 'e hits a vegetable monster and there be enough in the bottle for three applications, ahr.'

Which was, you must admit, a nice gesture on his part, and potentially a very useful gift if you happen to meet any vegetable monsters. Stow it away carefully in your backpack for now and return through the secret door to **80**.

133***

This 30' x 30' chamber looks as though it might have been used as some sort of reception room at some time, although the few scraps of wooden furniture are in a pretty ragged state now.

All the same, it's not entirely disused. There are two armoured guards at the door in the southern wall and, when you look carefully, you can see why - the door has a notice saying 'TREASURE ROOM'.

The only way through that door is past the guards, Pip. They don't look particularly strong - 15 LIFE POINTS each, which suggests somebody forgot to

feed them for some time. As against that, they are each armed with swords and the armour they are wearing is very high quality, subtracting 3 from any damage scored against them.

The guards will not attack if you leave them alone, so you have a choice of simply returning back into the corridor. If you want to go to 66, however, you're into Bribery or a fight, or both.

134

Nice one, Pip - there's 50 gold pieces and a scroll in the chest!

The scroll is the really interesting bit: it contains instructions for a really superior class of Light Spell which you can cast at a cost of only one LIFE POINT and which will give you light for the remainder of the adventure. Once you've learned this spell, you can use it even if you're killed and have to come back. What a saving on torches!

Return to 97 and go on from there.

135

This looks like a very ordinary ante-chamber, one door leading into the corridor, the other leading into 81. You could walk straight through if it wasn't for the Spif which has rooted itself in the centre of the floor, cracking up the stone slabbing and revealing the earth beneath.

You recognize it as a Spif instantly, of course, since there are pictures of these weird vegetables in several of Merlin's spell books. It has a single stem, very thin and pliable, and a bulbous head

the size and shape of a melon (honeydew, not watermelon) and the colour of an aubergine.

Desperately you try to remember what you read about Spifs in Merlin's spell books. There's something magical about them, of course, otherwise they wouldn't be written about. But what?

Eventually it comes to you. The seeds! Inside the head are anything up to six seeds and each one you swallow restores your LIFE POINTS to their absolute maximum. The most powerful healing known. What's more, if you eat six Spif seeds, you automatically gain one PERMANENT LIFE POINT.

The only problem is, Spifs don't like having their heads cut off for the sake of the seeds and will begin to vibrate if you're not very, very careful. A vibrating Spif will turn the molecules of your body into brackish water in exactly eight seconds, Pip.

The thing is, are you willing to risk cutting off the Spifs head for the sake of the seeds?

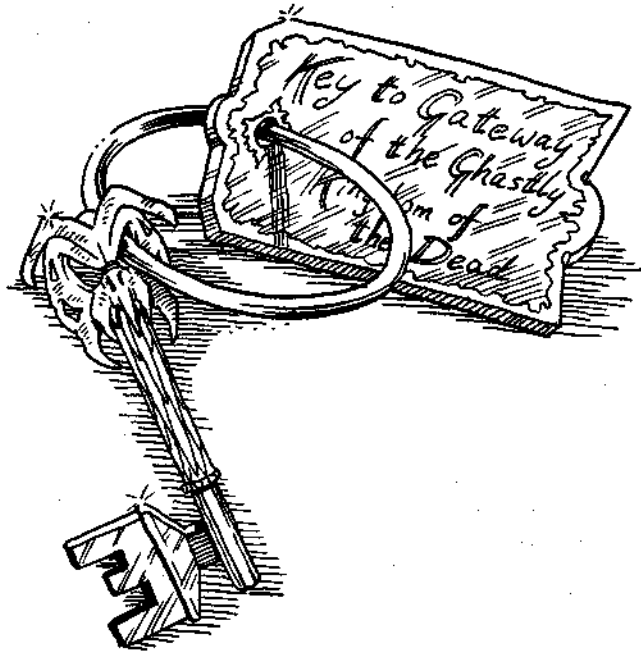
If so, turn to 165.

If not, you can safely return to the corridor or progress to 81.

136

There's a key in here!

A huge brass key, attached to a huge brass key-ring, with a huge brass plaque on which is engraved, in huge brass letters, 'Key to Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead.'



You've found the key! (Without even having to fight the dreaded Black Knight either.) This is incredible! This is fantastic! The very Key you were looking for and here it is in the chest of the Little Old Lady Monster! Now all you have to do is zip out and lock the Gateway, get back to Camelot and pig yourself stupid at the festive banquet while everybody tells you what a good class of adventurer you turned out to be!

Wait a minute. You still have to get back to the Gateway. Wonder which way that is?

The doors in this room open (north) into 97 and (east) into a corridor.

137

As the machine shuts off (which it does easily) you notice a bottle of healing potion (six doses: one die roll of LIFE POINTS restored per dose) propping up one of the side plates.

You snatch the bottle quickly, then turn to face the Golls which are lumbering forward to do you mischief. Each Goll has 10 LIFE POINTS, strikes on 6 and fights with a dagger which does +1 damage.

If they kill you, go to 14. If not, you can take either door out of the chamber.

138

Sword in hand, you brush aside the curtain.

No monsters, but something maybe just as terrifying. You've found a locked door and behind it (as you can see through a tiny barred window) stairs! Stairs going down....

Only one key can unlock this door - the Key to the Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom itself. If you have it, unlock the door and take the stairs down to 71.

If not, you'd better make your way back the way you came and continue to explore this level until you find the Key.

139

You're a glutton for punishment, Pip. Go to 14.

140

Zap! This whole huge chamber is full of blinding pinkish light. It comes from a large globe set in the centre, which pulses (and gibbers slightly, come to that).

'I AM THE MAGIC ZAPPER,' a voice sniggers telepathically in your head, 'I HAVE BEEN WAITING TO SEE IF YOU WOULD BE FOOL ENOUGH TO ENTER MY LAIR. IF YOU LEAVE MY LAIR NOW, ANY MAGIC YOU MAY USE FROM NOW ON WILL COST YOU DOUBLE THE NORMAL LIFE POINTS. BUT IF YOU FAIL TO KILL ME WITH A SINGLE BLOW, I SHALL ABSORB ALL YOUR MAGIC COMPLETELY.'

Nasty.

The Magic Zapper has only 6 LIFE POINTS, but it's still a big risk if you have only one blow. At the same time, you hardly want to pay double in LIFE POINTS every time you use magic from now on, do you?

Decide what to do, do it, then go back out the door into the corridor and keep away from this chamber from now on.

141

Tastes like old socks as well. It could be poison with a taste like that — Poisonous Elixir of Old Socks, a famous alchemical distillation. But don't start to writhe in agony just yet, because this is, in fact, a Poison Antidote. One swig of this stuff will cure any known poison... and there are six swigs in the vial. Use a dose now if you happen to be

poisoned, otherwise save it carefully in case you might be in the future.

Go through the north eastern door to 92, or go through the southern door into the corridor.

142

As you deliver the death-blow, the Invisible Wizard slowly grows visible again. And would you believe, he really is the spitting image of the Wicked Wizard Ansalom. But he couldn't have been, could he? Not when you killed Ansalom ages ago.

As a hardened scavenger, you diligently search the pockets of his robe. He is carrying a chewed piece of bubble gum, a pen-knife, a piece of string, a wax doll, a shrunken head and a spell book just like yours.

You start to throw away this rubbish when a thought strikes you and you flick through the Spell Book. Much as you thought - it has only the spells you already know.

You start to throw away the Spell Book when another thought strikes you and you carefully examine the inside back cover. Something is written there in faded pencil. Although the light is bad, you finally manage to read it:

RESURRECTION

Resurrection? Resurrection! You've found a Resurrection Spell! This is the most valuable Spell you could possibly have. It's the only spell you can cast when you're dead. It's a bit tricky since

you need to roll a 10, 11 or 12 on two dice to make it work. But if it does work, you are completely resurrected with all your original LIFE POINTS and can go on fighting whatever monster killed you, or whatever else you were doing when you got yourself killed. What a spell! The only trouble is it uses up so much magic that you will not be able to use any of your other spells in the next three sections you visit, or until you SLEEP, whichever is the sooner.

All the same, that spell could mean the difference between life and death for you, Pip, so rejoice a little.

That's enough rejoicing. You can now leave by either of the southern doors. One leads to 102, the other to 87.

143

'This is none of my business,' you remark, shoving EJ firmly into his scabbard. 'I have better things to do with my time than waste it on a carrot's problems.' With which you make for the door of your choice.

One exit door of this 20' x 70' chamber leads to 92. The other opens into a corridor.

144

By Jove, you're out, Pip! You're out of the maze! Mark you, the mental effort has taken a lot out of you. Better nosh some of your rations before going on. (If you aren't carrying rations, you lose 1 PERMANENT LIFE POINT due to brain fag.)

If you look around carefully, you will find you are standing in the northern corridor just outside the northern door to the area marked 129 on your map.

