

RETURN OF THE WANDERER

THE CRETAN CHRONICLES: 3



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and Philip Parker**

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To Martin Hammond

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John Butterfield
David Honigmann
1984-5

BACKGROUND AND RULES

Back on the ship, the captain greets you with delight, as the seven youths and seven maidens, who have also escaped, feared you slain. You wink at the one who looks like your mother and she smiles at you gladly. As the captain shows you to a cabin below decks, the crew begins to row with long, powerful strokes away from this accursed island. You take one last look at Crete, to which you came a boy, but which you leave a prince and husband, Altheus the Avenger. Yet on the horizon the winds of strife are stirring.

In this, the third book of the Cretan Chronicles, you are still Altheus, a Greek hero with an awesome mission to accomplish, striving against wild beasts and men, and seeking to win the favour of the gods in your quest. The years ahead will be difficult, but it is *you* who will determine your destiny. The book is laid out in paragraph format; at the end of each paragraph you will be given a choice which will determine the number of the paragraph to which you next turn. The paragraphs are set out in numerical order; you should not read a paragraph until you are sent to it from the one which you have just read, or you will spoil the continuity and enjoyability of the adventure. If there is no destination given at the end of a paragraph, you are dead. In this case, you may start again at the beginning of Book 1 (*Bloodfeud of Altheus*), with a new Altheus, all values at their initial level, weapons and equipment as at the start, and all the gods' attitudes at Neutral.

You will need pencil, paper and dice to appreciate the travels of Altheus – *your* travels!

Might, Protection, Honour and Shame

Before you set out, there are a number of things it is necessary for you to know. Your mental state, your fighting skills and your relations with the supernatural and society are described in terms of four characteristics. These are Might, Protection, Honour and Shame. Their values will change during the course of the game, so they must be recorded. For this purpose a blank Chronicle Sheet is provided (pp. 20–21), which may be photocopied. Also marked on the Chronicle Sheet is a Wound Record track. This begins at Healthy, and as Altheus suffers injury it moves through Wounded and Seriously Wounded to Dead. The Chronicle Sheet can also be used to record equipment carried, artefacts acquired on the journey, and whether Altheus is in Favour or Disfavour with the gods. In short, it details everything important about Altheus' condition and his relations with the outside world.

Altheus' Might value at a given time will nearly always be made up of a combination of his natural ability and the value of the strongest weapon he is carrying. This characteristic is used to determine how likely Altheus is to hit an opponent, should he find himself in combat. Altheus' natural Might is 4, but this will be supplemented whenever he is carrying a weapon.

Protection is made up of a combination of Altheus' inborn skill at dodging and the sum total of the armour he happens to be wearing. Altheus has inborn Protection of 10. Now suppose that he has greaves and a helmet. The greaves give 1 point of Protection, and the helmet 2. His total Protection value in this case is 13 (10+2+1). Protection is used mainly in combat to determine how difficult an opponent will find it to strike at Altheus successfully.

Honour is all-important for Altheus. It determines his relations both with his fellow men and with his patron god or goddess. Without Honour he will find himself an outcast. His patron deity will refuse to aid him when called on (not that this aid is in any case automatic); men will despise him and seek to do him ill. Altheus starts with the Honour value carried over

from the last book, unless you have not played through that, in which case it will be assigned in the first few paragraphs. This Honour may increase or decrease without restriction, but it may never decrease below 0. If it ever reaches 0, it may not increase again except through appeals to Zeus (see below) or by means of a special item described in the text. Honour is gained by victory in combat; it may be used up in appeals to the gods. Honour may also be used to gain a temporary increase in Might or Protection in combat.

Shame is another crucial concept in Bronze Age Greece, the setting of this adventure. Shame, which initially has a value corresponding to its level at the end of the last book (if this has not been played, a value will be assigned), cannot be eradicated once acquired, except under exceptional circumstances (which will be detailed in the text). It is accumulated by such cultural *faux pas* as slaying one's opponent after he has surrendered, retreating ignominiously from a fair fight, or failing to perform heroic deeds. Such gross crimes as patricide, marrying one's own mother or failure satisfactorily to maintain one's armour will be penalized by a greater increase in Shame points. If Altheus' Shame ever rises above his Honour, he will be overwhelmed by the burden of his heroic conscience, and he will either disembowel himself with a shortsword, if one is available, or be struck down by a thunderbolt from Olympian Zeus, father of the gods, and his spirit will go whining through the dark halls of Hades the life-destroyer. Resurrection is, in this case, specifically forbidden. If Shame exceeds Honour in the middle of a combat, no action is taken until the battle is completed. Thus the Honour he gains from victory may save him from this horrible fate.

Combat

Combat may occur in any encounter with a man or animal who is given combat abilities. You should always note these down on a piece of paper, not only for convenience, but also because you may well be sent to another paragraph. You should also

keep a track of the Wound Record of an opponent. Combat is fought in a series of rounds called thrusts and counter-thrusts. Unless otherwise specified, Altheus will have the option of the first strike. If he performs some other action, such as appealing to the gods or using a magical item, his opponent will gain this initiative.

Altheus rolls two dice, and adds his natural Might and the value of his chosen weapon (note that if a weapon is given no Protection value or a piece of armour no Might value, this is because its value is 0). If this total equals or exceeds the total Protection (natural ability + armour) of the opponent, Altheus has scored a hit. The Wound Record of the opponent is moved forward one stage. If Healthy, the opponent becomes Wounded; if Wounded, Seriously Wounded; and if Seriously Wounded, Dead, at which point the combat is over. On a dice roll of 11 or 12, Altheus will automatically hit his opponent, regardless of his Might or his opponent's Protection. Altheus may 'get lucky', even against the most formidable adversary. Conversely, on 2 or 3, he will automatically miss. His opponents fight in exactly the same manner, except that non-human opponents have no separate weapons or armour to be taken into consideration. If Altheus is fighting more than one opponent, the procedure is very slightly different. Altheus will fight them one by one, but each one's Might is increased by 1 for each surviving companion. For example, if Altheus fights three wolves (Might 2, Protection 12), the first wolf has effective Might 4, the second Might 3, and the last its own 2. In such multiple combats an opponent drops out when Seriously Wounded, and leaves the fight to his unwounded companions, if any; if all are Seriously Wounded, the text will give instructions as to what to do.

The fight continues until one side is dead or has surrendered. Once either Altheus or his opponent is Seriously Wounded, however, the injury will hamper fighting ability. Anyone suffering from such a wound will roll one die instead of two during combat. In this situation, a roll of 1 is an automatic miss, but a roll of 6 is not an automatic hit. If all participants in a combat are Seriously Wounded, then, in

this case only, they are allowed to roll two dice instead of one until the end of the combat. Once a protagonist is Seriously Wounded, therefore, his chances of survival are very much less. Against a human opponent, in this situation, Altheus has the option of surrendering. The opponent will almost always accept this (the text will tell you whether or not he does), strip him of his strongest piece of armour and his strongest weapon (calculated according to their Might or Protection – the best has the highest value), and then let him go. Altheus must, however, take 1 Shame point for such action. If an opponent surrenders, Altheus must accept, or else take 2 Shame points. He may then strip the opponent of any armour or weapons he wishes, bearing in mind that he may not wear more than one of any type of armour (a helmet, for example), although he may carry a spare. Again, the text will tell you whether or not a given opponent will surrender.

If Altheus is Healthy or Wounded (but not Seriously), he may attempt to retreat. Any attempt will cost 1 Honour point, regardless of its outcome. A retreat is successful on a roll of 1–4, and fails on 5 or 6, unless specified in the text. A successful attempt will impose 1 point of Shame, and send you to the paragraph specified. Unsuccessful attempts rule out retreat for the remainder of the combat: the fight must continue to the death or surrender.

Honour, as already mentioned, plays an important part in combat. Altheus may, if it is his strike, use Honour points to increase his Might temporarily. For example, if his Honour is 14, and his Might 9 (natural ability + axe), he may increase his Might to, say, 11, for one roll only, by decreasing his Honour to 12. After the roll, the Might reverts to its former value, and the Honour points are lost for ever. Similarly, when it is his opponent's strike, Altheus may increase his Protection, for one roll only, by a corresponding reduction in Honour. He may do this as often as he likes, as long as he does not run out of Honour.

If Altheus is victorious in combat, he will receive Honour points. The text will specify how many points Altheus will receive as a result of a given combat. In addition, his Wound

Record should be set back to Healthy at the end of any combat he survives.

Examples of Combat

Altheus, with a spear (Might 3, Protection 1) and a helmet (Protection 4), his Honour at 10 and Shame at 0, meets a lion (Might 5, Protection 15). Altheus' combat values are Might 7 (4+3) and Protection 15 (10+4+1).

Altheus decides to take no non-combat action, such as praying to the gods, and so strikes first. He needs 8 to hit, because his Might of 7, plus a die roll of 8, is equal to the lion's Protection of 15. He rolls 6 and misses.

The lion needs 10 to hit. He rolls 11, so Altheus is Wounded. Altheus attacks again. This time he rolls 9, which hits. The lion is Wounded.

The lion again needs 10 to hit. He rolls 11, so Altheus is now Seriously Wounded and rolls only one die in combat.

Altheus now needs 8 to hit, but this is impossible on one die. He therefore decides to use some Honour points. He transfers 3 points to his Might, which is now at a temporary level of 10. He needs 5 to hit. He rolls 6; the lion is now Seriously Wounded. It has no Honour, and so cannot hit Altheus any longer. Altheus kills it in the next round, by using some more Honour, and he receives 6 points of Honour for slaying the lion. His Wound Record is returned to Healthy.

Later in this adventure, Altheus meets two Cretans, both Might 7, Protection 14. They carry clubs and shields. Altheus' values are as before: Might 7, Protection 15. He has acquired 1 Shame point, but his Honour is now 12. The effective Might of the first Cretan is 8, because of his companion. Altheus, deciding the odds against him are too great, tries to retreat. He rolls 5 and fails, but still loses 1 point of Honour. The first Cretan now strikes, as Altheus has lost the initiative by attempting to retreat. He needs 7 to hit, but rolls 3, which is in any case an automatic miss.

Altheus rolls 9, which hits, as 9 plus his Might of 7 is greater than 14, the Cretan's Protection. The Cretan is Wounded.

The Cretan rolls 5, and misses.

Altheus rolls and hits again. The Cretan is now Seriously Wounded, and drops out, leaving his companion to fight on. As he has no support, he fights at Might 7, Protection 14. He attacks Altheus, needing a roll of 8 or more to hit. He rolls 11, wounding Altheus.

Altheus rolls 5, missing the Cretan. He needs 7 to hit.

The Cretan rolls 3 and automatically misses.

Altheus would like to retreat now, but cannot, as he failed earlier on. Instead, he uses 5 points of Honour to bring his Might up to 12. He needs 2 or more to hit. He rolls 2, but this is an automatic miss. Two of his Honour points were wasted, as a roll of 2 or 3 misses, no matter what. His Honour is now at 6, and his Might back to 7.

The Cretan rolls 4, and again misses.

Altheus rolls 12, an automatic hit. The Cretan is now Wounded. The Cretan rolls 10. Added to his Might of 7, this makes 17, greater than Altheus' Protection, so he hits Altheus, who is now Seriously Wounded.

In desperation, Altheus uses 5 points of Honour to increase his Might to 12, so that he needs a roll of 2 on one die (only one, as he is Seriously Wounded) to hit. He rolls 4, and hits. Both Cretans are now Seriously Wounded.

At this point Altheus rejoices, thinking that both Cretans will surrender. By turning to the appropriate paragraph, however, he finds that they are fanatical defenders of the labyrinth of Minos, and will never surrender. As neither side can score a hit – the Cretans are using only one die and Altheus feels he cannot use any Honour as it would fall below his Shame, and if he failed to hit he would die – both sides are permitted to roll two dice instead of one. Even if Altheus wins this combat, his low Honour will cause problems; perhaps he will pray to Zeus . . .

Gods

The gods are a crucial part of Altheus' life. At the start of the adventure he must dedicate himself to one of Ares, Athena, Poseidon, Apollo, Aphrodite or Hera, and he must try to avoid angering any of the others. Presiding, enigmatic, over them all is Zeus, father of the gods, who will aid Altheus once in the adventure. Beneath this pantheon are many lesser gods, goddesses and spirits, whose anger is still to be avoided. In the case of a patron deity (who will already have been chosen by those who have played earlier books, or will be chosen later by those who have not), Altheus' standing is determined by his Honour. At certain points in the text, Altheus will be offered help by a deity; if it is his patron, he may expend the requisite amount of Honour (sometimes a random number) and accept the favour. If Altheus does not have enough Honour, he will be referred back to the paragraph where the choice was offered, but will none the less lose 1 point of Honour. Once at 0, Honour cannot be regained, except by praying to Zeus, or by use of certain artefacts.

In the case of deities who are not his patron, Altheus is either in Favour (F), at Neutral (N), or in Disfavour (D). Initially, his standing with all of these gods will be just as at the end of the last book, or as assigned for those who have not read that, but the standing may change throughout the course of the adventure, as he performs actions which appease or anger the gods.

Altheus may pray to Zeus once during each adventure. This will have one of a number of effects, at the reader's choice:

1. If he has been killed by any other means than Shame overtaking Honour, he may be resurrected, with all equipment, Shame of 0 and Honour of 1, at the paragraph indicated in the text. When Zeus saves you in this manner, do not be surprised if you find yourself moved to a nearby point in the same town or vicinity; this is simply divine Zeus' way of ensuring your safety.

2. He may simply gain 1-6 Honour points (roll one die).

3. If his Honour is at 0, he may have it set back to 1, and regain the ability to acquire Honour.

4. He may have the attitude of all the gods set back to Neutral, regardless of what they were.

Remember that the intervention of Olympian Zeus is very rare indeed, and may never be used more than once in an adventure, unless it is specifically offered in the text.

Equipment

You start the adventure with those pieces of equipment marked on your Chronicle Sheet (carried over from the last book or assigned to those who have not played it). During the course of the adventure you will acquire other pieces of equipment and should note these on the Chronicle Sheet. You may only carry one spare set of armour (in addition to any you may be wearing), and this will give you no extra Protection; but there is no limit to the amount of small items you may carry. This rule does not forbid the wearing of a breastplate, greaves, helmet, etc., merely the wearing of two of any particular type of armour.

Taking a Hint

At times during the adventure you may wish to perform non-standard actions. These will not be offered in the text, as this would give you a degree of foreknowledge granted only to the prescient. Instead, if you are at a paragraph with a number in italic type (i.e. *476* rather than 476), you may run the risk of adding 20 to the paragraph number and turning to that number; this process is known for convenience as 'taking a hint'. If there is no non-standard action at that point which a Bronze Age hero would have thought of, you will pay a penalty in either Honour or Shame, or both, for trying to be ahead of your time.

Note that this option will never be explicitly offered in the text; you must remember it and use it when you see fit.

You are about to set off. Turn to paragraph 1, and good luck!

ALTHEUS CHRONICLE SHEET

	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Best Weapon</i>	
MIGHT	4	+		= <input type="text"/>
	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Armour</i>	
PROTECTION	10	+	+	+
HONOUR	7			
SHAME	0			

PATRON:

The Gods

Favour

Disfavour

<i>Weapons & Armour</i>			<i>Notes</i>	<i>Wound Record Track</i>					
	M	P	POSSESSIONS: Mother's Gem	HEALTHY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CLUB	1	0		WOUNDED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				SERIOUSLY WOUNDED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				DEAD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ALTHEUS CHRONICLE SHEET

	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Best Weapon</i>	
MIGHT	4	+	3	= <input type="text" value="7"/>
	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Armour</i>	
PROTECTION	10	+	2 + 2 +	= <input type="text" value="14"/>
HONOUR	7			
SHAME	0			

PATRON: Apollo

The Gods

Favour

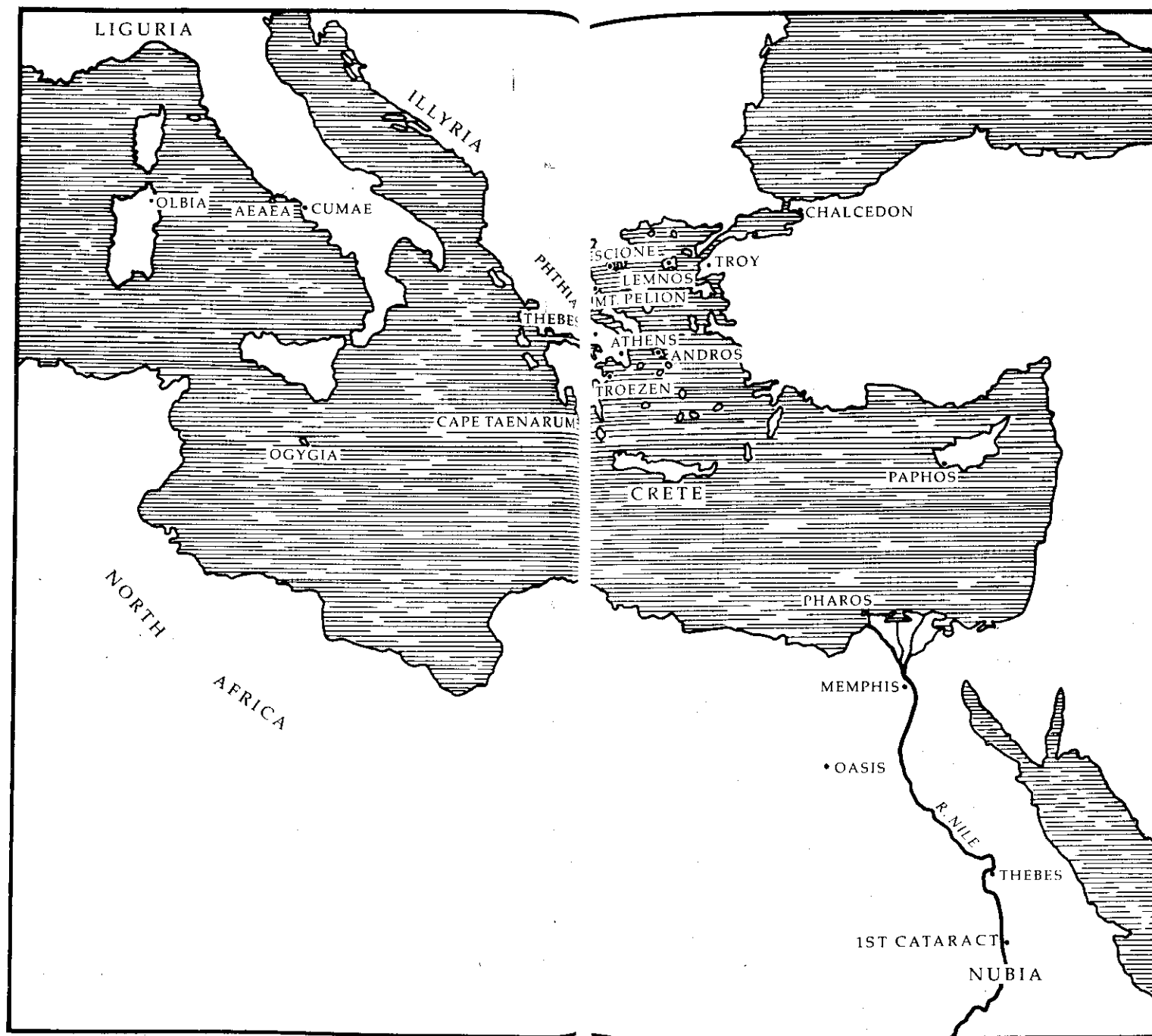
Disfavour

Dionysus

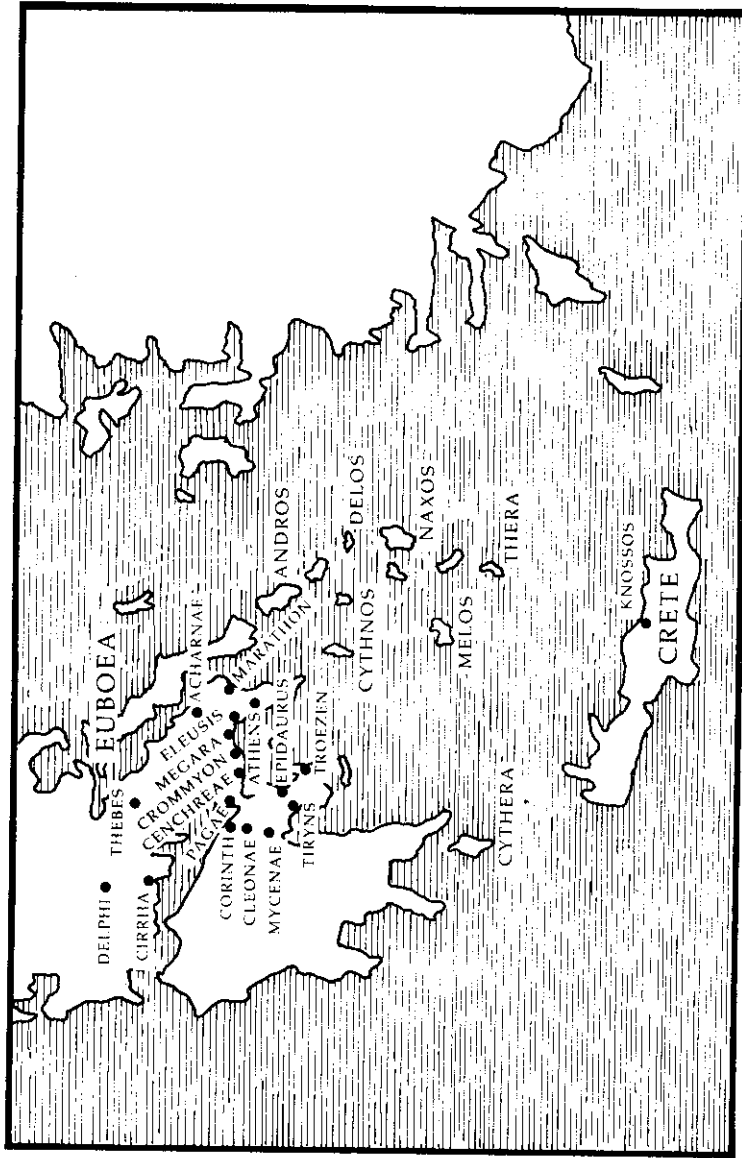
Hera

Aphrodite

<i>Weapons & Armour</i>			<i>Notes</i>	<i>Wound Record Track</i>					
	M	P	POSSESSIONS: Mother's Gem	HEALTHY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CLUB	1	0		WOUNDED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHIELD	0	2	NO HINT PENALTIES	SERIOUSLY WOUNDED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BREASTPLATE	0	2		DEAD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SWORD	3	0							



RETURN OF THE WANDERER





I

An angry summer is descending into a sullen autumn, and you are lying on the deck at the side of the ship, looking out to sea, when the captain comes above decks to speak to you.

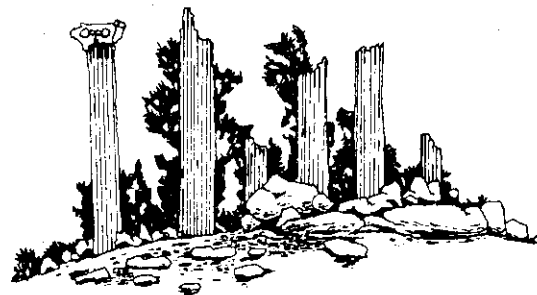
'We can make Naxos by mid-morning,' he tells you. His voice is full of enthusiasm; he is a bachelor. 'The priest in the temple of Artemis is a friend: he will be glad to marry you to the princess.'

You smile and clasp his hand for a moment, before staring out to sea again.

The temple of Artemis on Naxos is simple and bright. A circular ring of pillars surrounds an inner sanctum where stark fire burns and a bronze statue of the goddess stares unflinchingly out over the virgin forest of the island. As you walk up the hill towards the temple with Ariadne, the captain is already talking to the old priest, and when you reach the temple he approaches you with a broad grin.

'When the sun reaches its zenith,' promises the captain, 'then you shall be married.'

Ariadne kisses you once and goes away with two of the maidens of Athens to prepare for the ceremony. You watch her as she walks away, her hair suddenly caught by a gust of wind. Go to 148.



2

The ship has suddenly become becalmed and waits stationary between the rocks, just as the hare freezes before the hunter's dogs and cannot escape into the green meadow. For a moment nothing seems to move, and then there is a great splintering as the ship is squeezed between the crags. There are shouts of agony, and the waves crashing over the ship's deck are foaming red. You run to one side of the vessel, trying frantically to scramble up the side of the rocks. Your last sight is of Vizhazid, bloodied and battered, throwing a metal container into the sea. Then the Symplegades snap shut their jaws. If you can still pray to Zeus, go to 241.

3

The ship is ready to sail, even though it is now close to dusk. The captain explains that he does not wish to stay too long in this ill-omened place, for just as garments washed in the battle-bloodied waters will take on that crimson hue, so his vessel would be cursed by too long a stay in these hateful harbours. Vizhazid orders the rowers to begin their work, and as the Tyrian stroke-master beats his drum, you pull out from port. Go to 52.

4

Agnostes orders one of his handmaidens to find some new clothes to replace your travel-worn rags. Soon you are decked out in a tunic of finest purple, as befits a king's son. You relate your story to Agnostes, as he absently tugs at his long, brown, flowing locks. His brow creases at the news of Aegeus' death, and he stands up, pacing around the room to give himself the full advantage of his superior height. 'I must go now,' he says, hardly aware that you have been here but a few hours. 'Oh, by the way, the one who stayed in Troezen in my place has returned. His name, what was it? Ah, yes, Paris.'

You are conducted to your bedchamber, which is sumptuously furnished with silk hangings and sheets with a pattern of ships. You may sleep at once (turn to 402), or try to explore the palace (turn to 65).

5

In a fluttering of an eyelash, the goddess herself appears. She stays the hand of the high priest. 'Such a pity, don't you think,' she murmurs in admiration, and then, while the other acolytes and hierarchs fall down in obeisance and worship, she motions with a delicate flick of the wrist that you should leave. 'Some other time,' she mouths.

You do not pause to admire Aphrodite's aura, but make your escape swiftly from her Paphian shrine. You hear footsteps, but on turning find them to belong only to some slaves, who have also escaped, and want you to lead them to freedom. Go to 84.



6

There is some money in the pouch. Its owner is probably dead. Roll a die and add one. This is the number of obols you have found. In any case, have 1 Shame point for your theft. Go to 311.

7

Your body seems to become feather-light as the father of the gods guides you gently to the ground. You suffer only a few bruises and scratches. One of your sandals is flung off into some bushes, and you are bitten by an insect as you retrieve it. Sucking your thumb, you set off from Pelion. Go to 189.



8

You strike once more, and the corn-creature crashes to the ground. The scene seems to waver, and you stretch out your hand to grasp the remains of the beast. You take hold of a wooden plaque; on it is inscribed an ear of corn, symbol of the fruitfulness of the earth.

Restore your Honour points to the level they were at the start of the combat. If this is the third beast you have fought and defeated, then go to 346. Otherwise, you must deal next with the water (turn to 149), or with the fire (turn to 107).

9

The waves sweep you far out to sea, away from the path that your ship was plying. You float past the bleached and gnawed bones of a long-dead mariner; perhaps this will be your fate, also. Again and again you are submerged beneath the waters. If you wish to invoke your patron's aid, go to 286. Otherwise, go to 123.

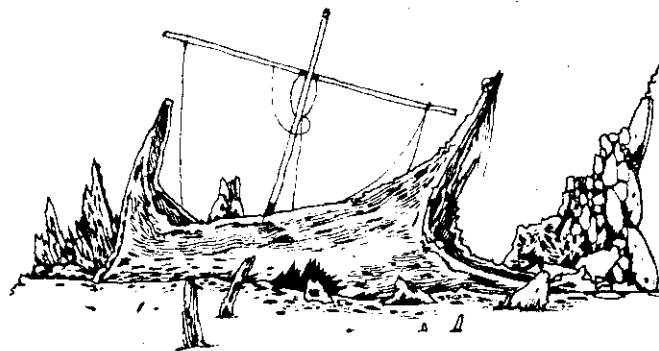


10

It is some days before the shores of Troy come in sight, and only dimly can you make out the towers of that great city. Oresander informs you that the stay in Troy will be but two days long, so you have little time for sightseeing. Go to 37.

11

You stagger backwards, seeking to flee from the fatal fight, but you come up against something hard. You turn round quickly, only to see the gigantic mandible of another Fire-ant poised to crush you. The heat emanating from the creature is oppressive, preparing you for the fires of Hell.



12

Do you agree to travel back to Troezen with Vizhazid (turn to 443), or will you wait for another ship to come and take you back to the lands of your forefathers (turn to 35)?

13

Lose any one item won during the first game, and return to 106 to roll again. If you have no items, lose one obol and return to 106. If you have no obols, go to 91.



14

Roll two dice. You have won the following:

- 2 1 Honour point for your good company
- 3-5 A copper ring
- 6 A small piece of jade
- 7 A small sapphire
- 8 An amber comb
- 9-11 A carved ivory toad
- 12 A sword (Might 2, Protection 1)

Items 3 to 12 can be won only once. If you possess the item already, do not roll again – you simply win nothing. Having rolled, return to 401.



15

The way is steep at times, and your feet are soon blistered and torn. Your arm begins to bleed and you rub the scratch with a leaf plucked from a nearby tree. As though by divine will, the bleeding ceases. As you proceed higher and higher up the slopes, you see that much of the once green land is blasted and scorched, plagued by fire and pestilence. Thorn-bushes choke the trees of Asclepius the healer and Pelion is overtaken by the diseases of earth.

Just as you are about to give in and head back down the mountainside, you hear a great, deep, rumbling voice crying out in pain. The sound seems to emanate from a cave on a crag above you. You could make the climb, but it would be difficult. Do you investigate (turn to 301), or do you turn back (turn to 520)?

Out of the harbour the ship ploughs a fast furrow through the foaming waves, and is soon well under way. Yet on the afternoon of the first day a huge storm blows up, tossing the boat like a mere splinter of wood in Ocean's cruel currents. Four days and nights the ship is battered in the swell, and then at last it is driven aground. But you, Avenging Altheus, do not reach land so easily, for you are swept off the deck. The last sounds you hear are the cries of the sailors as they seek to save you. Go to 167.



The journey across the Pagasaeon Gulf takes several hours, and all the passengers have to lend a hand bailing out water from the craft. At times it seems the ferry will sink, but its stern steersman affects an air of unconcern, muttering only various curses against 'Easterners'. The other passengers are mostly pilgrims from various parts of Thrace and Thessaly, on their way to Delphi, and they keep to themselves.

At last you land, and there, waiting to sell the pilgrims ivory statuettes of Apollo, is Markos the Phoenician merchant. You groan, and try to get back on the ferry, but are pushed off.

'Greetings, son of Aegeus,' he shouts, oblivious of the pain

the mention of your father's name will cause you. He comes closer and begins to herd you away from the common press of pilgrims. 'They're of Baal, in fact, a Tyrian god,' he says, pointing at his statues, 'but *they* wouldn't notice even if the figurines had four heads.'

You try desperately to get away from Markos, but his grip is vice-tight. 'Meet my friends,' he continues. 'They are Achaians, but then you'd know that.' You have approached a party of four men, who are heavily armed with swords and spears; they have complete sets of armour, and horse-hair plumes in their helmets, waving in the wind.

'I'm bored,' says one of them. 'Let's play dice.' You realize he is speaking to you.

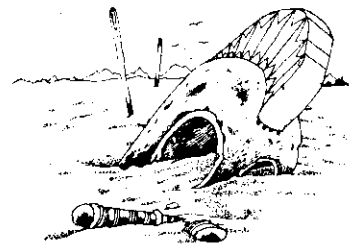
'Oh, yes,' agrees Markos enthusiastically. 'Let's see what you're made of.'

'What's the game?' you inquire without relish.

'Oh,' says Markos, patting his money-bag, 'it's called the Golden Fleece.'

Will you dice with the Achaians (turn to 401), or will you refuse their offer, either because you prefer to keep your money safe or because you have no money (turn to 404)?

Out of the building you rush, knocking the acolytes over on your way. But the mass of citizens is still ahead of you, and you are unable to get through. You turn round to face the tumble-down temple, and Arissia emerges at that very moment. Yet she seems inspired by the goddess, her eyes glowing, her hair almost aflame, and she does not recognize you. Go to 262.



You approach one of the passers-by and state: 'I am Altheus, take me to the palace'; but the only reply is a furtive, 'Don't mention that name; Theseus has forbidden it.'

'What Theseus is this, for Theseus is dead?' you cry.

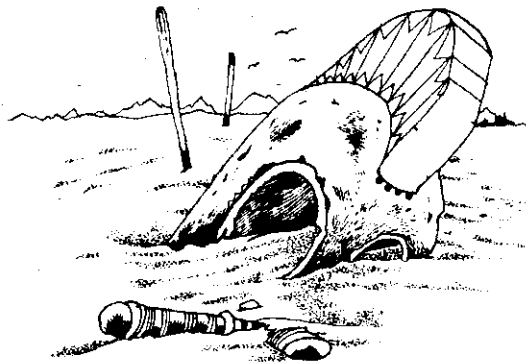
'General Etekon's son. He rules now,' the man answers and then scuttles off, apparently fearful lest he be caught talking to such a madman.

Dirty, sea-stained, bearded and unrecognized, you walk through the streets of Athens, wrapping yourself tightly in your threadbare coat to keep out the wind and driving rain. The passers-by avoid you as a beggar or leper. At length you stumble inside an inn. As you start to dry off by the fire, you see the innkeeper coming towards you, evidently intent on throwing you out; but before he can do so, you are greeted by a group of balding men and plump matrons, who drag you to their table and ply you with wine and questions. The innkeeper retreats, mollified, and you sip at the spicy wine, wondering who these people are. Then you recognize them: these are the youths and maidens who accompanied you to Knossos and whom you saved from the Minotaur.

But time has wrought its revenges. The youthful muscles have turned to fat, the bronzed flesh to paunches. The men are balding or greying, and the women's dimples have turned to wrinkles. From what they say, you learn that the city has ignored them. None of them received a hero's welcome and one of the youths has been stoned. Now they have sunk into sullen reminiscences about glorious days long ago; seven and a half years after coming home, the six surviving youths and five maidens of Athens are still fighting the darkness of Knossos.

The girl who reminded you of your mother smiles, and something in the toothless grin, or perhaps the wine, makes you snap. Like a man who goes to greet his grandmother in the morning, and finds her dead, you rise hurriedly and stumble out into the street, retching. As quickly as you can, you leave Athens, and take the road home to Troezen.

Out on the highway the weather improves slightly, and you stride along confidently, your spirits lifting as the memory of Athens fades. A farmer on a small cart approaches you from behind. Will you ask him for a lift (turn to 335), or wait for him to pass (turn to 414)?



Seeing that you intend to fight them, the men step back and brace themselves. As you close in for the attack, one of them lets out a high-pitched cry.

The men are Might 4, Protection 10, with spears (Might 2, Protection 2). You may not retreat. If you surrender, go to 69. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 214. If you Seriously Wound both of your opponents, go to 541.



21

'We're leaving Naxos now,' you tell the captain. He looks at you and the smile dies on his lips as he sees you are serious.

'But . . . The Lady Ariadne . . .'

In an instant your sword is out of its scabbard and at his throat. 'Now, villain, or you die.'

As the ship pulls away from Naxos with resentful strokes, you collapse in your cabin and weep freely. Then the messenger god is with you.

'Twice have I brought you news from High Olympus,' intones Hermes, 'and now, for the last time, I do so again. You have played your part: now the wanderer must return. But it is a journey begun with a betrayal, and in shame must you travel.'

'My lord Hermes, there was no alternative.'

Hermes vanishes. 'That alters nothing,' he says, and is gone for ever.

If you have read the second book of the Cretan Chronicles, *At the Court of King Minos*, go to 353. Otherwise, you must choose a patron to aid you in your journey home.

If you choose Aphrodite, goddess of love, go to 76.

If you choose Apollo, god of prophecy, go to 158.

If you choose Ares, god of war, go to 229.

If you choose Athena, goddess of wisdom, go to 268.

If you choose Hera, queen of the gods, go to 413.

If you choose Poseidon, god of the sea, go to 508.

22

When one of the fishermen leaves his raft to take a basket of fish to the shore, you and the other slaves rush on to the craft and begin to row with desperate strokes away from the shore. Out in the bay the wind picks up in the crude sackcloth sail and you make more headway. Remembering your duty to the others, you examine how well provisioned you are, but the only food aboard is fish, albeit in copious amounts and fresh; the only other things the fisherman left aboard are some rope and a small pot of beeswax.

You explain that you must visit Italy before you will be safe and the slaves, sullen and confused, agree. But soon you are driven far to the west by the winds, and you lose track of time and your position. About six weeks pass and your provisions are all but exhausted. Go to 168.

23

If Aphrodite, goddess of love, is your patron, go to 118. If not, go to 162.

24

Paris, son of Priam, was exposed as a youngster on Mount Ida and brought up by some shepherds. He discovered his real origin, and having defeated the other sons of Priam at games, declared it, and was acknowledged. Clearly the other sons of Priam were annoyed at this, and the Trojan king sent him on an exchange with Agnostes, from which he is just returning. Lose 1 Honour point, and return to 4.

25

You are stripped of all your weapons and armour. You must in effect attack yourself four times.

The scourge is Might 1; you attack your own Protection. You may use Honour points to increase your Protection, but, as normal, these must be committed before the dice are thrown. If you are Seriously Wounded, go to 220. After four strokes, go to 66.

26

The woman looks at you wide-eyed, jabbars something ending in 'sophists', and runs away, almost tripping over a stall selling fruit. You must ask the soldier. Go to 187.





27

You miss your handhold and for a moment sway precariously above the precipice, but then your senses return to you, and you haul yourself safely to the side of the ledge. There you see what manner of creature has caused the disturbance. It is a Centaur, half-horse, but with its upper body human – a once magnificent specimen of its type, but now old and enfeebled. It gasps out in agony, and you notice for the first time a great black welt on its side from which pus and blood flow intermittently to join a caked pool of fluid on the ground. A broken arrowhead has been tossed to one side of the mouth of the cave, and leaning against the entrance is a crude wooden spear.

'Help me,' wheezes the pitiful creature, and his voice is as the flowing of the waters in a nearly dry stream-bed. 'For I am Chiron, disciple of Asclepius. A Phoenician trader threw poisoned darts at me as a cruel game. He laughed and joked, but one of the baleful barbs struck me. His name was M . . . ' The creature falls into a coughing fit, and yellow bile trickles from its lips. Its rheumy eyes look at you in a desperate appeal. Will you help the Centaur (turn to 188), take the spear, since you are unarmed (turn to 166), or simply leave (turn to 80)?



You find the temple with ease. It is an austere grey building, somewhat dilapidated and overgrown with creepers. There is no door and you pass through a colonnade into the precinct. There stands the statue of the mistress of wisdom. 'Aid me, Athena,' you pray.

The statue seems to stir and a divine glow of life fires its eyes.

'You will never weach home, son of Aegeus, before you puwify yourself. You must seek out Circe, mistwess of ware arts on the island of Aea. At that place you can be purged of blood-guilt for Agnostes' death. Or if you'd wather, you could go to the temple of Awes at Olbia, and the pwiests will instwuct you in the wites of puwity.' With this the statue falls silent, and will speak no more, despite your constant entreaties.