You will also find you are in grave danger of stepping on a small, but quite amazing, magical artifact — a Talisman of Wandering Monster Protection. When you invoke the power of this charm, it sends out rays which absolutely ensure you will never encounter a Wandering Monster on the level you are in. There is only one slight problem: the Talisman has only two charges, so use them wisely. (Or not at all, if you wish, since *some* adventurers prefer to hack up Wandering Monsters for the sake of their gold.)

Should you wish to retrace your steps back through 129 from this direction, you can go direct to the door in the eastern wall since you've solved the maze now.

145

As you lunge towards the man, he drops the carrot, steps back and, grinning evilly, draws a short, gold-tipped rod from the folds of his sleeve.

'I warn you!' he cries. 'This is a Wand of Incredible Destruction and I shall use it without hesitation to save us both from the vampire carrot.'

'Not a vampire! Not a vampire!' shouts the carrot.

This is getting really hairy, Pip. Are you honestly prepared to face a Wand of Incredible Destruction for the sake of this fugitive from a Kitchen

146-147

Garden? If so, turn to **158**. If not, return to **123** and pick another option.

146

That was a bit of a nerve-wrack. But well done. You'll find the key opens the door that was locked behind you (but won't close the Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom, unfortunately) while the scroll contains a healing spell worth one double dice roll of LIFE POINTS, a charm which makes Minches keep away from you and the interesting message: GO TO 87.

147

At 20' x 50' this is a pretty big room for a rubbish tip. Everything seems to have been thrown in here ... tables, chairs, old pots and pans, lamps, clocks, urns, candlesticks, geroflas, crocks, old boo—

Geroflas?

There's nothing worse than meeting a Gerofla when all you want is a bit of peace. These six feet long, two-headed reptiles have a meaner disposition than Emperor Ming of Mongo. This particular Gerofla, lurking in the junk, has 40 LIFE POINTS, strikes on a 6 or better and gets two hits for your one on account of its second head. Fortunately both heads score only dice damage with no pluses.

*If you survive this encounter, go to **152**. If not, lick your wounds (a filthy habit) in **14**.*



147 The two-headed lizard has a meaner disposition than Emperor Ming of Mongo

148

Hold your breath, Pip! This whole room is full of poison gas! Your eagle eyes have spotted a fully operative coal-driven, steam-powered Mark I Poison Gas Generator (Patent Pending) chugging away in the middle of the room.

Roll two dice to see if you were fast enough. Score 2 to 8 and you weren't: off you go to 14. Score 9 to 12 and you can stagger back into the corridor, coughing and choking, for the loss of only one LIFE POINT.

149

Both the carrot and the man stare at you in dumb amazement as you begin to play the xylophone.

'What on earth are you doing?' asks the carrot.

'Have you taken leave of your senses?' asks the man.

Plinka plinka plink, goes the xylophone.

'You'll attract an ampitherian if you keep playing that thing,' warns the man.

No, I don't know what an ampitherian is either, but the question is do you want to risk attracting one? If you continue playing, go to 114. If not, return to 123 and pick another option.

150

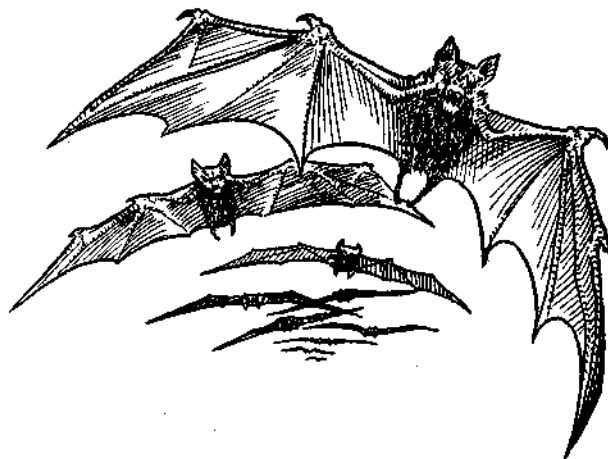
This isn't really a room at all. The stairs leave off in a twisty little bit of corridor with, fortunately, a

full plan of Level III drawn facing you on a massive blackboard.

Since you can't very well carry a blackboard around with you for the rest of the adventure, you carefully copy down the plan (wondering who drew it there) and note that you are actually in a spiral corridor that goes on for quite a long way.

This is rather a pity since you will find that in the corridors of this level you must make a Wandering Monster roll every 40 feet (4 squares) and not every 50 as on the level above. Results should be read from the Level 3 Wandering Monster table, in the Appendix.

Now put your best foot forward, turn to the Level III map and good luck.



151

There is a statue of a frog in here which is wearing a silver filigree amulet encrusted with magical emeralds.

The frog is wearing red tights and a blue cape and it has an emblem embroidered across its chest saying: 'Superfrog!'

All this must come as something of a shock to you, but there is more. A chiselled inscription on the frog's plinth states: 'Touch my amulet and I'll kill you. Signed, Superfrog.' (Frogs were never good at spelling.)

Propped beside the inscription is a note, written in ornate, but very familiar handwriting. This reads:

*The Amulet, I can report
Contains a spell of teleport
Which you can use to travel true
Or stop them teleporting you.*

*The frog is not a Superfrog
It's carved out of a piece of log
So on its plinth it just will sit
While you rip off its amulet*

*This is a tip from me to you
So you will know just what to do
Since things were not quite what they seemed
Signed: Your old pal, the Poetic Fiend.*

How nice — the Poetic Fiend was here and is looking after your interests. (Writing slightly better verse too.) If you're prepared to believe

the Fiend's note, you can try nicking the amulet at 157. But you're quite free to leave it where it is and leave this section via the doors north and east, both of which lead into corridors, or the other northern door to 156.

152

Nice bit of survival that. Geroflas are monsters to be reckoned with. What a sturdy young adventurer you turned out to be. What a sterling slaughterer of monsters. What an intrepid seeker after loot and booty. What a—

Enough of this flattery. You might as well rummage in this junk heap now you've got rid of the Gerofla. That brass lamp looks interesting, for instance. A bit battered and very old, but interesting.



153-154

Now you've found the interesting lamp, what do you do with it?

If you rub it, go to 177.

If you try to open it up, go to 186.

If you try to light it, go to 199.

153

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blacking you out momentarily and teleporting you straight back to 150.

Isn't that irritating?

154***(each)

Remember the number you rolled on the single die just before you came here, Pip? That's how many urns you managed to open before you noticed the smoke coming out of the first one. And now there's smoke coming out of them all. And that smoke is solidifying into hulking great big brutes of things with green skins, wearing turbans and carrying scimitars. In short, Djinn.

If you happen to be wearing a Tinglering, wave it in the Djinn's direction and you will be able to get out through the double doors into the corridor without any more trouble.

If you aren't, things become a bit more complicated. Not to say dangerous. Each Djinn you released has 30 LIFE POINTS, hits on 5 and does +2 damage with the scimitar. All are open to

155-156

Bribery, if you have the wherewithal, but they will attack you viciously if you don't.

Assuming you survive, you can return to the corridor.

Assuming you don't, you can return to 14.

155

Dark in here.

Very dark, in fact.

So dark you can hear yourself breathing.

That is *you* breathing, isn't it?

Hold your breath a minute and listen.

How unpleasant. You're holding your breath, but you can still hear breathing.

Yeeek! Something nasty is hacking at you with a bladed instrument.

Forget surprise, Pip, this Thing (whatever it is) has the first strike against you and no mistake. It also has 40 LIFE POINTS and a +3 blade of some sort. Fortunately it requires a 7 or better to hit because of the darkness. Unfortunately, so do you.

If you kill it, go to 159. If not, try 14.

156

Don't like the look of this place, Pip.

'Don't like the look of this place, Pip,' remarks EJ from his scabbard.

Nor do you, come to that, which makes three of us. The 60' x 60' chamber is chill and silent as a tomb. Which is what it seems to be, judging from the coffins, caskets and sarcophagi all neatly laid out in rows along the north,'south axis.

There are two doors, one north into the corridor, one south to 151. You might be wise to tiptoe quietly towards one of them before—

'Yipes!' shrieks EJ, who seems to have eyes in the back of his pommel. 'The coffins are opening!'

And so they are. Slowly but surely, the lids are opening, while slowly but equally surely, huge bolts are sliding shut across both doors leaving you (and EJ) trapped in what must surely be....

Yes, it is!

... a *Vampire Crypt!*

This is really sick, Pip. Why can't you avoid the dangerous sections? There are twelve coffins in all, so you'd better throw two dice to find out how many of them are opening.

Each coffin contains one Vampire. Each Vampire has a double dice roll multiplied by two of LIFE POINTS (or DEATH POINTS, in this case.) Each Vampire will fang you successfully on a throw of 5 or better. Each Vampire will suck away 5 LIFE POINTS on a successful fanging whatever the dice shows. Each Vampire is extremely thirsty.

Boy is this a mess!

If you survive your encounter with the Vampires, you'll find a ruby worth 500 gold pieces



in each open coffin. Once you've swiped these and closed the coffins, the doors will open again, allowing you to leave north into the corridor or south into **151**.

If you don't survive, it's a short trip to 14.

157

Cautiously, carefully, you lift the amulet from around the frog's neck, waiting for the statue to spring to life and zap you.

But it doesn't. The Poetic Fiend wrote truly, as well as poetically. Good old Fiend.

Now place the amulet around your own neck and prepare yourself for a bit of good news for a change. Anything up to three times during this adventure, you can use the amulet to teleport yourself directly to any section on any Level *that you have already visited* (even if you have managed to get yourself killed since you visited it.) This can save you a lot of problems with Wandering Monsters. You cannot use the amulet to teleport yourself to a section you have not yet visited and if you try, the amulet will teleport you to 14.

Perhaps even better news is that if you find yourself in a section that threatens to teleport you somewhere else, you can use the amulet to stop the teleport happening, allowing you to leave the section you are in by the same door you entered. The amulet may be used this way six times in the present adventure.

Now you can leave via the northern or eastern doors into the corridors. Or you can go through

the door to 156. Or you can blow a charge of the amulet right now by teleporting directly to somewhere you've been,

158

Phut!

A globule of leprous green light leaps from the tip of the wand, only to fall with mediocre sizzle on the floor.

'My wand has run out!' shrieks the man in alarm.

Splat!

You crack him on the head with the flat of EJ's blade, knocking him instantly unconscious.

'My hero!' cries the carrot in delight and promptly fangs you in the ankle. At once you feel your LIFE POINTS draining away at an alarming rate.

'Beware the bite of the Vampire Carrot!' calls out the carrot joyously, preparing to deliver a final, lethal bite.

You've only one chance here, Pip: the spell that turns vegetable monsters friendly! What's it called? PALS! If it works, then the Vampire Carrot will return all the LIFE POINTS it's just drained and remain with you as a bodyguard until you leave the Ghastly Kingdom. (And a good bodyguard it is too: in normal circumstances it requires a roll of six to score a hit, but if it manages three in succession, at whatever damage, it will always kill its opponent.) If the spell doesn't work, the Carrot's final bite will

159-162

drain your last remaining LIFE POINTS and send the pale husk of poor Pip straight to 14.

159

With the Guardian of the Darkness, or whatever it was, safely dispatched, you feel your way carefully along the wall that separates this section from 200, but there is no door. There is, however, a leather bag - presumably dropped by the Thing - which contains 300 gold pieces, so the booty is still mounting up.

You may leave 164 by either of the two northern doors.

160

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blackening you out momentarily and teleporting you straight to 147.

Isn't that irritating?

161

You seem to be rotting. Endure it as long as you can, then go to 14.

162

There are a great many urns in here. Terra cotta and alabaster and a few rough baked clay, but all extremely large and all sealed. Who knows what might be in them?

Who indeed, but if you are determined to open them, roll one die, remember the result and go to 154.



Alternatively, you can simply ignore the urns at this stage and leave through the double doors to the south into the corridor.

163

You didn't, did you, Pip?

You did?

They're a teleport direct to 14.

164

As you may have noticed from your map, there is a darkness zone in this chamber. It starts 50 feet away from the door you've just entered and it looks like trouble.

It also looks like it might be hiding a door into 200. Torches, lamps, even light spells won't dispel this darkness, but if you want to fumble your way in, you should go to 155. If not, your only other option is to go back out the door you came in.

165

Roll two dice. Unless you score 10 or better, the Spif will vibrate, in which case you should count to eight then flow away to 14.

If you manage to score 10, 11 or 12, then you should roll one die to find out how many seeds are in the head.

The doors in this chamber lead into the corridor to the north and into 81 to the south.

166

Seems that wasn't the right answer, Pip. Or if it was, they're cheating, since they have launched themselves upon you with ghoulish shrieks. You will recall each Ghoul has 30 LIFE POINTS, hits on 5 and will tear bits out of you at +4 with its bare hands.

If you survive the scrap, you may leave the chamber through the western door into the corridor, or though the eastern door into 173.

If you don't, you may sink slowly into 14.

167

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blacking you out momentarily and teleporting you straight back to 74, which is right at the beginning of Level III!

Wouldn't that make you spit!

168

'We tried that on the Dreaded Black Knight and he says it's wrong!!' scream the dwarves in unison, leaping forward to hack at you, with each one getting a Surprise attack in their fury.

You may not survive this, since each dwarf has 20 LIFE POINTS, strikes on 5 and scores +3 damage. But if you do, you may stagger through the western door to 176 or through the eastern door into the corridor.

If you don't, you can only stagger to 14.

169

This is the oddest room you've come across, even in this odd place. For a start, there are cages in each corner, which means you've just stepped into a cage, whichever door you entered. What's more, the door has now slammed shut, leaving you gripping the bars like an orang-utan, wondering how you could get yourself in trouble quite so quickly.

There is a Gnome in the middle of the room, sat beside a small table on which are a number of blank sheets of parchment, a quill pen and some inks.

'Glad you dropped in,' says the Gnome. 'My name is Crippen and I'm the Black Knight's Scribe.'

'Let me out of this cage!' you shout, 'Or I'll rip the bars apart and eat you for breakfast!'

'Bravely put,' says the Gnome easily, 'but stupid. Those cages were made to hold the Black Knight's

pet dragon, so your chances of breaking out are zilch. However, I am quite prepared to let you out if you can help me solve a problem. The Black Knight wants me to send out some invitations to a Dinner Party to celebrate his victory over some idiot named Pip who's lost in the Ghastly Kingdom somewhere at the moment. What's your name, by the way?

'Pat,' you answer promptly, since this is not time to start hassling with somebody so close to the Black Knight.

'Well, Pat,' says Crippen, 'the Black Knight wants to invite his father's brother-in-law, his brother's father-in-law, his father-in-law's brother and his brother-in-law's father. He also wants me to save paper, so my problem is to find the least number of invitations I can possibly send out and still cover the whole guest list. I gather it's possible to work out the solution logically, but that's never been one of my strong points. Murder's my strong point, really.'

'What will you give me if I tell you?' you ask, although at this precise moment in time you have not the least idea of the answer.

'I'll give you the key to that cage,' Crippen replies cynically. 'Otherwise you can stay in there and rot.'

Hobson's Choice, as they say. But what's the answer?

If you think it's four, go to 161.

If you think it's two or three, go to 185.

If you think it's one, try 197.

170

If you've studied your map, it will come as no surprise to you to learn the floor of this chamber is laid out in alternating black and white flagstones, like a chessboard. (A very small chessboard, admittedly, since it only has four squares to a side, but still....)

And if you have any sense at all (which you have, since you've survived this far) you would be inclined to think the layout means something. Probably something nasty. Like stepping on the black squares kills you. Or stepping on the white squares turns your brains to mould.

So which squares do you step on? Maybe the scrap of parchment pinned to the ceiling would help. You can just about fish it down with EJ without stepping on either coloured squares.

The parchment has just one word scrawled across it: 'Aaaaaahhhhhh!' Which is apparently the death rattle of some poor adventurer who stepped on the wrong colour. You are just about to throw it away in disgust, when you notice something written on the back:

'Avoid that which begins with the second. Use that which begins with the twenty-third. It's a long lane that has no turning and a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse.'

Some idiots get very garrulous when they're dying. But the message may contain some clue if you can figure it out.

Take your time, then make your decision.

Step on the black squares and go to 163.

Stepping on the white takes you to 195.

171

'We tried that on the Dreaded Black Knight and he says it's wrong!!' scream the dwarves in unison, leaping forward to hack at you, with each one getting a Surprise attack in their fury.

You may not survive this, since each dwarf has 20 LIFE POINTS, strikes on 5 and scores +3 damage. But if you do, you may stagger through the western door to 176 or through the eastern door into the corridor.

If you don't, you can only stagger to 14.

172

Everything looks funny through these specs, Pip. Blues have turned to green and greens to red and reds to a mottled shade of violet, but the really odd thing is that you can now see a notice on the northern wall. The notice says:

INVISIBLE ENTITIES DINNER DANCE

SATURDAY NIGHT. MAIN HALL.
8 PM SHARP.

CATERING BY TROGS

MUSIC BY LASHER DIVINE AND THE GRUNTS

Admission 5GP.

Proceeds in aid of the Black Knight Benevolent Fund.

You couldn't see that notice before, Pip. These specs must enable you to see invisible things. Which could be very useful. Take them with you when you leave by the southern door into the corridor.

173

Another bad choice. There are three exceedingly nasty things in here. Ghouls, by the look of them; and giant ghouls at that, each nearly fourteen feet tall, leprous white, skinny as sin and big teeth. Each Ghoul has 30 LIFE POINTS, hits on 5 and will tear bits out of you at +4 with its bare hands. Ghouls never accept Bribes, so you may as well get out EJ and—

Wait a minute - one of the Ghouls is saying something. That doesn't often happen down here: things usually just hack first and ask questions afterwards.

'Our Master, the Black Knight, has told us you are thick as a brick,' says the Ghoul, 'so we, as founder members of Ghoul Mensa, have decided to put you to the test. The test is that you must work out logically what our professions are.' He smiles, grimly.

'What a dumb test!' you reply, loosening EJ in his scabbard. 'There's no logic in it — only guesswork.'