You rush down to the harbour and manage to gain passage to Aea with a merchant captain of Markos' fleet. If you are in Favour with Poseidon, or he is your patron, go to 109. If you are in Disfavour with him, or he is Neutral to you, go to 169.

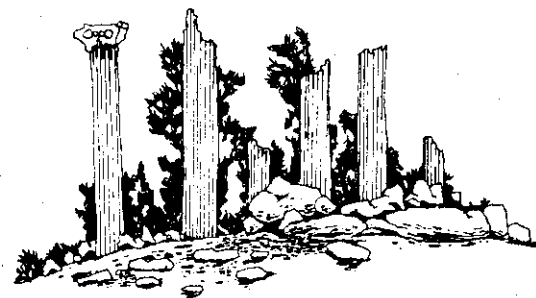
There is a faint whiff of Tyrian incense, and the god Apollo stands before you, dressed in a sumptuous pink tunic, stained badly down one sleeve by juice from oranges. Popping another piece of fruit into his mouth, he begins: 'I think you should leave at once. Calypso's a bad thing, really. At least I think she is, or was once, or might be tomorrow. Something terrible could happen if you don't build yourself a raft and escape. I can't help you there, practicality and immortality just don't mix.'

Then in a twist of orange peel the god is gone, back to his scrolls and prophesying. Go to 352.

You unstrap one of the men's breastplates (Protection 2) and a sword (Might 2, Protection -1), kick the fattest man once more and turn, striding straight and proud to the high-horned ship. The ruffians praise you for the saving of their lives, but you pay them no heed and soon, as the drum beats time for the oarsmen, you are off once more towards great-walled Troy. Have 4 Honour points for your victory. Go to 10.

As soon as you come close, the natives seize you and hold you, kicking and struggling, while you are tied with vines. You break away for a brief moment, and kick one of the men in the chest. He doubles up and cries out in his anguish. Your captors are startled, and almost let go of you, but a sharp blow to the head silences your struggles, and you are unable to resist further. Go to 164.

You order your friends to row round the islands, but they seem to be entranced. You seize up the oar and paddle in the opposite direction, but they, with their hands, make five times as much headway as you can manage. You are as a fly caught in a spider's web, which tries desperately to flee, while the black, brooding shape of the predator grows ever nearer. Go to 242.

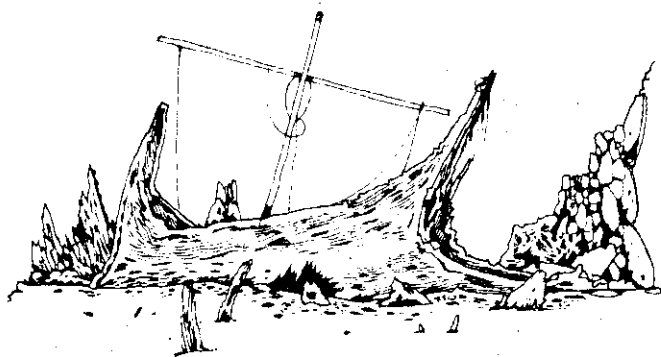


33

Zeus will most certainly not save those who have died defiling the temple of another of the divine ones. The laws of the divine are immutable, and to break them would threaten his position as king of the gods. No mortal man is worth such a price, and you least of all, Altheus the Avenger.

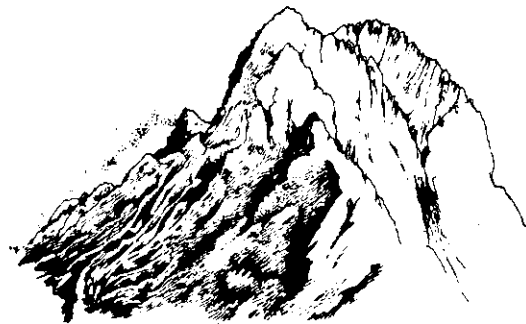
34

A searing pain strikes you in the chest. You try to clutch the place, but your hands are paralysed. The scene turns a rosy tint of red, then the angry colour deepens. There is a buzzing in your eyes, and you fall. Your heart has burst, swollen by the anger of Ares.



35

You wait for days and days, and search the island for signs of people, but find none. The only evidence of habitation is the manifest of a ship – a scroll describing a projected sea-voyage to Troy. The ship was carrying pomegranate seeds. There is no indication, however, of Markos' stay. You pull down some branches, and start to build yourself a raft. At last you slump down, exhausted. Go to 500.



36

For one so hardened by your journeying, Altheus the Avenger, you show curiously little faith in the gods; your entreaties smack of pride and arrogance, or else despair, none of which are to be cultivated in a hero of your stature. Roll a die. On 1-3, lose 1 Honour point. On 4-6, gain 1 Shame point. Go to 167.

37

With joy in your heart you remember that, as is the custom among noble folk of your land, your cousin Agnostes is at the Trojan court to be educated in a fitting manner, while the Trojan king's son arrived at Troezen three days before you left.

You admire the great columns of the city and its towering temples, which you can see even from the ship. When the vessel docks you can barely restrain yourself, and with hardly a word of farewell for the captain, you take off towards Troy.

The people here who wander beneath the walls seem happy and speak to one another in a high sing-song dialect of Greek, which you can follow only with difficulty. You pass through the massive gates unchallenged by the guards with their bright armour and painted body-length shields. Looking back towards the harbour, you see a warship disgorging its cargo of troops and prisoners on to the shore, but this does not trouble you, anxious as you are to see Agnostes. Will you walk around, in the hope of finding the palace (turn to 67), or will you ask a passer-by (turn to 372)?



38

The black-sailed ship limps into harbour. At the other end of the quay you can see the *Djinn* besieged by a horde of Athenian merchants, haggling with Markos the trader for his cargo of silk and ivory. As the ship is tied up, the Athenian youths and maidens jump on to the land and walk away unsteadily, but happy to seek their parents and, in some cases, loved ones. You wonder why your father is not here to greet you as a returning hero, but shrug it off.

Thanking the captain, you gather together your possessions, and set off to the palace of Aegeus. As you leave the Piraeus, you look over your shoulder, and see that the captain and sailors have gathered thick sticks and are heading determinedly along the quay, obviously intent on seizing Markos the merchant, and wreaking a grave revenge on him for his needless act of piracy. You hurry up to the city. Go to 538.

39

The land rises up from the sea and levels off into a low plain stretching as far as the horizon in all directions away from the sea. There is no sign of habitation, but there are several deer, grazing peacefully to your right. You decide to head towards them quietly, in the hope of catching some food. Suddenly the earth gives way beneath you, and you fall into a large, man-made pit. You have been caught in a deer-trap and are quite unable to escape.

Many hours later, six dark-skinned warriors arrive, and find you in their trap. They lift you out, and tie your hands behind your back. Go to 424.

40

Eager to be away from the place, you grab the bucket and pour its contents on the flames. Yet the smoke which rises is damp, choking and scaldingly hot. The men run back, and the other folk on the quayside look aghast. 'Fool!' cries one. 'No one can put out the flames of the fire-worker.' Then, just as the bright-armed battalions march in close formation, you see a column of gigantic bronze ants, fire streaming from their mandibles. The quay is suddenly empty, and you must face alone the wrath of the god you have angered.

There are eight ants, each with Might 8, Protection 10. Because of their mechanical nature, they fight one at a time, gaining no advantage from their numbers. When one is hit, it ceases to function, and the next takes over the fight.

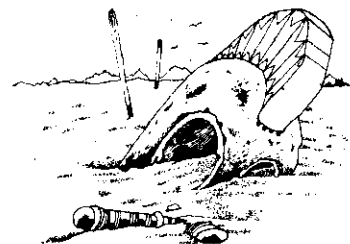
You are in Disfavour with Hephaestus. If you retreat, go to 11. If you die, and pray to Zeus, go to 126. When you have hit four creatures, go to 83.

41

Circe seems prepared for such a reaction. She mumbles a few words, and in her hands she suddenly bears a stout wooden stave.

Circe is Might 5, Protection 22. This latter value is high because of her sorcerous powers. The stave is Might 1.

You may not attempt to retreat: the clearing is too small. If you surrender, go to 92. If you Seriously Wound Circe, go to 223. If you are killed, go to 102.



42

'Certainly,' you reply, 'for how else could I have dared the sanctuary?' The priestess nods in reply, and signs to two aged acolytes, who stand to one side of the entrance, to open the doors. For a moment she seems vacant, and stares blankly. You have become involved unwittingly in the ceremony of a foreign god. Have 1 Shame point for denying your patron deity. Go to 184.



43

'What town is this?' you ask. To your surprise the man whom you have approached booms out, 'A stranger to Paphos, eh?' With this he leaps nimbly to one side and runs down an alleyway, stroking his long white beard. You look around for the cause of his fright and see, standing at one end of the quay, a group of black-robed men carrying cudgels. You are too weak from your experiences to run.

You could fight them (turn to 285), or you could wait to see what they want (turn to 380).

44

You pick up the bowl of corn, and at once the scene before you changes. No longer do you stand before the crowds at Scione, but alone amidst a seemingly endless field of waving corn. You start to walk, caught in the trance, but the golden ears of the plants prevent you from making progress. Just then there is a disturbance, and the field seems to rise up into the shape of a great golem made of corn. It moves towards you menacingly. This is one of the beasts that has caused famine to come upon Scione. You must fight it, but you are now unarmed and without armour or any other added protection.

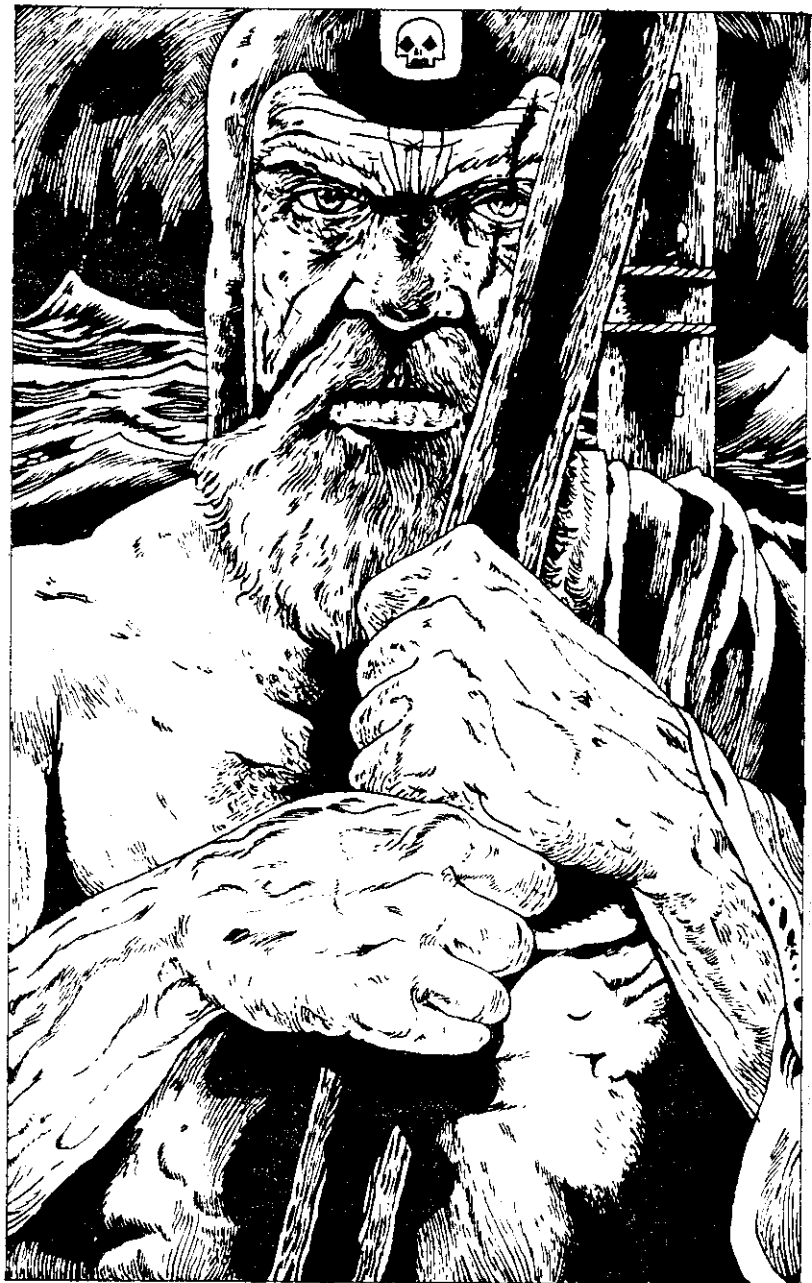
This is Beast number 3 (note this down). It has Might 4, Protection 9. Note down also your current Honour point total.

You may not retreat or surrender. If you die, go to 68. If you kill the corn creature, go to 8.

45

Wondering at the ways of gamblers, you retire, beating out a patch of smooth earth on which to rest. You wonder how long it will be before you sleep once more in your own bed at Troezen. You are so weary. Your dreams are for once fairly pleasant, with few of the nightmares that have plagued you since the days in Crete, the days of dread, when you had to fight for your very life, and the lives of your countrymen. Go to 440.





46

You are just clearing away the debris of rope and beeswax from the decks, hoping to make for land at once to restock your provisions, when a scent of putrefaction fills the air. Great Ares the war-bringer stands beside the mast, his massive bulk almost filling the whole raft. He bangs his spear on the timbers to gain attention, all but capsizing the craft as he does so, and then begins.

'Altheus. Purge yourself. Now. No questions. Do it. Go to Olbia, or, if you insist, Circe's island of Aea. My temple is better. Real priests.' With this the lord of slaughter is gone, leaving only a faint bloodstain to mark his passing.

Will you make for land to reprovision (turn to 131)? Will you strike out for the temple of Ares at Olbia (turn to 182)? Or will you make for Circe's island, further up the Italian coast (turn to 51)?

47

You step back and then rush at the man. Clearly expecting nothing of the sort, he is, for the moment, nearly bowled over, but then he is as the rock-ridge that divides the valley in two, when the waters come rushing at it; they do not prevail, even at the confluence of their course. So now, despite your greatest efforts, you are unable to push past the man. He calls out to his brothers in arms, but they are gluttoned with eating, and do not heed him. He steps back suddenly and you fall. You struggle again and see the Trojan has his spear-point levelled at you; you must fight.

He is Might 5, Protection 12, but with a spear (Might 2) and a full-length shield (Might -1, Protection 5). If you surrender, go to 71. If you die and pray to Zeus, go to 225. If you retreat, go to 324. If you Seriously Wound the guard, go to 421.

48

You turn to run in the opposite direction, but you are sandwiched between two groups. Closer and closer they draw, and you are unable to get away. There is no point resisting, as you are weak, and there are some twenty or more of them. If you pray to your patron, go to 343. If not, go to 164.

49

Fortune does not smile upon you, but casts her fickle glance instead upon the merchant. Lose any one item won during the first game, and return to 106 to roll again. If you have no item, lose one obol and return to 106. If you have no obols, go to 91.



50

You scramble back towards the raft, desperately trying to reach it, but it is no good. Once again you are the plaything of the waters. This child does not choose to caress you, but throws you petulantly again and again towards the wicked rocks of the shore. You only become aware of these as one rips your tunic into shreds. Half-naked and half-dead, you are washed up on an unknown shore. You scramble away from the sea, and try to take a look at where you have landed, but salt and blood obscure your vision, and you collapse face down in the muddy sand. Go to 195.

51

It does not take you long to make headway along the coast and soon the island on which you are told Circe dwells looms into sight. Woods wreath the shoreline and you cannot see far inland. Yet spiralling lazily above the island, as an eagle searches for its prey before pouncing and taking the sickly lamb which lies below, is smoke from a hearth or fire. If Hera is your patron, go to 54. If Hera is Neutral or Favourable to you, go to 165. If you are in Disfavour with Hera, go to 185.

52

You sail along the Thracian coast and then the ship plunges south towards Troy. Yet just as the shores of that high-walled city come in sight, the vessel turns once more to the north. 'Captain,' you shout, 'this way leads to the Symplegades, the clashing rocks. We shall all be killed.'

'Not necessarily,' replies Vizhazid, 'and if we do get through, the prices at Chalcedon will be very high . . . Not many make it, you know. Anyway there should be time to abandon ship.'

You feel as if the winter frosts had chilled your heart, and your mood grows grimmer as the ship approaches the rocks. Go to 101.

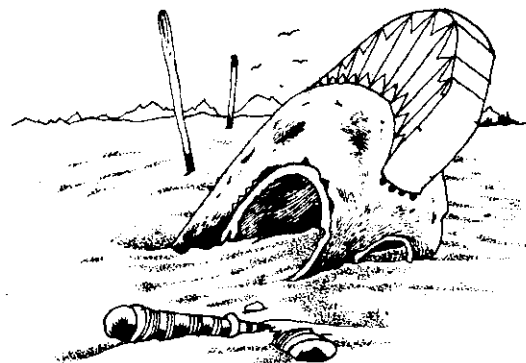
53

You take the fruit from the man and start as if to bite into it, but your benefactor just leans forwards and seizes it back. Puzzled by this, you decide to leave him, and seek someone more rational, if indeed such a person exists on this forsaken isle. Go to 143.



With a shimmering of colour, and a faint dewy rain, Iris, messenger of the divine queen stands before you. 'I am Iris,' she says, 'and I have a message for you; it's very important because Hera says that if you don't get it you'll run into all sorts of trouble and might not get back home, and then she'd lose face before all the other gods, and that wouldn't do at all, because you need a sense of perspective on these things, or at least stability, because if you didn't things would get out of hand, your armour would get messy, you wouldn't fight our enemies, and Hera wouldn't get all the glory, and after all we don't want the world to be a dangerous place for our children to grow up in, so we have to ignore the broader issues, and attend to specifics, such as that you should chew this plant . . .' She hands you a strange-looking root and continues to gabble: '. . . which is called moly, but I don't know why; anyway it's very important, but I've run out of time, which is another thing I had to tell you . . .'

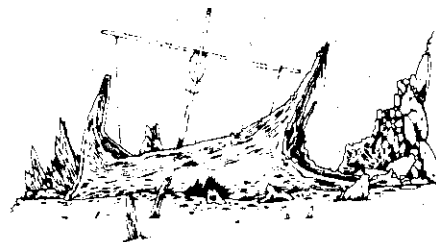
With this the rainbow goddess disappears before she found her ending. Confused, but with the moly root in your hand, you order your crew to strike for shore. Go to 461.



'Spare us,' the bearded men cry, each scrambling to grasp your knees in supplication, and as a result falling all over one another. You drop the torch, which sputters and dies; you kick one of the men in the ribs, and consider whether they deserve life or eternity in the grim halls of Hades.

Will you slaughter these enemies of the gods (turn to 521), or will you respect the traditions of your ancestors (turn to 30)?

Thebes, in the sunset, is a magnificent sight to behold, and you wonder at its high walls and strong gates, as the boat glides up to the bank. You are quickly ashore and inside the city, hoping to find a resting-place before night throws its dark mantle over the land. The city is indeed mighty and you recognize the wealth of the Egyptians as you walk amongst their buildings. Go to 236.



You back away, but your path is blocked by a wall of spectators, who shove you back into the fight. Your opponent capitalizes on your delay and inflicts a wound upon you. You must continue the fight. If you surrender, go to 331. If you Seriously Wound him, go to 133. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 566.



You spend some moments in silent prayer to Athena, protectress of your city, and suddenly the goddess herself stands before you, clad in armour, bearing a shield of burnished bronze.

'Altheus, you have done well. You have survived the perils of Cwete and even now, your father Aegeus waits anxiously, scanning the horizon for the white sails which herald your arrival, but fearing the black sails which will report your death. Now hurry back.'

With this the queen of knowledge is gone, back to watch over high-towered Athens. You go up on deck, inspired by the appearance of your patron. Go to 252.

On board the *Djinn*, and out at sea once more, you stand on the deck, wondering if the seas will stay calm long enough for you to return to Athens. Markos emerges from his cabin below and strolls up beside you.

'There's been a slight change of plan, Altheus my friend. I have to call in at a small town on the North African coast on some business,' he says cryptically. 'But it'll only be for one night and then we can head off to Athens again.' You curse him silently, but you are powerless, for you are twenty miles off shore. 'Come on, watch this,' the merchant continues, as he kneels on the deck.

He slips a golden ring off the middle finger of his left hand and holds it in his palm. 'Have you got a small object, anything light?' he asks. You feel in your pocket and produce the small piece of jade from Egypt. 'That's fine,' he says, taking it and holding it in the other palm. 'You consider yourself observant, Altheus. Well I'll bet you that ring against this jade that you can't tell me which hands the two objects are in.'

With that he flips his hands over very quickly, finally slamming them palms down on the deck. The motion is too rapid for you to tell which object went under which hand. Will you tell him that both are under the left hand (turn to 233), both are under the right hand (turn to 427), the ring is in the right, the jade in the left hand (turn to 584), or that the jade is in his right hand, and the ring in his left hand (turn to 377)?

You charge in your outrage at the source of the missile, but slip and fall heavily against a basket of oranges; it bursts open and you stumble and fall to the ground. You scramble around on the ground, hindered by a seeming sea of the sun-coloured fruit. A small crowd laughs in uncontrolled mirth at your plight, but when you do finally stand, the anger graven on your face is warning enough, and both they and the urchin responsible for your humiliation flee in mock terror. Lose 1 Honour point, and go to 3.

61

When you reach the palace, Aegeus has been laid in a ceremonial litter for his journey to the underworld. He looks at you weakly.

'Altheus, you have done well. But now . . . return home. Tell your mother . . . tell your mother . . .' He breaks off.

'Tell her what, father?'

'I am sorry,' says Aegeus, and dies.

You choke back the tears, slide an obol under your father's tongue so that he may pay the ferryman and cross the River Styx to take his rightful place in the underworld, and gently close his eyes.

General Etekon has entered, and stands behind you. Now he speaks.

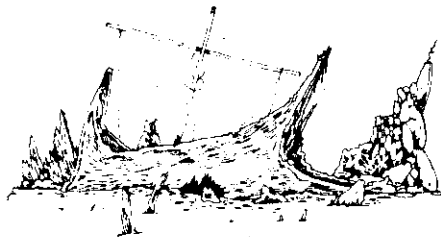
'The people are angry,' he tells you. 'This is the worst sort of omen for your homecoming. You must leave now, and seek a way to purge the guilt that has brought this to pass, or else I shall not be answerable for the mood of the city.' Go to 215.



62

How can you expect the aid of the gods in such a situation; the mysteries of Demeter are hidden even from them. There are things, therefore, that mere heroes such as you should not seek to inquire into. Lose 1 Honour point, and return to 42.





63

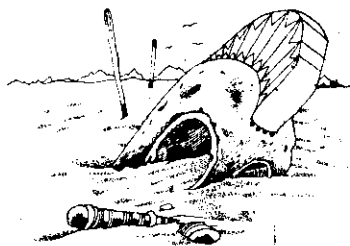
These men are probably part of a press-gang. Perhaps they wish to seize you and make you into a galley-slave, spending your life toiling away on the sun-scorched decks of ships that ply their trade on the seas. Yet a life such as this would be better than the gloomy halls of Hades, and if you do not resist, you may yet live. Go to 380.

64

The sorceress seems to be smiling in a particularly unpleasant way, but Iris seemed to be confident in her gift, so you comply. Go to 140.

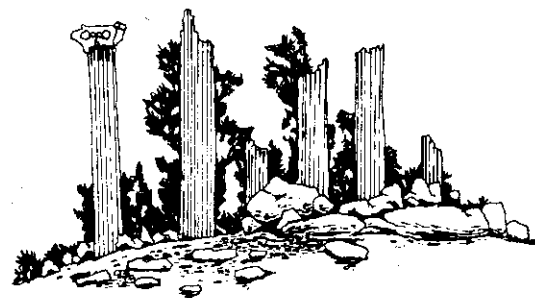
65

You creep out of your room, as the warrior who seeks to infiltrate the camp of his enemies and burn the high-prowed boats upon the beach. You hear a noise and dart silently into a room. The person soon passes, but as you turn to leave you see some parchments on a table. Do you investigate them (turn to 142), or do you return to your room to sleep (turn to 402)?



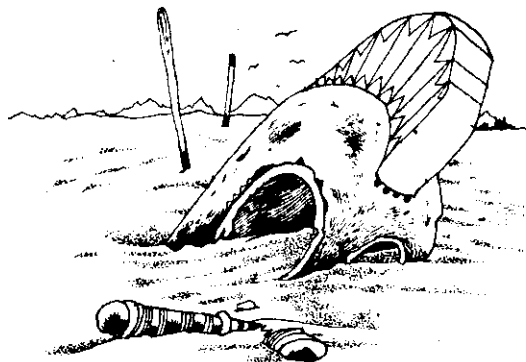
66

The final stroke is over, and the burden of guilt is lifted from your brow. The priests come and rub salt in the wounds as a final penance and you shriek out your protest at the punishment. Yet the gods will no longer seek you out for Agnostes' death and you may travel on towards Troezen. Your wounds are bound by one of the priests. They entreat you to stay to live with them and learn the rites of Ares the man-slayer, but you insist that you must leave. Your companions, however, are not so keen, and choose to stay on the far-famed island. You set off on your raft alone. Go to 344.



67

You walk through streets of rich houses. At one point you see a house guarded by a dog; it is held only by a length of chain. Wary of such animals, you turn back and see another way. Deeper and deeper you go into the city, until you find you are lost and must ask someone how to find Agnostes' residence. Take 1 Shame point, and go to 372.



68

You are knocked backwards by a mighty blow, and fall to your knees, awaiting your inevitable death and the long journey down to the gloom of Hades. Yet the baleful blow does not fall, and instead Arissia the priestess stands before you.

'You have failed us,' she cries, 'and the curse of the goddess will follow you for the rest of your days on this afflicted earth.' With this you rise, aching, your muscles crying out in agony; the shouts and jeers of the crowd ring in your ears. Arissia continues to intone a solemn curse upon you, a curse born of the bitterness of people who know that no rains will come and their children will starve. You stumble, dazed, towards the ship.

You are now in Disfavour with Demeter. Your Honour points are restored to the total you had before the combat, but you take Shame points equal to the number of the Beast you last fought. Go to 3.

69

Have 2 Shame points for surrendering. You are seized roughly by the arms and led down into the cave. You offer no more resistance. Go to 110.

70

It may seem to you, Altheus the Avenger, that shipwreck was the most commonly used form of rapid transport across large distances in Bronze Age Greece. This was not in fact the case. Have 1 Shame point, and lose 1 Honour point. Go to 195.

71

Have 1 extra Shame point for being defeated in the land of the Trojans; news of this fight will bring no glory to you in Troezen. Indeed, the report of your ignominy will cause great grief to the people of the mainland, for although the two lands are at peace at the moment, there is an uneasy tension, and the warriors of Greece will be incensed that, when a battle was fought between Troy and Achaia, it was you, Altheus the Avenger, who lost it. Go to 160.

72

You may pray to your patron for aid. If you choose to do so, spend 1-6 Honour points (roll a die), and go to 221. If you choose not to do so, or cannot afford the Honour points, then lose 1 Honour point, and go to 2.





73

The ship is far from land now, but the cloud of death that enveloped your mission in the city of your father seems to become tangible, and fear seizes your mind. The storm-clouds twist like a whirlpool, sending out great bursts of water from its vortex, like a heaven-sent Harpy snatching up hapless sailors from the ocean's surface. The blackness moves closer, and the ship is tossed from side to side by the wild waters. The captain's brow is furrowed and anxious, as the crew try desperately to right their vessel. You seek shelter, but it is too late; one great wave smashes through the rotten timbers, and sweeps you screaming into the depths of Ocean. If you are in Favour with Poseidon, or he is your patron, go to 385. Otherwise, go to 9.

74

You go down under a savage blow from one of the sailors and think yourself doomed, but after a moment you come round to see the captain looking at you. You clamber unsteadily to your feet. Go to 348.



75

You wait as the man approaches you, talons clicking on the wooden floor. As he comes near you, you lash out with your bound legs, and catch him in the midriff. He staggers back, and drops a knife to the floor. It glitters silver in a shaft of moonlight that comes through a gap in the rafters. Will you try to reach the knife (turn to 300), or try to trip the man over (turn to 139)?

Your Chronicle Sheet looks like this:

Might 5 Honour 18

Protection 11 Shame 8

You have no points of Intelligence.

Sword: Might 3, Protection 0

Shield: Might 0, Protection 2

Queen Antiope's amulet

Hera - Disfavour

Athena - Favour

Hecate - Disfavour

Others - Neutral

Note: You have Might 5, and not 4, and Protection 11, not 10, because of the experience gained in victory against the Minotaur in Crete. Go to 217.



The path ascends rapidly; in some places you cannot walk, but have to scramble up using your hands as well as your feet. When you reach the top, you are confronted with very barren countryside: rough heathland stretches as far as the eye can see, interrupted only by a clump of trees far off to your right. Will you move on along the path (turn to 416), or will you head off towards the trees (turn to 553)?



You stretch your hands towards the chief with the palms open in an attempt to show that you mean no harm. The king is enthralled, almost entranced by this gesture, and you start to speak very slowly.

'I . . . mean . . . no ill.' It is useless, since he clearly does not understand and yet he still stares at you strangely. You fall silent and for a long time the king does not move. Then he barks out a command to the warriors behind you and they lead you away to a bare hut, where you are left on your own. Will you try to escape (turn to 536), or will you await further developments (turn to 339)?

The horse and the cart on which you are fighting hurtle headlong down an increasingly steep and narrow road. The farmer curses and tries to reach the reins. You can assist him in regaining control of the cart (turn to 524), you can push him out while he is distracted (turn to 430), or you can jump out (turn to 216).

80

Down the mountainside you rush, almost reckless in your abandon. The last cries of the Centaur seem to echo in your ears, like the shouts of the high-helmeted comrade abandoned at the breaking of the battalions; yet you ignore the shouts of the wounded creature. They grow more and more anguished, and at last they cease in one last strangled scream. Have 2 Shame points, and go to 189.



81

The guard looks a little puzzled, but then motions for you to follow him. Will you go with him (turn to 160), or do you refuse (turn to 362)?

82

You have not won anything on this roll; perhaps your luck will be better next time. Return to 106, and roll again.

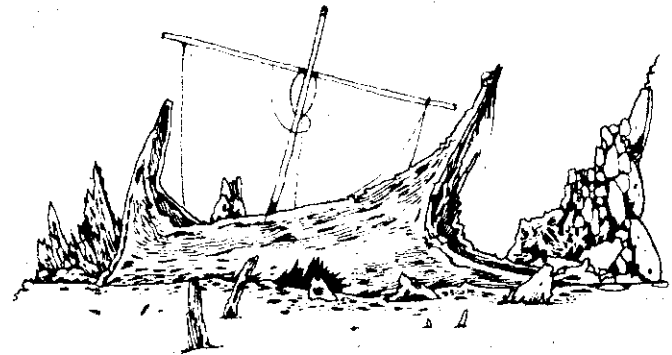


83

The fourth ant grows still beneath your blows. Your hands are blistered from the heat, and you turn to face the fifth of your fearsome foes, but, like dogs called back by their master from a boar that is too dangerous to approach, they retreat, and are soon gone. Their companions lie motionless on the beach, blackened by the heat from their own bodies.

'Beware, defiler, and begone,' you hear a voice crying out, and you run back to the ship. Even Oresander looks a little concerned, for there was little time to take on fresh provisions.

Have 6 Honour points for your victory. Not too soon do you leave the shores of Hephaestus the metal-worker. Turn to 10.



84

You reach the harbour soon enough, but are perplexed as to what to do next. You could try to steal one of the fishermen's rafts moored at the harbour (turn to 22), or you could try to get passage on a merchant ship to Athens or some other port on the mainland of Greece (turn to 540).



85

The barking grows to an almost deafening volume, but you do not realize that it is only one dog until its shape is revealed in the fog. Only two yards away is the terrifying form of Cerberus, the guard of the underworld, his three heads barking and snapping in defence of the realm of Hades. His tail is a hissing serpent which writhes hideously in the air. If you are wearing a lionskin, go to 277. If not, go to 531.

86

Circe just looks at you nonchalantly. 'You'll get no more from me. Go now, your precious moly won't save you from my other spells. If you do want to stay, then I could think of something creative for you; my mistress Hecate does not care for the approval of the other gods, and you can be sure that you would perish unavenged.' Have 1 Shame point for your futile and unheroic persistence. Go to 207.

87

Perhaps Altheus the Avenger has reason to be afraid of dogs, but that is no reason to show your fear among foreign folk. Lose 1 Honour point, and go to 372.

88

You pull away from the mast in your enthusiasm to hear the song better, but your strong bonds hold you back. You strain, and your companions look at you, fear on their faces. Yet you take no notice of them, intent on the sound. The rope grows slacker and slacker under the force of your straining, and eventually, with one last heroic effort, you pull free. If Aphrodite is your patron, go to 118. If not, go to 162.

89

You make as if to walk away from the quay, but a band of villainous-looking men, who are carrying cudgels, bears down towards you. You control the fear in your heart, which is unfitting for a true hero, and face them. Go to 380.

90

Zeus will not interfere in the rites of the love goddess; he leaves her shrines to her own tender care, and does not visit them save when fair-faced Aphrodite herself invites him, and then only when Hera is away from Olympus. Altheus the Avenger, you die unavenged.

91

'Bad luck,' crows Markos, evidently delighted, if not exactly surprised. 'Perhaps we can play again later.' The Achaians nod to each other sagely, their horsehair plumes waving comically in the breeze. Tired and disgruntled, you fall asleep, leaning on a sack of pomegranates which Markos has left unguarded. Go to 440.



92

'So then, drink my tea, peasant,' she crows. She drags you unyielding into the house and forces the cup's contents down your throat. You are too surprised to resist her deadly draught.

93

Go to 144.

94

The sailor drops his torch and falls to his knees. You pause briefly, and then quickly stoop to retrieve the torch. Will you spare him, now he has surrendered (turn to 426), or will you kill him (turn to 509)?

95

Your horse follows the others along the dusty path by the river, and you soon see a town ahead, its white, flat-roofed buildings shimmering in the heat. Many boats are moored on the river-bank beside the town, unloading their cargoes and restocking their holds with new goods, chiefly corn and papyrus. The horsemen greet several of the townsfolk and you guess that this is their home. Your conclusion is confirmed when they ride into some stables, close to the edge of the town. You dismount and thank them, although you are still uncertain whether they can understand Greek, before making your way down to the river to see if any ships from Greece are docked there. Go to 476.

96

You must continue the fight against these two men. If you kill both of them, go to 458. If you surrender, go to 299. If you die, and are saved by Zeus, go to 578.

97

Is Altheus so foolish as to stand in the baking sun, unable to decide which route to take? Sunburn can be the only result of such an action. Have 1 Shame point, and return to 77.





98

The old man will not accept your surrender, and you must continue to fight. He has found new strength, and is now Might 6, Protection 12. If you retreat, go to 453. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 557. If you Seriously Wound him, go to 474.

99

You awaken, head pounding, in a darkened room. As your eyes adjust to the gloom, you can tell that it is a kind of storeroom, with some sacks around the walls. You are bound, but manage to wriggle over to one side. One of the sacks has split, and you see that it is grain that has spilled from it.

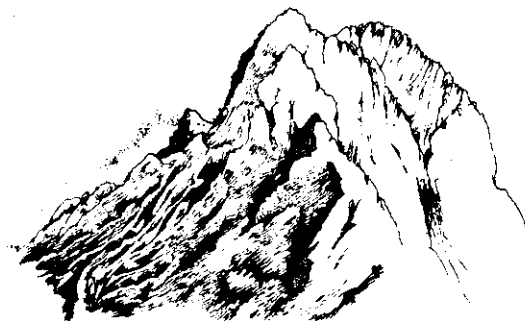
The door opens and one of the men in the bird-masks enters, looking impossibly tall. When you notice his feet, you feel a shiver run up your spine: both of his legs end in wicked-looking talons. Will you attack the man (turn to 75), or pretend to be unconscious (turn to 295)?

100

Down the mountainside you tumble, faster and faster. You have time to pray to Zeus if you still can (turn to 7). Otherwise your shattered body will be carrion for the creatures which crawl amidst the undergrowth.

101

Closer and closer you come to the clashing cliffs. Vizhazid is barking out orders to his helmsman, but you cannot hear what they are, intent as you are on the fate waiting ahead. How inglorious such a death would be, to die, your body splintered, in the Symplegades. You yearn for the massed formations of men in combat. A sudden shout brings you out of your reverie, Altheus the Avenger. Go to 2.



102

The last thing you remember is Circe pouring her drink down your throat. It burns. Strange, you think that she should try to revive you. But no, for she strikes you in the face and cries, 'You swine!' Your soul is snuffed out as your body transforms in obedience to her will.





103

You push through the crowd only to see that life's spirit has slipped away from your cousin. The spectators crowd about you, their voices like the clamour when shields clash, or the angry buzzing of bees disturbed from their nests when a great-rooted tree is struck down by the bronze axes and its limbs are burnt, wood-smoke clouding the blue summer sky. You turn your eyes away from the gaping wound which runs from Agnostes' foot to his thigh. You must seek solace and advice from the divine ones.

Do you look for the Sibylline oracle reputed to be near Troy (turn to 407), or do you resort to the temple of Athena close to the gates (turn to 28)?



104

You wait but a little while for your cousin to appear; even so you become impatient, keen after so many months to see a friendly face, to speak of the old times at Troezen. Agnostes rushes at length into the room, and greets you cordially, clearly surprised at your coming, and eager to hear of your adventures. You take relish in relating them. Go to 4.

105

Cautiously you open your eyes, and at once close them; the sun's bright light is too strong. At least, you think to yourself, this is not Hades. You find, when you eventually summon enough strength to look, that you have lost all your arms, armour and possessions.

You could wait here and hope to signal a passing ship (turn to 340), or you could make your way up the mountain, to look for help (turn to 15).

Markos briefly explains the rules to you, and you nod your understanding and acceptance.

This dice game is handled by you, the player. Roll one die for you, and one for Markos. You may then choose one of the rolls and go to the corresponding paragraph.

On 1, go to 161.

On 2, go to 13.

On 3, go to 49.

On 4, go to 304.

On 5, go to 333.

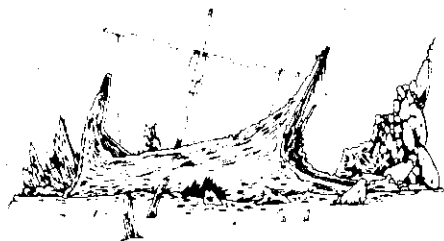
On 6, go to 82.

When both rolls are ones or sixes, go to 208.

You pass your hands over the brazier, and the heat from the flames is unbearably hot. You close your eyes, and mutter a prayer to your Olympian protector. Yet when you open them again, it is no longer Scione that greets you, but a vast burning plain. This must be the home of Helios, the sun, you muse to yourself. Strangely, the scorching tongues of flame do not burn you, nor does the all-consuming frenzy of the fire harm you. Just at that moment the flickering phantoms coalesce into a near-human shape. This, you realize without needing to be told, is one of the fiends which inflict famine on the folk of Scione. You must fight.