The Ghoul smiles again. 'We'll make it easy for you. My name is Ghoul Yvan and by profession I am a sailor.' He points to one of the other Ghouls. 'His name is Ghoul Truoc and by profession he is

174-175

a lawyer. Now all you have to do is work out Ghoul Ymra's profession.'

Ghoul Ymra smiles and bows. 'And to make it even easier,' he remarks, 'I can tell you that I am either a Doctor, a Soldier, a Merchant or a Dentist.'

And they all wait, smiling grimly, for your decision.

If you think Ymra is a Doctor, go to 166.

If your decision is Soldier, go to 192.

If a Merchant, go to 178.

If a Dentist, goto 188.

174

'We tried that on the Dreaded Black Knight and he says it's wrong!!' scream the dwarves in unison, leaping forward to hack at you, with each one getting a Surprise attack in their fury.

You may not survive this, since each dwarf has 20 LIFE POINTS, strikes on 5 and scores +3 damage. But if you do, you may stagger through the western door to 176 or through the eastern door into the corridor.

If you don't, you can only stagger to 14.

175

Oh, oh. There are three Ghosts in here. You can see them quite plainly with your special specs.

176-179

They are coming for you, Pip, rattling their stupid chains. Fortunately each has only 10 LIFE POINTS, since ghosts generally are terribly unhealthy. They strike on 6 and do +1 damage.

If you survive the encounter, you can search the room properly at 182. If not, have a look round 14.

176

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blacking you out momentarily and teleporting you straight back to 80, which is right in the middle of LEVEL I!!

177

Your name's Pip, not Aladdin. Go back to 152 and stop messing about.

178

Seems that wasn't the right answer. Or if it was, they're cheating, since they have launched themselves upon you with ghoulish shrieks. You will recall each Ghoul has 30 LIFE POINTS, hits on 5 and will tear bits out of you at +4 with its bare hands.

If you survive the scrap, you may leave the chamber through the western door into the corridor, or through the eastern door into 173.

If you don't, you may sink slowly into 14.

179

How strange. How odd. How positively bizarre.

There is a winding path laid out on the floor of this huge chamber and along it are marching, in perfect unison, an armed contingent of Seven Dwarves.

(Hastily you look around for Snow White, but she is nowhere to be seen. And well may you blush: fancy expecting Snow White in a joint like this.)

'Squad . . . Halt!' roars the leading Dwarf, who is wearing three stripes and a crown on his sleeve, the insignia of a British Sergeant Major.

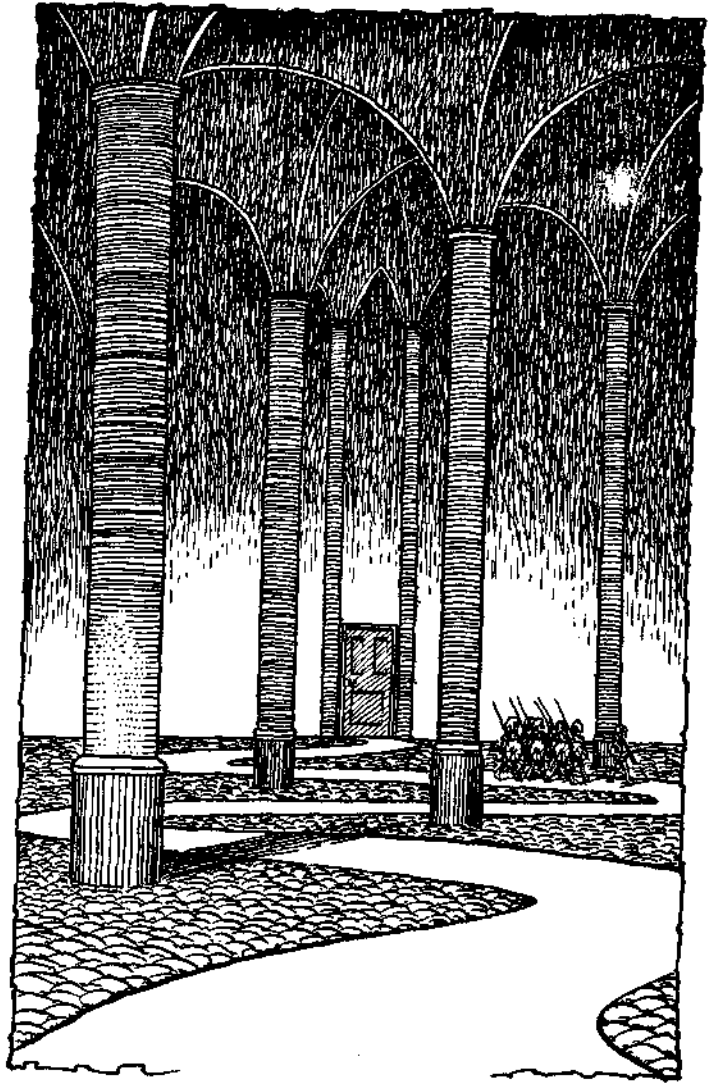
'Kill! Kill! Kill!' chant the remaining six, their beady little eyes fixed on you, glittering slightly.

'Hold it down, lads,' growls the Sergeant Major. 'This one may know the answer.'

'Yea, tell us the answer!' chant the other dwarves in unison.

'Tell you the answer to what?' you ask cautiously, not particularly anxious to tackle seven well-trained martial dwarves.

The Sergeant Major Dwarf scratches his nose in a most alarming manner. 'At 0.1500 hours (3 o'clock in the afternoon to you), our CO., the Dreaded Black Knight of Avalon, set us marching along a level road, then up a hill and home again, back the way we came. We got back at 0.2100 hours (9 o'clock in the evening to you). Then he asked us how far we'd marched. Of course, being pig ignorant, none of this shower knew; and being Sergeant Major, neither did I. So he's set us marching round and round this chamber until we work it out. Very boring it is too, with only the



179 Marching here in unison are Seven Dwarves

occasional adventurer to murder. Now, the question is, will you tell us how far we marched, or do we amuse ourselves by murdering you?

'Nobody can tell you the answer to that unless you answer one question first,' you say slyly, playing for time, but with an idea forming in your cunning little brain.

'And what's that?' asks the Sergeant Major Dwarf.

'How quickly you marched in miles per hour!' you say smugly, knowing full well this pig ignorant shower won't have a clue.

But to your horror, the Sergeant Major Dwarf answers promptly, 'Four miles an hour on level ground, three miles an hour uphill and six miles an hour downhill. Never varies, on account of our military training.'

You stare at him blankly, stuck now with answering the problem.

If you think the answer is 13 miles, turn to 168.

If you think the answer is 12 miles, turn to 171.

If you think the answer is 16 miles, turn to 174.

If you think the answer is 24 miles, turn to 191.

If you think the answer is 20 miles, turn to 183.

180

Something bashes you on the head, neatly removing 4 LIFE POINTS. (If *this kills you*, go to 14.)

You lash out instinctively, but miss.

Something else bashes you, removing a further 1 LIFE POINT (if *this kills you*, go to 14.)

Since you're a quick-witted soul, it occurs to you that you are under attack by Ghosts. There seem to be three of them altogether. Fortunately each has only 10 LIFE POINTS, since ghosts generally are terribly unhealthy. They strike on 6 and do +1 damage. Unfortunately, since they are invisible, you will need to roll 8 or better to hit one and even then, you will automatically miss every third strike.

If you survive, you can leave by the southern door into the corridor. If not, there's always the comfort of 14.

181

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blacking you out momentarily and teleporting you straight to 164.

182

With those silly things out of the way and your specs still on, you can see there is a wand in here. Careful inspection shows you it is a fireball wand. Roll one die to find out how many fireballs are in it, then take it with you when you leave via the southern door into the corridor.

183

'We tried that on the Dreaded Black Knight and he says it's wrong!!' scream the dwarves in unison, leaping forward to hack at you, with each one getting a Surprise attack in their fury.

You may not survive this, since each dwarf has 20 LIFE POINTS, strikes on 5 and scores +3 damage. But if you do, you may stagger through the western door to 176 or through the eastern door into the corridor.

If you don't, you can only stagger to 14.

184

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blacking you out momentarily and teleporting you straight to 87, which is somewhere in the middle of Level II.

185

You seem to be rotting. Endure it as long as you can, then go to 14.

186

There's some oil in it. Funny perfumed smell that you can't quite place, probably because you've never smelled it before. Apart from that, it looks like a perfectly ordinary lamp.

You can keep it or chuck it away and leave by the southern door into the corridor or use the eastern door into 167.

Or you can light the lamp now you know there's oil in it by going to 199.

187

If you weren't such a seasoned adventurer by now, you'd imagine this room was completely empty. But, as a seasoned adventurer, you search.

And find a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles.

Are you going to wear them? If so turn to 172.

If not, you can always leave them and return to the corridor through the southern door.



188

Seems that wasn't the right answer. Or if it was, they're cheating, since they have launched themselves upon you with ghoulish shrieks. You will recall each Ghoul has 30 LIFE POINTS, hits on 5 and will tear bits out of you at +4 with its bare hands.

If you survive the scrap, you may leave the

chamber through the western door into the corridor, or through the eastern door into 173.

If you don't, you may sink slowly into 14.

189

'Full marks!' exclaims the Maths Teacher. 'A hundred thousand rats would certainly kill the cat long before the cat managed to kill them. That may not be mathematics, but it's certainly Life.'

He reaches into the pocket of his jacket and smiles (a most frightening gesture). 'Here,' he says, 'is a free pass to the Black Knight's lair.'

You look at the Pass. On it are inscribed the words: 'Go direct to **200**.'

*If you want to use the Pass, you may go direct to **200**.*

If not, you can leave the chamber (198) by the northern door.

190

This octagonal room is completely empty. At least it seems so. You may like to inspect it with any special spectacles you may have found. If so, go to 175.

If you don't have any special spectacles, you can still search it thoroughly by going to 180.

Alternatively, you can always leave by the southern door into the corridor.



188 They launch themselves upon you with ghoulish shrieks

191

'And just how do you figure that out?' asks the Sergeant Major Dwarf aggressively.

'Simple,' you reply, adopting your best intellectual expression. 'Since this pig ignorant shower marches at 4 mph on the level, a level mile takes them a quarter of an hour. Going uphill at 3 mph means they take one third of an hour to march a mile uphill. And since their speed downhill is 6 mph, it follows that they will take one sixth of an hour to march a downhill mile.'

'Yes,' nods the Sergeant Major Dwarf uncertainly.

'That means that EVERY mile you march there and back is going to take *half an hour*. It doesn't actually matter whether you're marching on the level or on a hill. And since you marched six hours altogether, from 3 o'clock to 9 o'clock, you must have covered 12 miles there and 12 miles back - 24 miles altogether!'

'Hurray!' roar the Dwarves in unison. 'Pip. Pip. Hurray!'

'Can I go now?' you ask politely, exhausted from all that thinking.

'Course you can!' says the Sergeant Major Dwarf delightedly. 'And so can we. Here - have a tin of Spit'n'Polish for your sword, with our compliments.' And he hands you a small, rather rusty tin of wax polish. 'Great stuff this. Not only keeps your sword bright, but gives you an *additional* +2 damage during a fight. There's enough in here for six fights too.'

So saying, the Seven Dwarves march off, singing lustily, 'Hey Ho, Hey Ho, off to the Dreaded Black Knight of Avalon we will go!'

And if you are really quick off the mark, you can follow them through their secret route to 200.

Of course, if you don't feel ready to face the Black Knight yet, you can go through the western door to 176 or through the eastern door into the corridor.

192

'By Jove, this adventurer isn't as thick as a brick!' exclaims Ghoul Yvan in amazement. 'That's absolutely the right answer. Please accept this with our deepest respect.' And before you can move, he leaps forward and hangs a locket around your neck.

Desperately you tear it off, thinking it may be cursed or something, but when you open the locket, you find engraved inside the words:

HONORARY MEMBER: GHOUL MENSA

Now there's a turn-up. Honorary Member of Ghoul Mensa, eh? Although what good it will do you is anybody's guess.

'Please feel free to proceed without further let or hindrance from us,' says Ghoul Truoc. 'But a word of free legal advice - don't go into 176 or you'll regret it.'

You can always ignore this advice, of course, and go direct to 176 through the eastern door. Alternatively, you may use the western door into the corridor.

193

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blacking you out momentarily and teleporting you straight to 200.

194

'Pedantic nignog!' roars the Maths Teacher, working himself up into a fury. 'Any fool might guess a hundred thousand rats are bound to kill the cat!'

He reaches for his ruler to beat you to death, but fortunately suffers a heart attack instead, leaving you to steal the key of the door from his pocket and exit this dreadful chamber gracefully through the northern door into the corridor.

195

That seems safe enough. Furthermore, there's a healing potion worth a die roll of LIFE POINTS on one of the safe squares. Take it with you when you leave by either the western or the southern door.

196

A whirlwind envelopes you the second you step through this doorway, blacking you out momentarily and teleporting you straight to 198.

197

'What an ingenious suggestion! exclaims Gnome Crippen, quickly scribbling down a diagram with the quill pen. He stares at it frowning.

Grandfather/Grandmother

1st son daughter 2nd son

'Now suppose the first son in this family tree got married and had a daughter and the Black Knight married that daughter when she grew up. And suppose the Black Knight himself were the son of the daughter in this family tree. And further suppose that the Black Knight had a brother and a sister and the sister married the son of the second son in this family tree, while the Black Knight's brother married the daughter of the second son, then a single invitation to the second son would certainly cover everything, wouldn't it?'

'Of course it would!' you nod wisely. 'Any fool can see that.'

'Well,' says Crippen philosophically, 'it had me beat until you gave me the answer.' And true to his word, he tosses you the key to your cage.

When your confusion settles, you may leave by the northern or western doors into the corridors.

198

Get out of here fast.

Too late, the door has closed behind you.

This is the most dangerous room in the whole Ghastly Kingdom, next to the lair of the Black Knight himself. One glance tells you all. It is the lair of the deadly Maths Teacher!

The deadly Maths Teacher is wearing a sports jacket with leather patches on the sleeves and has hair on the back of his hands.

He fixes you with a gimlet eye, in the manner of a snake hypnotizing a bird. 'If a cat can kill a rat in one minute, how long would it take to kill 100,000 rats?' he asks you grimly. 'Answer at once or I shall beat you to death with my ruler!'

If you imagine the answer might be 100,000 minutes, turn to 194.

If you think it isn't, try 189.

199

The lamp burns with a surprisingly steady blue flame and a hint of pale blue-grey smoke which curls around you like a shroud. Except it isn't a shroud, as you quickly discover - it's a magical protection! If this lamp is lit before you get into a hassle, the magic smoke will deduct three points from any damage scored against you. And that's on top of any damage deductions you may already have.

The only thing is, you must decide to light the lamp *before* you enter a section or make a Wandering Monster roll, since you won't have time when the hassle actually starts. There is enough oil in there for six uses, but don't throw

the lamp away afterwards, since you may find suitable oil somewhere - perhaps on some other adventure.

Now pack your lamp away carefully and leave via the door south into the corridor or the door east into 167.

200

Despite the vast size of this chamber, the first thing you notice is that there are no doors leading out of it. But that hardly matters, since standing in the centre of the chamber, black armour glistening in the light of a massive chandelier above his head, is a burly figure carrying a sinister broadsword in one hand and an equally sinister mace in the other. Ranged in front of him are seven Military Dwarves. Ranged in front of them are seven Slime Monsters (and sickening they look). Ranged in front of them are seven Djinns.

'Welcome, Pip,' says the black armoured figure heartily. 'I am, you will instantly realize, King Pellinore, bosom friend of King Arthur.'

'No, you're not,' you reply promptly, having made that mistake too many times before. 'You are the dreaded Black Knight of Avalon and I am going to do you fearful mischief in order than I may shut the Gateway to this Ghastly Kingdom.'

'Well, if you're going to be like that, we'd better get on with it,' says the Black Knight huffily. 'Sic him, Monsters!'

At which the various monsters move slowly towards you.

This may not be quite so bad as it looks. If you have already met, befriended or defeated the Seven Dwarves and the Djinn, the only things that will actually attack you are the Slime Monsters. But if you haven't met them before, the Dwarves and Djinn will attack you as well.

Each dwarf has 20 LIFE POINTS, strikes on 5 and scores +3 damage.

Each Djinn has 30 LIFE POINTS, hits on 5 and does +2 damage with the scimitar. All are open to Bribery, but only at the special rate of two precious stones and 500 gold pieces each, so it may prove expensive. If, however, you are wearing a Tinglering, any damage scored against you by a Djinn is automatically halved.

The Slime Monsters are bad news all the way. Each has 10 LIFE POINTS, needs 6 to strike and scores only dice damage. But they poison you on their first successful strike, causing you to lose 2 LIFE POINTS every time you make a hit until you cure yourself if you can. (And curing yourself takes up a round, so the monster gets a free strike against you while you're doing it.)

Finally, there's the dreaded Black Knight himself. He has 80 LIFE POINTS, which could be worse, but both his sword and armour are magic. The armour will stop 12 points of damage the first time it's hit, 6 points the second and 4 points regularly thereafter. His sword allows him to strike on 4 and does +4 damage.



If you get out of this mess with a whole skin, go on to 201.

If not, it's a long way back to 14.

201

The Black Knight sinks to the floor, clutching his wounds.

'Rotter!' he gasps, this being an ancient expression meant to convey the very depths of insult.

But you ignore him, except for the token gesture of placing your boot lightly on his back and beating your chest. Then you search the huge chamber carefully until, at your agile touch, a secret panel opens in the ceiling, allowing you to climb out into the muted sunlight.

You look around and sure enough, the open Gateway is a mere hundred yards away to the south. Faster than a speeding arrow (despite the various bits of booty you've collected) you zip through, slamming it tight shut behind you. Quickly you turn the key you found in the Little Old Lady Monster's chest.

The bolt slides home with a satisfying click and you turn away to seek the road to Camelot.

(Which, when you find it, will take you to the section headed PIP TRIUMPHANT.)