You may neither retreat nor surrender. The Beast is number 1 (note this down). It has Might 6, Protection 13. Note down also your Honour point total.

If you die, go to 68. If you finish off the flame-man, go to 209.



'No, most certainly not. I am the chosen one of . . .' Your protestations are cut short by the butt of a spear in your back. You whirl around to see two elderly men, each of them armed with a spear. 'Then defend yourself, temple-defiler,' rasps one of the men. 'Demeter will see to your death.'

The men are Might 3, Protection 10, but with spears (Might 2) and breastplates (Protection 2). Remember the rules for multiple combat. If you Seriously Wound both men, go to 482. If you surrender, go to 373. If you retreat, go to 18. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 33.

Go to 169.

You are led, unyielding, down into the depths of the earth. The natives seem to possess an uncanny ability to see in the dark, as you pass through twisting tunnels and turning after turning. All you can make out is that there are further paintings on the walls, but of what you cannot say.

At length you come to a vast underground opening, arrayed around the edges of which are the rest of the tribe. At the centre of the opening is the chief of the tribe, his body completely covered in a garment woven of the feathers of a thousand birds. You are pushed into the arena, just next to where a brightly burning fire blazes. The chief gestures to you with a clenched fist, and when you do not react, one of the tribesmen rushes forward, and pokes you with the butt of his spear. Clearly you are expected to respond to the chief.

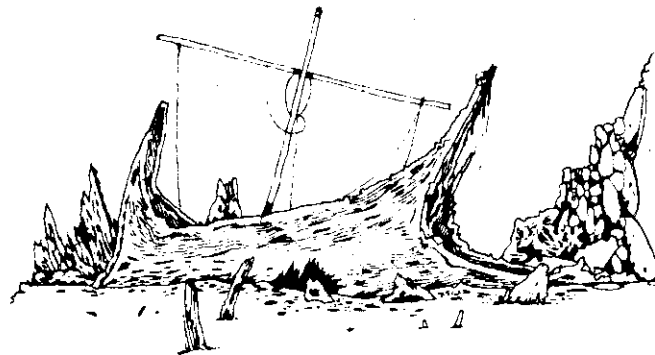
Do you make a clenched fist gesture (turn to 363), a sunburst gesture, with your fingers spread out (turn to 145), or a flat-palm gesture (turn to 556)?

111

If you are lashed to the mast of the raft, go to 88. If you are free to move about the vessel, go to 23.

112

You are tired almost beyond death when the ship reaches the small port of Chalcedon, and you are unable to leave the ship. In a moment of rare generosity, Vizhazid buys you a helmet (Protection 1), although it is rusty, and he clearly does not expect you to live long enough to enjoy it very much. You are still groaning at the effects of the last sea-voyage, when the next begins. 'The rocks,' you cry out in agony, 'the rocks.' Yet Vizhazid calms you, feeds you with a sticky orange gruel, which he tells you is an Armenian delicacy, and assures you that the rocks are now stationary and can do no harm to man or beast. You are not mollified. It is late on the third day after leaving Chalcedon that the look-out sights Troy. Even you, Avenging Altheus, weak as you are, stagger to the side of the ship to gaze at the magnificent sight. Turn to 37.



113

Soon they return, eating hunks of bread, but they do not give you any. You keep silent, despite your extreme hunger, and you watch, betraying no emotion. Eventually it grows dark, and you hear a great commotion outside. When you are brought out by your guards, you are amazed to find the whole camp thronging with warriors, each carrying a torch. You are led into a central ring where the king stands brandishing an ornately decorated spear, which he raises above his head, to the obvious delight of the crowd. An enormous warrior pushes through the spectators into the ring, and the king hands you the spear. Will you fight (turn to 171), or will you decline by handing the spear back to the king (turn to 468)?

114

The torch sizzles on the damp floor of the hold. You are momentarily blinded. For being distracted from the higher purpose which Fate has set aside for you, have 1 Shame point. Return to 94.

115

The Nubians will not surrender, and you must continue the fight. If you kill them, go to 386. If you surrender, go to 424. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 269.

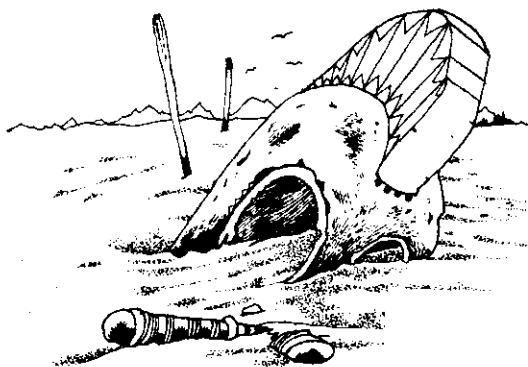
You seize the chief, twist a knife out of his hand and hold it to his throat.

'Listen to me well,' you cry out to the others, 'and if any of you still understand a civilized tongue, hear this. Lie down on the floor, with your hands on your heads. I shall leave now, and if I hear any sound of you following, your leader dies.' There is no movement. You thrust the point of the dagger upwards, and the leader jerks his head back. His followers see the glint of fear in his eyes and obey you.

Still keeping the man at knife-point, you back out of the barn to the edge of the compound. There you snatch the mask away to reveal a cadaverous face with a receding hairline.

'Which way leads to the city?' you demand. He makes no answer, but his eyes flick to a path leading away to the left. You laugh, 'I see.'

Then you cut his throat, and leave him in the bushes, walking along the path he has indicated. There are no sounds of pursuit, and you tuck the knife into a pouch in the feathered cloak. After a while the forest thins, and you can see the road ahead. The moon glints on a tripwire stretched across the path, and you step over it carefully, hereafter watching out for more traps. A rustle in the bushes betrays the presence of a sentry, but he is fooled by your costume, and lets you pass unhindered.



As you press along the road, it becomes light. When you can see that the road is empty and can spy Thebes ahead, you unbuckle the talons, and dump them and the costume and mask by the side of the road. You walk up to the gates of Thebes. Have 1 Shame point for your murderous act. Go to 598.



As the waves crash heavily into the ship, you stare back at Naxos, receding on the horizon. Then, to your horror, you see a figure swimming towards the vessel through the confused waters. Perhaps one of the crew has fallen overboard, you think at first, but then see that it is no mortal, but the god Poseidon. He climbs to the deck and speaks.

'I don't know how you muddled through in Crete, when Theseus failed. Still, you should get back to Athens now, and forget this heroic nonsense; you're not cut out for it at all. Your father is waiting for the black or white sails to signal your death or success, and he is beginning to lose the faint hope that you have won through. Knowing your incompetence, you'll probably put the wrong ones up.'

So saying, the sea god dives back into the waves, leaving you alone on deck. Go to 252.



118

The boat bumps against one of the islands. Strangely, no one else moves. Yet you are not to be denied a sight of the sweet singers, and scramble up the rocks. For a moment you close your eyes, and at the summit of the slope open them again. There, oblivious to all else, is Aphrodite, fairest of the goddesses, singing as she combs her hair, with a blissful smile on her face.

'Oh, Altheus,' she chides, 'you could have waited a bit longer. My hair is all tangled in the breeze, and I just must straighten it out.' She goes to work again with the amber comb. 'Now,' she turns smiling towards you, 'tell me about your adventures.'

When you reach the raft again, tired and scratched from your climbing, some hours have passed, but the sailors do not seem to have moved from their positions, awed at having amongst them an honoured one of the goddess. Go to 46.



119

You go down into the hold, which is dark and musty. Your eyes search the gloom for the mutineer, but all you can make out are empty crates stacked up to the deck above. You advance slowly into the darkness, listening for any sound, but all is quiet save for the creaking of timbers as the boat sails on. You reach a large crate, which is blocking your path. Will you go round to the left (turn to 526) or right (turn to 398)?

120

The wooden tiles fall to the ground, and at once they are suffused by a reddy-golden glow. You feel a strange prickling feeling in your left hand, and when you look, you see that you hold a golden ear of corn instead of the corn-plaque. The priestess walks unsteadily to your side and addresses the crowd: 'Spring comes! Go now to your houses and prepare, for Persephone may yet return.'

To you she whispers, 'I thank you, my friend. Normally there would be feasting and dancing, but the town is poor. I hope you understand.' She motions to one of the acolytes, who goes into the temple and returns with a dove, held in a cage of beaten bronze. 'Take this as token of our thanks. Scione has seen better times, and may once more. Farewell.'

You take your leave of the priestess Arissia and make your way to the ship, cage clutched in your hands. You are now in Favour with Demeter, and may have 3 Honour points for saving the folk of Scione from starvation. Go to 3.

121

Do you have a dove with you? If so, turn to 375. If not, turn to 2.

122

Again and again you are struck by this mischievous brat, who takes delight in humiliating foreigners. You try to shelter, but to no avail, and the missiles still strike you. You dodge from side to side, yet your assailant throws with unerring accuracy. At last the barrage ceases, but the laughter of the onlookers lasts longer. Have 2 Shame points, and go to 3.

123

Tired, cold and without hope, you are carried hither and thither by the cruel ocean. Gradually your moments of lucidity grow less, as the sea sucks out your spirit. Zeus will not save those who offend against his brother Poseidon.

124

Hours seem to pass, and again and again you bang at the door. Shipwreck and imprisonment seem perennially to be your lot, but at last you settle down to sleep. You are awakened by the door creaking open. At once you are on your guard, in case a black-cloaked brigand has come to torture you. Yet this is no villain, it is your cousin Agnostes. 'Sorry about the misunderstanding, Altheus,' he says. 'It's all sorted out now, but I suppose you have a lot more to tell me about how you come to be in Troy.' Go to 4.



125

You lift up the scourge with one last great effort. You strike yourself, and the metal tips dig deep into your flesh. On your left leg bone is exposed below the knee. The flies buzz around, attracted by the sticky blood. Pain throbs in your temples, and it grows to a crescendo. One more stroke and you can take no more. You fall to the ground and the dusty sand enters your wounds. Your release from life and guilt is pleasant in comparison to the torment that ended them.

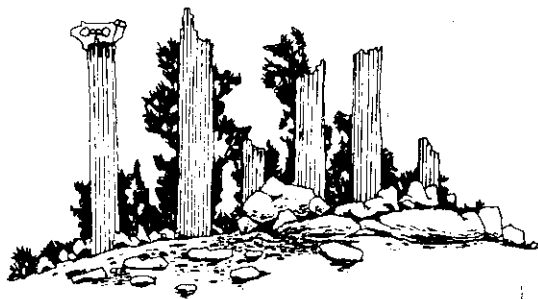
126

Zeus has no business interfering in the sacred places of other gods. After all, he would not tolerate such behaviour on high Olympus. You must now put your talents to the test of Tartarus and grim Hades.

127

'You're in no position to bargain, son of Aegeus,' she says. 'I keep your crew; you get purged. Now, if you want divine forgiveness for your Trojan misdeeds, you must drink the potion of herbs which I have made.'

Do you agree that you have no choice and return with her to the house (turn to 140), or do you attack her (turn to 41)?



128

At last the North African coast comes into view. You paddle a little way down it, seeking a place to land so that you can take on new provisions. For a time, you see no sign of human habitation, no curious onlookers gazing at your strange craft from the shore, no huts of mud-brick or branches, no smoke or fire. After a while, however, you come to quite a large island, on the beaches of which a great number of people are lounging. They pluck fruit lazily from trees which stand some way from the water's edge, and in just such a carefree manner consume them. If you are in Disfavour with Poseidon, go to 342. Otherwise, go to 132.

129

The priest begins a monotonous chanting, while the female acolytes dance around him with slow convoluted steps. From his belt he draws a dagger, whose blade is etched with strange twisting, twining symbols. He tests it against the sacred cone, and then turns to you with a broad smile on his face. Your arms are seized and held behind your back. You try to struggle, but you are as a lame man seeking to make the long walk home. The dagger plunges downwards, and there is a searing pain between your legs. You cry out in agony, but then you die. If you can still pray to Zeus, go to 90.

130

You are only just out of the harbour, when a massive storm begins to brew. The captain and crew look grave and attempt to tack back to port, but the ship is swiftly blown far from its path, and soon the sailors can exert no control over its course through the white-foaming waters. After some hours, there is a crash, and you are flung headlong into the sea. There is an island in view, and you strike out towards it, desperation buoying you up. You drag yourself up the beach, cursing under your breath the fate that has decreed that yet again you do not find yourself safely on your road.

You turn your head to see that a few of the sailors have been saved with you. Go to 186.

131

You are driven on to the coast of Liguria, far from your destination. In a storm your companions are swept overboard and your attempts to rescue them are in vain. The raft is broken up as it comes on to the beach and you are forced to scramble out of the wreckage quickly and run hare-swift up the beach to avoid the breakers. On the beach stands a group of natives.

Do you make an approach to them, trying to be friendly (turn to 31), or do you run away in the opposite direction (turn to 48)?



132

You approach one of the men, who is reclining against a pile of clothing, seemingly trying to construct some edifice from small pieces of driftwood. Every so often he turns and plucks a fruit from an overhanging tree, ignoring the scratches he receives from the prickly branches. The fruit is the colour of the sun, and looks very much like an orange plum. You reach the man and try to disturb him from his meal. His only reaction is to eat another of the succulent fruits. At last he seems to offer you one of them. Do you accept and eat the fruit (turn to 53), or do you refuse (turn to 143)?

133

The champion drops his spear and clamps his hands over a gash in his right leg, which is pumping blood to the ground in a grotesque fountain. He looks up, as you approach to make a final thrust with the delicately crafted spear, now specked with Nubian gore. His imploring eyes stare relentlessly into yours, and you refrain from your blow momentarily, while you decide whether to finish off the black warrior or to spare him. If you kill him, go to 273. If you do not, go to 593.

134

If you were Seriously Wounded in the battle, go to 309. If you were not, go to 577.

135

A few of the youths and maidens show their support for you, but the others, cowardly and ungrateful, or perhaps remembering your desertion of Ariadne and the two maidens of Athens on Naxos, stand silent. The four wavering sailors need no weatherman to tell which way the wind blows, and join the six mutineers. They seize hold of you again, wrenching the weapon from your hands. Go to 175.

136

Before you leave the costume, you retrieve the knife from it. As you reach the gates, two thieves appear as if from nowhere and stride towards you menacingly. One brings a club round to swing at your head, and you block the blow with your left forearm, while bringing the knife up with the other to carve a gash through his cheek and into the eye. He drops the club and runs off screaming; his companion follows.

You tuck the knife away, and knock at the gates. They are opened by two birdmen. Go to 193.

137

You dismount and hand the reins of your horse to the man at the back of the group. You mutter your thanks and walk down to the water's edge where one of the dhows is just leaving. Explaining that you have no money, you try to board and cross the great river. Luckily the captain, who speaks your language, is quite friendly, and he explains that your best chance of returning to Athens would be to take a boat many hundreds of miles downstream to Lower Egypt and the coast. He will take you across the Nile and set you down at the far side, if that is what you want. If you wait for a boat travelling the length of the river, go to 589. If you cross, go to 446.



138

The Nubian chief steps back alarmed, as you fall to the ground in front of him. He nods to two warriors, who grab you by the arms and haul you to your feet. They march you away to a small hut, bind your hands behind your back, and leave you there alone.

It is many hours before they return to drag you outside. It is night, but the whole camp is lit up by thousands of torches, each held by a different warrior. You reckon that these men must form the tribes for miles around. You are brought into a central ring where the Nubian king stands brandishing an ornately decorated spear. He lifts the weapon above his head showing it to all the crowd, and then he hands it to you. At the same time, one of the biggest warriors pushes his way into the ring. Will you fight (turn to 171), or will you decline by handing the spear back to the king (turn to 468)?

139

Leaving the knife where it is, you throw your arms around one of the man's legs. The rope that ties your hands together snags one of the talons and the man shakes his leg frantically, trying to throw you off.

Then the other leg catches in a crack in the floor, and he topples over backwards, jerking you halfway across the room. Your bonds snap on the razor-sharp edge of the talon, and you drag yourself backwards quickly.

The man has broken his ankle; he is throwing himself all over the room, screeching and rebounding off all the walls, until he falls to the floor again. You have untied your feet, and you go over to him and remove the mask to reveal a face bloodied by collisions with the walls. You lift his head from behind, and then pull your hand away in horror, finding it covered in blood and a milky-yellow fluid. The man's skull has cracked: such was the force of his self-destructive urge. He looks up at you with incredulity. 'But I am Cyron the merchant,' he says, and dies.

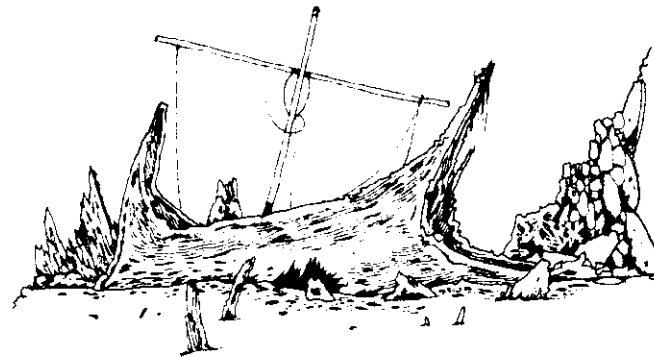
You have been stripped of all your possessions, but you reach down and retrieve the knife which has fallen in the fight. You tuck it into your belt. Will you escape from this place as quickly as you can (turn to 505), or look about outside (turn to 456)?

140

You take the cup from her hands and start to drink; the liquid has a strange musty taste, but you continue. Then a strange feeling overcomes you. You start to choke, drop the cup and fall down on to all fours. Oddly, you cannot arise. Bristles have sprouted from your arms and legs, and your fingers are fusing together. Your ears have become long and floppy, and your nose elongated. You try to protest, but can only squeal and grunt as you are metamorphosed into one of Circe's swine. Your last human thought as you look down on the pigskin rug gives you no cause for comfort.

141

'Filthy cheat,' they cry, clearly offended at your giving in while you are ahead. You try to reason with them, but it is no good. Markos approaches you. 'My friends,' he says, 'don't quarrel. I'll play dice with Altheus, Phoenician rules. All right?' The Phthians look somewhat mollified. Do you accept (turn to 106) or refuse (turn to 502)?



142

Quickly you pick up the parchment rolls, but are only able to catch a few glimpses; they are letters to Agnostes. One is from the king of Ethiopia, agreeing that a cargo of pomegranates be imported into Troy, a dangerous venture indeed. The other concerns Paris, who is apparently to judge in a divine beauty contest, involving Hera, Athena and Aphrodite.

Have 1 Shame point, and you are in Disfavour with the goddess Eris, who would rather these matters were kept a secret. You retire to your room. Go to 245.

143

You walk down the beach, taking care to avoid the prone bodies scattered all along the shore. No one you ask seems to be willing or able to speak to you. Here one man is digging a deep pit in the sand, there a woman is building a pyramid of fruit. At last you see a figure standing in the distance waving at you. As you come closer you recognize him. It is Markos the Phoenician merchant. Go to 202.

144

You descend once more to the cave of Chiron, dislodging the spear from its resting-place as you jump down to the ledge in front of the Centaur's home. Quickly you crush the delicate petals and rub them against the festering wound, handiwork of an unknown merchant. Yet the Centaur sighs and breathes his last, his eyes roll round and are white and blind. You have taken the wrong plant, and Chiron is now dead. Take 1 Shame point, and leave, either with Chiron's spear, which is Might 2 (turn to 520), or unarmed (turn to 189).



145

You make the sign of the sunburst, and the chief moves his hand forward into yours so that his fist is enclosed within your outspread fingers. The whole tribe cheers, and you are hoisted shoulder-high and paraded around the cavern in triumph. Afterwards you are fêted and given gifts of food and jewellery. It is with difficulty that you make the islanders understand that you must leave to return to your homeland.

After some little time you sleep, and when you rouse you find yourself on the beach once more. You think that you have dreamed it all, until you find that your raft is heaped with provisions, and strapped to your belt is a jade knife (Might 1). Have 1 Honour point. You decide in memory of the occasion to name the island Althenesos. Perhaps one day you will found a colony here. Go to 214.



146

Before your adversaries can react, you push the spears aside and make a dash for the beach. They stand stunned for a moment, and then follow you as fast as they can. But when they see that you have a boat, they halt their pursuit, and confine themselves to hurling insults at you in a tongue you cannot understand. Have 2 Shame points for your cowardice. As you go, you decide to yourself that you will name this island after yourself, Althenesos. Go to 214.

147

Do you have any moly root? If so, go to 423. If not, return to 127.





Two rivers in spate run down from the high hills and throw together at their meeting the full weight of their water, like two armies clashing in the dawn light. Far off in the mountains the shepherds hear the thunder and stand in awe, wondering at the sound.

You stand, Altheus the Avenger, at the meeting-point of the rivers, and let the waters' violent union buffet you and cleanse you from the dust and cares of the journey and escape from Crete. Then you step out of the water, dry in the sun and dress again, shaking your hair like a dog.

Back at the temple, the captain waits to give away Ariadne, and the priest hovers expectantly. The fourteen youths and maidens of Athens have formed into a semicircle in front of them, facing inwards to watch and applaud. Behind them are most of the crew; only a few have stayed behind to guard the ship. You walk through to Ariadne and the captain, who stand beneath the statue of Artemis, and take Ariadne's hand in yours as the priest begins to chant the words of the ceremony.

You take very little of this in; you are gazing intently at Ariadne, and waiting for the moment when you can say 'I do' and the princess will be yours.

'I do,' says Ariadne, and turns to face you. You repeat her words and hold her tight in your arms.

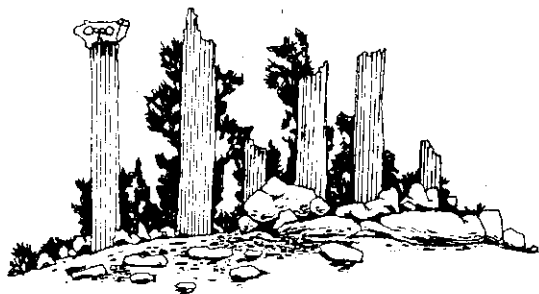
With a screaming like a million rats drowning in the hold of a sinking cargo ship full of grain, the guests turn into a cloud of bats which flies, shrieking, into the heavy sky. Snakes begin to push out through Ariadne's scalp and you hurl her away from you in horror. She collides with a pillar and crouches against it while leathern wings bud from her back, rip through the silken gown, harden and begin to beat, lifting her a few feet into the air. You stoop to examine Ariadne's long blonde hair, the remains of which lie at your feet, but freeze halfway, when you see that the same transformation has overtaken the captain and the priest as well.

All three Furies join together and then launch themselves at you, their claws scratching at your body as you back away.

'You have slain your brother, Altheus,' hisses Alecto, her

spittle burning into your face like acid. You realize that, by marrying Ariadne, you have made those members of the Cretan royal family you have killed into your relatives, and the Minotaur as well; and the Furies drive mad and torment those who kill their kin.

You look round and for a brief instant see the guests as they were, and Ariadne and the captain gazing at you imploringly, astounded at your behaviour. Then the cliff edge on which you are standing gives way, and you fall into space, dropping to your death on the wave-lashed rocks below. Not even Zeus will save those who destroy themselves.



149

The scene before you wavers and shifts. No longer do you stand at the temple of Scione, but at the centre of a vast area of water, to which you can spy no end. The sea seems tranquil, and you realize, to your astonishment, that you are floating some six inches from the surface. Hardly have you observed this when the surface parts, and from the deeps of the wine-dark waters a great man made entirely of water emerges. He, you at once know, is one of the creatures who cause Scione's famine. You must fight.

You may neither retreat nor surrender. This is Beast number 2 (note this down). He has Might 5, Protection 11. Note down also your current Honour total.

If you die, turn to 68. If you vanquish your foe, go to 558.

150

You may take comfort in the fact that Markos the Phoenician trader has lost a cargo. You also take 1 Shame point. Go to 186.

151

The guard accepts your rusty helmet and examines it, puzzlement clear on his face. At length he has an idea and motions for you to follow him. You do so. Go to 160.

152

You face the king and throw the spear to the ground, to his alarm. Soon, however, he is master of the situation once more, and barks out an order to a tall, skinny warrior, who steps towards you. His build looks too weak for a fighter, but he holds the other tribesmen in terror, as you can readily see from the way they all edge back. It is the royal interpreter; he will translate your words from Greek into the Nubian tongue, so that the king may understand. Turn to 330.

153

Terror grips your limbs as you recall the year of captivity, from which you have so recently escaped. You do not know why you should fear the hateful Nubians now, when you are safe on board an Egyptian trading boat, but perhaps they will recognize you and demand your return. Perhaps these Egyptians mean to sell you for a few more skins. But surely your imagination is just turning to paranoia? Are you not safest with this good captain, who speaks your language so well?

You must decide whether you will stay on board and meet the Nubians (turn to 490), or whether you will entrust your life to the Nile, and jump over the side into the turbulent water below the fall (turn to 595).

You look forward, and the scene is as it was before: a circle of grey figures. You blink, and everything goes yellow, with no variations in shade or texture: all you can see is a wall of yellow. You blink again, and the yellow wall starts to ooze a brown fluid which runs down it in drops and little rivulets.

You blink again, and unleash a stream of images, each one lasting only for a fraction of a second, barely long enough for you to register it. Your father and mother at the moment of your conception . . . A bead of sweat on your father's forehead, magnified a myriad times . . . A flower, fading, decaying, withering and falling apart . . . A chicken's neck wrung by a farmer . . . A skull . . . A leaf caught in its descent, turning . . . An eastern soldier, twisting a long, curved sword in his hands . . . A sewer flowing through the heart of the world, carrying filth into the oceans, to be spread everywhere . . . A small boy's face, crying out in pain as his drunken father breaks his back . . . Ariadne's bloodied body lying on a hillside in Naxos, where she has died giving birth . . . Markos the Phoenician, throat slit, lying dead in a sweat-stained bed in North Africa . . . The Minotaur, first and last of its kind, dead in the ruins of Knossos . . . Wrinkles spreading on your mother's face, speeded up a million times . . . A city being put to the sword . . . Horsemen burning the huts of peasants in the north.

You realize how everything is connected. Death is the only reality; life is only a time of delusion before all are united in the dust and we all rot with our kind, rulers and ruled alike. The world belongs to the worms. Even the vast halls of Hades are a lie, told by poets to make men quiet. After death there will be nothing at all.

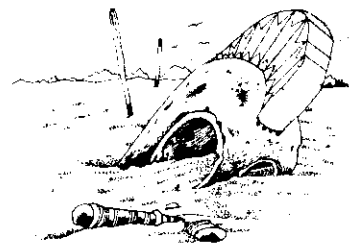
You feel yourself falling through space, in blackness, and halfway through a cry of terror your life ends, as neatly as if someone had pinched out a candle and said, 'No more.'

The Phytalidae see you fall back out of the circle and lie unmoving on the floor, face twisted in agony, and are sad.



You grow weak under the powerful sun, and begin to have difficulty walking. The birds fly towards you and circle expectantly in the air. There is no water anywhere in sight, and you slump in the grass to wait for the cool of the night. But it is only midday, and the sun is at its highest point. You grow delirious and the vultures above seem to become larger and larger, even with your eyes firmly shut. As the afternoon begins, you fall unconscious, and never revive. Zeus will not save those who bring death upon themselves.

Zeus heals your wounds and delays the sailor's next blow long enough for you to spring back to your feet. You must continue. If you surrender, turn to 249. If you Seriously Wound the mutineer, turn to 94.





157

You wander into the town, and all the people seem to be walking in the same direction. At last you are carried along by the press, past great decayed buildings and collapsed temples. All the people seem to be disfigured by some sort of rash. You struggle to escape this unhealthy atmosphere, but cannot. At last the pressure ceases, and you can escape into a little building, with an ear of corn inscribed on the door.

Do you push through and try to get into the building (turn to 560), or do you stay and risk being carried on once more (turn to 322)?

158

Your Chronicle Sheet looks like this:

Might 5 Honour 20

Protection 11 Shame 7

You have no Intelligence points.

Axe: Might 5, Protection 3

Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2

Hera - Disfavour

Furies - Disfavour

Athena - Favour

Others - Neutral

Note that as a client of Apollo, you may ignore any Shame or Honour penalties that accrue as a direct result of taking hints. You have Might 5, instead of 4, and Protection 11, instead of 10, to account for the experience gained defeating the Minotaur. Go to 354.

159

You examine the corpse. The talons are not part of the body, but are cast in iron and attached to the feet by straps, giving the wearer an extra foot or so of height. Will you now escape (turn to 505), or explore outside (turn to 522)?

160

You are led down a series of corridors the halls of which depict various Trojan exploits of the past, including the building of the walls by Poseidon the earth-shaker. You are slightly curious at a large blank patch of wall which is being prepared by a craftsman for a new series of paintings.

The guard pushes you into a room, bare except for a stool, and slams the door behind you. You test the door, but it is locked. Go to 124.



161

Markos is too skilful for you. Lose any one item won during the first game, and return to 106 to roll again. If you have no item, lose one obol, and return to 106. If you have no obols go to 91.

162

As you draw closer and closer to the rocks, the singing becomes more ecstatic than ever. At last the raft is beached, but a wave lifts it off and smashes it against the foot of the cliff. You are thrown off and your legs are crushed by the life-sapping stones. Yet still the singing continues. The sea seems to become as green as a meadow, and you would walk on it, if you could walk at all. The pain of your injury is eased by the rapturous sounds. Orange lights start to glow and bob from side to side overhead. There is a scratching, but this too merges into the heavenly symphony. Your last memory is of the talons of the Sirens tearing lyrically into your limbs.

163

Away sails the ship from Athenian shores, from the Piraeus, that once bustling port, now strangely silent and decaying. The holds of the vessel are empty of cargo, for trade from Athens has virtually ceased with the prospect of political upheaval. Yet little of this troubles you, just as the man on the mountain top knows or cares little about the plague-ridden people below. You grieve for your father and, as you gaze at the gloom-black sails, tears fill your eyes. Go to 73.

164

You are led past the huts of the natives into a central area. A man dressed in a strange array of plumage holds something up to your nose. You sniff it; it smells of oranges, but makes you drowsy. Then, carried between two of these primitives, you are woken to full consciousness as spears are thrust into both your arms. By means of these, you are held high by your captors, who ignore your agonized squealing and kicking. You are moved over to a fire which has been kindled in the centre of the village, and lowered into it. As your body roasts and blisters, you bemoan and curse the gods who have punished you for your disobedience. Before you can bear the torment no longer, and your agonized life sinks to the depths of Hades, you briefly hope that your flesh will sear their stomachs.



165

With a hint of diaphanous colouring, Iris, messenger of Hera, stands before you on the raft, her robe all the colours of the rainbow. She takes a deep breath and begins. 'I am Iris, and a very important woman, because I am messenger of Hera, who has entrusted me to give a message to you, which is in turn very important, because it's all about your future welfare, about which we're all terribly concerned on high Olympus, as we wouldn't want your journey to come to an end here, seeing as we've all been so interested in it, and enthralled, and it has stopped the business of divine decadence for days at a time, so that if it ended it really would be a disappointment, and anyhow we don't like Circe that much, because she's a scheming, black-hearted, conniving bitch, which is of course all right if you like that sort of thing, but most of us don't, actually we find it quite offensive, and it's hard for gods to get offended, we're mostly meek-mannered folk, whatever your teachers told you, and I hear they're not that good in Troezen, and when we do get offended, thunderbolts fly, and everyone gets upset, which is why I have to give you a message.' She nearly pauses, remembers something, and then takes an odd root out of her pocket. 'This is moly; eat it and you'll be safe, why I don't know, but Hera thought it important, and if it's important to her, of course . . .'

With this Iris is interrupted and vanishes, without ever having come to an end. Somewhat dazed by this outpouring, you push the moly into your belt, and your companions row enthusiastically for shore. Go to 461.

166

Pushing past the near-lifeless form, you seize the spear and begin the hazardous climb back to the sea-shore. As the Centaur's tortured form vanishes from view, you hear him cry out in his death agony: 'May the curse of Asclepius the healer go with you, and may you never see the light of your home back in Troezen again.' You are now in Disfavour with Asclepius, and are in a permanently Wounded state, until you are prepared to pay 4 Honour points to remove this penalty. The spear is Might 2, Protection 0. Go to 189.

167

You open your eyes and clear away the grime of the salt sea. This is not Hades, but a civilized land that you have been washed up on. Crowds of people gather around a ship, and you notice that the cargo being brought in is of figs. Perhaps these people could help you, perhaps you could find some heroic employment to win your passage to the lands you must visit to atone for Agnostes' death. You notice, however, with some disgust, that the figs are rotten, and you gaze again at the harbour; it is as though a film has been lifted from your eyes. Ships' timbers are rotting, the buildings have weeds growing from cracks in the walls. All the people walk with a pronounced stoop, while mounds of rubbish accumulate at the quayside.

You could ask one of these folk for aid (turn to 43), or you could try to find a more prosperous area of the harbour (turn to 89).

168

You are tired and thoroughly miserable; the raft is driven by the blasts of the racking wind along the barren coast of Italy. The shoreline seems to have become the battlefield in some cosmic conflict of the gods; it is scorched and blackened.

There are some islands ahead, and you instruct your companions to row around them, but just then, you seem to hear a noise emanating from one of them. You decide to approach closer. Go to 303.

169

If you have an even number of Shame points, go to 130. If you have an odd number of Shame points, go to 16.

170

You follow the Centaur's instructions and there, just as he described, is the bush. You hesitate for a moment before picking some of the flowers, for they are of various types, and the wrong sort might not be so efficacious. Do you pick those with two petals (turn to 144), four (turn to 205), or six (turn to 93)?



171

You grasp the spear firmly and step forward to battle with the Nubian; the rest of the tribesmen draw in closer to watch the fight. Your opponent crouches low, one hand touching the ground for balance, and all eyes focus on you. Bewildered, you crouch down in the same fashion and then, with a cry, the champion leaps forward. The contest is begun.

You fight using the normal combat rules. He has Might 4, Protection 12. You both have spears (Might 2), and no armour. If you retreat, go to 57. If you surrender, go to 331. If you Seriously Wound him, go to 133. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 566.

172

You waken to find your head cradled by a young woman dressed in grey. You start to rise, but she holds you back, smiling. You look around, and see you are in a bare tent, with a rug on the floor. You rest.

After a moment, an older woman and a man enter, also dressed in plain grey. 'We are the elders,' says the woman. 'We know of the reason for your coming: You wish to be purified of your blood-guilt. We may do this for you: the ceremony is being prepared now.'

The man now speaks: 'But be wary, young hero. We may only save those who are not ashamed of themselves. Be alone now, and be sure that this is what you want.' All three leave, and you are alone. Go to 519.

173

Zeus heals you and sets you down at the harbour, back in Egypt. You offer prayers in thanks. Turn to 544.



174

You examine it carefully, but it appears to be an ordinary gold ring. You wonder if you can really have won something from Markos the merchant for nothing; maybe the ring is cursed, but it is just possible that his luck has finally changed. You shoot a glance at the Phoenician to see if his face will reveal the truth, but, as ever, his expression carries no clue to his thoughts. You rise and walk over to the side of the ship, gazing out over the wine-dark sea that has so often proved your adversary in this long struggle to reach your homeland. For a moment you are alone with your thoughts, but then you hear the merchant approach. Go to 239.

175

You are tied up and tossed over the side of the black-sailed ship into the foaming waters below. As you open your mouth to cry out in protest at this monstrous injustice, you hit the sea; the brine stings your eyes and the impact knocks the breath from your body.

As you flounder around, you feel the ropes tighten around your limbs. After a frantic struggle, which at first only makes the matter worse, you manage to free yourself.

You swim for hours, until the weather clears. You are alone in what seems like an endless ocean, over which no birds fly, and in which no ships sail. Then, far away in the distance, you see a high waterspout, as of some giant sea-creature which has lain dormant on the sea-bed for aeons, and rises briefly to the surface to draw breath before seeking the depths once more.

Will you swim towards the waterspout (turn to 410) or away (turn to 255)?



176

As you walk to the river-bank, all the shades move out of your way, sensing that you are a living, corporeal person.

There is a rickety old jetty, crammed with hopeful shades, but they make room as you push to the front to view the river. A filthy, ragged old man, with a flowing unkempt white beard and a ripped piece of cloth hanging from his shoulders as a cloak, punts a stitched coracle back to the bank. This is Charon the ferryman, warden of the Styx.

'Obol,' he shouts, holding out his hand expectantly. To your embarrassment you realize that you have none. Have 1 Shame point. Go to 395.

177

The two men pass close by as you lie in the grass, unseen and unheard, until they are out of sight again. It is still afternoon; your throat is parched, but you have no water, and there is no prospect of finding it in this grassland plain which seems to stretch for ever. You pray to your patron to send rain or produce an oasis spring, but your pleas fall on deaf ears. The gods will not help those who reject the help of other men. As you grow more and more feverish in the heat, visions of your mother spring to mind. Then your mother's face transforms into the leopard's, and that of the leopard into the Minotaur's. Faces flash through your mind until you pass out. The vultures will get you after all.

178

The men are shocked by your sudden onslaught, but readily raise their daggers in reply. They are each Might 3, Protection 10. The daggers are Might 1. If you retreat, go to 511; if you surrender, go to 308; if you Seriously Wound them both, go to 415; if you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 173.

179

You examine the holy book. It is titled *The Battlefield of the Birds* and purports to have been written by the birdmen's leader, who calls himself the Buzzard. You look at it. In form it is an epic poem, a dull and illiterate pastiche of the great works of Athens. You are suddenly weary. The men of Thebes were always unwelcoming, but now they have become fools.

You drop the book in a sewer and head out of the city. As you reach the gates, you catch a passing remark: '... the Phytalidae. They're camped about twenty miles north of here.' The hair on the back of your neck prickles: at last, you are within reach of your goal. Go to 551.



180

You throw the stool at the door. One of the legs breaks off, and now you do not even have anything on which to rest your weary limbs. Have 1 Shame point for destroying the furniture of a host, even one so forgetful of his manners. Go to 124.

181

Seeing you drawing the sword, the guard thinks you are about to attack him. Go to 362.

182

You are almost starving by the time you make landfall on Sardinia; the pangs of hunger pierce you like spears. The priests of Ares await you at the quayside, dressed in robes of blood-red. They know what must be done. Strange, you think to yourself, that all the people you pass have ugly welts covering their faces. The houses are all topped by battlements. Go to 290.

183

'I haven't got time to argue with you,' he says, spitting out his lotus fruit, 'but I'm sure you'd have been happier if you'd taken my present. I would offer you a lift on my trireme, but I'm afraid I'm going in the opposite direction to Troezen.' With this he skips lightly down the beach, scooping up a handful of lotus fruit as he goes. Go to 405.

184

The priestess stands at the open door, holds up her hand to calm the people and speaks once more, seemingly herself again: 'Citizens of Scione, worshippers of Demeter, as is the goddess's will, it is one of the common people who officiates at the spring-time rite of corn, water and flame, the symbols of rebirth. Let this be an auspicious moment; for the past five years the goddess has not smiled on us and the harvest failed. Let the rites begin.'

She turns to you; you must somehow complete the ceremony. Do you deal with the corn first (turn to 44), water (turn to 149) or with the fire (turn to 107)?