201 The Gateway of the Ghastly Kingdom . . .
closed at last!

PIP TRIUMPHANT

If the Monday morning meetings of the Table Round were bad, the Friday afternoon meetings of the Table Round were usually much worse. Even at the best of times, the Knights were restless, anxious to get shot of business so they could spend their weekends wassailing and carousing.

But in the middle of this particular Friday afternoon meeting, something very peculiar happened. The Knights suddenly began to act politely towards one another, so that it was, 'After you, Sir Percival,' and, 'No, no, my dear Galahad, what were you going to say?' and, 'No, I insist you speak first, Sir Percival,' and general sweetness and light all round.

King Arthur studied this interesting development for nearly an hour before he rapped the table for silence.

'Have you noticed,' he said seriously, 'how benevolent we have all become to one another? There has not been one serious threat voiced for the past sixty minutes.'

The Knights looked at each other in amazement, realizing that, of course, their King was right.

'What does it mean?' cried Sir Bevedere, who had a flair for histrionics.

'I think,' said the King slowly, 'it must mean somebody has managed to close the Gateway to the Ghastly Kingdom of the Dead.'

'Pip?' asked Sir Lancelot.

King Arthur nodded. 'Who else?'

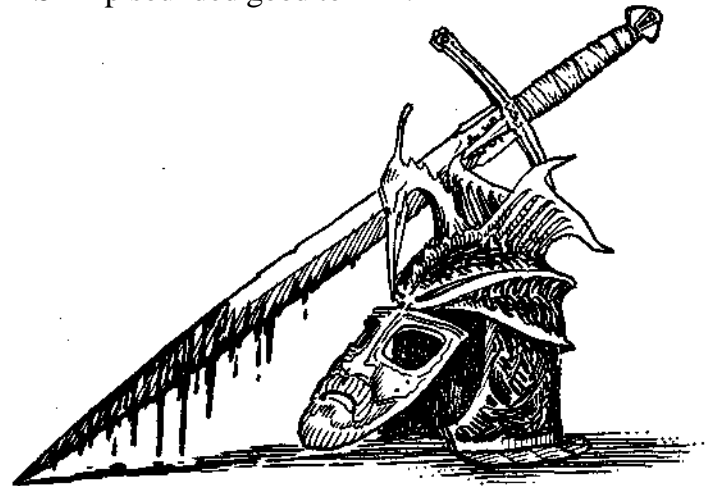
'I have a proposal,' said King Pellinore, seated in one corner. He glanced around grinning. 'I expect you all know what it is.'

'A knighthood?' asked Sir Lancelot, also grinning.

'Precisely,' King Pellinore confirmed.

'A knighthood!' roared the excited members of the Table Round. 'A knighthood for Pip!!'

Even the King was smiling. In the circumstances, Sir Pip sounded good to him.



APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

Pip's First Spell Book

RULES OF MAGIC

Rule 1. Every spell you try to cast will cost you 3 LIFE POINTS *whether it works or not.*

Rule 2. No spell can be thrown more than *three times* in any adventure. Once thrown, it is used up whether successful or not.

Rule 3. No spell works at all unless you score 7 or more with a throw of two dice.

Spell

**Pip's Armour of Nearly
Impenetrable
Coruscation**
(P.A.N.I.C. for short)

Effect

Throws a shimmering, spinning wall of light around the user. This light acts exactly like plate armour, subtracting 4 points from any damage scored against the user. What's more, this effect is *additional* to any deductions made for actual armour, dragonskin jacket etc.

**Pip's Outlandish
Wallop**
(P.O.W. for short)

Adds +10 to the damage caused by the next blow delivered by the user. This is additional to damage shown by dice and weapon damage.

**Pip's Instant Levity
and Laughter**
(P.I.L.L. for short)

Causes the user's opponent to fall about laughing so heartily that he/she/it misses three consecutive turns during combat.

Pip's Attacking Dart
(P.A.D. for short)

Allows user to launch a magical dart against an enemy out of combat range. The dart never misses provided the spell is properly cast and causes 10 damage points. An enemy so attacked cannot immediately strike back unless he has some long-distance weapon such as a bow or spear.

**Pip's Immunity to
Poison**
(P.I.P. for short, oddly
enough)

If cast *before* poison is taken, the spell renders the user immune to its effects whatever results are shown by the dice. The spell DOES NOT WORK if cast *after* the poison is taken. It comes in useful when the user wishes to sample some unknown substance that might be dangerous.

Pip's Instant Neutralizer
(P.I.N. for short)

The use of this spell counteracts the effect of one (only) spell placed on an *object* (not a person or living creature). It is useful for opening magically locked chests, doors etc.

Pip's Immense Rapid Repeater
(Pi R Squared, for short)

During combat, the spell enables the user to move twice as fast as usual, enabling him/her to get in TWO blows in succession each time his/her turn comes round throughout a given combat.

Very Special Spell
INVISIBILITY
(I.N.V.I.S.I.B.I.L.I.T.Y.
for short)

This very special spell may only be used ONCE per adventure at a cost of 15 LIFE POINTS... and even then only in certain sections of the adventure. (The sections where Invisibility is possible are labelled as such, so don't waste LIFE POINTS trying it anywhere else.) The effect of the spell is to render the user totally invisible.

Firefinger

This causes a bolt of lightning to emerge from your finger and zap 10 LIFE POINTS from an enemy. This spell gives you ten Firefinger Bolts in all. Once cast successfully, the spell may not be used again.*

Fireball

Creates a giant fireball in the palm of your hand which you can then hurl at an enemy to cause him 75 points of damage. This spell gives you only *two* Fireballs, one for each hand. Once cast successfully, the spell may not be used again.*

*But you can keep any Lightning Bolt or Fireball you don't use right away and use it later.

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT NOTE:

Except for INVISIBILITY, any spell you have can be used in *any* section of your adventure. It is up to you to keep a note on your Quest Journal of what spells you have used up and what spells you still carry.

It is also up to you to remember to use them!

APPENDIX II
(see Section 65)

Level 1 Wandering Monsters

Dice Score	Encounter	Life Points	Hits On	Damage	Gold
2	None				
3	None				
4	None				
5	None				
6	None				
7	None				
8	Animated Skeleton	20	6	+1	10gp
9	Nerds (2)	11	7	+2	10gp
10	Orcs (2)	12	6	+2	15gp
11	Kobolds(4)	8	7	+1	5gp
12	Creeping Jello	30	5	+4	30gp

Note: Figures in brackets show you have encountered more than one monster at once. LIFE POINTS, Gold etc., refer to *each* Monster in the group. Roll for Surprise at start of combat. Where there is more than one Monster, you can make a single Surprise roll for the whole group. Groups of Monsters will attack one after the other, never together.

Wandering Monsters cannot be bribed and never give a Friendly Reaction.

APPENDIX III
(see Section 74)

Level 2 Wandering Monsters

Dice Score	Encounter	Life Points	Hits On	Damage	Gold
2	None				
3	None				
4	None				
5	None				
6	None				
7	Medusa	30	7	+2*	15gp
8	Poison Dwarves (2)	15	6	+1	10gp
9	Colls (2)	15	5	+2	15gp
10	Triffids(2)	30	8	+4	15gp
11	Scrats(5)	10	7	+1	25gp
12	Creeping Semolina	35	6	+4	80gp

* Any throw of 12 by the Medusa will paralyse you totally for the next four combat rounds and quite possibly result in this monster hacking you to death while you can't hack back.

APPENDIX IV
(see Section 150)

Level 3 Wandering Monsters

<i>Dice Score</i>	<i>Encounter</i>	<i>Life Points</i>	<i>Hits On</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>Gold</i>
2	None				
3	None				
4	None				
5	None				
6	Pit Trap	You lose double dice roll LPs			
7	Them	20	5	+5	150gp
8	Vampire Bats (5)	6	3 + 1		0gp
9	Spike Trap	Lose double dice roll & poisoned*			
10	Permans(3)	15	5	+2	100gp
11	Tubarinos(2)**	30	6	+1	150gp
12	Creeping Sago	70	6	+2	500gp

*When poisoned, you will lose 5 LIFE POINTS for every 40 feet travelled or new section entered until you die or take anti-poison potion.

**These are vegetable monsters.

APPENDIX V

Weapons and Armour

Unless different figures are given for a particular encounter, you can use the following table as a guide to the damage associated with weapons used or armour worn by your opponents in combat. It will also give you an indication of the damage associated with any weapons or armour you may find (and possibly decide to use) during an adventure.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Damage</i>
Battleaxe	+4
Dagger	+2
Flail	+2
War Hammer	+3
Lance	+5
Mace	+4
Sword	+3
Chainmail	-3
Leather armour	-2
Plate armour	-4

Dreamtime

This section is used **ONLY** when you decide to **SLEEP**. If the dice direct you here, follow these rules:

1. You enter the Dreamtime with your **LIFE POINTS** at the exact level they were at when you decided to Sleep.
2. You have no magic, weapons or armour, except those which may be given you in a Dreamtime encounter.
3. You may take nothing back from the Dreamtime.
4. Any **LIFE POINTS** you lose in the Dreamtime must be deducted from your actual **LIFE POINTS**. If you are killed in the Dreamtime, you are really killed and must go direct to the dreaded **14**.