185

You must spend 1-6 Honour points (roll a die) to gain Hera's help, since you have angered her. If you choose to do so, go to 165. If not, lose 1 Honour point, and go to 461.

186

Up the beach you wander, dazed and confused. You are still more bewildered to find men and women playing happily amongst the trees. Seeing a ship has been wrecked, one runs off towards a hut situated some way away in a clearing. A woman emerges from the building and beams at you. To judge by her build, she is not mortal, but a nymph, clad in a tree-green shimmering robe and a necklace of sea-shells. 'I am Calypso,' she says, 'and this is my island of Ogygia. You are welcome to stay as long as you want.'

Feeling a peculiar sense that you cannot refuse the invitation, you begin to circulate among the men and women, and soon, strangely, you are filled with euphoria and joy, and await Calypso's every move with a feeling of eager anticipation, like a slave waiting for his master's commands after the warrior has been away to the wars for ten years. Go to 306.



187

The man looks at you askance as you jabber on, attempting to make yourself understood. He mops his brow briefly, for the heat in his armour is oppressive. 'Agnostes?' he asks. You nod, and the man points to a building with an elaborate portico, whose roof is supported by columns carved in the shape of Atlas supporting the heavens.

You thank the soldier and approach the building. There is, however, a guard at the door. As you come close, he bars your way with his straight-shafted spear. Do you say your name is Altheus (turn to 81)? Do you mention Agnostes' name (turn to 460)? Do you try to offer him something to let you in (turn to 305)? Or do you simply charge past him (turn to 47)?



188

You kneel down and attempt to comfort the great beast. The Centaur begins to speak again. 'I will die,' gasps Chiron, 'unless my wounds are bathed in the juices of a particular plant. Climb a little higher, to where a bush with white flowers grows. Pick the flowers with . . . f. . . ' Once again the half-man falls into a fit, and seems for a moment to be dead, before the ragged rising and falling of his ribs resume once more. Do you follow the Centaur's instructions (turn to 170), or do you choose to leave now (turn to 80)?

189

Down past the margins of the mountain you walk, and the malaise seems here to be no milder. Plants are withered, trees are without leaves, cattle are sick and listless. As you walk down the path to where you know there to be a ferry at Demetrias, from where you can get to Phthia, and thence home again to Troezen, you notice a small pouch lying discarded on the ground. Do you investigate (turn to 6), or leave well alone (turn to 311)?

190

For two days, you lie in the hut, unable to move on account of your terrible leg wound. The gash swells up and turns completely black; it is badly infected, and you become feverish. For two more days, you fight the raging delirium and in the end you pull through. The Nubians give you only a little food, to keep you in your weakened state, and you cannot build up your strength. Your leg is still painful, but gradually you exercise until you can walk again. No chance of escape exists while you are unable to run and so, for months, you are forced to lead a life of servitude, waiting on the king. Slowly your fitness returns and at last you can begin to think again of freedom. You await your opportunity. Go to 591.

191

You are thankful that it is night and that the air is relatively cool, although you are still very hot. Nevertheless you decide to travel as far as you can now and to rest in the shade during the blistering morning and early afternoon. You have no shoes and your feet ache from the hard ground, but it is not until just after dawn that you find a group of leafy trees, which afford pleasant shade. Your wound throbs with pain, as you lie in the long grass, but you are happy to have escaped from the Nubians. You fall into long awaited sleep. Turn to 327.

192

You pray to Almighty Zeus, father of the gods. If you have already used your prayer to Zeus, go to 291. If not, go to 497.



193

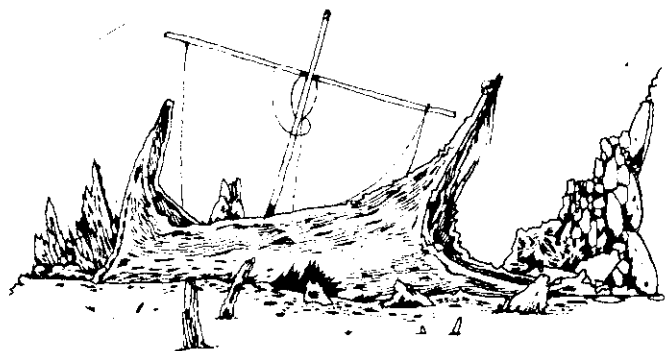
The birdmen do not appear to recognize you, and you pass by them into the city. The streets are empty, and much cleaner than when you passed through here seven and a half years ago. The streets soon fill with citizens, and you mingle with them, arriving at the market-place. You sit by a fountain, resting your feet, and watch the world go by.

There are birdmen among the passing Thebans; they stand head and shoulders above the crowd because of the talons strapped to their feet. Their masked heads dart here and there to look for any sign of trouble.

A city official comes and sits next to you. 'A stranger?' he asks. Will you tell him of your encounter with the birdmen (turn to 495) or not (turn to 545)?

194

It is, of course, a perfectly normal gold ring, neither cursed nor blessed with beneficial powers. Markos' luck has indeed run out, as may yours very soon. Have 1 Shame point and return to 174.



195

You rise from the sand and brush yourself off, with new-found determination, in the face of the hostility of the gods, to return home. Shipwrecked again, you vow to build yourself another boat, and battle across the sea towards Troezen, ending only in success or death. Adversity serves to fire your heart more strongly with resolve. First, however, you must search this land for wood and other materials for a craft to travel the seas and to withstand the buffeting of winds and waves. Will you go inland (turn to 39)? Or will you search the shore (turn to 533)?

196

You may have an obol. If so, do not take 1 Shame point, but go to 270. If you do not have an obol, lose 1 Honour point and take the Shame point from the last paragraph, before going to 395.

197

The tunnel is very cold and seems to stretch on as far as you can see. At first it is large and cylindrical with smooth walls, but then as you progress further, it becomes smaller and rougher. You also notice that it begins to slope down, so that you soon find yourself almost running down it. You have to check yourself and take slow, deliberate steps. The floor becomes slippery and, glancing down, you see that you are walking on polished marble. The slope now increases, until it is a real effort to prevent yourself from sliding. You steady yourself by pressing your hands against the rough walls and thus manage to advance a few more steps. Ahead there is an opening off the tunnel to the left. Will you continue straight (turn to 535), or will you turn to the left (turn to 567)?

198

Ariadne comes out of the cave, looking exactly as she did before.

'All right, you can come in now I'm dressed,' she tells you sullenly. You and your guide enter the small, undecorated cave. You have nothing to say.

'I've made it look quite nice,' ventures Ariadne, pointing at the cave. You still say nothing.

'So what are you doing, Altheus?'

'I'm trying to go home.'

'Oh I see. And he' - she points at your guide - 'insisted you came to see me first, as a . . . as some kind of a penance. I see.' You remember, seven years on, why you deserted Ariadne on Naxos. She carries on. 'So it's home to a hero's welcome from a grateful family and friends? Do you have any friends, Altheus?'

'I'm glad to see the old Minoan charm still prevails.'

Her face buckles up. 'Get out of here, Altheus. Go away.'

Your guide leads you away. On the way back to the path, you pass a woman returning from bathing, but she fails to recognize you. Go to 279.



199

The farmer reels towards the front of the cart, and you manage to kick his feet away from him. He falls under the wheels, and is dragged along for a moment, tangled in the underside of the cart; then he seems to be spat out at the back, and he lies unmoving in the road.

The cart and horse accelerate down the hill. You reach for the reins, but they are dragging along the road. The horse has the bit between its teeth and is cantering down the winding path. You struggle to stay on top of the jolting platform, its wheels singing maniacally.

Several choices present themselves. You can stay with the cart and try to regain control of it (turn to 494). You can jump out of the cart now (turn to 356). Or you can try to cut the cart free from the horse (turn to 445).

200

The wooden carvings clatter to the ground and there is a tense and expectant silence for a moment, but nothing happens. Then expressions of puzzlement turn to fury.

'Stone him,' an elderly matron with a deformed hand cries. 'Raphanidosis!' urges another. 'Hang him!' 'Behead him!' 'Drown him!' 'Burn him!' The suggestions seem to go on for hours, becoming more and more explicit, for the people of Scione are nothing if not renowned as torturers. Yet no one moves; the only stone cast hits the temple and dislodges a piece of decaying masonry. You take your chance and dash off through the disheartened crowd.

You lose 3 Honour points, and if you were in Favour with Demeter, she is now Neutral; if she was Neutral to you, you are now in Disfavour; and if you were in Disfavour, you take a Shame point. Go to 3.

201

You awake to find yourself in a brightly painted room, some type of ante-chamber, decorated with scenes of Aphrodite, goddess of love. A slave-girl is holding a red poppy up to your nose to revive you, but you toss it aside as you regain the use of your arms. 'Where am I?' you ask.

'This is Aphrodite's temple at Paphos,' she murmurs. 'You have been chosen to become an acolyte. If you serve the goddess well, you may become a priest one day.'

You feel for your weapons, but find that they have all been taken away, and have been replaced by imitations made of a soft, yielding material. Go to 550.

202

'Hello, Altheus,' he shouts, and slaps you on the back in a peculiarly irritating manner. 'This is the last place I expected to see you. Came here trying to shift some pomegranates, but all these people are interested in is lotus fruit. They eat nothing else. Here, try one, they're quite good, really.' With this he nimbly rushes over to the nearest of the inhabitants of the isle, seizes a fruit from her hand, and one from a pile beside her foot, and offers one to you. Seeing you hesitating, he pops one into his mouth and begins to munch. Do you accept the fruit (turn to 266), or refuse it (turn to 183)?

203

Away from the well you run, pursued by the brigands. 'May your days be ever darkened,' one cries, flinging a sword towards you. The Achaians, especially Oresander, laugh at your discomfort as you step aboard. Take 1 extra Shame point. Ignoring the jeers of the men of Lemnos, the oarsmen soon set the ship under way once more. Go to 10.

204

'Good game,' cry the Achaians. 'Troezenites aren't that bad after all. You can come to Phthia any time.' If you have won any item, go to 400. If not, go to 45.

205

You rush down the slopes back to where the Centaur lies, fearful lest you are too late. You crumple the petals between your fingers and rub them around the point where the Phoenician's arrow entered. Soon, to your astonishment, the creature stirs once more. 'I thank you, Altheus the Avenger,' he whispers, and you wonder at his knowing your name. 'And I ask you to leave me now, with Asclepius' blessing, for now I will be able to tend to myself. Take the rest of the white flower, for it will serve you well when you are wounded. Go now, and may you ever prosper.'

So it is that you bid farewell to Chiron and set off down the scorched slopes of Pelion, wondering at the malaise that seems to afflict the place.

If, at the beginning of a combat, you place the petals in your mouth and chew them, then it will take three hits to move you from Seriously Wounded to Dead (and not one as normal). Note that this will work once only, and will involve giving up your first strike. Go to 189.

206

Go to 132.

207

You paddle away from the ship, happy both to be free of the burden which has beset you since those fateful games so long ago at Troy, and at having eluded the trickster sorceress. A little sadness tinges your euphoria, however, for your comrades of so many weeks will doubtless soon die, and be consumed as Circe's cooking. Still, at least the gods look after you. In your reverie, you almost do not notice that all your arms and armour have been left behind on the beach. You are in no mood to go back and reclaim them. Have 1 Shame point. Go to 344.



208

Markos looks annoyed and flings the dice into a corner. 'Another time,' he says, with an obvious lack of grace. The Achaians look amazed that you have survived without losing everything, regarding you as the people do a man who has survived being trampled by a boar and gored by its death-dealing tusks. The experience has tired you out: you slump against a tree-trunk and sleep. Go to 440.

209

The fire-fiend falls beneath your frantic blows, and merges back into the flames. You begin to feel the heat from the burning, and your skin begins to blister. You cry out in pain, for surely these must be the fires of Hades, and you are dead. Yet just as suddenly as it manifested itself, the land of fear and flame is gone and you are back in the gloom of godforsaken Scione. Clutched in your hand is a small wooden tile, on which is engraved a flame-symbol.

If this is the third opponent you have destroyed, turn to 346. Otherwise, you must confront the problem of the corn (turn to 44), or the water (turn to 149).

210

The Egyptian is a friendly man, and his command of your language is surprisingly good; he explains that he has just been up the Nile to exchange gems and weapons for animal skins with the Nubians. At the name of the tribe, you shudder involuntarily, and are forced to explain how you have just escaped from a year's captivity.

'It's just as well you didn't come with us before. They might have wanted you back,' he says jokingly, but it is not a subject in which you can find any humour. The captain explains that the animal skins are worth much more in Lower Egypt, and he will be sailing the whole of the way up the Nile. Go to 579.

211

The vultures fly overhead, but you are intent on getting away from these inauspicious birds. The hot sun beats relentlessly down, but you find extra strength to keep going, and you are relieved to see the birds make one last, low swoop before flying off in search of more certain food. Encouraged by this omen, you pause and sit in the long grass, resting in the most extreme heat of the afternoon. Fortunately, there is a light breeze, which ruffles your hair, cools your sweating forehead and causes the grass to sway gently, ripples moving across it like waves on a turbulent lake. In one place it forms into a long furrow that seems to float straight towards you, and it is with a jolt of terror that you see that it is not the wind ploughing through the grass, but a sleek leopard.

Will you sit motionless, in the hope that it will leave you alone (turn to 512)? Will you run (turn to 390)? Or will you prepare to fight it (turn to 472)?

212

You stumble into the woods, seeking to evade the pursuit which has just started behind you. The deeper you penetrate, the harder it becomes to see, and soon you are merely thrashing blindly through the undergrowth.

Suddenly you run into a net, which is suspended between two trees, and only wrap yourself deeper in it by struggling to get free. Then the birdmen catch up with you; one delicately covers your head with a talon, and presses and twists it. The razor-sharp edges cut into your head, and you die, screaming as your life flows away into the forest floor.

213

The men have Might 4, Protection 11 and the knives are Might 1. Remember the bonuses for multiple opponents. If you retreat, go to 568. If you surrender, go to 555. If you die, and are saved by Zeus, go to 391. If you Seriously Wound all three, go to 462.



214

You paddle furiously away from Althenesos. There is no wind, and as darkness falls, even the moon, new-born this evening, casts no light. You think about your journey, which has brought you, now ragged and half-starved, to these shores. Yet soon it will be over and you will hear the hoofs of the fast-running horses at Troezen and see the shining helms of your father's troops. In your dreamy state, you drop the oar into the waters, and cannot retrieve it, so you drift, helpless at the mercy of the currents of Poseidon's deep.

Just at that moment, there is a flapping of wings, and you are struck a painful blow across the temples with a whip. You look up and, hovering around your craft, are the Furies, winged women with snakes instead of hair, which hiss furiously. They are armed with whips and torches, and proceed to set about you with a will. You cannot escape; you are too far from land.

'I am Tisiphone,' croaks one, 'and we, the Furies, divine agents of justice, accuse you, Oedipus, of marrying your mother.'

'I am not Oedipus,' you cry out. 'I am Altheus the Avenger, son of Aegeus, and Aethra is my mother. I have not married her.'

'No matter, wretch,' hisses another Fury. 'Alecto never makes mistakes. Altheus, we accuse you of marrying your mother. Your torment at our hands will be long and unpleasant.'

'I have not married my mother,' you insist.

'Somebody has,' cries out the third Fury, striking you in the belly with her lash. 'I, Megaera, observed it.'

'My father Aegeus married my mother,' you protest incorrectly. 'You're being perverse.'



'On the contrary, vile wretch, we're being correct,' snorts Tisiphone, with an increasing note of glee.

'Agents of divine justice we are,' they all three start in an unholy chorus. 'We are the Furies, and we can do whatever the Hades we like.'

With one last flurry of flagellation, the fearsome Furies take off, leaving you bloodied and beaten. Yet their revenge for your escaping their wrath does not end here, for Alecto takes hold of your raft and upturns it, tossing you into the water. Go to 50.



215

You slump on to a stool, while the general gives peremptory orders to some subordinates. When he returns, he asks searching questions about your experiences in Crete. You answer as fully as you can: have 2 Honour points for every point of Intelligence you gathered in Crete (if you played through the previous adventure).

At length all is ready, and you are bundled out of the palace in disguise and escorted to the Piraeus, where a ship awaits you. Go to 449.

216

You leap out of the back of the cart, land awkwardly and sprain an ankle; but you get up in time to see horse, cart and farmer plunge over a cliff. Only a hunk of cheese, with the farmer's knife still stuck in it, remains to bear witness to the fact that you did not imagine his passing. You tuck the knife into your belt and discard the cheese after one bite. You limp towards Thebes. Go to 259.

217

You stand on the exposed deck, sheltering from the winds, when suddenly the white-armed goddess, your patron Aphrodite, rises radiant from the waters and perches herself delicately on the wooden rail which runs around the ship's perimeter.

'Altheus,' she coos, 'it's been a long time since our last encounter, but I rather enjoyed your little escapades in Crete. Now you must get back to your mother and your poor old father in Athens, who waits every moment for your ship to return with the white sails of success, but worries terribly in case he sees those nasty black ones. I've just got to rush now, but I'd love to return later and learn about all your exploits.'

With this the goddess is gone, leaving only a small vial of orange-scented perfume. Go to 252.

218

The bearded matelot falls to his knees in supplication, dropping his weapon. You stand over him with the torch, breathing heavily. Have 1 other point. Will you spare him now he has surrendered (turn to 366) or kill him (turn to 509)?



219

It is hard to keep your balance on the swaying cart, but you steady yourself until you can leap on to the horse's back. Once astride the animal, you grip with your knees and cover the horse's eyes with your hands.

It comes to a halt. Getting hold of the reins, you dismount and unbuckle the cart. Then you climb back on to the horse, and cautiously urge it on down the hill towards Thebes. Go to 537.

220

Ares imbues your limbs with a strength born of fury. Again and again you strike yourself. Blood drips from your battered body. You stagger and almost fall, punishing yourself for Agnostes' death, but you do not die, you do not flag.

You still roll two dice, despite being Seriously Wounded. If you die, and pray to Zeus, go to 382. If you die, and cannot pray to Zeus, go to 125. After four (or three for those with Ares as patron) strokes, go to 66.

221

You hear a gentle whispering in your ear: 'Follow the eagle's path, and you will prosper.' Ahead you see a huge, great-beaked eagle, flying towards the rocks.

'See that bird?' you shout to Vizhazid. 'Tell the helmsman to follow its path precisely.'

The captain shrugs his shoulders nonchalantly, but does as you ask.

The looming rocks draw near; as you watch, there is a great deep grinding sound, like the noise of the approach of Talos, bronze man of Crete, death to sailors and mariners. You gaze on fearfully as the earth shudders and great waves buffet the ship. The very cliffs are moving together. Yet the captain does not blanch, and the helmsman steers true to the course of the bird which beats out your path.

As you move into the channel of the rocks, you grow ever more afraid, until you pass out. You awaken to find to your surprise you have survived the Symplegades. Have 1 Shame point for failing to witness so great a feat. Go to 112.

222

The fruit of the lotus is clearly addictive. If you were to eat it, you would end up like all the others on this island. You take the lotus from Markos, put it in your mouth, but then, when he goes off for a moment, you spit it out. The taste was sickly-sweet and cloying, but you were almost tempted to succumb to it. Have 1 Shame point for your disgusting demeanour, and go to 345.



223

Circe laughs. 'You thought you defeated me. Fool, for I am invincible.' Circe is now unwounded, through the force of her mystical enchantments. Return to 41 and continue the combat.

224

You approach the well, eager to talk with anyone but the dull Achaians. Yet when you do, one of the men seizes your arms and holds you tight. You struggle, but cannot get away. There are three of them, all bearded and wearing blackened tunics. 'You will do,' one says. He offers you a metal bucket full of water. 'Pour this on our fire,' he continues, pointing to a stone-built hearth. Beside it stands a small figurine of a man, its head broken off beneath the boot of a passer-by. You wonder at the request. Will you agree to do as they say (turn to 40), or will you refuse (turn to 381)?

225

Zeus gives life back to you, but you are drained of strength, and as a reed which has been broken no longer pipes in the wind, you are forced to surrender to the guard. Go to 160.

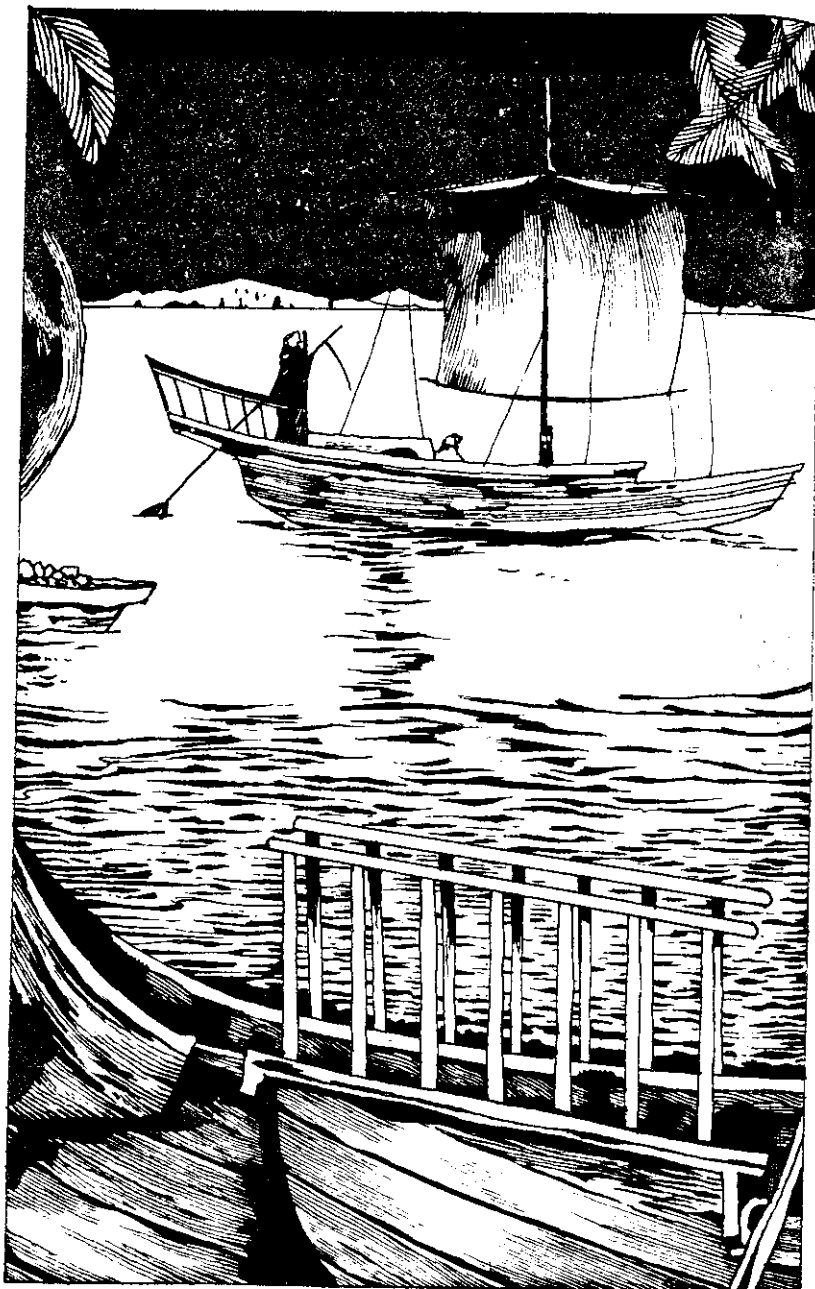
226

For ten days, you travel on horseback with the men, pausing each day for only a few hours of sleep, until you reach a mighty river, unbridgeable and unfordable. Small dhows work from bank to bank, carrying men, grain, horses and many other cargoes, including pottery, papyrus and pomegranates; larger boats ply up and down the river, trading between the towns and cities along the banks. The horsemen turn downstream and ride along the bank. Will you stay with them (turn to 95), or will you try to go by boat (turn to 137)?



227

The harbour is strangely quiet; Vizhazid's ship seems to be the only one berthed today. You stride to and fro across the quayside. Suddenly you are hit by an orange flung from a pile a few yards away. Do you ignore this affront (turn to 122)? Do you throw the orange back (turn to 281)? Or do you charge at the pile of oranges in an attempt to catch the culprit (turn to 60)?



The ship sails on. Around dawn the next day, when you go up on deck to greet the morning, you see another ship in the distance, which has piled on all sail to make the greatest possible headway. As time wears on, with only the occasional small island to relieve the monotony of endless sea, the other ship gains on you.

The captain walks back to talk to you, and you point at the pursuing vessel.

'Pirates?' you ask.

He squints, shading his left eye with his hand to cut out the sunlight.

'No,' he judges finally. 'A merchantman, I'd say. Phoenician, by her hull.'

But you are not convinced, and continue to watch the other ship. As it grows closer, you can distinguish the characteristic two-oar rudder at the stern. The captain comes aft again.

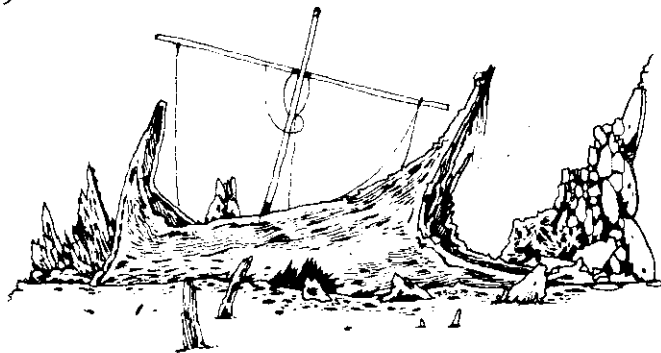
'Why's she making such speed?'

'Better design,' he replies glumly.

'No, I mean, for what purpose?'

'The master may have a perishable cargo. In fact, he probably thinks we do too, and that's why he's chasing us. Look!'

At that moment, two things happen at once. In a confused babble of voices, the look-out shouts a sighting of Cape Sounion, and hence home. And the Phoenician vessel moves up behind you, neatly taking the wind out of your sails. Go to 389.



Your Chronicle Sheet looks like this:

Might 5 (+2) Honour 25

Protection 11 Shame 14

You have no Intelligence points.

Axe: Might 5, Protection -3

Shield: Might -1, Protection 3

Corn-ear brooch

Hera - Disfavour

Poseidon - Favour

Dionysus - Favour

Apollo - Favour

Others - Neutral

Note: As a client of Ares, you are entitled to +2 Might bonus (as shown in brackets). You have Might 5, Protection 11, as a result of the experience in killing the Minotaur. Go to 532.

For three days, you labour in the hot sun, moving timber down to the beach, constructing your raft. The work is hard, but you are only too eager to see it completed, and be away from Pharos. At last the raft is ready, and you slide it into the water. Go to 351.

You swallow deeply of the drink, and carefully replace the carved beaker on the floor of the cave. You grip your neighbours' hands again. Nothing seems to be happening. Then the knife in your belt begins to glow red-hot, burning your clothes and branding its mark on your skin. You break away from the circle and stagger outside into the snow. You seek to pluck the knife from your belt, but it is too hot to touch. You feel the heat reach the bone of your leg, and, crying out in agony, you hurl yourself over a precipice to your death. You have failed utterly.

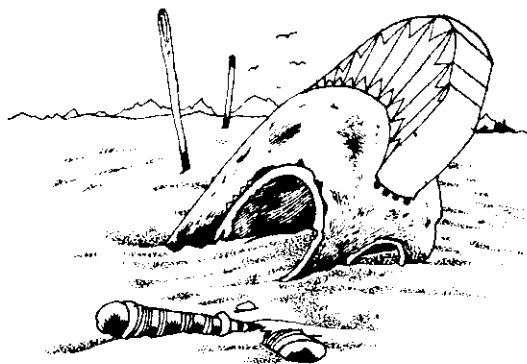
The first stage of your journey is taken by boat and you soon settle down to the lack of space on board. Indeed you find the riverboat life of relaxing on deck in the sun, while the boat is sailing on calm water, most agreeable, although the priest, more accustomed to indoor life, finds the journey very trying. You watch the green waters of the Nile flow past for hours on end, their strange tranquillity disturbed only by the occasional crocodile moving effortlessly in the river.

On the fourth day your boat has almost reached Hermopolis, where you are due to dock, when a strong wind blows up from the east. It is clear that there is too much sail up, but sand swirls in the air, bringing the deck into confusion.

'She's going on to the bank,' cries the captain desperately. He hands you a knife. 'Quick, lad, cut the main halyard. Get the sail down!'

You rush forward and saw at the rope until with a sharp retort the warp parts. The sail crashes to the deck, and knocks you into the water. Immediately a crocodile from the near bank slides into the river and swims towards you. Gripping the knife tightly you prepare for its attack.

It has Might 4, Protection 13. You have the knife (Might 1). If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 574. If you kill the crocodile, go to 527.



The Phoenician merchant raises both hands from the table very slowly. To your delight and amazement, both the ring and the piece of jade are under his left hand. Reluctantly, he slides them across towards you and you snatch them up eagerly. You replace the piece of jade in your pocket, but stare at the gold ring a little longer. Roll one die. If the die comes up 1, go to 569. If the result is 2 or 3, go to 174. If the roll is 4, 5 or 6, turn to 475.

As you turn to descend, a tremendous roar breaks the tranquillity. You wheel round, and are confronted by a mountain lion. You freeze for a moment, startled, just as two lovers stand motionless when surprised by another, whose approach has passed unnoticed. Just so has this lion crept up behind you, and now it leaps forward, its huge paws stretched out to maul you. It is Might 6, Protection 13, and, since it has surprised you, it has first strike. If you kill it, go to 298. If it kills you, but Zeus intervenes, go to 590.

235

The shepherd is seated with his back to you, and does not seem to hear you making your way through the meadow towards him. Now that you are closer, you can see that he is drinking from a waterskin, and is clutching a piece of bread in his free hand.

'What country friend, is this?' you begin, not wishing to alarm him.

'This is Ilywwia, lad,' comes the reply, and the shepherd turns to face you. It is no boy, but a fair-skinned girl. 'Ah, Altheus, you still do not recognize me. I am Athena, goddess of wisdom, and protector of the city over which you mightly wule. You have been told previously that it is your duty to twavel to the underworld and see the events which Gweece has undergone, and some still yet to come. Now go back to the steps and weturn once more to the tunnels below the gwound.' So saying, the goddess wanders away with the sheep, and you walk back to the marshy ring at the top of the steps.

Have 2 Shame points for forcing the gods to remind you of your destiny. Go to 530.

236

Night is falling fast, and the Egyptians now retire to their houses, leaving the streets to the beggars and the homeless. You are anxious not to spend the night outside, at the mercy of thieves and robbers, so you hurry into the centre of the city to find somewhere to stay. A number of ideas spring to mind: you could announce yourself at the palace of the pharaoh, since you are the rightful king of Athens (turn to 374), you could seek sanctuary at the temple of Ammon (turn to 464), or you could search for a tavern (turn to 552).



237

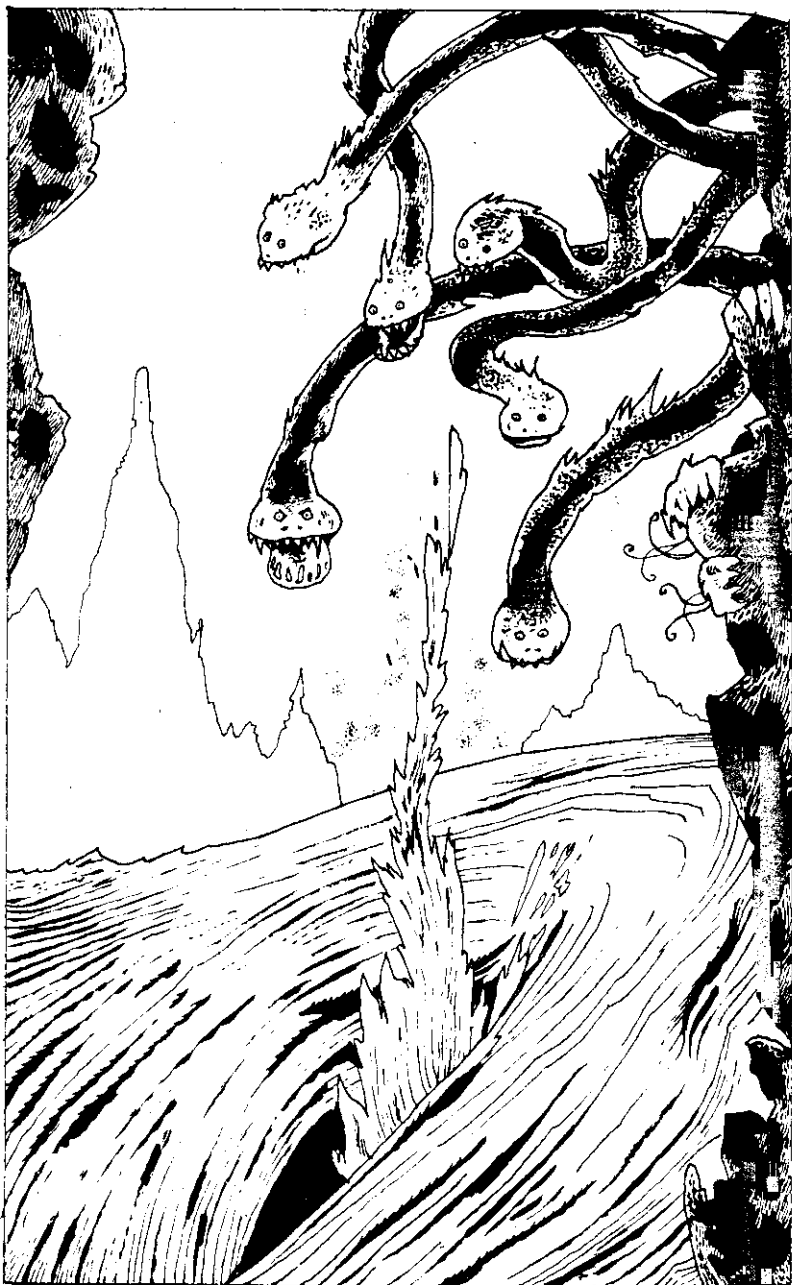
Before you can open your mouth to ask what land this is, one of the men shouts out: 'Stranger, what business do you have in this land? Why do you frighten our children and drink our water?'

You stammer a friendly reply, but the men still look angry and hostile. Others come out to join them.

'It's the one they warned us of,' cries one of the men. He and several of the others look to one another for support, and then start to advance towards you. Will you wait (turn to 299), or run away (turn to 316)?

238

You kick the billhook away from the man, and back him against a wall. Then you call for the captain. He and some Athenians come below into the hold and seize the sailor, taking him to cast into the sea as a sacrifice to Poseidon. Order is restored. Turn to 228.



239

'You'll enjoy this next leg: we're going between Scylla and Charybdis,' begins Markos, and a chill of fear runs up your spine at the mention of these twin terrors. 'I'll take the helm myself to go through. You have to get the line just right, otherwise one or other of them will have you for certain. I lost six men on the first two occasions I took her through, but last month I lost only two.'

You are shocked by the Phoenician's disregard for the lives of his crew, but are even more concerned about the peril you are about to face. The helmsman stands aside for Markos, and you see ahead the whirlpool Charybdis. It sucks down water into a vortex and then disgorges it with a deafening gurgling noise, throwing it high into the air. The monster Scylla, however, is nowhere to be seen, and you think, as Markos steers clear of the whirlpool, that you have escaped. Then the six-headed monster emerges from her cave high up on the cliff-face and lashes out towards you. If you have fewer than 25 Shame points, go to 388. If you have 25 or more Shame points, go to 418.

240

Cautiously you push through the undergrowth, until you can see a campfire. A group of figures is seated there, all seemingly intent on a game, perhaps dice. Suddenly one gets up, mumbling, 'I'll get you one day,' and storms away towards you. Just before the man dissolves into a diaphanous display of fireflies, you recognize him, to your surprise, as Hermes, god of good fortune.

Another of the company stands and turns to regard you. That wicked grin is unmistakable. It is Markos, the Phoenician merchant.

'Well, Altheus,' he smirks, 'what a surprise. Come, join us.'

Do you accept (turn to 246), or refuse and look for more acceptable company (turn to 459)?

241

Zeus would spend many months matching the pieces of your shattered body. He has no time for such trifles. You will spend the rest of eternity in Hades.

242

As the islands come nigh, the singing seems ever sweeter, a distillation of all the happiness which you have ever known, and yet more. Your body becomes light, and you feel that you could float across the waters to join whichever heavenly goddesses are singing their song. The beauty of these creatures must surpass all races of women; you are eager to meet them and perhaps join in their eternal hymn in praise of life. 'Altheus!' you seem to hear them cry over and over again. But somewhere within the depths of your mind, your will yet resists and you know that these are the Sirens of the tales, who lure men on to their rocks by the unsurpassing sweetness of their songs, only to devour them later. Go to 480.

243

Roll two dice. Your losses are as follows:

2-4 Take 1 Shame point, for your ungainly and unheroic conduct in attempting to cheat

- 5 A copper ring
- 6 A small piece of jade
- 7 A small sapphire
- 8 An amber comb
- 9 A carved ivory toad

10-12 Lose 1 Honour point for your uncompanionable remarks while you are losing, not worthy of the upbringing your mother Aethra gave you

If you roll 5-9, and do not possess that item, then roll again. Go to 401.



244

You pray to your patron for aid lose 1 Honour point). You are filled with divine strength and by this mystic power are able to escape from the man's grip. You knock him over and run for the ship, closely pursued by the gang of ruffians. You reach the ship and Oresander casts off. Go to 10.

245

Agnostes wakes you early. He is dressed in a splendid short tunic of sky-blue, which shows off his legs to best advantage. 'Come quickly, Altheus,' he says. 'It was a bit short notice, but I've managed to enter you in the boat-race and the discus.' You dress quickly and follow your enthusiastic cousin out of the house and through the streets of Troy. No one is in the city, it seems, and when you reach an open space some way from the walls, you see the reason why. All the citizens are gathered in a vast semicircle, while in the middle the Trojans engage in the contests. At the moment the javelin-throwers are competing. One burly, bearded man, clad only in a white loincloth, hefts his projectile almost twice as far as the thrower before, and the crowd breaks into enthusiastic applause.

'I could do better myself. . . with practice,' Agnostes boasts. 'But come over here; this is the starting-point for the boat-race.'

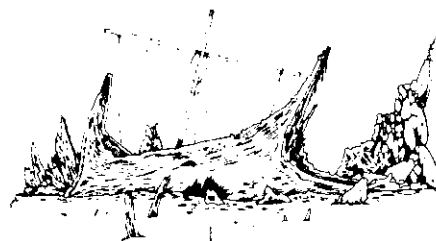
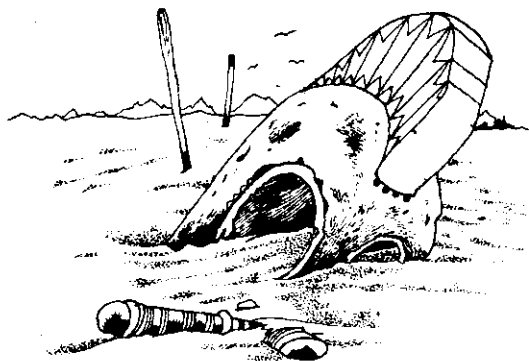
Before you can object your inexperience, your cousin has introduced you to the crew. 'This is Altheus, your helmsman, and a good one, too.' You are helped aboard, a little unsteadily, and begin to inspect your vessel. Turn to 435.

'Come, eat with us,' invites Markos, still grinning, with the look of a hyena addressing its next meal. He offers a handful of a sticky green substance, which you accept. 'Ground maggots,' he confides. 'A Phoenician delicacy.' Markos puts away the dice in his tunic and inquires as to your destination. 'That's lucky,' he exclaims. 'Captain Vizhazid is going to Troezen himself. I'm sure he'd give you a ride.' A gaunt man stands up and offers you his hand. You do not take it, suspicious of these Phoenician habits and you stand for an awkward moment, staring at each other, before Vizhazid drops his hand once more to his side.

'Well,' chatters Markos, 'that's settled. The ship leaves tomorrow.'

'What's the charge?' you inquire.

'Oh, no charge,' murmurs Markos, and winks, but to no one in particular. Go to 12.



You wait. Another orange is thrown. You catch it deftly, and begin to peel off the skin. 'Many thanks to Scione's people,' you cry. 'For it is a long time since I have tasted such a succulent fruit. Altheus the Avenger compliments you.' Have 1 Honour point, and go to 3.

Your guide leads the way through the thick fog, until you come to a collection of shades. One man in particular stands out: he is tied by his hands and feet to a giant wheel which rolls over and over, turning the man first this way, and now the other.

'Ixion,' your guide explains. 'He tried to seduce Hera, and Zeus has punished him thus.' His tone is impatient, and he hurries you away. For a moment you think you see your father, but Dean is well ahead, and will not stop. You call out, but you have lost sight of your father's shade amongst all the others. Go to 279.

The mutineer lashes out as you fall to your knees, and his boot catches you full in the face. There is a sharp crack of breaking bone and then another kick flies into the side of your head. You black out and do not feel yourself carried to the side of the deck and thrown into the sea to float with the rest of the rubbish that litters the Mediterranean. The dolphins sadly find you dead, when they come to your aid.

250

Before you embark, you offer prayers to Poseidon, and he shows his acceptance with a gentle breeze from the south-east. Go to 254.

251

Your fist comes down hard on the snake, and its body is trapped beneath your hand. As you look, however, it turns black and glancing up, you see that you are merely pressing the paw of a black panther into the ground. The sleek cat swipes at you with its other front paw.

You must continue the fight against the panther (Might 5, Protection 13). Your wounds remain unhealed, and it has first strike with two dice.

If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 557. If you wound the panther, go to 450.

252

An insistent wind fills the black sails and sends the ship skimming across the tar-black sea. You look up at the unfriendly moon and shiver; the crew murmur mutiny in the back of the ship. The wind increases into a gale, as sheets of lead-grey clouds ripple over the sky like a shroud laid into the cold ground.

The prow crashes down into the waves ahead and chilly salt-spray spatters you and rouses you from your reverie. You arise and go below decks to shelter from the storm. Go to 361.



253

You wade into the muddy water, which only reaches your waist, and push across towards the other side. Charon's ferry moves away from the jetty and the bearded old man punts it towards you. By now you are halfway to the far bank, beginning to wonder why all the shades bother to wait for the ferry. Then, as the boat draws alongside, Charon swings the heavy punt pole across the surface into the back of your head. You crash forward into the foul water, and a heavy undertow drags you along the rocky bottom. This is the punishment for those who don't pay the ferryman.



254

After twelve days at sea, you spy land and rejoice. It is Cythera, Aphrodite's wooded island. You have survived the storms and you give thanks to the god of the sea. The currents take you past the island, however, and many hours later you come to rest at Cape Taenarum, the most southerly point of mainland Greece.

A small dark-haired old woman calls out to you in Greek and you feel your heart surge, as you realize fully for the first time that you are no longer on treacherous foreign soil or Poseidon's salty realm.

'Altheus,' she cries, 'we've been waiting here for two days. What delayed you?' You look up again and see beside her a small girl of five or six. You scramble up the rocks to join them. Turn to 422.



255

You swim away from the spout, which ceases after a while. You float for ages, alone with your thoughts, until at length a sail appears on the horizon. You shout yourself hoarse and wave frantically at it, struggling to stay above the water. With what seems like agonizing slowness, the vessel steers towards you. As it approaches, you can see the figurehead, a richly wrought Arabian carving of a wind-spirit emerging from a bottle.

A net is dropped from the side of the boat and you cling to it. You are hauled up into the ship and huddle exhausted on the deck, as the captain looks down at you.

'I am Markos the merchant, of Phoenicia,' he tells you. 'I am bound for Athens.'

'That's where I want to go,' you tell him.

'Good. It'll cost you . . . your loincloth,' he replies. 'Nothing is free in this world.' You have no choice but to submit. The Phoenician throws your loincloth over the side of the ship. 'I love doing that,' he tells you as you look at him in astonishment. 'It always surprises them.'

The journey to Athens lasts only a few hours, and the sight of the city thrills your loins, now clothed in a makeshift cloak. You leave the harbour, not sorry to see the last of Markos the Phoenician, and race up the hill into the city. Go to 538.

256

You kick the sand on the beach in frustration, and walk up to the water's edge. A pebble flies from your angry hand and skims along the water, hopping from wave to wave. A hundred yards down, the ashes of your boat are lapped by the incoming sea, which carries away small pieces of burnt timber to be washed up on some distant shore. You turn away from this unhappy sight, and notice a colony of seals, basking in the sun further up the beach. A bearded old man is lying among them.

Will you talk to the old man (turn to 453), seize him (turn to 542), or attack him (turn to 510)?

257

You sense that there has been a misunderstanding and that the men think you are someone else. You try to explain, but they still seem doubtful. If Aphrodite is your patron, or you are in Favour with the goddess, turn to 349. If you are Neutral with Aphrodite, go to 549. If you are in Disfavour with her, go to 371.

258

'These people don't seem very lecherous,' you tell Dean, 'or gluttonous.'

'I must apologize. The lechers and gluttons have been moved elsewhere, during the rebuilding. It's most confusing: whole groups have been switched to temporary accommodation.'

Before you, a scribe sits at a desk writing furiously. You turn to your guide with a questioning look.

'He's from the barbarous heartlands. Every time he comes to write the last page of the book, he finds two more still blank.'

'But who is it?' you ask.

'You,' replies Dean in an offhand manner. 'No! Don't look,' he adds agitatedly as you move towards the scribe. 'We don't want you caught in a self-referential paradox, do we?'

You move on, puzzled. Turn to 279.

259

You come at last to the city of Thebes and knock on the great gates. They are opened by two men with bird-masks; they have talons on the end of their legs, and stand taller than you. Puzzled, you pass by and into the city. The streets are cleaner than you remember them seven and a half years before. You come at last to the market-place and sit by the fountain. You watch the Thebans for a while, with birdmen, like those at the gate, moving among them. A city official comes and sits by you. 'A stranger?' he asks. Turn to 545.

260

Does the appearance of the god Hermes shock you, when he solemnly promised never to do so again? Is not the god of cheats permitted to break his word? Lose 1 Honour point and take 1 Shame point. Return to 240.

261

Have 5 Honour points for defeating the monster. The head releases its grip on you and you fall into the water close to the whirlpool, but fortunately it is on the point of disgorging and it flings you away towards the Phoenician's ship. They haul you aboard in a net and you lie exhausted on the deck.

Soon, however, you have recovered, and when the ship reaches harbour, you feel well enough to accompany the merchant into the town. Go to 302.

262

The woman seizes you and her grip is as that of the eagle on the field-mouse caught scurrying amongst the waving ears of golden corn at harvest time. You are led unwillingly into the building. It is very gloomy inside; you can see only a small table, one leg cracked, on which are set an urn, a bowl of corn, and a brazier, which burns with a bright blue flame. You notice, as you stand musing on your fate, that the walls are encrusted with a fluorescent moss. The doors are flung open. Go to 184.

263

You realize that these sweet sounds emanate from a deadly source, for these are the Sirens, evil creatures who lure men to their deaths on the sharp, life-rending rocks and devour them at their leisure. No one can resist their song, so you quickly instruct your crew to push beeswax into their ears, while you are to be lashed to the raft's mast. On hearing of the dangers they face, there is ready compliance to your request. Go to 480.

264

What more can you ask of the gods? Do you desire to know the secrets of the fire god? Have 1 Shame point for your presumption and go back to 244.

You are distracted from your eavesdropping by a sudden throbbing. You whirl round, your battle-senses sharpened by your experiences. For a moment you think the heat-haze is deluding your eyes, but then you realize it is true: a column of gigantic bronze ants, mandibles clacking, and sparks flying where they tread, is advancing towards you.

'Fire-ants,' cries one of the onlookers in abject terror and, as when the wind separates the chaff from the grain on the winnowing floor, so now the people of Lemnos flee in the face of Hephaestus' creatures.

You must fight the ants; there are eight in all. Each is Might 8, Protection 10. Because of their mechanical nature, they fight one at a time and gain no advantage from their numbers. When one is hit it ceases to function.

If you retreat, go to **11**; if you die and pray to Zeus, go to **126**. When you have hit four creatures, go to **83**.



You accept the fruit and take a deep bite. The taste is somewhat sweet, but not unpleasant. You reconsider your last thought: it is in fact the best thing you have ever tasted. Markos has moved temporarily out of your vision. You turn towards him, but everything seems strangely different. His hair has turned saffron, and his teeth, formed into a grin, are stained bright orange. On the ground beside him is a lotus fruit. He has spat it out: a terrible waste you think to yourself, as the sea shades in almost indistinguishable steps from green to purple. A heady sense of ecstasy overcomes you, as you turn away from Markos and look inland. There are trees, more than you can count, each bearing at least a hundred fat, juicy, orange lotus fruits. You wander towards them. Why, you wonder, have you ever done anything else? All this heroism, the endless clash of war – you can hardly remember what it was about, and it seems profoundly foolish to you now.

An enormous orange-striped bee wafts lazily past you and you try to seize it, but it does not matter that you grab a branch instead. You pull it from the tree, and begin to count the number of parts it has, yet whenever you pull a piece away, you can always divide it into smaller pieces. Hundreds merge into thousands: never before have you realized how big a branch was. This is what really matters, this and the lotus.

You are now Shame 0, Honour 0, but this also is no longer of importance to you.

You wait for hours and hours. Night falls and the ferry is long gone. You manage to build yourself a small fire, but you are almost frozen to death by the time the craft returns next morning. You are more than grateful to beg an obol to leave this place. Lose 1 Honour point and go to 17.

Your Chronicle Sheet looks like this:

Might 5 Honour 25
Protection 11 (+1) Shame 10
You have no points of Intelligence.

Sword: Might 3, Protection 0
Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2
Corn-ear brooch

Asclepius – Favour
Demeter – Favour
Hera – Favour
Furies – Disfavour
All others – Neutral

Note: As a client of Athena, you are entitled to a +1 Protection bonus (indicated in brackets) and you need not take any Honour penalties for looking at hints (but you do take the Shame penalties). You start with Might 5, instead of 4, and Protection 11, instead of 10, as a result of the experience gained in defeating the Minotaur. Go to 58.

Zeus heals you, but the Nubians capture you and tie your hands together behind your back. Go to 424.

You hand over your obol and climb aboard the flimsy boat. Before the old man can drive the ferry away from the bank with the pole, a familiar figure rushes up and jumps in. The whole boat lurches and you are sure that you will all end up in the Styx. It is Markos the merchant, and he hands Charon an obol when the craft has stabilized. In his hand he carries a large sack of pomegranates, and you can see that he is very much alive, and not a shade. Go to 437.

271

If Athena is your patron, or you are in Favour with the goddess, turn to 588. Otherwise turn to 329.

272

Are you frightened by a summer squall, Altheus? Have 1 Shame point and turn to 361.

273

With no regard for the ancient morals of your ancestors, you plunge the tip of your spear into the warrior's chest and twist it cruelly. The man cries out and then is silent and unmoving. Four tribesmen step forward and carry the body away through the crowd. As the ranks of warriors part, a wicker cage is revealed, inside which a mountain lion pads back and forth, awaiting the meal it knows it will receive from the champion's body. You flinch at the thought that you would have been fed to the lion if you had lost the contest. You must have 2 Shame points for killing an opponent after he had surrendered. Turn to 152.

274

Night falls and still no boat heading down-river has called in at the bank. Many large cargo vessels are going in that direction, but none of them stop to offer you a ride north. You wish that you had gone with the first boat, for then at least you would have the pleasure of human company now; as it is you are alone on the bank of the Nile. In the cool of the night, you sleep on the hard earth and are woken the next morning by the clatter of hoofs on stones, as four horsemen ride past. Will you call out to them (turn to 504), or will you wait for another boat (turn to 411)?

275

After ten days of untroubled sailing, you are within striking distance of the Piraeus. No one on board seems the slightest bit worried by the absence of Markos; indeed they all welcome the respite from their master's critical eye.

You decide that you dare not claim your throne immediately without military aid, and that you should, therefore, adopt a low profile in Athens before returning to Troezen to see your mother. Turn to 19.



276

You accept the Nubian king's terms and pledge yourself to servitude, but in your heart the hope of escape never fails. For weeks you wait for a chance to break out from the camp, but it seems that you are watched all the time. Then, after nearly two months of hard service for the king, you are sent to draw water from the well at the edge of the camp and, thinking yourself unobserved, you make a dash for the grasslands that mark forbidden territory.

The Nubians catch up with you after two hours. You are brought back to the camp and the king cuts deep into your thigh muscle to prevent you escaping again. Go to 190.



277

Thinking that you are the great Herakles returned to carry him away again, the dog backs off and cowers in its den. You pass quickly, but the dog is silent and does not dare emerge. Have 2 Honour points for inspiring fear in such an awesome beast. You may go left (turn to 419), right (turn to 447) or straight on (turn to 561).

278

You wheel round at the cry, remembering too late the words of Dean. You see your brother's shade fading into the fog, and you call out desperately, but it is futile. You have disobeyed the instructions and now your brother will never ascend to the upper world and the joys of life in the land of light. Have 2 Shame points for causing such distress to your brother.

With a start you recall your quest to discover how you may purge yourself, and you call out anxiously 'My blood-guilt?'

'The men of the Phytalidae,' comes the faint and dismal cry, and then his form is finally dissolved.

Another cry breaks the silence and you see Markos running up the hill with his sack. He soon reaches your side. Go to 455.

279

You and Dean walk on in silence for some way before he turns to you.

'This is Elysium, where your brother dwells.' You are surprised by this announcement, for you are still surrounded by the mind-numbing fog, and you see no evidence of the legendary fields of flowers and sun-bathed meadows. 'Not quite

what you expected, eh?' your guide continues, but then with a wave of his hand, he clears the mist and you are confronted with the traditional scene. 'As I told you, none of this is real, but you might as well see what you want to believe. Come on, let's find your brother.'

Theseus is standing in a sunlit meadow surveying some shades destined to ascend to the upper world, but when he sees you, he weeps with joy.

'Altheus, my brother, you have come at last. I feared that the perils of your storm-tossed journey and the power of mighty Africa would cause you harm, but now I see you here quite safe. I have a message for you from the gods about how you may purge your blood-guilt, but that can wait. First, let us review the company of heroes who will bring glory to Greece in future years.'

Turn to 513.

280

'Well Altheus,' begins Circe, 'You're more clever than I thought, but no match for me without divine interference.' At the word 'divine' her mouth twists into a sick parody of a smile. 'Go now and leave my island.'

Do you demand that your friends be turned back to humans, now you are free of guilt for Agnostes' death (turn to 86), or do you leave on your raft at once, as she suggests (turn to 207)?

281

You pick up the bruised orange and fling it back in fury at the folk who have sought to humble you. The jeers turn to murmurs and the crowd which had gathered to see some fun at the expense of a stranger disperses. You sit down and rest against the basket which contains the fruit and from time to time take one to eat. Turn to 3.

282

The mast crashes into the sea with a tremendous crack and your shoulder sustains the full force. Your arm hangs limp and useless. As you flounder in the bloody water, the lord of the sea himself manifests and, seizing the jagged mast, hurls it at your breast as if it were a javelin. As your life gushes away, you hear him mutter, 'Not even a quarter the man . . .'



283

Zeus suffuses your limbs with life once more, and you are able to continue the fight. Because these men are defilers and you do a divine duty, have 3 extra Honour points (i.e. you are Shame 0, Honour 4).

If you retreat, go to 203; if you Seriously Wound all three, go to 55.



284

You slip. Either spend 1 Honour point and go to 27, or turn to 100.

285

An idea worthy indeed of a hero, but you stand little chance of success, surrounded by these foreign folk who are likely to offer no aid. Have 1 Honour point and go to 380.



286

You must spend 1-6 Honour points (roll one die) for your patron's aid and go to 332. Otherwise, lose 1 Honour point and turn to 123.

287

You manage to grab the arm of one of the men and twist it. Your victim cries out, but you are free, and able to attack. Go to 20.

288

You surface in a pool of still water behind the fall and clamber on to the rocks, gasping for breath. You lie there panting, and hope that the Egyptians have not noticed you. You watch as they trade gems and weapons with the Nubians in exchange for leopardskins and lionskins, and then, with regret, see them sail away downstream. The Nubians pass close to you, but luckily they do not catch sight of you. So with a feeling of great relief, you set off back along the bank to Syene, which you remember is only ten miles down-river.

It is late evening when you arrive in the town and you quickly make your way to the small jetty where the boats tie up. You are lucky: a dhow will leave for Thebes early next morning. You climb aboard and fall fast asleep on a heap of sails. When you awake the boat is already on its two-day journey to the Egyptian capital. Go to 56.

289

The chief grabs you by the neck and thrusts you against a wall, holding you pinned against it even though your feet are a sword's length off the ground.

'There are two spiritual kingdoms in this world,' says the man. 'The kingdom of the birds and the kingdom of the ratmen.'

'You are mad,' you cry.

'If you are not part of the kingdom of the birds, then most assuredly you are part of the kingdom of the ratmen.' The owls in the rafters rise to a crescendo. 'If you are not with us, you are against us.' He presses harder and your eyeballs start to strain against your skull. 'You must be certain,' cries the leader, as the pounding in your ears increases and the cries of the other birdmen and the owls combine into a demonic harmony, a paean for the end of the world, 'for without certainty you are lost!'

And with that he pushes you back until your neck snaps. You do not see your head slump forward and your body crash to the ground, as the birdmen cluster to feed.



290

You are led to the temple of the god, an open area, much like an arena, in which gladiators are practising. A concerned-elderly man, his white beard dyed red, approaches you.

'I am Hiatokon, priest of Ares at Olbia. You must purify yourself through pain, through blood, for only then will you be truly free.' He hands you a scourge, an evil looking leather whip with metal-tipped ends, and looking you straight in the eyes, says, 'Beat yourself.'

If you refuse, go to 34. If you take the scourge and do as he says, go to 341.



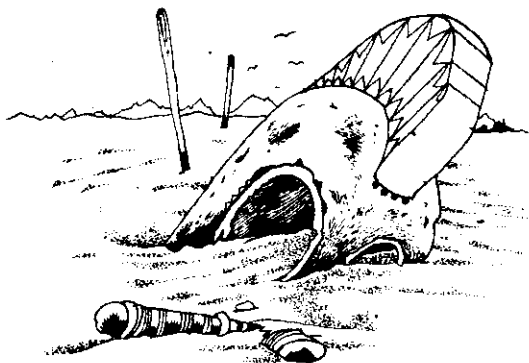
291

The air is full of a mighty noise, and you look out of the tent over the mountains. A thunderbolt from high Olympus is rushing through the air. As you gaze, it sets a tree alight, which then plunges towards you. The gods have found you wanting.

The dog is not so easily killed: even Herakles only carried him away. But Cerberus can see that you are too strong and he rushes back to his den, all three heads whimpering in submission. Have 7 Honour points for defeating the hound of Tartarus.

The fog is especially thick and heavy ahead, but you are starting to grow accustomed to the bland and uninteresting surroundings. It seems so tempting to be lulled into a mindless trance, and yet your heart beats quicker at the thought of seeing your brother again.

The shades, seeing your corporeal form, gather round, just as the people of a city crowd in on a stranger, dressed in rich garments, and pester him for money. So do the flitting shadows press in and ask you about life above. You ignore them and peer into the gloom ahead. You can make out a distinct path, which branches three ways. Will you go straight on (turn to 561), right (turn to 447) or left (turn to 419)?



You are roused by furious shaking, and as your eyes focus, you see two black warriors leaning over you. You lift your head and try to stand, wincing in pain as you move your right leg. The leopard, which now lies dead, transfixed by a long-shafted spear, has torn a great gash in your thigh, and you can only limp along between the two warriors. The pain blurs your mind; it is only when you reach a familiar village that you become aware that you have been recaptured by the Nubians. They throw you into a hut and one stands guard outside. Go to 190.

'You must build yourself a raft from the fallen trees inland and the moment the work is complete offer prayers to Poseidon, master of the seas. He will ensure that your feeble craft makes it across the waves to Greece in safety. Then seek out your brother, Theseus.'

'But my brother is dead,' you complain, but the old man has changed himself into water and flows back into the sea.

You are hungry and must eat before you set about the construction of the raft. You trek into the middle of the island and find a bush with both red and white berries. Will you eat the red berries (turn to 559), the white berries (turn to 379) or some of both (turn to 439)?

295

You feign unconsciousness. The man picks you up with one hand and throws you over his shoulder with the strength of a giant or madman, seemingly unconcerned that you have moved across the floor.

He carries you out of the granary and down a flight of wooden steps. There is then a brief, jolting journey across a compound, formed by a cluster of buildings, into a large barn. Here you are unceremoniously dumped on the ground and you feel your bonds being cut. You open your eyes a crack and can see about twenty men, all in bird-masks. Will you try to escape now (turn to 528), or bide your time (turn to 436)?

296

'My lord Aeacus,' you cry, 'give me a guide that I may travel the wastes of the underworld without fear of the souls in torment who dwell herein.' The gaunt man gibbers and drops his whip.

'Lost my rhythm,' he explains. The man who was being whipped ceases to pound the two pebbles and stretches. 'You want a guide,' says Aeacus uninterestedly. 'You,' he gestures to one of the shades, 'go and fetch Dean. I have someone who'll be just right,' he adds, turning to you.

Over his shoulder you see Markos the merchant approaching with his sack of pomegranates. The shade returns from the other direction with a man in a tunic. The latter, obviously destined to be your guide, has a small silver cross dangling from one ear. They both make their way to Aeacus' side.

'Dean,' commands Aeacus. 'Take this mortal through the realms of the underworld, keep him from harm and show him the mysteries of this place.'

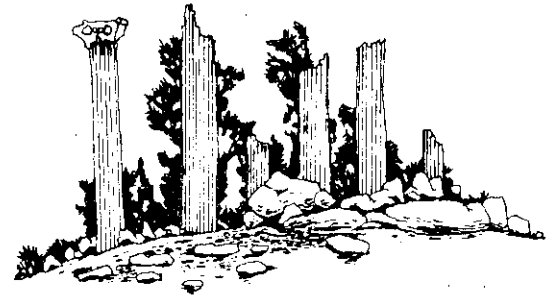
'All right,' says Dean and he leads the way into the fog. As you depart, you notice that Markos has reached the group and is pounding away at the pebbles. As the mist engulfs the scene, you hear shouts of 'Dust, dust.' Go to 548.

297

You may have 7 Honour points for holding Proteus during his terrible transformations. Go to 572.

298

The lion crumples to the ground as your sword cleaves its neck. You thrust the sword into the carcass once more to make sure that it is dead, and then you clean the blood off the blade by wiping it on the grass near by. Finally you sheathe it and prepare to return to the underworld once more. Go to 546.



299

The men seize hold of you roughly and lead you to the village. There they strip you to your loincloth, and hustle you, with a blanket over your head, into the dwelling of an elder. You can feel lumps of horse dung being flung at you along with harsh words of abuse. Then the blanket is removed and, while you are held down by four men, a fifth starts to hack away at your hair with a rusty blade. It is extremely painful and the man does not stop until all your hair has been cut away. Your bald head is covered in cuts, and blood trickles down your face into your eyes. The men drag you to the edge of the village, telling you to leave or they will disfigure you more seriously. Have 2 Shame points for this humiliating experience. Go to 316.



300

Your hands are tied together, but you reach out for the knife. As you do so, the man brings one foot down and one of the talons passes like a dagger through your left hand, pinning it to the floor. You scream out in agony and the man crows out and grips your head in the other talon, twisting it and straining your neck. There is a moment of struggle, as you try to pull your hand free, but the other claw holds it inexorably. Then, in an instant of indefinable pain, your head is ripped from your shoulders. Zeus cannot be expected to save you in these circumstances.



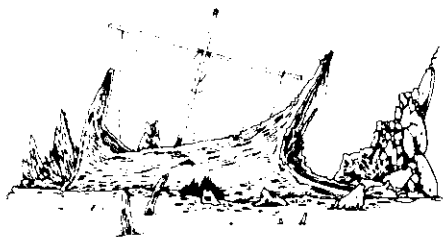
301

Carefully you choose your handholds and scramble up the rock. The going is not as hard as you anticipated, but the fall to the shore below would surely see you dead. Roll a die: on 1-3, go to 284; on 4-6, go to 27.

Markos leads the way through narrow streets and dark alleys to a small undecorated house in the heart of the town. He turns to you, smiles and then leads you inside into a large hall. The lighting is subdued, but you have no difficulty in taking in the scene; all around young African women relax on soft cushions talking to men of assorted races and ages. In one corner there stands a bar tended by a large Arabic-looking man, and you wander across to him and order a drink. It is extremely expensive, but you hand over the money grudgingly, not wanting to argue with the aggressive man. Markos has left you, so you drink and talk with the people reclining on the cushions.

The wine and the hot sweaty atmosphere contribute to a sudden feeling of nausea. Markos lies insensate in a corner of the large hall, surrounded by admiring Africans. He is clearly too far gone for you to rouse him, but you know you must leave now or you will never escape and return to the longed-for land of your mother, to Troezen.

You run out of the house and away to Markos' ship, informing the captain that his master has instructed him to sail at once for Athens without waiting for him. As the boat draws away from the lights of the African shore, you feel a sense of grief mingled with one of liberation. You have grown fond of the merchant in your meetings with him in the course of the last seven years. Perhaps you will meet him again. The ship pursues its course through Poseidon's salty realm. Go to 275.



303

Your raft moves closer and you seem to hear the sound of maidens singing sweetly. Do you investigate (turn to 242), or do you instruct your companions to row on (turn to 32)?

304

Lose any one item won during the first game and return to 106 to roll again. If you have no items, lose one obol and return to 106. If you have no obols, go to 91.

305

You could offer him a carved ivory toad (turn to 364), a green horsehair plume (turn to 383), a shortsword (turn to 181) or a helmet (turn to 151). If you have none of these, or are not willing to offer any, go to 580.

306

Some four and a half years later, the sense of euphoria has not lessened. You and the rest of the crew soon grew accustomed to the idyllic way of life on Ogygia, and settled into the routine of eating, sleeping and playing in the forest. Why, you ask yourself, did you ever consider any other existence? If Hera is your patron, go to 463. If not, turn to 29.



307

The chief's face contorts into a huge grin, revealing his ivory-white teeth. He gives a throaty laugh and then says something you cannot understand; his eyes stare at you relentlessly while he waits for a reply. Unsure of what he expects, you mumble in Greek that you mean him no harm. For a second he looks puzzled; but then his face clouds over and he begins to shout, arms gesticulating wildly. Behind you the warriors who captured you shift uneasily from foot to foot. It is clear that you must do something to appease the king. Will you fall at his feet in supplication (turn to 138), or will you try to communicate with sign language (turn to 78)?

308

You raise your hands and fall to your knees. Without hesitation, both men drive their daggers into your chest. If Zeus can save you, pray now and go to 173.

309

The bushman's spear is poison-tipped and you fall weakly to the ground. The Nubians drive off the ambushers and carry you back to the camp where you are taken to your hut. Go to 190.

310

The lion roars, but the sound merges into a hiss as the beast changes into a squirming snake. Its forked tongue darts out at your arm as it tries to sink its fangs into your flesh.

You must continue the fight against the snake (Might 3, Protection 14). The snake strikes first with two dice, since it is Healthy. Your wounds from the previous fight remain unhealed.

If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 557. If you Wound the Snake, go to 251.



311

You stroll past the yellow fields, shaking your head in amazement at the changes the months have wrought in Greece. The gods must be displeased, sending burning bolts down to blast the disbelievers. At last you come to the village of Demetrias, and find the ferry to Phthia; it is a leaky-looking boat, hardly seaworthy, but you have no choice. The surly boatman demands an obol for the passage.

'This is not the Styx, river of Hell,' you protest.

'Very nearly, since the Phoenicians took over, young man,' he replies, unsmiling.

'I am no youth, but Altheus the Avenger,' you cry, but no one listens.

Will you pay the obol (turn to 17), or wait for another boat (turn to 267)?



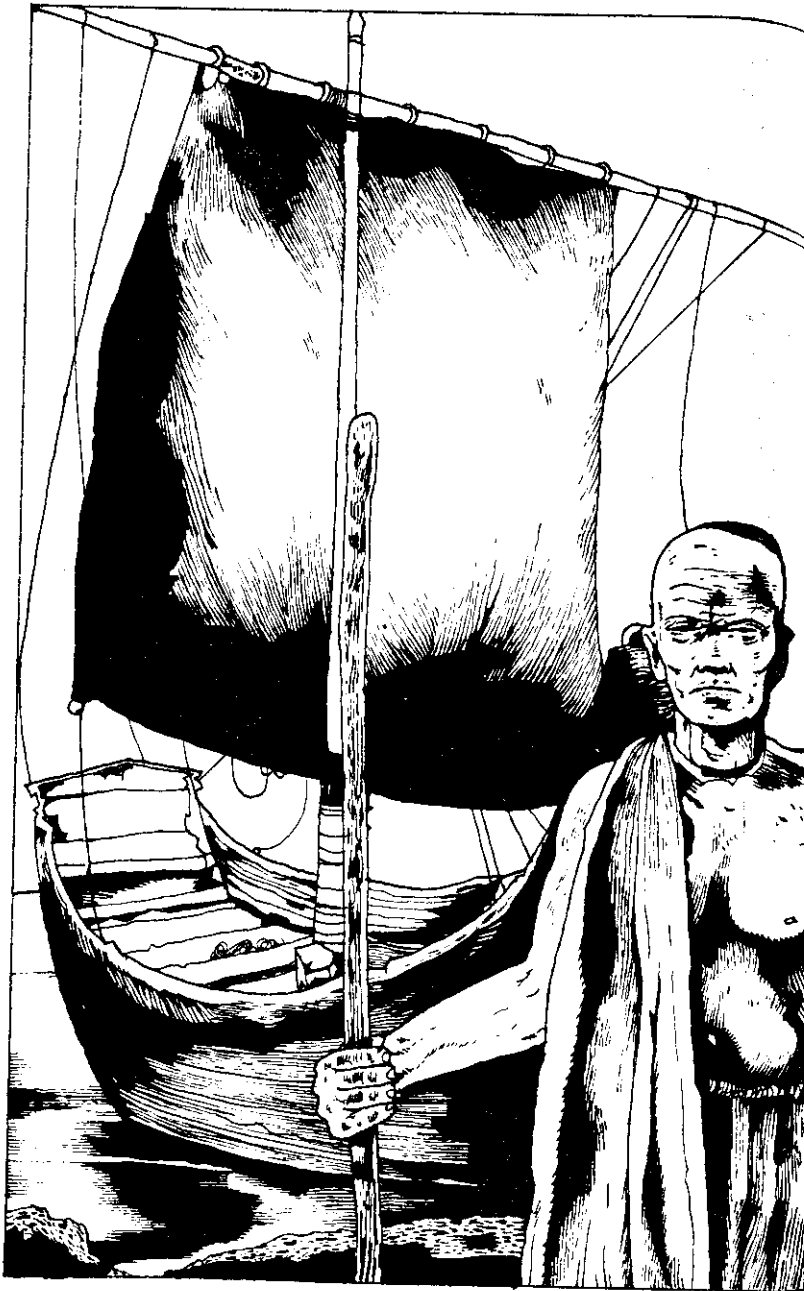
312

Pushing the sailors aside, you leap to the top of the ladder, seizing a long pole with a wickedly curved billhook at one end as you do so.

'To arms, Athenians, to arms,' you cry. 'Who is for me, and who against?'

There are six mutinous sailors and four more are unsure. Roll two dice to see how many of the seven Athenian youths and five maidens are with you; you may add 1 to the dice roll for every 5 Honour points you spend in advance.

If fewer than seven Athenians are with you, turn to 135. If between seven and ten are on your side, turn to 515. If more than ten support you, turn to 406.



313

You learn that you arrived at the time of the annual tribal gathering, and that it is now time for the next festival. It is night and every warrior from all the Nubian villages carries a lighted torch through this camp. Then you form into a large ring in which the king performs a ritual dance. Behind him a sturdy wicker cage holds a mountain lion which prowls back and forth, like a man locked in prison who paces the length of his cell.

Suddenly the lion crashes against the bars, which collapse under the impact, and with a leap it is free. Starved for three days, it now races towards you and you can see its jaws salivating expectantly. The other warriors back off and you stand, stunned, as the lion sinks its teeth into your neck. Then it is off, running sleekly over the wide plains. Zeus will not help those who forsake their homeland.

314

The men chew red berries and occasionally spit out the pips on the ground, but they refuse to give you any of the fish they have caught. The waves roll in up the beach to your feet and you stand there, annoyed that you have travelled so far and escaped so many perils only to be prevented from your return by these ignorant fishermen. You decide to return to your boat. You will have to set off without provisions, for you cannot bear to wait any longer. Go to 525.

315

As you lie motionless, the birdmen begin to move towards you. If you delay any longer, your decision will be made for you by the birdmen. Lose 1 Honour point and return to 295.

316

You sprint away from the men and glance back to make sure that they are not following. After running for ten minutes, you feel safe again and slow to a walk, as you enter a grassy meadow. You can see a shepherd ahead, whose sheep graze safely despite the fact that he does not appear to be taking any notice of them. Go to 235.

317

You remain adamant that you do not wish to visit the oracle; the priest frowns. Suddenly he is gripped with convulsions and the god Ares speaks through his lips.

'Zeus is angry. When he says off to the oracle, you go. Get this blood-guilt nonsense sorted out. Right, last chance. No more slip-ups. Good luck.'

Have 2 Shame points for ignoring the commands of Zeus and go to 232.

318

Before you descend, you skin the lion and don the pelt, thinking to yourself that perhaps you look like Herakles now. Turn to 546.

319

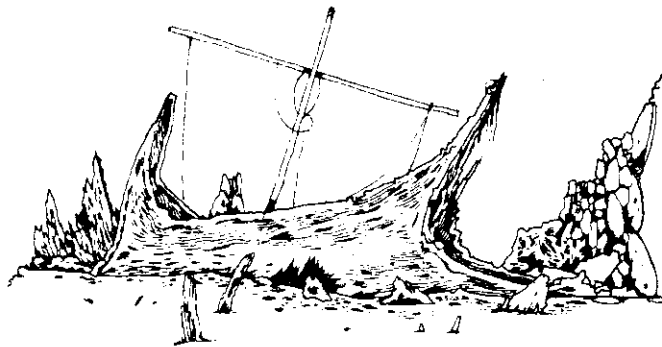
The man looks upset that you have refused his hospitality, but does not say anything, so that an awkward silence follows, punctuated only by the sounds of his wife preparing the food behind the curtain. Eventually she emerges with a bowl of steaming soup, which you gulp down. It is very hot, but you are too hungry to wait for it to cool off. When you have finished, she takes back the bowl and draws back the curtain to reveal a bath, which the daughter is filling with boiling water from a kettle, before she, too, comes into the main part of the house. You strip and wash thoroughly, in the privacy afforded by the curtain. When you emerge, your host is deep in conversation with another villager and you decide not to trouble him further. Having thanked him, you make your way out of the village and, mindful of your journey to the underworld, you return to the marshy ring and the steps to the tunnels underground. Go to 530.

320

You stride away from the shore, but Agnostes offers no comment on your performance. He simply hustles you to the central arena and thrusts a discus into your hands.

'No time for practice; you're the first thrower,' he says. Your first attempt is a total failure: the bronze disc carries only a few feet before clattering to the ground. On the second throw you have got the knack of twisting yourself round to gain acceleration, and the third throw is passable. The vast crowd is more intent on their Trojan athletes and ignores you; only a few of Agnostes' friends cheer you on.

You step up to the circle to make your fourth and final throw. You twist once, and again, but just as you are about to release the discus, it spins out of your hands and plunges back towards the crowd. Your fingers are badly cut, and it is not for a few seconds that you turn round. A group of Trojans is gathered round someone; your discus must have struck a spectator. As you draw closer, you realize that you have hit your own cousin Agnostes. Go to 103.



321

You try to make it understood that you are a friend and mean no harm, but the two warriors seem to understand no Greek, and can make little of your frantic hand-signals. They shake their heads in perplexity, but at last seem to come to a decision. They step forward and seize you roughly by the arms. You are too busy trying to communicate, and so have no time to defend yourself. You could, however, try to struggle free of your captors (turn to 287), or you could simply go along with them, and hope for the best (turn to 110).



322

You try to retreat into the crowd, but cannot and must stand at the front. A woman dressed in flowing black robes rushes out of the building. 'Arissia, Arissia,' the crowd chants, and then, 'Demeter, Demeter.' The woman seems to be taken up by some spirit, clearly that of Demeter, the goddess whose name the crowd cries out. Her hair seems aflame; her very eyes seem to shed sparks. Go to 262.

323

Do you have some beeswax and rope? If so, go to 263. If not, return to 303.

324

You back straight into the arms of another of the Trojan palace guard.

'Filthy Achaians,' he snorts, and spits at you; lose 1 Honour point. You are bundled into the palace at spear point. Go to 160.



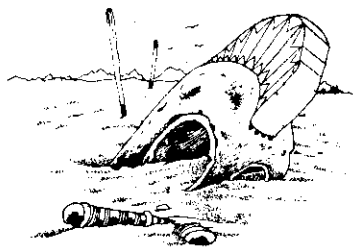
325

As you fall, you notice that the air around is growing cloudy. At first, it is just a mist, like the spray rising off a lake early in the morning, but then it grows denser until you are falling through heavy fog and are unable to see more than a few inches ahead. At the same time it seems to buoy you up, so that you are no longer falling but rather floating in a cushion of thick cloud. You swim through it until you reach solid ground; the fog grows darker as you walk on and it seems less clean. The atmosphere is very oppressive and you reflect that it would be unbearable to live in such conditions all the time. Your lungs fill with the sooty air and your breathing becomes hard and wheezy.

In the distance you hear several dogs barking and you press on through the thick cloud towards the noise. Then the fog lifts suddenly to reveal the marshy River Styx, across which no unburied shade may pass until it has wandered aimlessly for one hundred years on this near bank. On the water a ferry-boat of stitched leather works from bank to bank, transporting shades to the kingdom of Hades beyond the river. Will you make your way to the ferry (turn to 176), or wander on this bank for a while (turn to 575)?