Now enter the Dreamtime by throwing two dice and going to the section indicated by your score.

If you survive, you should return to the section where you decided to Sleep.

Dreamtime Sections

2. You are at the helm of a great ship on a voyage of high adventure. Your look-out in the crow's nest calls out a warning that your vessel is approaching the edge of the world. Although you know this is impossible since the world is round, you can nonetheless see he is right: a strong current is

taking the ship directly to a vast waterfall in the middle of the ocean, a waterfall which plunges down into the starry depths of Space. You swing hard on the wheel, but cannot divert the ship from its course. In minutes, your vessel is plunging over the edge. Roll one die. Score 1-3 and you plunge to **14**. Score 4-6 and you get lucky enough to fall back to the section where you decided to **SLEEP** without loss of **LIFE POINTS**.

3. You are standing before a broad mist-enshrouded lake, and you know the only way back to the section where you decided to **SLEEP** is across its gloomy waters. The distance is too far to swim, but there is a chance you may be able to call to the Ferryman on the distant shore. As you are about to do so, you are attacked suddenly by a Ragged Rogue armed with a +1 dagger. You yourself are unarmed, but you determine to put up a fight. The Ragged Rogue has 12 **LIFE POINTS**. Both of you strike successfully on a 6 or better; but in your desperation you get first strike. If the Rogue kills you, go to 14. If you kill the Rogue in three strikes or less, you will be able to call the Ferryman and return to the section where you decided to **SLEEP**. If you take longer to kill the Rogue, the Ferryman will have departed and you can only return to your adventure via **14**.
4. Although this is totally out of character, you are drunk as a newt and have just picked a fight with a very large man with 25 **LIFE POINTS** and a +3 club. Although you are equipped with old EJ (thus hitting on 4 or better and doing +5 damage) you are so unsteady on your feet that you can only get in one strike for every two bashes your opponent gets in. What's more, you take so long getting EJ out of his scabbard that your opponent gets first strike. If you

lose this silly fight, you're off to **14**. If you win, you may return to the section where you decided to SLEEP.

5. At the lowest level of a horrendous dungeon, you have found an ornate casket made from transparent crystal. Within it is a glowing blue-green gemstone which you know will give you a double dice roll of LIFE POINTS (a rare thing in the Dreamtime). Your problem is to open the box safely. To attempt to do so, you must roll one die. Score 5 or 6 and you retrieve the gem safely and increase your LIFE POINTS. Score anything else and the box shatters, hacking away 10 of your present LIFE POINTS. If this kills you, go to **14**. If not, return to the section where you decided to SLEEP - minus 10 LIFE POINTS.
6. You have fallen through the floor of a ruined castle into the pink marble Crypt of the Poetic Fiend who, you discover, is in a foul mood by reason of a bad toothache (or, more correctly, fangache). He insists you must write a Limerick beginning 'There once was a Poet called Dan...' If you can complete the Limerick in less than fifteen minutes, you may return safely to the section where you decided to SLEEP. If not, he will fang you for the loss of 5 LIFE POINTS. (If this kills you, go to **14**. If not, return minus 5 LIFE POINTS.)
7. A sorcerer has given you a scroll containing a GNURLBASH spell. You have no idea what a GNURLBASH spell does, but are determined to find out. The instructions on the scroll suggest you roll two dice. Score 2-6 and the spell calls up a Gnurlbash Monster with 30 LIFE POINTS and +2 fangs which attack you viciously, getting first strike. If it kills you, go to **14**. If you can kill it with

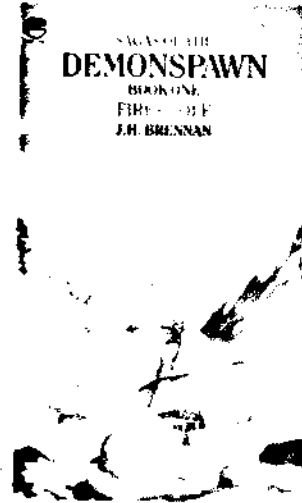
your bare hands, go back to the section where you decided to SLEEP. Score 7-10 and the Gnurlbash Monster will appear but wander off, allowing you to return safely to the section where you decided to SLEEP. Score 11-12 and the Gnurlbash Monster will actually accompany you out of the Dreamtime and fight on your behalf against one (but only one) monster in your adventure before disappearing.

8. You have fallen into a gigantic bowl of sago (which presumably means you've shrunk in size alarmingly, or that you should stop eating cheese butties before you go asleep). Although the goo is so thick there is little chance of your drowning, you do notice a fin approaching across the surface. Throw a dice quickly. Score 1 to 4 and you're safe: the fin is only a floating cornflake. Throw 5 or 6 and it's a floating cornflake with a shark underneath. The shark has 20 LIFE POINTS and does +4 damage each time it bites you. Good luck with the encounter.
9. Somebody has unscrewed your leg (the left one) and thrown it down a deep well. You are now in the process of climbing down the well to get it back. Throw two dice. Score 9-12 and you succeed. Score 2-8 and you fail. The problem is that if you don't get your leg back here, your real left leg will be numb for three sections after you return to the section where you decided to SLEEP. This means that if you get into a fight, you will automatically miss every third strike, whatever the dice show.
10. On your arrival at a strange village, the peasants decide to burn you at the stake having apparently mistaken you for a witch. You are now bound and gagged, watching the village elders approaching with lighted torches. This worries you, since it is

broad daylight. If you can break your bonds, you should be able to run back to the section where you decided to SLEEP. Throw two dice to decide the strength of your bonds. Then throw two more to represent your effort in breaking them. If the second roll is higher than the first, you get free. If not, make your singed way to **14**.

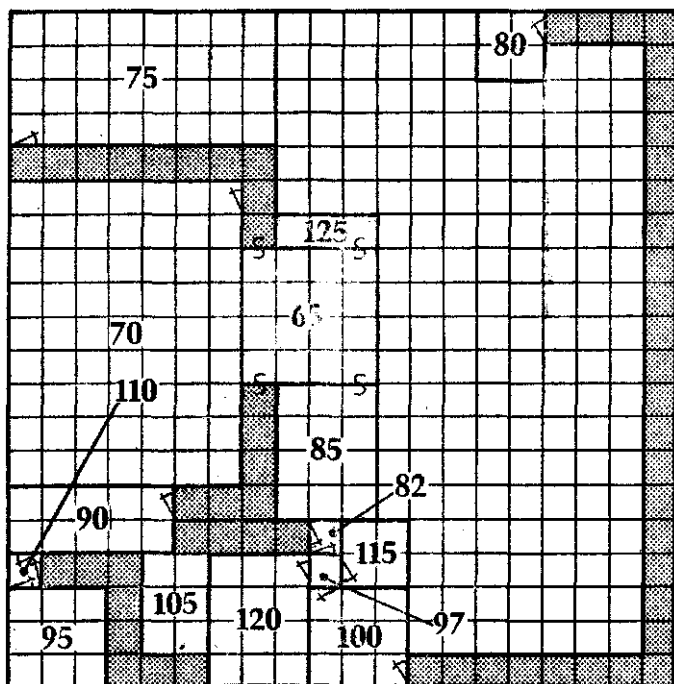
11. You have been knocked unconscious during combat, but Merlin, who is a bit short-sighted, decides you are dead and arranges a decent burial. You come to in an extremely comfortable coffin as it is being lowered into the grave. You have only a very short time to attract everybody's attention before our air runs out. You can attract their attention by throwing a 6 on a single die. But unless you manage to throw that six in five or fewer attempts, you're dead from suffocation. Take up your die....
12. You are lost in a dense fog, which has completely disorientated you. You wander for hours, trying to find your way back to the section where you decided to SLEEP . . . while at the same time trying to avoid wandering into the dreaded **14**. Throw one die. Score 1-2 and go to **14**. Score 3-4 and you're back in the section where you decided to SLEEP. Score 5-6 and you're back in the Dreamtime so that you must roll two dice to find which Dreamtime section awaits you this time.

There are two more Solo Fantasy Gamebooks by J.H. Brennan in Fontana paperbacks in the SAGAS OF THE DEMON SPAWN Series.