The lord of war stands once more before you, brandishing an evil-looking mace. 'Popped in from the battlefield. Your prowess in war is great. Halfway to purity already. Be fearless.' With this the battler god transforms himself into an eagle and flies off, screeching, into the distance. Go to 25, but where this states that you must make four strokes, you need make only three.



You are woken by strange voices and for a moment you fear that you have been recaptured by the Nubians, but it is a different tribe that has come upon you out here on the plains. They ride small ponies and have sharp angular features; their skin is less black than the Nubians', and they talk in a slow, deliberate language, not the fast rattle that characterizes the Nubian tongue.

They bring you a pony and motion you to get on it, which you do with more than a few misgivings. Horse-riding was frowned upon in Troezen and you were never allowed to learn, although it was said that Theseus, your brother, became a skilled rider before he left for Crete. So, with no experience, you set off with these men across the plains into the desert, as behind you, to your left, the sun drops down to the horizon. You have no idea who they are or where they are going, but you feel that at last you are among friends. Go to 226.

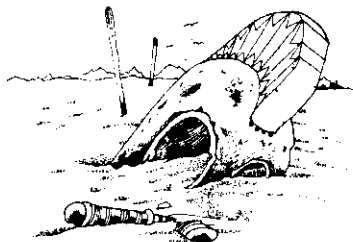
You walk wearily down the path, almost without hope of finding your way through the swirling fog. It grows bitterly cold and you hug yourself, folding your arms inside your clothing. Beside the road a man, barely out of his boyhood, marches in the opposite direction, his green tunic showing up well in the dim light. You turn to watch him pass and he stops too, but seems oblivious of your presence; he draws a wineskin from his belt and tries to drink. The wine has frozen in the bitter cold and comes out in a lump, which shatters on the ground into a million tiny fragments like a crystal dropped on a hard stone. The young man scowls and replaces the wineskin at his belt before he is away into the fog, his regular step echoing into the distance.

Now it grows warm again and the mists lift to reveal the sight of an insubstantial figure pounding two pebbles while he is whipped by a gaunt man who is clearly not a shade. Will you approach them (turn to 431), or observe from afar (turn to 543)?

As you walk away from the smoke, the goddess Athena appears, dressed in a long flowing robe of purest white. She beams at you.

'Altheus, you must not despair. This island is Phawos, home of Pwoteus, the old man of the sea. Seek him out on the beach and he will tell you how to weturn home, now you are mawooned.' She points to the smoke and you realize that it is your boat burning. When you spin round again the goddess is gone, so you make your way sadly down to the beach. Go to 256.





330

The king makes it clear that you must fight alongside his warriors and prove yourself their equal in the field, unless you want to be forced into servitude. You understand, and return to your hut to prepare for an expedition the next day.

It is early morning when five of you set out to hunt for food, and by the afternoon you have already shown your skill with a spear and have two kills to your name; each of the others has three, but you are pleased that you have not been embarrassed in the chase. You think back to the days in Troezen spent hunting wild boar, and how you forced yourself to keep up with the older, more experienced hunters.

A sudden cry brings you back to the present. Four bush warriors have attacked your group and you must fight one of them. He has Might 6, Protection 11 and carries a short spear (Might 1). You have a long-shafted spear (Might 2). You cannot retreat or surrender.

If you kill him, go to 134. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 309.

331

You toss your spear aside and, with an extravagant flourish, you throw your arms open wide in clear acknowledgement of your defeat. For a moment you sense the indecision of the champion, but, thankfully, he accepts your surrender: he picks up your spear, breaks it in two, and then holds it up to the acclamation of the crowd.

The Nubian king returns to the centre of the ring and he and the champion grab you by the arms and legs to carry you away. It is only a short distance before you see where they are taking you.

A massive wicker cage holds an angry, hungry, strutting mountain lion; the door is swung open and you are thrown inside. You must fight the lion with any wounds from the first combat unhealed. It has Might 6, Protection 12. If you kill it, go to 565. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 477.

332

You curse bitterly as you are driven ever onwards, but just as you have lost all hope, you see, dimly with your salt-stung eyes, a coastline approaching closer and closer. Quickly you come to your senses before your brain is torn out by the life-rending rocks. You stand up unsteadily and stagger on to the land. Soon you can only crawl, but from up ahead you hear shouts and cries; they are in your own language. Do you go to investigate (turn to 240), or lie where you are and rest (turn to 500)?

333

Return to 106 and roll again.





334

The guard returns with a large, fat-faced man, who is dressed in fine robes and adorned with jewelled bracelets, and who claps you on the back with his ample hand, and addresses you in Greek: 'Altheus the Avenger, your fame has travelled far, for your deeds are truly heroic. I am Ramses, Pharaoh of all Egypt. Now come with me and relax.'

He leads you into the palace stateroom, where you are fed rich food and strong wine. Dancers entertain you while you talk with Ramses about your travels and your recent escape from the Nubians.

Eventually, long into the night, your host bids you good night and adds, 'Tomorrow you shall accompany me to the oracle at the Oasis Ammonium and then we shall see about a boat to Greece for you.'

You collapse back into the luxurious cushions and enjoy the nubile dancing girls' display before drifting into welcome sleep. Go to 408.

335

As the cart draws alongside, you turn to the farmer and ask him for a ride. He cuts you with his whip, scoring your face with an ugly red weal.

'You'll get no more free rides from me!' he cries and lashes his lean horse into a trot.

Will you run after the farmer to attack him (turn to 529), or continue on your way (turn to 414)?



336

For two days you wander round the island in search of food, but there appears to be no wildlife. You become weaker and when you eventually come upon a bush bearing white berries, you eat them avidly. Their poison works inside your stomach and you are racked with intense pain; only Zeus can save you. If you have not used your prayer, do so now and go to 557.

337

You see the shades destined for the upper world drink from the waters of the River Lethe to clear all memories from their minds, but hurry on impatiently. The ascent is made along a steep and rocky path that disappears up into the mist, and soon you concentrate only on the climb. Underfoot the soil is loose and slips away with every stride, small pebbles bouncing and rolling down the hill. Behind, the reassuring footsteps of your brother begin to fall back, but you dare not stop. Then a cry rings out: 'Altheus, Altheus.' You start to turn in response. Go to 278.



338

You seize the chief, twist a knife out of his hand and hold it to his throat.

'Listen well,' you cry out to the others, 'and if any of you still understand a civilized tongue, hear this. Lie down on the floor, with your hands on your heads. I shall leave now, and if I hear any sound of you following, your leader dies.' All is still. You thrust the point of the dagger upwards, and the leader jerks his head back. His followers see the glint of fear in his eyes and obey you.

Still keeping the man at knife-point, you back out of the barn and to the edge of the compound. There you rip the mask away to reveal a cadaverous face with a receding hairline.

'Which way to the city?' you demand. He makes no answer, but his eyes dart to a path leading away to the left. You laugh, 'I see.'

Then you cut his throat, leave him in the bushes and run along the path indicated. There are no sounds of pursuit, and you tuck the knife into your belt. After a while the forest thins and you can see the road ahead. You redouble your steps, and fall flat over a tripwire stretched low across the path. You start to rise, and a birdman sentry comes out of cover and breaks your neck.



339

You wait, and presently it grows dark. Hungry and tired, you sit patiently, but then, as there seems no prospect of food, you take the opportunity of your isolation to sleep. So you are doubly surprised when a man awakens you and speaks to you in Greek, although he speaks haltingly.

'I . . . speak your . . . language,' he begins and for the first time you focus on the speaker, as he walks around in front of you: he is an unusually tall Nubian, but not at all threatening, since he appears totally devoid of muscle. 'Your . . . acts this afternoon have worried my . . . my . . . ' he stops as if searching for a word, ' . . . my king. He think you . . . put a spell at him.' His mastery of your language is far from perfect, but you sense the meaning immediately and turn the misunderstanding to your advantage.

'He would be right, in a sense,' you reply, unhelpfully. 'Now you shall act as an interpreter and we shall see your king,' you add, underscoring the final word with contempt. Go to 465.

340

You wait for an hour, and no vessels pass. In frustration you throw a stone against a tree: it rebounds and catches you painfully on the foot, so that you are forced to sit to let the pain subside. Eventually you get up again and although your foot is stiff, you resolve to try climbing up the slopes. Have 1 Shame point and turn to 15.

341

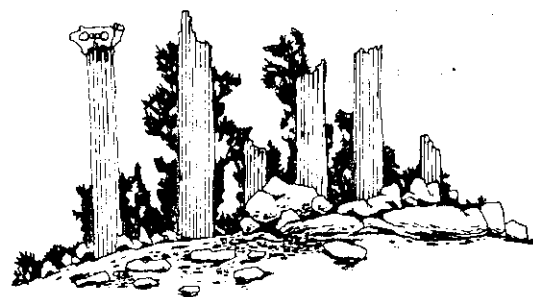
If Ares is your patron, go to 326. If not, go to 25.

342

You may spend 1-6 Honour points to get Poseidon Neutral towards you again. If you do so, turn to 206. Otherwise turn to 132.

343

Your Olympian guardian will not aid you, since you have rejected divine orders that you must purge yourself. The rewards of pride and arrogance remain the same. Go to 164.





344

You sail on, rejoicing in the knowledge that your blood-guilt has been erased. You make away from the land, hoping to skirt the coast of North Africa, and thence make the long crossing to the Peloponnese. As you are watching the sun setting on the horizon, another figure seems to stand on the raft beside you.

'I am Iris,' the woman begins, 'and I have been delegated by the rest of the gods and goddesses to bring you a warning to the effect that, although you may think you are purged of guilt entirely and may now go home to Troezen and your mother Aethra, you still bear the blame for your father Aegeus' demise and – yes, that might seem unfair to you, but then you haven't the cosmic perspective that divinity gives you, and believe me there are other sacrifices one has to make, and it's all a question of running around after mortals when they make a mess of things, which of course they're doing all the time, witness that Trojan business, and if I don't spend my days looking after this war, it's that siege, or that riot in Thebes, and in contrast to these your problems are petty, but they still take up an inordinate amount of time and you don't get any gratitude, since men just aren't brought up right, and if Hera had control of their education, then things would be stable and proper and of course stability is what we're all aiming for, especially . . .'

With this, Iris seems to be interrupted and comes to no end. Go to 128.

345

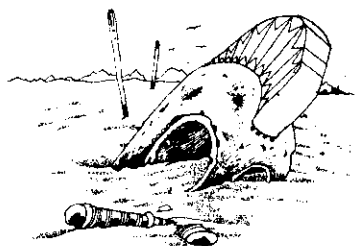
Markos returns, sees the lotus fruit on the ground, grins wickedly and spits his out, too.

'Best thing for them really,' he begins. 'Still, if they sell well, I could be back for more.' With this, he indicates his crew gathering basketfuls of the fruit, who are just coming to join their captain. 'Sorry I can't take you to Troezen, but we're overloaded with cargo already.' With this he shouts to his crew to depart, and soon he too is gone. Go to 405.

346

Your victory against these beasts of the underworld is complete, and once more you stand before the tumbledown temple of Demeter. Yet there is more to the ceremony. In your hands you hold the wooden plaques which you brought with you from the strange dream-world of the elements. You must combine them in such a way to free Scione of famine. You should drop two of them and retain one of them.

Do you drop the water and corn symbols (turn to 200), the water and flame tiles (turn to 120), or the flame and earth plaques (turn to 466)?



347

Before long, you have fallen off the pony. You scramble around in the dust, trying to regain your feet, to the sound of laughter. Lose 1 Honour point. After a long struggle the men manage to get you back on your mount, and you hang on desperately. Go to 226.

348

The surviving sailors are bound by the Athenians.

'The leader got away,' the captain explains. 'He's down in the hold.'

You must hunt down the chief mutineer. Go to 119.

349

The goddess Aphrodite bathes you in a divine aura and the men become more friendly. They sheathe their swords and the man at the front, clearly their leader, speaks once more:

'Friend, we mean you no harm, but we must be careful: there are strange people about,' he adds mysteriously. 'Come into our village to wash and eat, for indeed you look as though you have been travelling far without receiving hospitality.'

He leads you back to the village and into a stone house. Inside a large woman is talking to a young girl, but they fall silent when they see you. The man speaks sharply to them and they withdraw into a separate part of the house behind a curtain.

'My wife will cook you a meal and my daughter is preparing a hot bath for you. Take a drink with me.'

He offers you a goblet filled with ruby-coloured wine. Will you drink with him (turn to 487), or will you decline (turn to 319)?

350

The smoke dies away as you reach the top of the cliff. From this vantage point you can see the whole miserable scene laid out below: your boat has been reduced to smouldering ashes and nothing can be salvaged from it. You curse the gods silently for plaguing you with such misfortune, and then you turn bitterly away. It is almost as if they are deliberately keeping you from reaching your home in Troezen. You must have 1 Shame point for leaving the boat to be burnt.

You march defiantly along the beach, leaving the wreckage behind you. Go to 256.

351

You drift on your raft for six days, but then the west wind grows strong and you start to fear for your safety. The seas become short and vicious, and your raft surfs dangerously on the larger waves. You can only cling on as your makeshift rudder flaps uselessly, more often in the air than in the sea. If Poseidon is your patron, go to 254. If not, go to 586.

352

Chastened and puzzled by this divine warning, you gather together a number of the crew and explain that you must leave. Tired and jaded, they agree, albeit dubiously. After a day's work you have constructed a small raft with a mast. For a sail you steal the tunic of one of Calypso's handmaidens, and during the course of the evening manage to secrete away some provisions. Shortly after that you are at sea. None of you take any notice of the pleas and entreaties of the small group gathered on the beach.

After you explain to your companions that you must visit the Italian shores, they almost mutiny, but since the winds are carrying you first to the north and west, and then to the east, they can do little. Two weeks pass and your provisions are nearly exhausted: all that is left is some rope and a small jar of beeswax. Go to 168.

353

The rules for *Return of the Wanderer*, the third book in the Cretan Chronicles, are exactly the same as for the first two books in the series. Your combat values, however, start at Might 5, Protection 11 (plus, of course, any bonuses accruing from your patron), on account of the experience gained in killing the Minotaur.

If you are in Disfavour with Poseidon, roll one die. On 1-2 you are still in Disfavour; on 3-5 he is now Neutral towards you; on 6 you are now in Favour with the sea god.

Now turn to the appropriate paragraph for your patron:

If your patron is Aphrodite, turn to 217.

If your patron is Apollo, turn to 354.

If your patron is Ares, turn to 532.

If your patron is Athena, turn to 58.

If your patron is Hera, turn to 486.

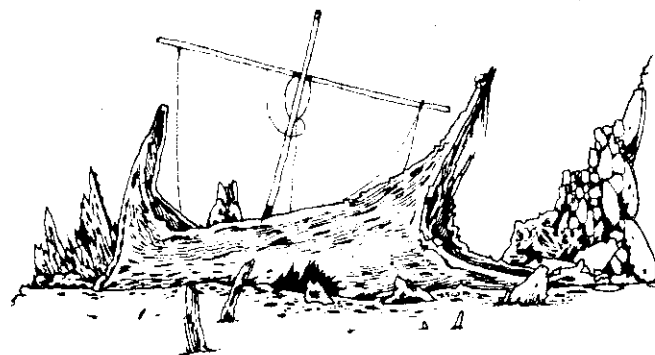
If your patron is Poseidon, turn to 117.

354

You pray to your patron as you lie below decks, and you hear his voice calling out to you.

'Altheus, you've done so well. All you have to do now is make it home to Athens where your father awaits you at every moment. I must be going soon, but I'm sure there was something I had to tell you. Now what was it? Oh, yes, the sails. You know, black for disaster and white for success. Oh well, I'm very late, so I must hurry. Good luck.'

For a moment all is silent and then you hear the rush of wind and waves above decks. You rise and climb up into the fresh air. Go to 252.



355

The ground close to the top of the steps is soft and marshy, and you tread carefully, probing forward each step to find a firm foothold. You can see that there is harder terrain twenty yards away and beyond that there are clumps of trees and bushes so that, in effect, you are standing in a marshy ring enclosed on all sides by thick vegetation. Behind you the hill rises gently up to a crest, and you decide to climb up there to view the whole countryside. You are soon, once again, out of breath, and by the time you reach the top, you collapse on the ground. Within moments, you are fast asleep. Go to 547.



356

You are thrown free of the vehicle rushing headlong to destruction and lie winded in the grass, listening as the horse's anguished noise abruptly ceases. Then you pick yourself up and set off down the hill towards Thebes. By the side of the road you notice a broken knife, discarded by some wayfarer, and you tuck it into your belt. Go to 259.

357

You remember the words of Dean, and just stop yourself wheeling round. The cries continue, but they become fainter and fainter until finally they cease completely. You are left alone and eventually you carry on up the hill until you reach daylight. Your brother is no longer with you, and you ask yourself how you will ever discover the way to purge your blood-guilt. Then a voice cries out 'Altheus' once more and you take heart. Your brother has made it after all. But it is not your brother who is climbing the path and calling your name, but the Phoenician merchant Markos, carrying his sack. He quickly reaches your side.

'I have a message for you from your brother. I passed him on the way up. He says you must seek out the Phytalidae, whoever they may be.' Turn to 455.

358

You bite into the fruit and enjoy its sweet taste. It seems a long while since you last ate, although time is strangely hard to judge in the underworld. You could have been here only minutes, or hours, or maybe even days. The dogs' barking fills the air again and you move on towards it. Turn to 85.

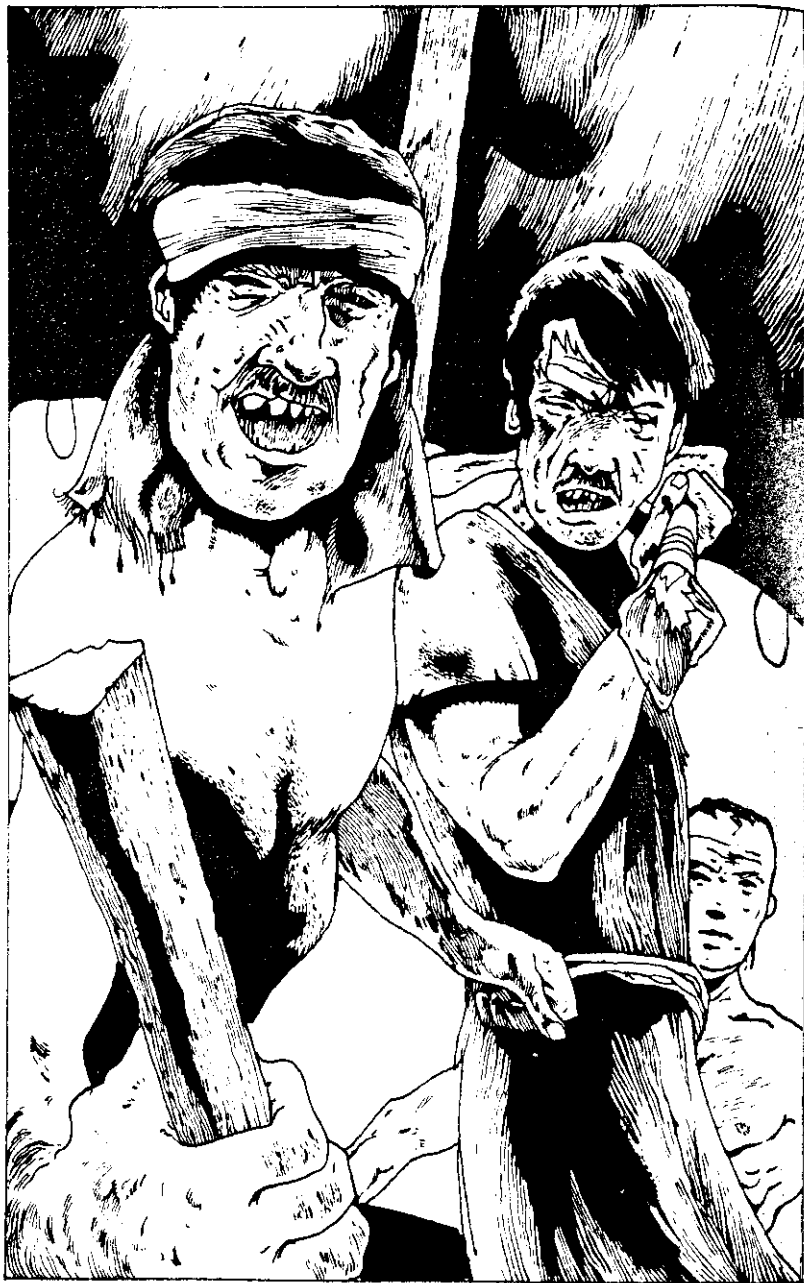
359

Many have wondered how the young Nubian could speak Greek. Some reckon it was a gift from Apollo, others that a captured merchant taught him, before the unfortunate sailor was killed, and yet others that scrolls, washed ashore and carried far inland by nomads, bear the secret of his knowledge. Have 1 Shame point for trying to delve into such mysteries and return to 339.

360

The anger of the sea god is aroused. The waters close to the boat grow turbulent and the rigging of the mast parts with an ear-splitting report. You may either spend 1-6 Honour points and swim to shore (turn to 320), or you may face the wrath of Poseidon (turn to 282).





361

The sailors are waiting for you below and seize you roughly. You look around in shock, and the captain stares back at you helplessly. The seven youths and five remaining maidens of Athens are confused, not knowing with whom to side. The ship pitches and rolls dementedly.

'This is the man,' shouts one of the sailors, 'who is responsible for our plight! The gods punish us for his betrayal.'

'The only way to appease them is to sacrifice him,' continues another, in what is clearly an orchestrated attack.

Will you submit (turn to 175) or fight (turn to 312)?

362

You shake your head, but the guard misunderstands your hurried hand-signals. He is clearly confused, and rising anger fills his features. Your conciliatory words mean nothing to him in his fury and you must defend yourself.

He is Might 5, Protection 12, but with a spear (Might 2) and a full-length shield (Might -1, Protection 4).

If you surrender, turn to 71. If you die and pray to Zeus, turn to 225. If you retreat, turn to 324. If you Seriously Wound the guard, turn to 421.

363

You make the sign of the clenched fist, and at once the gathered company gasps. You have committed sacrilege, and your shattered body does not last long under the rain of spears which is at once unleashed. Take more notice of cave-paintings on your next adventure, Altheus the Avenger.



364

The guard grins knowingly, and at once his attitude becomes friendly. He ceremonially pulls an obol from his pocket and places it in your hand. Feigning comprehension, you follow him as he leads you down a darkened corridor past rows and rows of shelves on which stand baskets filled with pomegranates. You try to ask your guide what use the royal house of Troy has for the fruit, but already he has led you, as a blind man is led by his kindred, to a room to await your cousin's coming. Go to 104.



365

The first stop on the voyage to high-walled Ilium, Troy of the ancient tales, is Lemnos, and the two weeks to which bad weather lengthens the voyage seem like months to you. You are racked by your old seasickness and the aching of your wounds from Crete. The Achaians laugh at you and mock you for a child, but, you think grimly to yourself, Oresander would soon feel the blade of a sharp-edged sword if he were alone. At last the shores of Lemnos, sacred island of Hephaestus the fire-worker, loom large on the horizon. Go to 384.

366

You lower the torch and turn away from the man. As you do so, he seizes the billhook and sinks it into your head. Your skull is ripped apart in a moment of blinding agony and you fall dead. Zeus will not save the wilfully naive, although it is they who most need his help.

367

You remain on the beach beside your boat, but there is little of interest to look at and the heat of the sun makes you drowsy. You close your eyes against the harsh glare, doubly brilliant as it reflects off the motionless sea, and soon you fall asleep.

When you awake, the day is almost over and you feel cold and hungry. You fashion a spear out of wood from the boat and try to harpoon fish in the shallow water; after some time you have not killed any, but just got yourself soaking wet; you walk back to the boat. Realizing that you must dry off and warm up, you collect driftwood from along the beach and attempt to start a fire, but this also fails since the wind is too strong. Eventually you manage to kindle a flame by sheltering it behind the boat. The warmth is comforting and you quickly forget about your empty stomach as you drift to sleep. Go to 576.

368

You grab a lamp from the wall and go down into the hold. The flickers of light randomly illuminate portions of the hold stacked high with empty crates. You move about cautiously, and suddenly come across the chief mutineer, armed with a billhook. He swings at you and you duck, waving the torch in his face.

You must fight the sailor. He is Might 4, Protection 11 and has the billhook (Might 3, Protection -1). All you have is a torch (Might 2, Protection 0).

If you surrender, go to 249; if you die and Zeus saves you, go to 425; if the sailor is Seriously Wounded, go to 218.



369

For eleven days, the caravan makes its tracks across the barren desert and you grow tired of travelling by camel, the most uncomfortable and unpleasant form of transport you have yet experienced. At last the fertile island in the sea of the great Libyan desert comes in view and you note the euphoria of all the travellers. The priest hands you a small piece of jade, which, he claims, is a good-luck charm, and then he goes into the temple on his official business. You offer up a final prayer to Zeus and follow him. Go to 506.

370

Cursing the gods is always less effective than placating them with sacrifices. Have 1 Shame point and return to 350.

371

'Yes, this is definitely the one,' cries a man from the back of the crowd, and at this they all rush forward. Before you can run off, two heavy men throw you to the ground. You try to escape, but as you break free, two more men are at your side. Go to 299.

372

Will you ask a woman, who is carrying an urn full of flour on her head (turn to 26), or will you approach a guard, who is armed with a spear and a full-length shield (turn to 187)?

373

Humbled by these aged men, you, Altheus the Avenger, drop to your knees. Take 2 Shame points. Yet you see that they are about to sunder your spirit from its earthly shelter and that you will find no mercy. They are old, however, and you dodge aside at the last moment. The combat continues.

If you Seriously Wound both men, go to 482; if you retreat, go to 18; if you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 33.

374

You knock loudly at the palace gate and a guard opens the heavy door.

'I am Altheus the Avenger, true king of Athens,' you declare imperiously, but the Egyptian does not understand you. Another man arrives and talks with the guard, who then shows you inside. The palace is a magnificent building, recently rebuilt, and the walls are newly decorated with fine mosaics. You stand and wonder, while the guard goes off to fetch someone. If you have more than 50 Honour points, go to 334. If not, go to 392.



The dove, you fool, release the dove!' Vizhazid is shaking you violently, and you suddenly realize what he means. You set the bird free from its cage and, as if inspired by the god, it flies straight and true towards the rocks. Following it will gain you safe passage; you remember Arissia's words.

Desperately the oarsmen row, the beat on the drum grows more frantic and the air is tense, as when ill omens are read at the altars of the immortals, and a young man must pay with his life. You grasp the rail at the side of the ship, ignoring the splinters which pierce your fingers.

You are passing through the channel itself now. The wind suddenly drops, but the waves are no less turbulent; with a great creaking and groaning, the living rock itself begins to roar and rumble. The cliffs move; the Symplegades have started their deadly journey. Closer and closer the sharp rocks come, like the talons of a thousand eagles all waiting for the kill.

Yet the forces of the underworld do not prevail and the moment of crisis passes. You reach open water and strike out for Chalcedon. The whole crew cheers and shouts out in joy. Go to 112.



376

The leopard's back is broken; after contorting in spasms the beast lies still. You give your thanks to the gods and lie on your back, panting from the exertion of the struggle. It is still very hot and you notice that your arms are beginning to blister, but it is your stomach that troubles you most, and you rip at the dead leopard's flesh with your teeth. The raw meat is unpalatable, but you eat it anyway. Flies gather round the carcass and the vultures return, approaching timidly. When you have eaten enough, you leave the body for the scavengers and limp on through the grass, for the leopard has sliced into your right thigh with its claws. You have no idea in which direction salvation lies, but then you see two figures up ahead on the horizon. They carry spears and as they come nearer you see they are dark-skinned warriors. Will you shout for help (turn to 444), or will you hide in case they are hostile (turn to 177)?

377

The merchant raises his left hand and you see the ring. For a moment you think you have won, but then you notice the jade under the same hand. He sweeps both items up off the deck and pockets them, before moving away to speak with the helmsman. You rise and walk to the edge of the deck and look out at the waves, so quiet and serene now, yet capable of such fury. You are only at the wooden rail for a few moments before Markos comes over to you again. Go to 239.

378

The farmer's fist crashes home against your jaw. The road starts to swirl and you topple backwards off the cart and fall on to the road, rolling over and over like a child's doll before coming to rest, limbs twisted and broken, dead.

379

Barely two minutes pass before you are convulsed with terrible pain. Your limbs shake and you sweat profusely, as the poison takes control. What a pitiful end for Altheus the Avenger, conqueror of Talos the bronze man of Crete, slayer of the Minotaur. The Amazons, the Cretans and the Nubians could not subdue you, but nature has succeeded. If you can still pray to Zeus, go to 557.

380

You stand your ground as the men, who are all massively built, approach. A sudden panic grips you, and you whirl around lest you are attacked from behind. Yet it is too late, and a crashing blow and a crunching sound are your last memories. Go to 201.

381

'Never,' you cry, managing to shake free of the grip of your captor. Yet you see that they will never let you leave Lemnos alive. You grab a burning stick from the hearth (Might 3) and proceed to the attack.

Each man is Might 5, Protection 9, with a shortsword (Might 2, Protection -1) and a breastplate (Protection 2). Remember the rules for multiple combat.

If you retreat, go to 203. If you die and pray to Zeus, go to 283. If you Seriously Wound all three, go to 55. You may not surrender.

382

Zeus is perplexed that one who savages himself to death would seek his succour. He tosses aside your request with the disdain it deserves. Go to 125.

383

You offer the green plume to the guard, whose face, suffused with crimson, regards you with the air of one insulted in public before his friends. 'Phthian pig,' he cries and charges straight at you.

You must fight him, and he gets the first strike. He is Might 5, Protection 12, with a spear (Might 2) and a full-length shield (Might -1, Protection 5).

If you surrender, go to 71. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 225. If you retreat, go to 324. If you Seriously Wound the guard, go to 421.

384

You disembark at Lemnos, eager for the feel of solid earth beneath your feet. The quay is not busy; there are only a few people lounging lazily in the midday sun. Some hundred yards up the shoreline there is a well at which a group of men are talking animatedly and gesticulating.

'... more pomegranates, Vizhazid, I don't want any more ...'

'... and he threw them into the master's garden ...'

'... I don't care if it's sacred ...'

If you are in Favour with Hephaestus, or he is Neutral to you, go to 224. If you are in Disfavour with him, go to 265.

385

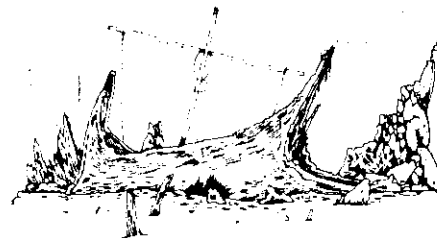
Far and long you are carried by the waters, tossed like a tree-trunk down spring-swollen waters. You manage to grab hold of a plank from a ship and cling to it, praying to all the gods to preserve you. At last a shore grows near and you strike out towards it. Scrambling on to the sand, you lift your head towards the heavens and there, towering above you, as a Titan looking loftily down on its feeble foes, is Mount Pelion, swathed in green with its healing plants. You slump to the ground unconscious, the water's margin lapping at your feet. Go to 105.

386

Have 10 Honour points for killing the men. You pick up a spear and continue your search, but eventually you decide that it will be more productive inland. Besides, you are feeling hungry and there is clearly nothing to eat here. Go to 39.

387

Are you so scared that you will not even talk to the local villagers? Have 2 Shame points and go to 316.



388

The monster grabs one man standing on the deck and bears him away in one of her mouths. He screams hideously as she returns to her den, but there is nothing you or anyone else on the ship can do to save the unfortunate. Markos steers on ahead, without looking to either side, and manages to bring the craft through without further loss. Soon he comes up and speaks to you: 'Next time it'll only be a serious injury or two. Anyway, forget about that now, and come with me when we get into port; I'll show you the sights.'

After a few more days, the crew reach the shores they have sought. You are eager to be on your way, but Markos insists that you come with him, and, with great reluctance, you agree to his request. Go to 302.

389

The captain and you can only gaze in impotent fury as the other ship edges round to starboard, careless of any collision, but delicately keeping you blocked. The two craft just fail to collide. The captain shakes his fist at a figure on the other boat in rich but clashing robes, and follows up this gesture with a stream of invective garnered over many years. The other, obviously the Phoenician master, grins back and waves lazily at you.

The merchant ship edges ahead of you, and your sails start to fill again. The Phoenician captain is handed a long pole with a scythe on one end, and before you can do anything, he uses it to cut the guy rope which holds up your sails. You can only look on as the vast black canvas crashes to the deck, and the other ship pulls steadily away. As it does so, the Phoenician captain licks his forefinger and then jabs it at you.

'When they ask you in Athens who did this to you, tell them you were bested by Markos the merchant,' he yells. 'Competition and integrity!'

With the vessel disappearing into the distance the word *Djinn* on the prow shines like gold. The remaining sailors furiously start to raise the sails again. Go to 38.

390

You are on your feet immediately and running as fast as your weary legs will take you, but it is obviously useless. Even when fit you could not outstrip a leopard. With graceful strides, it is at your heels and brings you down, its mighty claws digging into your back. As you fall, you think you can see two figures on the horizon and you shout out, but your cry merges into an agonized scream as the leopard tears at your leg. If you have not prayed to Zeus, do so now and go to 293. If you have, content yourself with the thought that your end was swift and not the prolonged death from heat and dehydration that faced you otherwise.



391

Zeus transports you to wooded Cythera and sets you down on the forest floor. You are healed and he returns you to the island of Pharos, well away from the hostile fishermen. Go to 588.

392

In a few moments the guard is back, with a stern-looking official who announces himself, in Greek, as the king's steward.

'You say you are the king of Athens, huh?' He looks you up and down and you realize that you appear far from regal. 'Well, wash yourself and come back next year. We might believe you then.' He ushers you out of the palace and tells you to try the temple where they are more receptive to foreign slaves. You take his advice and leave to find the temple of Ammon. Turn to 464.

393

You take the leopardskin gratefully and quickly ask round at the harbour to see if any boats are going further downstream to the delta. It transpires that none are sailing for two days, when a small cargo boat leaves for Phoenicia. You negotiate with the captain and he agrees to take you as far as the mouth of the Nile.

Two days pass and you are only too glad to leave Memphis and be on your way once more. The journey to the sea takes three days, but you do not enjoy any of them; you lie below decks troubled by the fever you first caught in Nubia. In your delirium, you see visions of your patron in fierce argument with the Minotaur, but at last you recover.

The Phoenician trader sets you down at a small town on the easternmost mouth of the Nile and you soon find a small boat, which you can buy, to sail back to Greece. With the intention of hugging the African shore before heading north towards the Peloponnese, you sail for two days until you reach the island of Pharos at the westernmost mouth of the Nile. You decide to rest and accordingly you come in close to the island before falling asleep on deck. Go to 507.

394

You run for the door, but two of the men catch your arms and kick your feet from under you. Then they force you to your knees in front of the chief birdman, resplendently tall in a gold feathered robe. Go to 289.

395

A familiar voice pipes up behind you and you spin round to see Markos the merchant, a mortal not a shade, carrying a large sack.

'It's no good, Altheus my friend. He won't let you across without an obol. No coin, no crossing - that's his motto and it's no use arguing.'

'But where can I get one?'

'You should have brought one with you. I can get you one, but it'll cost you.' He looks you up and down and then makes his offer. 'An obol for your sword.' Then, seeing your indecision, 'And I'll throw in a pomegranate.' He opens his sack to show you that it is full of pomegranates.

Will you agree (turn to 493), or try to find some other way across the Styx (turn to 582)?

396

With sudden insight you realize that there is no salvation in this sun-scorched place. Lose 1 Honour point for being aware of your plight. Return to 376.

397

Take 1 Shame point and lose 1 Honour point, as usual, for retreating. Go to 316.



398

As you move around the crate you see a flicker of light, but it is too late: the flames of a torch flash into your face, burning you badly. The mutineer has burst out of the crate and now attacks you with a torch (Might 2). He is Might 4, Protection 10. You are unarmed and already Wounded. If you Seriously Wound him, go to 94. If you surrender, go to 249. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 156.

399

The village is much bigger than you first thought. The houses are made of stone and are well built. The people who live here must be civilized, not barbarians, you think to yourself, but there is more hope than certainty in these reflections. As you wander among the houses, you fail to notice a stocky man who has crept up behind you and you are startled when he speaks.

'Stranger, do not snoop about our village like a dog or a spy, but tell me your name and that of your home city, so that we Illyrians may extend our hospitality. For although we have chosen to live in peaceful tranquillity, we are not primitive natives.'

'I am Altheus the Avenger,' you announce proudly, 'the rightful king of Athens. Yet it seems the gods have ordained that I shall never return there, since for seven years I have been sent back and forth across the world.'

'You are among friends here, Altheus, and now come into my house to wash and eat.'

Inside one of the larger buildings, his wife and daughter stand talking, but the man tells them to prepare you a bath and some food, so they retire behind a curtain into a separate part of the house.

'Now drink with me,' he says, handing you a goblet of wine. Will you accept (turn to 487) or decline (turn to 319)?



400

Markos approaches and grins. 'Not bad, Altheus,' he says. 'Play again, this time against me. Phoenician rules?' Do you accept (turn to 106) or refuse (turn to 502)?

401

The Golden Fleece is played in rounds. Each round you must stake one obol. Roll one die for yourself and one for your opponent. Subtract the latter from your roll and follow the instructions in the table.

+5	} Go to 14	-5	} Go to 243
+4		-4	
+3		-3	
+2	Win back stake + 1 obol	-2	} Lose stake
+1	Win back stake	-1	
		0	

If you have any obols left, you may roll again. If you have none, you must retire and go to 204. If you give in while you still have some obols, go to 141.

402

Your sleep is sweet, and you rest properly for perhaps the first time in months. Have 1 Honour point and go to 245.

403

Clearly the green plume is a symbol of the Achaians, a race not exactly enamoured of the Trojans. Beware Phoenicians, even bearing gifts. Have 1 Shame point and return to 383.

404

'Are you a coward?' cries one of the Achaian warriors.

'Perhaps brought up after the Trojan fashion,' another adds.

'Troezen will not be of much use to us if we have to fight. Let's leave him and take our pleasure on our own.'

With this they march off a few yards and sit in a circle, chattering animatedly and dicing. After a while, chastened, you sleep. Have 1 Shame point and go to 440.

405

Away from the land of the Lotophagi, the Lotus-eaters, you sail, thankful to be gone from that place. At length you feel sleepy, and begin to doze. You awaken with a start, to find that your raft has run aground on an unknown shore. You pull the battered vessel up the beach, and begin to trudge inland, in the hope of finding food.

After some time you come upon the entrance to a cave, shrouded in shadow. You approach cautiously, fearful lest you be set upon by some wild beast which has the place as its lair. Upon the walls at the mouth are paintings of tribesmen; this island must be inhabited. One picture shows a young man, his hand held out in a clenched fist, his head being struck off. Yet another shows a woman, her fingers held stretched in a sunburst symbol.

Your perusal is interrupted by a savage blow in your back. You whirl around and see two tribesmen, their skin painted with strange wavy signs, their hair bedecked with flowers. They are menacing you with primitive, crude spears.

Do you run away (turn to 146), try to negotiate (turn to 321), or attack the natives (turn to 20)?

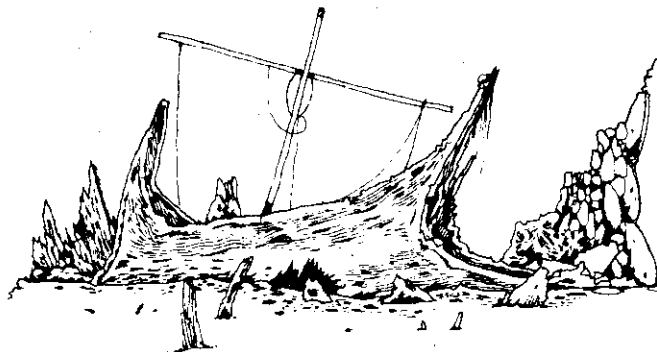
406

With scarcely a dissenting voice, your countrymen pledge their support for Altheus the Avenger. The four undecided sailors can sense what is blowing in the wind, and shout for you too. The captain steps forward.

'We have no licence to kill our passengers,' he urges. 'Lay down your arms.'

You jump down the ladder. 'Your lives are safe,' you promise. 'Bear with me now and we can weather this storm together. Give up your plot, and all this can be forgotten, as last night's dream. Or stick to your treachery, and face the wrath of a favoured one of the gods!' A flash of unearthly light illuminates the room, pitching and rolling in the heavy seas. The glow persists, and you look up to see blue fire running along the mast and sails. 'A sign!'

Resentfully the sailors cease their mutiny, and while the ship continues to be flung hither and thither by the winds, all is peace below decks. Go to 228.





407

You manage to separate yourself from the crowd, and wander disconsolately along the shore. At last you come to a cliff in which there is a cave. An elderly woman emerges from the gloom, her bones stiffened by age; her hair is white as the winter snow on the mountains.

'Altheus,' she cries, 'you require solace. Read your future here.' With this she picks up a pile of sun-browned leaves from the cave mouth and scatters them into the air. The sea-breeze blows them in all directions, while the Sibyl scampers after them, like a child in search of a lost toy. Sadly, the Trojan Sibyl is insane and you must seek divine advice at the temple. Go to 28.

408

The next morning, just after dawn, the king shakes you out of your slumber. 'We must make an early start,' he explains, 'in order to get on to the Nile before everyone's awake. If I leave any later, the whole town will be out on the river trying to get a glimpse of us and we'll be held up for hours.'

You rise and follow him, wondering at the way the king's popularity causes him so much trouble. At the harbour you board the king's boat, a splendid vessel decorated in gold and gems, with huge sails of Tyrian purple. The townsfolk do indeed crowd round the ship, peering in as best they can; the guards are forced to hold them back. Then the vessel is cast off and moves through the gathering flotilla of smaller boats, all edging as close as they dare to the mighty craft.

For six days you travel by boat, and then for two more weeks you cross the Libyan desert in a magnificent palanquin carried by six slaves. At length, you arrive at the oasis and the king's litter is carried into the temple, while you remain outside. After a few moments the king comes out on foot, looking very worried.

'I must return to Thebes at once,' he begins. 'Take these gifts as tokens of our friendship and the alliance between our nations.' He hands you a jewelled bracelet and a small piece of jade. You climb out of the litter and enter the temple. Go to 506.

You remember the words of your father, spoken so long ago: 'Journey under a black sail. If you succeed, change it to white, and I will know at your coming that you have succeeded.'

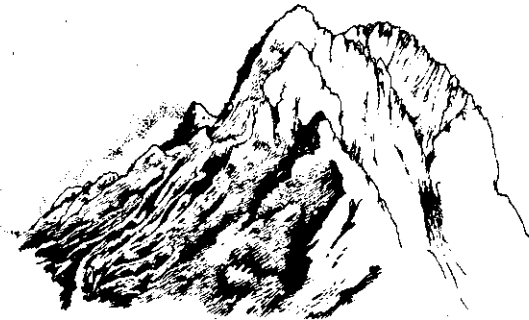
At your insistence, the captain seeks out some white sails from a locker below, and the crew and the youths of Athens gladly hoist them.

A firm wind runs the ship along steadily and you reach the Piraeus sooner than would have seemed possible. An expectant crowd throngs the quayside, and when they see you in the prow of the boat, arms held high, and the youths and the remaining maidens of Athens lining the side of the deck, they break into exalted cheering and applause.

Aegeus, your father, is the first one to greet you as you step off the gangplank; he clasps you to his bosom, crying, 'Altheus, my son, my son.' Then he breaks away and turns to address the crowd, but as he does so a spasm of pain crosses his features and he clutches at his chest.

'The time has come,' he gasps. 'Already the shears are cutting through my thread. Come, to the palace, that I may die in peace.'

Aegeus is carried off, and the crowd melts away, murmuring at this omen. You follow on behind your father. Go to 61.



You swim towards the waterspout, and as you come nearer you can tell that a huge whale is responsible for it. You redouble your efforts to reach the creature, hoping to lodge in the belly of the beast. The water swirls into a vortex as the whale starts to submerge, and you are sucked into its mouth. As the waters close over your head, your clothes snag on a tooth. In your struggles to free yourself, you hurt the creature, and it closes its mouth in pain, snapping you in two like a child's toy. Zeus has no business intervening to keep the ailing afloat.

The day wears on and once again the only boats that stop are heading up-river. Six or seven berth quickly at the landing-stage, take on water and then move off south once more. By evening you are very irritated, and almost decide to join a boat going the wrong way just to move from this cursed spot, but wisdom prevails. Darkness falls and you rest another night at the side of the Nile. In the morning a vessel berths from the south and your hopes are high of at last going down-river. To your embarrassment you see that it is the first boat which called in going up-river two days ago. The captain leans over the bow and calls, 'Still here? Well you had better come with us. We're going your way now.' You gratefully accept his offer and join his crew in the stern. Have 1 Shame point and go to 210.

Shortly after leaving the palace, you are hopelessly lost in the city. For a long time you wander back and forth in the dark streets until you eventually find yourself back where you started. You are forced to ask the guard at the palace gate the way to the temple. He laughs, but sends you in the right direction. Have 1 Shame point and go to 464.

Your Chronicle Sheet reads as follows:

Might 5 Honour 22

Protection 11 Shame 11

You have no Intelligence points.

Sword: Might 3, Protection 0

Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2

Queen Antiope's jewelled brooch

Asclepius - Disfavour

Poseidon - Disfavour

Athena - Favour

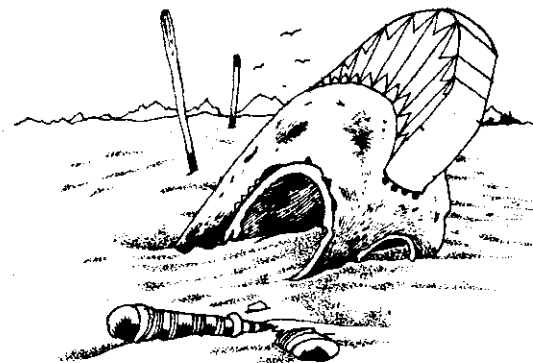
Dionysus - Favour

Hephaestus - Disfavour

All others - Neutral

Note: As a client of Hera, you can pray to Zeus one extra time. You start with Might 5, instead of 4, and Protection 11, instead of 10, to reflect the experience gained in defeating the Minotaur. Go to 486.

You walk on, with a shrug. Soon the cart disappears into the distance. After a while the path starts to descend a steep hill, and you can see Thebes ahead. You start to jog down the slope, but then you hear a deliberate rustling in the undergrowth at the side of the road. When you pause, you feel a sharp blow to the back of your head and your world goes black. Turn to 99.



Both men drop their daggers and run off screaming. Have 3 Honour points and you may have the daggers. You stride down towards the harbour and, meeting a young woman returning from the river with a basket of washing, you ask what town this is. She does not understand, but you manage to discover that the river is the Nile. You are soon at the harbour, now aware that you are in Egypt. Go to 544.

Out in the centre of the plain, you have no shade and the heat of the midday sun is unforgiving. You begin to sweat and soon you are very thirsty, but there is nothing here to drink. You follow the path as it rises up a gentle hill and, when you reach the crest, you can see the sea again on the far side of the island. Below you is a small village of straw huts which seems unnaturally quiet and, out at sea, several fishing boats lie lazily in the heat. You descend and are soon on the edge of the deserted village, when you see that the first fishing boat has now returned and that the men are hauling it up the beach. Will you talk to them (turn to 314), or will you hide in one of the huts (turn to 563)?

417

You and your guide proceed in awkward silence until you reach an enormous open theatre where thousands of shades perform on stage to their own embarrassment.

'These are the corrupt court officials,' says Dean. 'Each one has his own personal punishment appropriate to his crime. Take that one over there, for instance.' He points to a man surrounded by mirrors, who stands abusing his own reflections. 'He was steward to a powerful monarch, but considered himself more important. He ordered everyone to do his bidding and began to call himself "king". Even simple pleasantries were rebuffed with violent insult. Abuse and excessive self-regard now serve to punish him.'

You let the rolling clouds of fog envelop the scene once more. Go to 279.

418

As Markos steers the vessel between the whirlpool and the monster, you move to the side of the deck to look at Scylla, with her six heads. In horror you realize that she is thrusting one of her necks towards you, and you are gripped by her mouth. You struggle to break free, but you cannot prevent her retreating towards her den.

You must fight the beast (Might 7, Protection 14). If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 479. If you Seriously Wound her, go to 261.

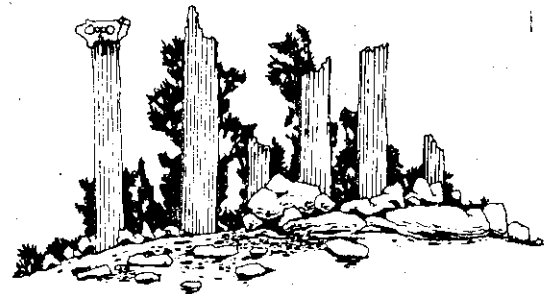
419

You stride into the fog, certain that this way leads to your brother Theseus, but it is a different figure that you encounter first. A small man sits on a wooden stool, his eyes constantly darting up to a rock which hangs precariously above him on a black flint ledge. At every moment it seems about to slip; indeed it appears to be already falling. He looks at you, but only for moments at a time, since he glances up rapidly every time his gaze falls. In perpetual suspense the man and the rock wait; but you cannot linger as you must find your brother.

The path reaches a crossroads. Will you go left (turn to 447), right (turn to 328) or straight on (turn to 561)?

420

It would be a remarkably bad idea to play dice against one whom even death avoids on his shakier days. You decline politely, explaining you must pray to your patron. Markos looks at you askance, but seeing that his comrades are impressed by your piety, says nothing. You make motions of praying for a while, just as the stricken hero pretends to be dead on the battlefield lest the hard-hearted foe slay him; for they are barbarians and do not follow the ways of the gods. In a few minutes, feeling safer, you make yourself comfortable and sleep. Go to 440.



421

The guard falls to his knees and shouts out: 'Think of my honoured father and beloved mother, bereft of their son, and spare me. Do not sunder my spirit and send it lifeless to the land of Lethe, the halls of Hades.'

Surprised at this outburst, you simply divest the man of his spear. Have 2 Honour points. However, just as you do so, someone comes out of the house to investigate the noise; it is Agnostes.

'Altheus,' he cries, 'cousin. I've missed you so in this land of Trojans. No one to speak to.' By the look of the four handmaidens who follow in his train you doubt the veracity of his complaints, yet you greet him heartily also. 'Take this man to the physician's,' he orders one of the handmaidens. Then to you, 'We have a lot to talk about.' Go to 4.



422

'You've come to see your brother,' she begins as you walk along the rocky path above the sea.

'But my brother is dead,' you reply.

'I know. You're going down to the underworld to see him,' she says with finality. She hands you a sword (Might 2) and a breastplate (Protection 2), which you strap on slowly. 'You may need them against the hound,' she adds, and it is clear from her voice that this beast is very dangerous. 'Oh, by the way, I'm the Sybil.'

She says no more and you are about to ask who the little girl is, but, when you look round, the child has gone. You proceed in silence a pace behind the Sybil. Go to 514.

423

You return to the cottage with the sorceress and, secure in the knowledge that the divine ones will protect you, take a great draught from the proffered vessel. A strange tingling sensation afflicts your throat, but nothing else occurs. You feel no different.

Circe eyes you for a moment and then says, 'The drink was not strong enough. You must take another draught.' She bustles back into her crowded kitchen, and you can see her rapidly placing herbs in a cup. She pours hot water from a cauldron on to this, and then strains off the coloured liquid into another container. She comes back, and offers this to you.

Do you accept and drink again (turn to 64)? Or do you refuse, fearful lest the root has lost its efficacy (turn to 280)?





424

Stripped of your weapons and all your clothing except for a small loincloth, you are marched across the plain by the Nubians. Soon the plain gives way to desert and for days you are taken south across the arid expanses of sand. They untie your hands because they know you cannot survive in the dunes. They seem unaffected by the heat, but you are exhausted by the sun's powerful rays. You lose count of how many days you have been held, but it is at least three weeks before you emerge from the desert into hot grassland. A day later you reach the Nubian village and are dragged in front of the king. The warriors make some remark to him in a strange staccato tongue. Turn to 307.

425

Zeus revives you and heals your wounds. You must continue the fight in a Healthy condition. If you surrender, go to 249. If the sailor is Seriously Wounded, go to 218.

426

As you reach down for the torch, the mutineer pushes you back with all his might. You crash heavily to the floor and he seizes up the torch to bring it down on to you. Your clothing ignites and, though you tear at it with your bloodied hands, you cannot rip it away from your skin. Zeus will not help you, as you are burnt to death.

427

Markos lifts his right hand quickly to reveal the bare deck below.

'Out of luck, I'm afraid, Altheus.' He pockets the jade from his left hand and then slips the gold ring back on his finger. 'Play again?' he asks, but you have no wish to lose more of your possessions. You walk away to the side of the deck, already regretting that you agreed to sail with the Phoenician. As you gaze out to sea, you wonder whether you will ever reach Athens, or if the gods intend you to roam the oceans for the rest of your life. You are stirred from your thoughts by the sound of the merchant approaching. Turn to 239.

428

You run quickly along the path to the right, and keep on going when the shrieking behind you turns into sounds of pursuit. Eventually, you come to a point where the path meets the road to Thebes and the wood thins. You hurry on towards the city, as it becomes light. Go to 193.



429

The sails need not, of course, have been white. According to Simonides, who will write about these events in the future, although he will mistakenly refer to you as Theseus, the signal was 'a scarlet sail dyed with the juicy blossom of the luxuriant holm-oak'. But as you look at them now, the sails are undoubtedly white. Have 1 Shame point and lose 1 Honour point. Go to 61.

430

Have 2 Shame points and go to 199.

431

The gaunt man's whipping steps up to a frantic pace and with it the pebble-pounder's frenzy increases. You approach and inquire about your brother.

'I seek my brother Theseus,' you begin.

'You must be Altheus. I am Aeacus, judge of the dead,' the gaunt man replies without looking up or ceasing his activity.

'Where may I find my brother?' you continue, returning to the matter that weighs upon your mind.

'Oh, he's in Elysium somewhere. Just wander about: you'll find him sooner or later.'

You decide that a more formal approach might be more successful. Go to 296.



432

You come down from the mountain for the first time in your life, and stride along the road back to Troezen with joy at your return.

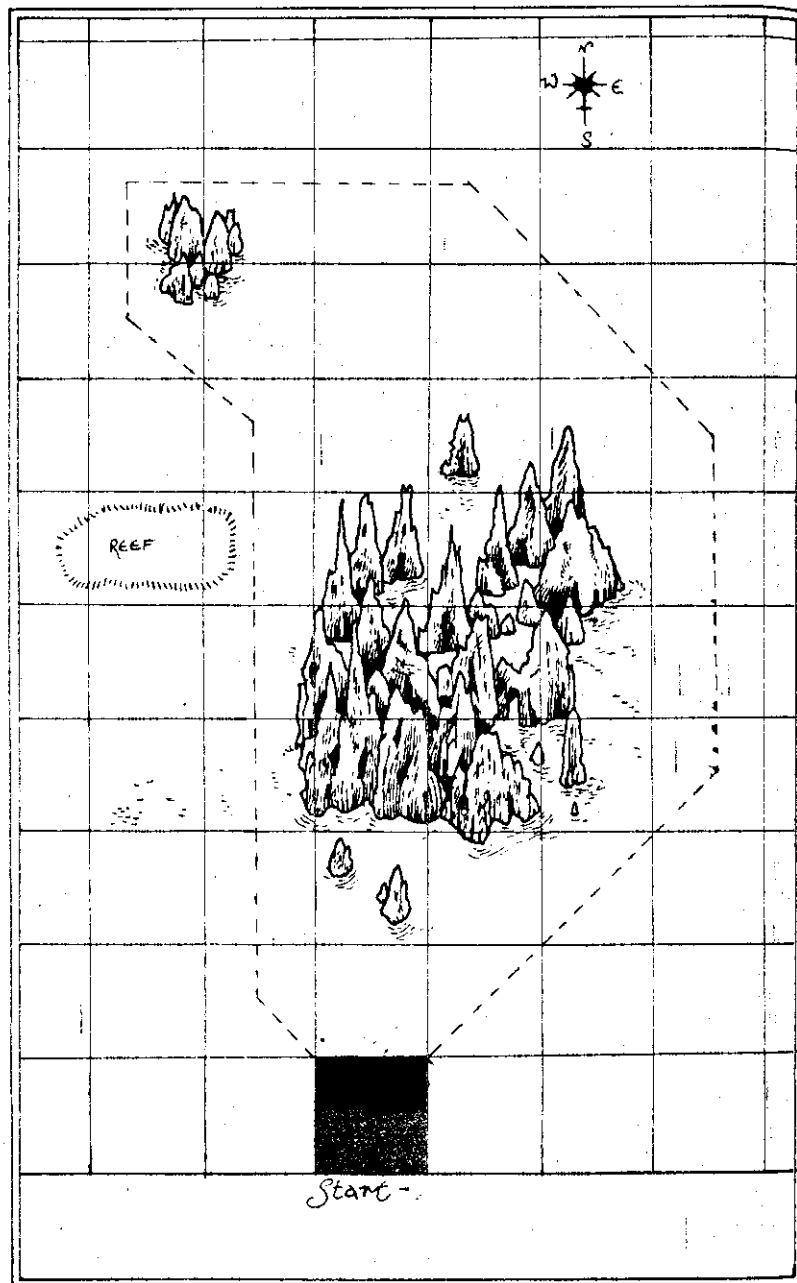
'Farewell, my young friend,' the elder told you at your parting. 'We are glad in our hearts for you, but you must remember that not all men think as the Phytalidae.' Keeping these words with you, you cross the Isthmus and come at last to the hills encircling Troezen. You can see the smoke of the home-fires ascending in thin columns to the sky, and run through the fine rain to the crest of the hill. Go to 600.

433

You trudge back along the flat tunnel, fearful of your descent to the underworld and yet at the same time anxious to delay no further. Deep in your introspection, you walk on, scarcely noticing your surroundings until suddenly you feel yourself falling. You throw out your arms wildly and try to grasp anything, but there is nothing but air. Down and down you fall, faster and faster. Go to 325.

434

You have, in fact, been attacked by the birdmen of Thebes, as you shall shortly discover. Lose 1 Honour point for failing to see your assailants. Go to 99.



In the boat-race, you steer a sailing-boat against an oared vessel. Every turn, the oared boat advances one square along the track marked on the board, as long as you are not on the square that it would advance to.

You, however, must sail where the wind allows you. You may not sail directly into the wind. If you sail at 45 degrees to the wind (e.g. north or west with a north-west wind, or south-east or south-west with a south wind), you advance one square in that direction. If you sail in any other direction, you may (but do not have to) advance two squares in a straight line. Thus if the wind were from the north, you could go two squares west, south-west, south, south-east or east. You may not sail on to or through the same square as the other boat.

The procedure for any turn is as follows:

- a) The oared boat advances along its track one square.
- b) You declare which direction you are heading in, and then roll a die to find if there is a wind shift:
 - 1 Little wind – current takes you 1 square to the west.
 - 2 Wind shifts 45 degrees anticlockwise.
 - 3 No change in wind direction.
 - 4 No change in wind direction.
 - 5 No change in wind direction.
 - 6 Wind shifts 45 degrees clockwise.

If you so wish, before rolling the die, you may elect to spend 1 Honour point, and then you *must* add one to the die roll. A total of 7 (6 + 1) still has the effect of an unmodified roll of 6.
- c) You move the number of squares dictated by the wind's new direction or by the current if a 1 is rolled.

The winner is the first boat to reach the starting-square again, having rounded the black rocks, leaving them on your left. You may sail either side of, but not through the white reef. The wind blows from the north-east to start with.

If you win, go to 581. If you lose, go to 485. If you crash into the rocks or the reef, go to 562.

436

Ropes are thrown around your wrists and ankles and you are spreadeagled on the floor of the barn, tied to stakes.

You start to struggle, but it is too late. The chief birdman kneels over you, straddling your body, and runs the long nails of his left hand through your hair before tightening his grip and forcing your head back. He bends closer and closer to you, and at the last moment tilts up his mask and sinks human teeth into your neck. Blood runs down into your mouth and clouds your eyes, and as you die you can see the other birdmen clustering round, screaming, ready to receive the strips of flesh their leader is preparing to drop into their eager gullets.

437

Markos turns to you and complains, 'I despair of Charon and this leaky boat.' You glance down and notice to your dismay that water is pouring in through the stitching. 'I really do despair, but it's the only way across. I approached Hades about setting up an independent ferry, but it seems old Charon was granted a monopoly when no one else wanted to run the service.'

The boat now approaches the far bank and you both jump ashore.

'Well I've got to rush now, Altheus. Oh, here's a pomegranate.' He tosses you one from his sack and moves away into the fog which envelops you once more. You pause on the point of eating. Go to 358.

438

As you begin to move away from Elysium towards the River Lethe, cleanser of memories, you feel a cold hand descend upon your shoulder. It is Dean.

'I hope you enjoyed your pomegranate, back at the start of your trip through our mythical domain, and will not feel that the price was too great. You see, one of our rules around here is that anyone who eats in the underworld may never leave. Now, I know that sounds petty, but I am only obeying orders. Anyway, none of this is true so I wouldn't worry too much.'

Nevertheless, you find it impossible to escape your self-created underworld and there you remain for the rest of eternity.

439

Almost as soon as you have finished eating the berries, you realize that they contain a powerful poison. You stick your fingers down your throat in an attempt to bring back the fatal fruit from your stomach, but it may be too late. If you have not yet prayed to Zeus, do so now and turn to 557. Otherwise your travels are at an end, Avenging Altheus, so close to your ultimate goal.

440

You wake to find Markos removing from your belt the pouch which you picked up earlier.

'This is mine,' he snaps, and adds, 'you thief!' as if to salve his own conscience. All your obols have gone, if you had any.

You struggle up, but the Achaians are all glaring at you, and you think it best not to cause any trouble while still lightly armed.

'Here,' says Markos, tossing you a green plume, evidently from a Phthian helmet, 'have this. Give it to the guards at Troy, and they'll let you into the citadel.'

'But I'm not going to Troy, I'm going to Troezen,' you protest.

'Ah,' contradicts Markos, 'the ship calls in at Troezen on the way back, and you won't get to your home overland: I hear all Boeotia is racked by civil war.'

Reluctantly you agree to this proposition and tuck the horsehair plume into your belt. You feel strangely as though the black earth is about to open up beneath you, but you accept Markos' offer of a voyage. You all walk down to the shore, where the Achaian vessel stands, high-prowed and many-oared, with a statuette of Poseidon on the bow. Markos turns back, and you try to stop him. He eludes your grasp and dashes back up the beach, calling, 'Oresander will take good care of you!' Turn to 365.

Take 4 Shame points. You must be purged for your treatment of Agnostes, Return to 469.

As you walk away, you catch one last glimpse of the old cynic, who turns away, sad that you will not even speak with him for more than a few moments. Have 1 Shame point for your thoughtlessness. Turn to 176.

You step aboard Vizhazid's trireme, as the sun reaches its zenith and pours down heat on the weary earth below. The ship sways from side to side like trees in a winter gale when the branches are torn off and even great-hearted heroes quail to go forth into the forest. You too, Altheus the Avenger, feel ill and must rest. At last your stomach ceases to trouble you, and you look over the side to see Markos, still on the beach, waving enthusiastically.

'Next stop Scione,' says Vizhazid in his gruff Armenian accent.

'But wait,' you say, 'that's on the sea-route to Troy, not Troezen.'

'Just so,' replies Vizhazid, looking puzzled. 'Andros, Scione, Chalcedon, Troy and Troezen – that's the route. Did not Markos tell you we ply to Troezen on the way back from Troy?'

'Not exactly,' you reply sardonically.

For the next few days you bemoan the evil fate that ever set Markos the Phoenician on your path. The journey, too, is not free: you are forced to scrub the decks and wash out the sailors' quarters, lowly labours indeed, for a king. Past Scyros, Icus and Polygaeus you sail, until at last the nearest promontory of Chalcidice comes in sight, and also the small harbour of Scione.

Do you stay at the quayside (turn to 227), or do you investigate the town (turn to 157)?

The warriors seem pleased, and chatter to each other, as they wade through the thick grass that lies between you and them. It is only when they are right at your side that you know who they are. It is the Nubians, again. You curse silently, but might just as well do so out loud since they do not understand a word you say. They offer you some water from a skin and then they bind your hands. The way back to the camp is long and it is nearly night when you reach there. They throw you into a hut and one stands guard outside. Go to 190.

You seize a knife which is being thrown about with other debris in the bottom of the cart and start to hack at the harness. The knife is intended to cut nothing stronger than vegetables, and it seems to take an eternity before the first strap separates.

As it does, the cart skids violently and rolls over. If you have not yet used your prayer to Zeus, you must do so now and turn to 356. Otherwise, you are crushed by the cart, dragged along in the wreckage, and left, unwashed and unburied, by the side of the road.

The dhow ferries you across the Nile and then the captain continues on his way upstream. You do not have to wait long before a ship plying north towards Thebes draws up alongside the bank.

The captain speaks good Greek and explains that he is taking animal skins to Memphis, although he will be stopping at ports along the way. You eagerly accept his offer of transport down-river, and soon you are enjoying a fresh breeze that sends you quickly along the river. Go to 579.



447

The path moves up a hill and you start to climb the gradual incline. The fog still blocks out any view of the surroundings and so it is with great surprise that you are suddenly confronted by a massive boulder hurtling towards you out of the murky gloom. You leap aside just in time and feel a twinge of pain in the wound which you received long ago in Nubia. The boulder rolls to a stop on the flatter ground below. Soon after, a muscular man runs down the hill chasing the boulder. He is wheezing badly and looks very tired. Sweat pours from his brow and from his massive arm muscles. Yet for all his apparent might, he is clearly a shade and his boulder, on close inspection, proves equally insubstantial.

'I'm Sisyphus,' he begins. 'I cannot talk now, but walk up with me and I'll have a word with you in a minute. I've just got to get this rock to the top of this hill; I nearly had it just then.'

He crouches behind the boulder and pushes. The rock lurches forward and he keeps it rolling as he climbs the hill. You walk beside him, silently, as he grunts with the exertion. Up through the fog, the hill keeps going, but at last you can see the top. Sisyphus sees it as well and gives a final effort, but he is exhausted. The boulder slips away from him and rolls down the hill again. You wait while he rushes after it and several minutes later he is back again, puffing and blowing. You realize that his torment decrees that the rock will always slip away just as he is in sight of the top. Will you help him, since the boulder weighs nothing to you (turn to 597), or will you press on over the crest of the hill (turn to 328)?

448

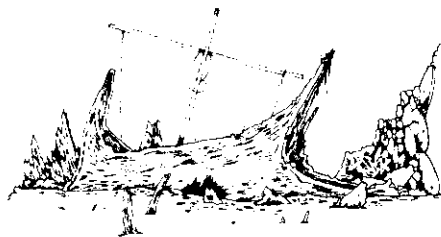
Few wayfarers have escaped the talons of the birdmen of Thebes. Fleet-footed Hermes would rejoice at such an escape. Have 1 Honour point from your divine audience. Return to 428.

449

Your ship pulls away again from the Piraeus. You look back at the twinkling lights of Athens, to which you returned a hero, but which has now cast you out again.

Where now? You must purge your blood-guilt, so that you may once again see Troezen your homeland, and take your place as king of Athens. But for now, you are in the hands of the gods, with no indication that they care for you at all.

Then you remember your father, briefly found, then lost for ever, and you weep. Go to 163.



450

You wound the panther, but next the old man becomes a wild boar with savage tusks. You must continue against the wild boar (Might 4, Protection 10). Your wounds are unhealed and the boar has first strike with two dice. If you die and Zeus saves you, go to 557. If you Wound it, go to 297.

451

The shade is attempting to pound the pebbles to dust: this is his torment. Others are told that they must do this next, and their punishment is to watch him failing for all eternity. Return to 431.

452

You slink about the village like a jackal or a criminal: this is no way for a hero to behave, so you must have 1 Shame point.

Three fishermen hear you and rush towards you brandishing small knives. They are very vociferous in their cries and you fear that the whole village will be out to see what the commotion is. Will you attack these three (turn to 213), or try to flee (turn to 568)?

453

You cry out to the old man, but in an instant he has transformed into a mighty eagle. The bird soars away from the beach and circles high above you. The seals, disturbed by this commotion, flounder towards the sea in desperate attempts to reach their natural habitat. Will you attack a seal for food (turn to 596), or will you let them escape into the sea (turn to 336)?



454

Each turn you and then the farmer aim a blow at the other by rolling two dice. If 12 or 11 is rolled, the target is knocked out. If 10 or 9 is rolled, the target falls off the cart. If 2 is rolled, that character falls off the cart himself.

If you fall off, go to 517. If the farmer falls off or is knocked unconscious, go to 199. If you are knocked unconscious, go to 378. After five rounds, if both participants are still conscious, go to 79.

455

'Come on, I've got my ship here. I'll take you to Athens,' offers the merchant. You pause wondering whether to accept, but the Phoenician has decided for you. 'Right, it'll be good to have some company.' You walk on together out of the tunnel.

'Still got the bag of pomegranates, I see.'

'No,' he replies, opening the sack, 'it's full of obols now. You know they have a tremendous build-up of the coins in Hades, what with all the shades bringing them down for Charon. And they can't get rid of them; you see, the ferryman pays them to Hades in tax, but then they just pile up. Anyway, food's a bit scarce down there so I sell them the fruit and bring the obols back to the upper world. It all works rather well, don't you think?'

You, however, are not concerned with the merchant's tale, but are very worried about your surroundings.

'This is not Taenarum, where I came down.'

'No, of course not. The entrance is there, but you always come out here at Cumae. It's the Sibyl's job to make sure that no one is disorientated.'

At this moment the Sibyl herself arrives, panting.

'Oh, I see you're in safe hands,' she says, and leaves again. Go to 59.

456

You move cautiously through the compound, which appears deserted apart from sounds coming from a large barn. You creep closer. Unlike the granary, which was supported off the ground by huge boulders, the barn is flush with the earth. You peer through a crack in the door and see about twenty birdmen, waiting as if in a religious ceremony. There is a low murmur, as of owls in the rafters. You pick out the chief birdman, slightly taller than the rest, in a cloak of golden feathers and an eagle mask.

Then a birdman who has crept up behind you unnoticed pushes you in the small of the back. You stagger forward through the doors, which swing open in front of you, and collapse on your knees. Go to 289.



457

You remember that anyone who eats in Hades will never leave and you curse Markos silently, before moving on your way once more into the mist. The barking of dogs is louder on this side of the Styx and you head towards it, away from the river-bank. Go to 85.

458

You dispatch the last man with your sword, before the crowd from the village can reach you, but you are quickly surrounded. One man walks forward with his hands held out in a peaceful gesture.

'We do not know who you are, but we can see that you are a prodigious fighter, as you have killed our best swordsmen. Now, we outnumber you and could easily kill you, but we want no more bloodshed. Leave our village now.'

The crowd parts and, realizing the wisdom of his words, you hurry away. You return to the marshy ring where the steps lead down into the earth, and you prepare yourself once more for the underworld. Have 6 Honour points for defeating your opponents and go to 530.

459

Lose 1 Honour point. You spend a particularly uncomfortable night, having to climb up a tree to avoid the predators which prowl at times of darkness. You sleep little, every whine and squeak startling you. At length dawn breaks and her rosy glow gives you new heart. In getting down from the tree, however, you tear your already tattered tunic. At length you come to the beach and there, standing beside a magnificent Tyrian trireme, is Markos and a thin, haggard-looking man.

'Ho, Altheus!' cries Markos. 'This is your transport to Troezen. Captain Vizhazid - he's Armenian - has agreed to take you, for free.' You do not miss the twinkle in Markos' eye. Go to 12.

460

The guard's attitude changes at once.

'Your cousin . . . Agnostes?' he smiles. Clearly Agnostes is well liked in Troy. He conducts you down a series of twisting, winding corridors. For a moment you are reminded of the labyrinth, and cold fear takes hold of your stomach, but a second later you are Altheus the Avenger once more. You are led into a small room, warmed by a fire, and there, seated on a stool meditating, is Agnostes. He wheels round at the interruption, but at seeing you bursts into a grin.

'What brings you here, Altheus? I am sure you have a story to tell!' Go to 4.

461

The crew runs on ahead, while you thoughtfully tie up the raft so that you have a means of escape. You call them back, but they do not answer you. A strange sense of lassitude overcomes you, and for half an hour you do nothing. Then, in panic in case anything untoward has happened, you rush on towards the source of the smoke. Go to 469.



The three men back away in fear of the final blow, but you stay your hand. Five more villagers have arrived carrying long knives, and you think it best to leave now before they set upon you. Have 4 Honour points for defeating the fishermen.

You evade their comrades and climb back into the heart of the island. A thin column of smoke rises from the other side, close to the cliffs which you scrambled up earlier. The smoke grows thicker and thicker as you hurry towards it. Go to 350.

In a shimmer of sunlight, the white-armed goddess, Hera, queen of the gods, stands before you.

'Well, Altheus,' she chides, 'I really would not have expected this of you. Your mother Aethra would be shocked. If you do not purge yourself, the gods will never forgive you. Go on now, build a raft and get away from this dreadful place.' With this the fair-faced one is gone, back to her satin-cushioned bower on high Olympus. Go to 352.



You soon find the temple, and the priest is pleased to usher you inside. You are worried lest Zeus be offended by your entry into the temple of this pagan god Ammon, but you offer prayers to the Olympian and proceed into the vast cavernous sanctum. You find a spot well away from the cold draught that seems to run right through the building and you fall into uneasy slumber.

In your dreams you are disturbed by a vision of the goddess Hera.

'Altheus, don't fret yourself, you silly child. Of course Zeus won't be offended by you sleeping in the temple of Ammon. He is Ammon! It's just that these Egyptians can't get their tongues round his real name. Anyway, tomorrow you must set off for the Oasis Ammonium – that's an oracle in the middle of the desert. Goodness knows why they wanted to put it there, but I suppose it is a very pleasant setting. Now get some sleep; you've got a long journey tomorrow.' She frowns, as if deeply worried, and then is gone.

In the morning you set out from Thebes, accompanied by the temple priest. Go to 232.

The skinny Nubian's protests are overruled by a sweep of your arm and he follows as you stride out of the hut. You return to the place where you spoke to the king before, but he is not there and you stand, embarrassed, while the youth catches up. He leads you away to a hut in the centre of the camp and, after a moment of hesitation, he shows you inside.

The king looks up, irritated at this intrusion, but the interpreter talks to him briefly, explaining, you presume, why you have burst in. The king looks no less angry and snaps back with quick staccato speech, which is interpreted for you reluctantly.

'He asks what you want.'

'I want my freedom,' you reply, and the message is relayed to the king, who grunts to himself thoughtfully. After a moment he turns back to you.

'You are free to choose between life as one of my warriors and life as one of my servants,' he says through his tribesman. 'That is your freedom.'

Will you choose to fight for the Nubians (turn to 330), will you become a servant (turn to 276), or will you refuse to agree, and threaten to cast another spell (turn to 516)?

You let go of the plaques and they fall to the ground and shatter into a thousand tiny pieces. You bend down in an attempt to collect together the fragments, but it is as futile as seeking to count the grains of sand on the sea-shore. The crowd, stunned for a time at these events, starts to surge angrily forward, but Arissia contains them. 'Go now, stranger,' she intones, 'and may you never rest easy in your bed, knowing what you have done to us today.' Chastened, you flee as fast as your weary legs can carry you, back towards the ship.

You lose 3 Honour points, and if you were in Favour with Demeter, she is now Neutral; if she was Neutral to you, you are now in Disfavour; and if you were already in Disfavour, you take a Shame point. Go to 3.

'I'd like to visit Ariadne,' you tell him.

Your guide shrugs. 'You're the consumer. And none of this is true, anyway.' He leads you away through a corridor of swirling mist, but after a mile or two you sense the direction and stride off ahead, leaving your guide trailing.

You arrive at a cave with a sign over the entrance reading 'Ariadne'. You enter cautiously.

'She's not here,' you complain.

'I know,' says your guide. 'If you'd let me explain . . .'

Ariadne comes into the cave to find you both. Her hair is dripping and she is wrapped in a towel. You back out of the cave and turn to your guide furiously.

'It's her punishment,' he explains. 'She's to spend eternity returning from a bath.'

'Returning . . . ?'

'Yes. It's lucky her father is a judge of the underworld. Her original sentence was to spend eternity on her way to bathe.'

If you leave, go to 518. If you stay, go to 198.

The king takes the spear back and signals to four men who step forward from the crowd. Together they bundle you through the ranks to a massive wicker cage, inside which a mountain lion prowls restlessly up and down. It does not take the intelligence of a genius to realize what lies in store, and you know instinctively that the lion has not been overfed these last few days. The cage door swings open in the hand of the Nubian king and you are forced inside. You are quickly on your feet, but the door is slammed and tied shut. Your only hope lies in defeating the lion with your bare hands. Perhaps the gods will help you. The lion is Might 6, Protection 12. If you kill it, go to 565. If you pray to Zeus as you die, go to 477.

You strike deeper into the forest and there, ahead of you, stands a stone cottage nestled peacefully in a grove of olive trees. You approach cautiously and see, on the threshold, a middle-aged woman, clad in a grey gown.

'I am Circe and I know why you have come,' she says.

She leads you into her cottage and it seems that the tiny room is crammed full of centuries of keepsakes; there are small carved ivory toads on the mantelpiece, unicorns' horns in the corner, and a pot with a portrait of Perseus rests on the table.

'Signed,' whispers Circe. You wipe your feet on a pigskin rug and wait, hardly able to take in all the artefacts. Before she returns you have only time to pick up and examine a scroll of parchment. It is an excellent texture of paper and contains a work entitled 'The Sharpened Sickle'.

Circe returns with a delicate container in which a dark steaming liquid bubbles.

'Drink this,' she says, 'and you will be purged of your guilt.' Do you refuse (turn to 441), or accept (turn to 140)?

When the boys see you approaching, they scream and run off towards the village. In the rush, the ball falls to the ground, bounces slowly into the stream and is carried away by the water. Anxious not to frighten the children, you do not run after them, but instead stop and drink from the clear stream. The water is cold and refreshing, and you gulp it down avidly.

When you look up again, the children are almost back in the village, making their way through the trees that surround it. You walk slowly in that direction in the hope that you may be able to discover where you are. As you near the village, two stocky men carrying swords run towards you. Will you try to talk to them (turn to 237), prepare to fight them (turn to 583), or run off before they can reach you (turn to 387)?



You start up the steps with firm strides, anxious to get a sight of the top. The climb tires you, however, and soon you are forced to take a rest. The steps still carry on above you with no apparent end, so you decide that you will have to take off your armour and leave all your other impediments on the steps, if you are to reach the top. You set off once more carrying only your sword. Up and up you climb, and slowly you begin to make out light, filtering down from above. With renewed vigour you bound up the remaining steps until, at last, you stand on the final step, once more in the fresh air of the cool night. You stare out at a wooded hillside: evidently this is not the way to the underworld.

Will you climb down the stairs again (turn to 234), or will you forsake your expedition and explore this place (turn to 355)?

You crouch low in the grass and, as the leopard approaches, you leap at it, before it has noticed you. Its back drops down as you crash on top and it throws its head back when your hands encircle its neck. You twist and tighten your grip, but it is too strong and with a swift flick, it knocks you off its back and into the grass. You must fight it: it has Might 5, Protection 10, but the heat has taken its toll, and you may only roll one die. You have, however, managed to Wound it already in your attempt to throttle it.

If you kill it, turn to 376. If you retreat, go to 390. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 293.



473

You fall into conversation with one of the crew on deck and discover that this boat travels up the Nile from Memphis twice a year to collect animal skins at the furthest navigable point. These skins are then sold to Egyptians along the banks, as the boat returns to Lower Egypt, and any remaining are sold to Phoenician, Cretan or Greek merchants at the delta. You take heart at this news, for if you can board a Greek vessel in the Mediterranean, you will soon be back in Athens and once more see your beloved mother in Troezen.

The boat sails on through the night and in the morning it is near its destination. You sail on past Syene, the last town in Egypt, and in a few hours you are at the first cataract. An incredible waterfall of foaming, angry Nile water fills the air with spray. The rush of water is almost deafening and you can barely hear the captain as he leans towards you.

'This is where we pick up the skins,' he shouts.

'Who do you get them from?' you ask.

You can only just catch the reply, but you wish you had not: 'The Nubians.'

Go to 153.

474

As you strike the old man, he transforms into a fearsome lion and hurls himself at you. You must continue the fight against the Healthy lion; any wounds you received are unhealed. It is the lion's attack and he rolls two dice. The lion is Might 6, Protection 12.

If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 557. If you Wound the lion, go to 310.





475

The ring is, in fact, a highly valuable artefact, forged by the god Hephaestus in his furnaces deep under Thera. It allows you one extra prayer to Zeus, but since it was not given to you, but to another Athenian who had the misfortune to lose it to Markos, when you want to use it, you must invoke the fire god. When you choose to do so, roll one die. On a roll of 6, he will refuse to pass on your message to Zeus. Go to 239.

476

On your way to the river, two men jump out from behind a building and threaten you with short daggers. They demand something gruffly, but you cannot understand their language. Besides, if they want money, you have none to give. They become angry and shout first at you and then at each other. Will you make a dash for it (turn to 511), or will you fight these thieves (turn to 178)?

477

The lion strikes out for a final kill, but only catches your thigh. Its claws slice into the muscle and you pass out. Zeus, however, stops the lion as it moves in to kill and devour you. The ruler of the gods controls the beast and makes it retreat to the far corner of its cage while the Nubians, awestruck, release you. You try to walk, but your leg will not support any weight and you have to be carried back to a hut. Go to 190.

478

The twelve-day journey to Memphis passes without incident, but you are constantly haunted by the words of the god. The thought of the nether world fills you with dread and you are troubled again by the fever you caught in Nubia. You cannot enjoy the sight of the pyramids or the delights of Memphis, as you fight the raging delirium. Your mind cannot dispel the image of the Minotaur striking down your brother, but after two days you recover enough to resume your journey. You build a raft and sail it down the Nile until you reach the Mediterranean. With no regret, you glance back at Africa one last time, and then your eyes are trained ahead, course set for Greece and home. Go to 351.

479

The Olympian sees you taken by Scylla, but he does not wish you to die just yet. He commands the six-headed monster to release her grip, and you fall flailing into the water. You look up and see each of the creature's heads grinning evilly; the expression reminds you of nothing so much as Markos' smile. Yet it is the merchant who saves you from the whirlpool that threatens to suck you down into the vortex of Charybdis. A net is thrown over the side and you scramble up it, chafing your hands on the rope.

When you reach port in North Africa, you follow the merchant ashore, in order to buy some token to display your profound gratitude at his uncharacteristic act of mercy. He, however, is intent on other business. Go to 302.



480

In order to see if you pass the Sirens safely, you must roll two dice. If the total is nine or less, you move one step closer to the Sirens. You may modify the roll as follows:

If you are tied to the mast – add four

For every Honour point you spend in advance – add one

You must roll the dice six times before sailing past. If you have moved three steps towards the Sirens, turn to 111. If you have rolled the dice six times and have not moved three or more steps towards the Sirens, go to 501.



481

Are you afraid of a little rest? Lose 2 Honour points and go to 469.

482

Both men drop to their knees.

'Spare us,' they wheeze as one, 'for we are but temple acolytes.'

You accept and take a spear (Might 2) and breastplate (Protection 2). You may have 4 Honour points for your victory. The priestess Arissia then pipes up in a voice now less resounding and strangely girlish.

'You are clearly favoured by Demeter. You must perform the ceremony. If you fail in front of the people, they will no doubt lynch you, and your limbs will be food for the starving of the city. Open the doors.' You have no choice but to go along with the ritual. Go to 184.

483

'You must seek out your brother Theseus in the underworld, for he will tell you how you must purge yourself.'

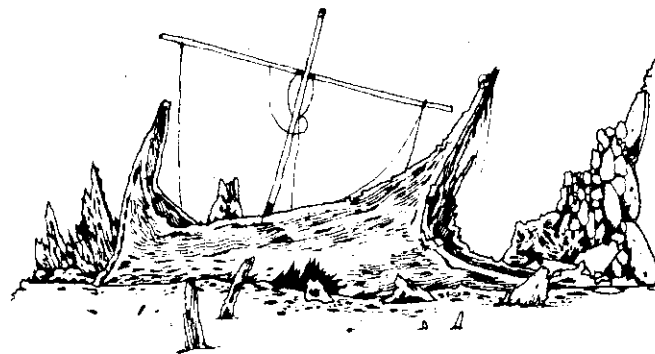
So saying the old man sinks back into the heaving waters of the sea and you are left alone, faced with the daunting task of journeying to the underworld. You do not know which direction you must take, but you offer prayers to Zeus in the hope that he will guide you to the entrance of the kingdom of Hades.

You feel very hungry and decide that you must eat before you set about building a raft to escape from Pharos. You walk into the heart of the island and there find a bush bearing both white and red berries.

Will you eat the red berries (turn to 559), the white ones (turn to 379) or a mixture of both (turn to 439)?

484

You raise the beaker to your lips and drink deeply of the hot liquid before replacing the vessel on the dusty floor of the cave. Everything seems very close up. You grip the hands of your neighbours firmly, and they squeeze yours reassuringly. If you have 1 or more Shame points, go to 154. Otherwise go to 587.





485

Several minutes after the other boat, you guide your vessel across the finishing-line. Your crew is dejected, and they are silent as they drag the boat up the sand. The crowd cheer the other captain, but you are ignored and snubbed.

Have 1 Shame point. Sadly, you make your way along the beach to Agnostes. Turn to 320.

486

You stand on the deck, a sense of exhilaration racing through you as the cold winds begin to blow. Then, with a sudden reassuring gust, the goddess Hera, wife of great Zeus, appears to you.

'You'll catch your death of cold standing there, Altheus, and you should get some clean clothes on too. Well anyway, you behaved yourself quite well in Crete, but it was such a pity that Ariadne just had to be left on Naxos.' She smiles wanly. 'Now you must return to the safe haven of Athens where your father is worrying himself to death in case he sees the black sails of doom; the white ones are so much more comforting, don't you think?'

With a twist of her tunic, and the dropping of a small wooden figurine, the rain begins to fall, and Hera is gone once more.

Wondering at this manifestation, you turn to shelter from the wild winds. Go to 252.

487

You accept your host's offer and sip slowly at the wine. He asks you about your travels and you tell him of your ordeals, but soon his wife returns with a bowl of hot soup. You drink it eagerly and hand back the empty bowl with a compliment, since it is indeed very good. Then the woman leads you behind the curtain where the younger woman is filling a bath from a kettle. The daughter bathes your aching body, rubs soft olive oil on your skin and then clothes you in a fine garment fashioned from a lion's skin. Thus refreshed and resplendent, you step back into the main room and greet your host once more.

'You have shown great kindness and I thank you.'

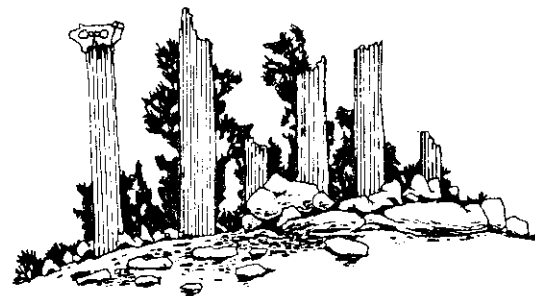
'It is no more than Zeus commands us; I only wish I had more to offer as a gift than this lionskin.'

'Friend, if ever you venture to Athens, you shall be welcome in my house, but now I must continue on my journey.'

So saying, you embrace him and depart. You return to the marshy ring where the steps lead down to the underworld, mindful of your mission. Go to 530.

488

The gods will not help you. Maybe they feel you should have faced the Nubian champion instead of backing off like a coward. Lose 1 Honour point and return to 468.





489

'Take me to see my companions before I drink it,' you demand and Circe does not seem to be put out. She conducts you out of the door and round to a pigsty behind the cottage. There, happily eating swill from the trough, are five rather thin pigs.

'These,' she says smirking, 'were your crew.'

Do you attack Circe (turn to 41), or do you demand that the sorceress restores your crew to their proper form (turn to 127)?

490

The boat moves into the bank and one of the crew leaps ashore with a rope to fasten the vessel. The Nubians are nowhere in sight and you wonder why you ever entertained such a ridiculous idea as leaping over the side into the confused waters of the Nile. The captain chats with you idly about his home in Lower Egypt and you feel more at ease. Suddenly a crew member cries out that the tribesmen are coming and the captain, pulling a knife from his belt, thrusts it close to your stomach. You have been sold into slavery! The Nubians take you, along with the gems and spears, in exchange for two baskets of animal skins. You watch as the perfidious Egyptians sail back down the Nile and then you are marched across the desert to the Nubian camp. It takes more than a week and when you arrive, the king cuts your hamstrings with a knife. You will never escape again.

491

As you pause in the moonlight, a rustling in the bushes to your left disturbs you. Shooting a quick glance in that direction, you are horrified to see a scraggy mountain lion stalking you. You draw your sword and turn to attack the creature. It has Might 6, Protection 13. If you kill it, go to 298. If it kills you and Zeus intervenes, go to 590.

492

You thank the captain and stroll into the main part of Memphis, which is far dirtier than Thebes, the Egyptian capital. A powerful stench pervades everywhere, but the inhabitants are seemingly unaffected. The air is hot and humid, and you are forced to rest every hundred yards or so to regain your breath and beat off the feeling of nausea.

You plan to spend only one night here, but the fever you caught in Nubia returns. You spend four days and nights delirious and fighting for your life. Visions of the Minotaur and the Nubian king seem to merge in terrible union, but at last you recover enough to resume your journey. You work for two weeks in the hot sun to recover your strength and to earn enough money to buy a small dinghy.

In this you sail down the Nile to its westernmost mouth, and rejoice at the sight of the Mediterranean. The island of Pharos lies barely a day's sail off the coast, so you make for that as the first stage in your sail to Greece. As the sun sinks in the west, you slowly drowse off at the helm. Go to 507.

493

'Oh, all right, but if you throw that sword in the water, I'll throw you in after it,' you add, to vent your anger.

Markos turns to one of the shades near by, removes a coin from its mouth and gives it to you.

'But . . . but he'll have to walk this bank for a hundred years now,' you complain.

'That's no concern of mine. You wanted an obol quickly; I got you one straight away.' Have 1 Shame point for being the cause of such torment to the unfortunate shade.

You both climb into the fragile craft and sit on the narrow bench as Charon slides the punt pole into the muddy water. Go to 437.



494

You lean forward, trying to grab hold of the reins and pull the horse in. As you do so, the horse charges round a sharp bend, and the back wheel of the cart slips off the edge of the road into space. For a sickening moment, the cart hangs there, the horse straining to stay on the road, and then the weight of the cart drags it, the horse and you back over the edge and sends you all tumbling down the mountainside.

If you have not yet used your prayer to Zeus, you must do so now, and turn to 356. Otherwise, horse, cart and you will end in a tangle of smashed limbs and wood at the bottom of the hillside.

495

You start to tell the official of your encounter with the birdmen, but he cuts you off agitatedly.

'Tell me no further,' he implores. 'This cannot be true: the birds are our friends. They protect our city from those who would do us harm: they save us from the ratmen.'

'Who are they?'

'They are our enemies.'

You are puzzled. 'But who are they? I have never seen one.'

'Neither have I,' the official tells you. 'The birds protect us from them. Here you must read this.' He reaches into a fold in his cloak and pulls out a thick scroll. 'This is our holy book. It will tell you all you need to know. No, keep it.'

And he hurries away, happy at having done a good deed. Go to 179.

496

You run blindly along the path, seeking to put as much distance as you can between you and the birdmen. Soon, you hear a screeching and keening behind you and then sounds of pursuit. You run on. A bush ahead screams into life and a flock of birds rises into the night. You run on. Panting, you come to a spot where the wood ends and the path rejoins the high road. You slow down, breathe heavily and walk out. At this moment, you feel a sharp pain in your chest, and look down to see the arrow that has lodged there. More and more birdmen spring up as if from nowhere in front of you; you crumple to the ground, dead.

497

As you pray, you feel a lightness and peace come over you, and the memories drop away from your mind. You can still recall what has happened, but it is as if you were only a spectator. You no longer blame yourself. You feel the fever which has troubled you since Africa and which broke out again in the mountains leave you too, but whether this is the work of Zeus or of the Phytalidae, you cannot tell. Your Shame is now 0, your Honour 1. Go to 519.

498

You remember to offer prayers to Poseidon, the earth-shaker, lord of the ocean, and he fills your sails with a gentle south-east wind. The sea is calm and you begin to hope that you will now return to Greece. Go to 254.

499

The men will not surrender, and in the distance you can see more men arriving from the village. You can retreat (turn to 397), or you can continue to fight (turn to 96).

500

The sun grows hotter overhead and your skin turns red and begins to blister. You gasp out for water, but you know you cannot drink the salt poison of the sea. You cry out for help, but your shouts are as the rattle in a dead man's throat. The sun's hue transmutes to purple, and the sea appears to solidify. A man dressed in flowing robes seems to glide across the frozen waves. It is Hades. Zeus will not save those who spurn safety.



501

The singing changes from heavenly to raucous, and the sweet notes transform into curses. You have escaped the Sirens and now they toss obscenities at you. Yet none of you turns round to gaze at their forms, fearful lest you be entrapped once more by these cruel creatures. Have 3 Honour points for surviving. Go to 46.

502

'Too bad,' says Markos. 'The callow youth's a coward.' You are angry enough to retaliate to this slight, but the Achaians, armed to the teeth, prevent you from acting. Take 2 Shame points. You spend the rest of the night sleeping fitfully. Go to 440.



503

'What happened to you? And what about Crete?' you ask him.

'Now that is a very complicated story,' replies Dipthis and he proceeds to tell you. 'When you escaped, Ariadne got away as well. Opris reckoned she went with you,' he says raising his eyebrows inquisitively. When you do not respond, he continues. 'Anyway, that was the last of Minos' family and Minos was killed in the earthquake, so there was suddenly no one at the top. Opris turned up with Minos' ring claiming that the old king had given it to him before he died, and although no one believed that, we managed to see that he got the kingship. He didn't last long: the Thracians soon got control. Opris fled when they tried to kill him and was last heard of making his way to Athens to enlist your support, but I suppose you know about that. Back in Crete the Thracians set up Miktros as a puppet and eliminated all the other claimants. I was just an embarrassment, so I had to go too. Still, you must be getting along if you want to catch the last ferry. Old Charon goes off sharp in the evening and won't come on again until the morning. You'll need an obol.'

With this Dipthis moves off again and is lost in the mass of empty shades. You reach the water's edge, aware that you have no obol. Go to 395.

504

The four men turn back at your cry and you climb up behind one, thanking them for their kindness. It transpires that they are making for Thebes, the Egyptian capital, which they hope to reach by nightfall. It is uncomfortable sitting right back on the horse, but you are only too grateful to be on your way north towards Greece, although it is still a thousand miles distant.

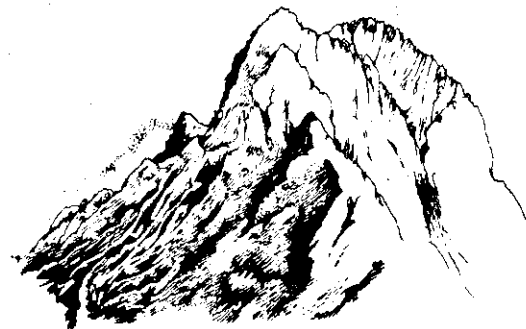
You arrive at the city just before sunset and are amazed at its grandeur. One of the riders tells you proudly that it has a hundred gates and through each one two war-chariots can be sent fully armed; such is the might and wealth of the Egyptian capital.

You climb down from the back of the horse and thank the men once more, before setting off into the city on foot. Turn to 236.

505

You stumble out of the door, and find yourself in a moonlit wood. Paths lead off to left (turn to 496) and right (turn to 428), or you can plunge into the thick of the woods (turn to 212).

Alternatively, you can go back into the complex of buildings, the nearest of which is the granary from which you have just escaped (turn to 456).



Inside, the temple is bleak and austere and you look around to see where you must go to find the oracle. A small Arab, clearly the officiating priest, shuffles up to you.

'I am Omar, desert priest of Ammon,' he starts. 'What do you want?'

'I have come to consult the oracle,' you reply.

He leads you to the back of the building and shows you into a small room behind a curtain. There a man sits at a desk, frantically scribbling on a piece of papyrus. All around the floor there are more papyrus scrolls and you step carefully through the chaos until you are at the desk.

The man looks up suddenly and knocks over his ink.

'Altheus, you startled me.' You recognize the god Apollo and start to apologize, but he cuts you off with a wave of his hand. 'Immortality makes one so nervous. Now, why have you come? Oh, yes, the blood-guilt. You must see the Phy . . . the, er, Phy . . .' He peers at the manuscript and turns it in his hand to view from another angle. 'I'm dreadfully sorry, but I can't read my handwriting. Can you make it out?' He hands you the paper, but it is a mass of illegible inky scrawls. 'Oh well,' he continues, 'it's something like the Phydippides, but I can't remember exactly. I know what. Go and see Theseus in the underworld, he'll tell you. Must dash. Sorry.'

With that the god is gone and with him all the scrolls and manuscripts. You leave the oracle, bemused. Turn to 478.

It is night, but an orange glow on the horizon heralds the approach of day. You turn your head slowly, taking in your surroundings: you are lying on a sandy beach below steep rocky cliffs and your boat has been dragged up away from the sea's edge. There is a gentle breeze coming in across the water, making you shiver, but as the sun bursts up from the sea and begins to climb high into the clear sky, you soon warm up. In the daylight you can see that there is a path up the cliffs into the heart of the island. Will you stay by your boat (turn to 367), or will you explore (turn to 77)?



Your Chronicle Sheet looks like this:

Might 5 Honour 24

Protection 11 Shame 14

You have no Intelligence points.

Sword: Might 3

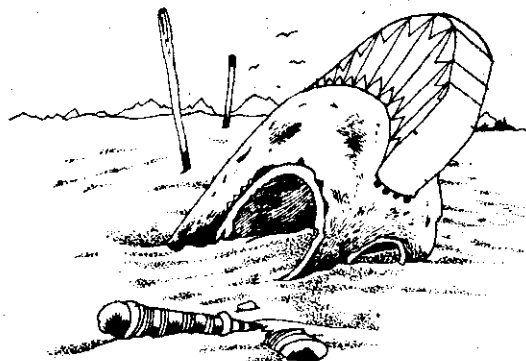
Helmet: Protection 2

Queen Antiope's jewelled brooch

Hera - Disfavour

Athena - Disfavour

Note that you have Might 5, instead of 4, and Protection 11, instead of 10, because of the experience you gained in the defeat of the Minotaur. Go to 117.



'No mercy, mutineer!' you cry and swing the torch down, blinding the man and igniting his hair. You turn and walk away as he beats feebly at his face with his hands, trying to put out the flames, before collapsing dead into the bilge. Have 2 Shame points and go to 228.

You rush towards the old man and attack him before he can run off. Have 1 Shame point for your action.

He has Might 2, Protection 9. If you retreat, turn to 453. If you surrender, turn to 98. If you die and are saved by Zeus, turn to 557. If you Seriously Wound him, turn to 474.

You rush down a side-street and quickly lose the two incompetent villains. Your leg throbs where it was wounded in Nubia and you are forced to rest against a house, while you recover. The streets are quite busy at this hour and the inhabitants bustle past without bothering you, so that you have to stop one and inquire what town this is. He does not understand. You motion with your hands and eventually he comprehends.

'Latopolis,' he says, and hurries away.

This answer affords you no more clue as to which country you are in than before, but a few more questions to passers-by reveal that the river is the Nile. You are in Egypt, you deduce.

You hurry on towards the harbour again. Turn to 544.

Your terror-stricken breathing is your only movement, while you helplessly watch the leopard slinking towards you with graceful gait. Its eyes dart left and right, observant of the surroundings. It comes ever nearer, as if drawn towards you by some higher power. You gradually realize that it is aware of your presence. Suddenly it leaps full stretch and attacks.

It has Might 5, Protection 10, but the heat has taken its toll of you and you may only roll one die. It has first attack. If you defeat it, turn to 376. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 293. If you retreat, turn to 390.

Theseus leads you through the sun-drenched meadows, pointing out the heroes of future years as you pass.

'Look over there: that's Agamemnon.' He points to a large, robust man standing talking to a group of other shades. 'He will be king of Mycenae and leader of the Greeks in the fateful Trojan War,' your brother explains. 'Yet no warrior's sword shall bring him down; instead his wife will slay him as he returns victorious from the war. And there is the bravest of the Greeks.' He indicates a strikingly handsome young man sitting sadly on his own. 'The perfect hero – courageous, strong and handsome, proud and yet eager to obey the gods. How sad it is that you must die so young, brave Achilles.'

Your brother only has time to show you a brief pageant of future Greek glories. You spy Menelaus and Odysseus, victors at Troy, and brave Leonidas, hero of Thermopylae. You hear of the great victories over the Persians at Marathon and Salamis, you marvel at the wisdom of the great philosophers, who will carry Greece's fame for centuries after their death, and you grieve at the future of Alcibiades, who promises so much yet cannot fulfil those expectations, but it is the tale of Alexander's future that seizes your imagination most.

At length, you must leave the halls of Hades and you turn once more to face your brother.

'Tell me how I may purge myself of the guilt that weighs upon my mind.'

'Altheus, I will not only tell you, I will show you the tribe who can purge you myself. We must leave the underworld now.'

You bid farewell to Dean, who tells you that, in order to lead your brother out of Hades, you must walk on ahead of him and not look back until you reach daylight again. With this in mind, you stride away towards the River Lethe.

Did you eat Markos' pomegranate back at the Styx? If you did, turn to 438. If you did not, turn to 337.



514

The old woman leads the way into a great cavernous opening in the side of the rock, and points with a frail, quivering finger at a tunnel set in the far wall. Her voice is unsteady, and carries more than a hint of fear.

'This is as far as I can go. I must leave now.'

She turns and hurries away, but after a moment she looks back, and, almost inaudibly, mutters, 'Good luck.' Then her figure recedes, until all you can make out is the light of her torch as she weaves her way down the hillside. Then that too disappears. You are left alone and frightened in the blackness of the cave. You pause awhile, so that your eyes become accustomed to the lack of light, but at last you feel that you have delayed long enough, and with forced determination, you stride into the tunnel. Go to 197.

515

Most of the Athenians cry out for you, but some are still undecided. Sensing these mixed feelings, the neutral sailors join the mutineers, and a confused fight begins in the close quarters below deck. You duck just in time for a thrown lantern to miss your head and smash against the wall behind you. Gripping your billhook firmly, you leap into the fray.

Subtract the number you rolled on the dice (including the Honour bonus) from 10. If the result is 0, go straight to 348.

Otherwise, you must fight that many mutineers, each Might 4, Protection 10, and each with a knife (Might 1). If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 74. If all are Seriously Wounded, turn to 348. If you surrender, turn to 249. You may not retreat.



516

The king gives another of his unfriendly laughs and orders his interpreter to take you away. The man argues for a second, but it is clear who is in control. You are hustled out, unclear about the conversation to which you have been party, yet which you could not comprehend. The skinny Nubian leads you back to your hut without speaking, and leaves. You fall exhausted to the ground, and sleep very soundly, so that it is nearly midday when you awake. Above you two warriors stand guard and will not let you leave the hut. It is a long time before they depart to fetch some food. Go to 113.



517

Ducking the farmer's blow, you lose your footing and fall off the cart. You manage to catch hold of a bough sticking out over the road and cling to it, as the cart careers away down the hill, the farmer's obscene taunting ringing in your ears. Once he is out of sight, you drop to the ground, shrug, and carry on walking down the hill. You notice a broken knife at the side of the road and you tuck it into your belt. Thebes lies before you. Turn to 259.

Take 2 Shame points. Your guide is silent as you walk back to the path. You look sideways at him.

'You disapprove?'

He shrugs.

'Come on, what's the matter?'

He stops. 'It's a few moments for you. It may be the only punctuation in her eternity.'

'She wouldn't have thanked me.'

'Do you do everything for thanks? And no, perhaps she wouldn't have been grateful now, but in a hundred years? Two hundred? But of course it's not literally true.'

You walk on in silence.

'Hell,' your guide remarks finally, 'is an absence of other people.' Turn to 279.



The elders return. 'Do you wish to be purged?' the woman asks.

You nod. 'I have no alternative.'

She smiles. 'Then come with us.'

They lead you out of the tent, along a small path and into a cave, dimly lit. The entire race of the Phytalidae is sitting in a circle, holding hands, all dressed in the same grey. They look up at you as the elders take their place in the ring. Following their gestures, you squat and join them, gripping the hands of the two young people on either side of you. The man to your right takes some mushrooms from a pouch and drops them into a beaker of steaming liquid. Then he passes it to you to drink. Turn to 231.

Have 1 Shame point for this deed, which is unworthy of a true hero, and turn to 189.

You take one of the men's shortswords. For a moment there is hope in their eyes, as they think this payment for their lives, but then you whirl round like a rushing river and sever their heads from their bodies. A woman screams in the background. Take the normal penalty of 2 Shame points for slaying opponents who have surrendered.

The sword you are holding suddenly feels light in your hand, and you know that Hephaestus has imbued it with a straighter edge and a sharper blade. It is now Might 3, Protection 0. You may take a breastplate (Protection 2). Have 4 Honour points for your victory.

You return to the ship and Oresander, looking pensive, orders the vessel to set sail. Go to 10.



522

You dress in the body's robes, don its mask and strap on the iron claws, before rising shakily to your feet. Outside the door, a small flight of wooden steps leads down; looking back, you can see that the granary is supported off the ground by a wooden framework resting on large boulders.

The granary is situated in a compound defined by several scattered buildings. There are sounds coming from the largest, a barn, and you strut over to it unsteadily. You look through the crack in the heavy double doors, and see that the barn is full of birdmen. One, obviously the leader, has a robe of golden feathers and an eagle mask.

You open the doors and step surreptitiously inside. One of the men spots you and screeches out to you in an alien tongue. You mimic him, but the birdmen crowd round you suspiciously. The leader forces his way to the front, and rips the mask from your face. Then he throws his head back and emits an unearthly cackle. 'As I thought,' he hisses. 'The enemy within.'

Think quickly. Will you try to escape before they can react (turn to 394), or will you seize a hostage (turn to 116)?

523

If in fact you have an obol, which you have carried all the way from Troy for six years, go to 270. If not, lose 1 Honour point and go to 395.

524

You join the farmer in fishing for the reins. He, however, sensing his opportunity, shoves you forward over the front, so that you fall between the wheels. Your ribs are crushed instantly.

525

You turn and run from the village, your feet pounding the earth as you sprint back towards your boat. You curse these inhospitable men, but you are glad to see that they have not followed. Smoke rises in thick clouds from the far side of the island, close to the beach where you left your boat. Go to 350.

526

Before you move, you notice a flicker of light in the crate in front of you. With a quick push, the top slides off to reveal the mutineer brandishing a torch. You step back in alarm and the man leaps out of the crate. You must fight him. He has Might 4, Protection 10, and has the torch (Might 2).

If you surrender, go to 249. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 156. If the sailor is Seriously Wounded, go to 94.

527

You may have 5 Honour points for defeating the beast. You are pulled back on board, but soon you disembark and proceed on the second part of your journey, by camel. You only stay in Hermopolis for a couple of hours before the caravan departs. The priest informs you of his dread of the river journey, which he is forced to undertake four times a year, and indeed he seems more cheerful now. Go to 369.

528

You spring to your feet and take the birdmen by surprise. You must make an instant decision whether to try to escape at once (turn to 394), or to take a hostage (turn to 338).

529

You break into a run and manage to catch up with the farmer and leap on to the back of the cart. You take the driver by surprise, and start to throttle him with your hands. After a moment, he breaks free and tries to fend you off.

The horse bolts and gallops down a shallow but increasingly steep hill, dragging the cart with it. It is on this precarious swaying platform that you grapple with the farmer. Turn to 454.

530

You are back at the top of the steps and, with trepidation, you begin the descent. You have forgotten how steep the steps are and you trip, almost falling before regaining your balance. When you are halfway down, you begin to look ahead for your armour, but it has gone. You keep on going down in the hope that you left it closer to the bottom, but eventually you reach the final step without finding it. Go to 433.

531

The dog rushes forward, his six eyes fixed on you intently, and hatred apparent in his manner. You must fight Cerberus, who has Might 4, Protection 10. You strike, then each of his heads strikes in any given round. Thus he has three attacks to one of yours. Note that the heads do not get multiple opponent bonuses, and that any Honour you spend to increase your Protection is only effective against one of the heads. You have only to Wound him three times, as normal, to kill him.

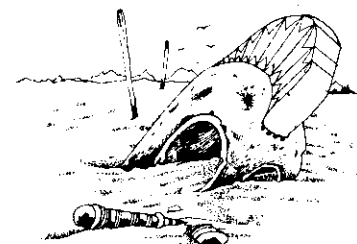
There is nowhere to retreat. If you kill him, go to 292. If you die, you cannot be saved by Zeus.

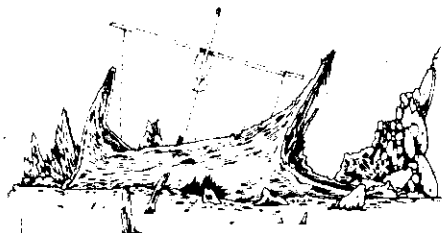
532

Ares the bringer of slaughter is at your side with a noise like that of a thousand war-trumpets.

'Hail, Altheus, Minotaur-slayer. New goal: return home. Receive the praise deserved. Hoist the white sails. Signal your success. Stamp on these cowardly sailors. That's all. Good luck, again.'

The god vanishes leaving behind no trace of his coming. You stay below decks for a while, but then the cramped and stale atmosphere forces you above. Go to 252.





533

As you wander along the shore looking for driftwood large enough for your purpose, you are set upon by four dark-skinned warriors. They leap down on to the beach from the plains above and run towards you wielding long spears. You must fight them. They are Might 5, Protection 11, but remember the bonuses for multiple opponents. Their spears are Might 1. You cannot retreat.

If you surrender, go to 424. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 269. If you Seriously Wound all four of them, go to 115.

534

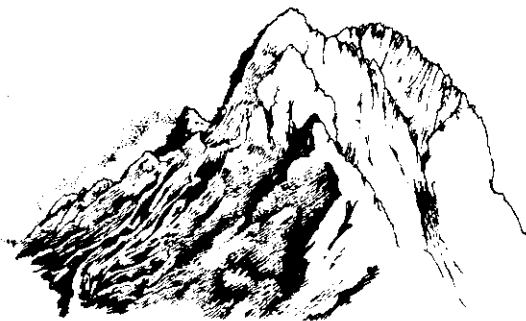
Realizing the peril of your journey, you pray to your patron for assistance. For a long time there is complete silence, but then a voice cries out, 'We Olympian gods cannot help you in the underworld. You must fend for yourself.' Have 1 Honour point for praying. Go to 197.

535

As you continue, it becomes much harder to keep a grip on either the walls or the floor. Eventually you slip and slide down the marble floor, unable to slow down. Then you shoot off the end into space. There is nothing to grab hold of and you begin to fall, turning somersaults and twisting in the air. Go to 325.

536

As soon as the warriors have gone, you slip out of the hut into the grasslands that surround the camp. It is evening and much cooler than it was earlier in the day, and you quickly get away from the village. No one appears to have noticed your absence, since no warriors have been sent after you. Even so, you decide to walk all night to make sure you are not recaptured. It grows very cold and you become tired, but you dare not stop. Then, as the dawn begins to creep over the treeless horizon, the air grows warmer until it is almost unbearably hot. You have not eaten for a day and you are dehydrated by the heat. Over to the left some vultures circle high in the sky. Will you head over that way in hope of finding water (turn to 155), or will you avoid these creatures (turn to 211)?



537

The horse picks its way carefully along the uneven road, and you lean back to stay upright. Out of the bushes at the side of the road leap several men in cloaks and bird-masks, one with a bow and arrows. You start to rein the horse back, but the men shout to each other in bursts of high-pitched screaming, and the one with the bow fires at you. The arrow goes through the horse's neck and it rears up, frothing blood at the mouth. Then it collapses forward, and you are thrown over its head to land heavily on the ground beyond, knocked unconscious. Go to 99.



538

The streets seem subdued and quiet and no one appears to recognize you. This time, you easily find the palace, which is silhouetted against the overcast sky, and knock confidently on the bronze gates for admission.

A guard opens them. 'Who are you, that comes knocking so loudly at a house of mourning?' he asks.

'I am Altheus the Avenger, son of Aegeus king of Athens.'

The guard's face turns ashen at this, and he hastily slams the door. After a moment, during which you stand puzzled, the doors open again, and the guard points at you while whispering frantically to another man, whom you recognize as General Etekon. He drags you inside and the bronze doors are slammed shut once more.

'Do you know what you have done?' demands the general. 'When the ship returned black-sailed, Aegeus was sure he had lost another son, and he cast himself from the cliffs into the sea.'

You stand aghast. 'Then I am now king of Athens?' you ask.

Etekon grunts. 'In name, yes. In practice, the Athenians will never accept you with an omen like this, until you have purged yourself of your guilt. As to how this may be done, I do not know. But I will have a boat and crew made ready for you. You must leave here tonight or I cannot answer for the mood of the people.'

You must take 8 Shame points for your father's death. Go to 215.

539

You remember the knife tucked into your belt, take it out and cast it away. The Phytalidae murmur approval.

'It is good,' comments the male elder. 'To be healed of the sickness within, you must utterly deny all outward wars and strife. Now drink the drink.' Go to 484.

540

You beg for a berth on a boat, but the merchant recognizes where you have come from by the pink hue of your robes. Once again you are struck on the head and all is blackness. This time you will awake in Hades; most probably this is for the best, since it will save you much pain.

541

The second of your opponents falls to the ground in agony, but neither seems willing to surrender. You turn around and find the reason for their confidence. There, just emerging from the depths of the cave, are some ten or more tribesmen, all apparelled as the first pair, all armed with life-severing spears. You have little choice but to go with them. You are disarmed, but you may have 4 Honour points for your victory in the fight. Go to 110.

542

You seize the old man and start to shake him. To your astonishment, he transforms into a lion and you release your grip in fright. The lion leaps at you while you are motionless.

You must fight it. It has Might 6, Protection 12, and has the first attack since you are so surprised. You cannot retreat. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 557. If you Wound the lion, go to 310.

543

'Altheus,' the gaunt man calls out, 'I know why you have come.'

Taken aback that he should have seen you so far off, you do not reply for a moment and then you call back discourteously, 'Who are you?'

'Aeacus, of course, judge of the dead.' Have 1 Shame point for your ignorance. You make your way towards him, and he continues to whip the shade, who, you discover, is attempting to turn the pebbles to dust. Your manner becomes more formal, now that you have discovered that you are talking to such an important figure. Go to 296.

544

There are six boats still moored at the bank when you reach the harbour and you have the good fortune to find a captain who speaks Greek. He explains that you are thirty miles south of Thebes, the Egyptian capital, to which he himself is sailing the next day. He offers you a ride there and you gratefully accept. You board the vessel and fall asleep on deck, glad of some rest. In the morning when you awake, the boat has already set sail for Thebes. Go to 56.



545

'I am,' you tell him guardedly. 'Who are . . . these men?'

'I thought you might not know,' he says, proud of his own perceptiveness. 'The birdmen are our protectors. My own son, I am glad to say, has been allowed to join them. Here, have this.' He reaches into a fold in his cloak and pulls out a thick scroll. 'This is our holy book. It will tell you all you need to know. No, keep it.'

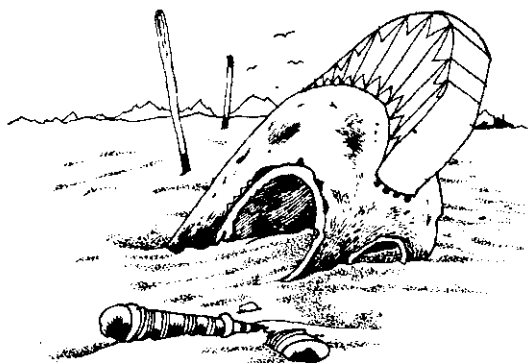
And he hurries away, happy at having done a good deed. Go to 179.

546

You begin to climb down, but the steps are very steep and you have to take care to avoid falling headlong to your death at the bottom. Halfway down you stop to collect the armour which you abandoned on your way up. Then you continue on down until you stand at the bottom. You glance up one last time at the apparently endless steps, almost like a stairway to heaven, and then you press into the dark tunnel. Go to 433.

It is mid-morning when you awake and the sun is already high above the horizon. Away down to your left by a small stream a group of young boys play, tossing a ball from hand to hand. Behind them in the distance there is a tiny village nestled among the trees. To your right, the hill rolls away into a grassy meadow, in which a shepherd sits with his sheep. You rise to your feet and, while brushing the grass from your clothes, decide what to do.

Will you approach the shepherd (turn to 235), will you head towards the group of children (turn to 470), or will you make for the village (turn to 399)?



'What