Map 1 Level I

Section 65

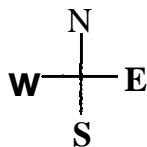


1 Square = 10'

▨ = Corridor

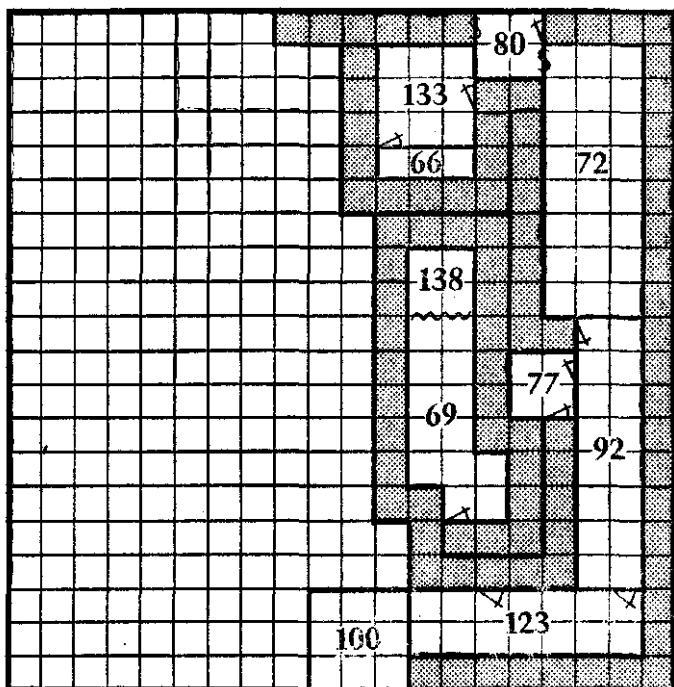
✕ = Door

S = Secret door



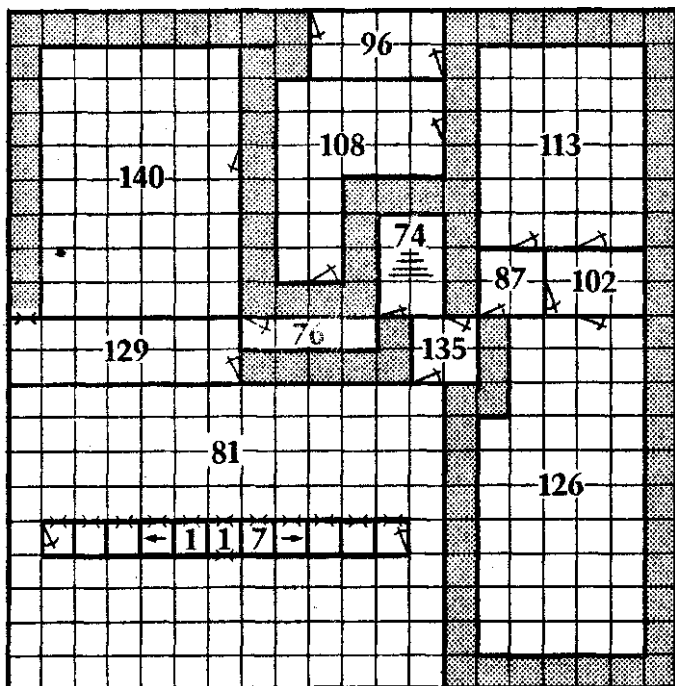
Map 2 Level I

Section 80



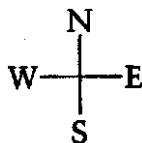
Map 3 Level II

Section 74

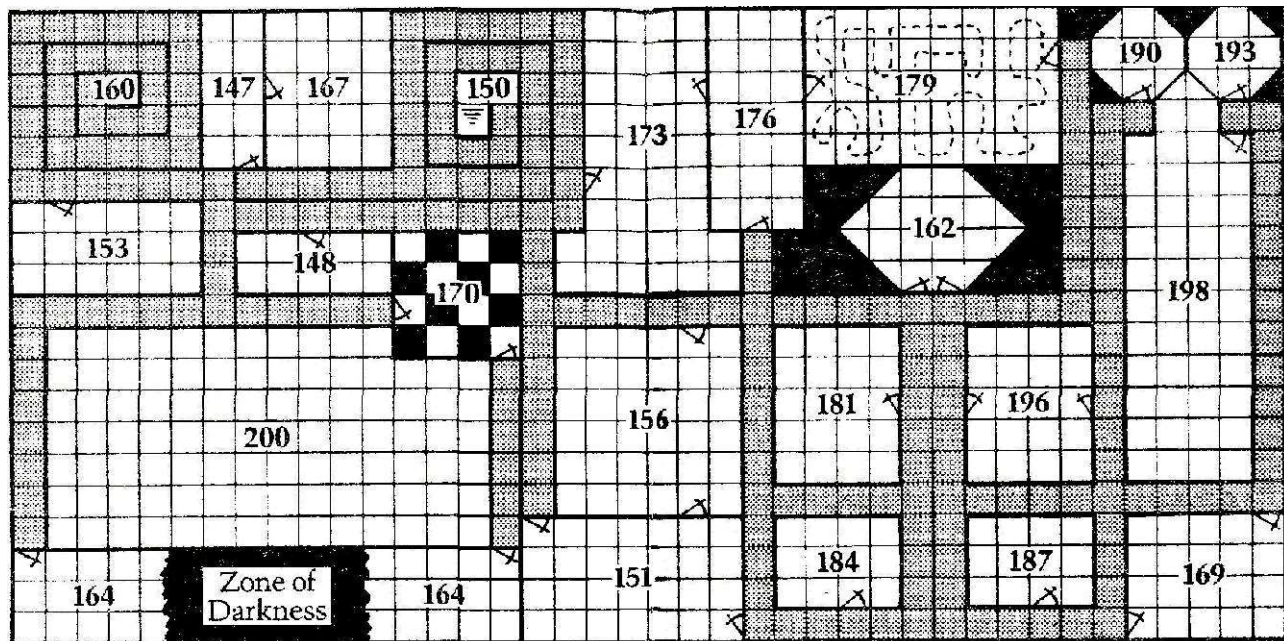


≡ Stairs to Level I

>< One way door: opens from
inside of 10' x 10' room *only*



Map 4 Level III



≡ Stairs to **Level II**

Rules of Combat

To Find Your Starting LIFE POINTS

1. Roll two dice and add the scores together.
2. Multiply the result by 4.
3. Add any PERMANENT LIFE POINTS gained in other *Grailquest* adventures.

To Strike an Enemy *

Roll a 6 or higher on two dice.

To Damage an Enemy

1. Check how many points you rolled above the number needed to strike.
2. Subtract this from your enemy's LIFE POINTS.

To Knock Out an Enemy

Reduce his LIFE POINTS to 5.

To Kill an Enemy

Reduce his LIFE POINTS to zero (0).

Your enemies use the same method to attack you, as you roll dice for them.

Armour & Weapons

1. Using armour subtracts from damage scored against you.
2. Using weapons increases the damage you score.
3. *You are permanently equipped with *EJ*: Needs a roll of only 4 on two dice and causes 5 extra damage points. If you have adventured through *The Castle of Darkness* you also have the *Dragonskin jacket*: Deducts 4 from damage done to you.

To Restore Lost LIFE POINTS

1. *Sleep*: You can sleep any time except when fighting. Roll *one* die. If you score 1-4, turn to *Dreamtime*. If you score 5 or 6, LIFE POINTS are restored equal to rolling two dice.
2. Other LIFE-restoring methods are given through the adventure.

N.B. LIFE POINTS cannot be restored to above your Starting total - except through Experience.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

1. 1 EXPERIENCE POINT is gained for each fight or puzzle won or solved.
2. 20 EXPERIENCE POINTS = 1 PERMANENT LIFE POINT. 10 of these can be taken into future adventures.

To Test for a Friendly Reaction

Roll one die *once* for your enemy and one die *three* times for yourself. If you score *less* than your enemy, he is Friendly. Proceed as if you had won a fight.

Attack Magic

1. Each spell thrown costs 3 LIFE POINTS whether or not it is successful.
2. No spell can be thrown more than three times. Once thrown it is used up whether or not it has been successful.
3. A 7 or higher must be thrown for a spell to work.

Spells

PANIC: Subtracts 4 extra points from damage done to you.

POW: Adds 10 points to damage scored.

PILL: Causes opponent to miss three turns in combat.

PAD: Causes 10 damage points to an enemy at any range.

PIP: Gives immunity to poison, when taken *before* poisoning.

PIN: Neutralises an enemy spell cast on an object.

PIR SQUARED: Gives you two turns in succession throughout a given combat round.

INVISIBILITY: Makes you invisible. Can be used only *once* in Sections indicated. Costs 15 LIFE POINTS.

HREFINGERS: Spell can be thrown successfully *once* only to give 10 Bolts, each scoring 10 damage. Unused Bolts can be fired at any later time.

FIREBALLS: Spell can be thrown successfully *once* only. Gives two Fireballs, each scoring 75 damage. If unused, can be taken forward and fired at any later time.

Repeat Journeys

On repeat attempts at the adventure, any enemies previously killed remain dead. Any treasure collected is lost unless you are told otherwise.

Quest Journal

PIP'S LIFE POINTS

Starting:

Current:

EXPERIENCE POINTS: (20 = 1 PERMANENT LIFE POINT):

EQUIPMENT

Silver Pieces (10 = 1 Gold Piece):

From previous adventures:

SPELLS

PANIC

POW

PILL

PAD

PIP

PIN

FIR²

INVISIBILITY

FIREFINGERS

FIREBALLS

BATTLE SCORES

Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS:	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :
Result:	Result:	Result:
Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :
Result:	Result:	Result:
Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS:	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :
Result:	Result:	Result:
Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS:	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS:	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :
Result:	Result:	Result:
Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :	Enemy: Enemy LIFE POINTS :
Result:	Result:	Result: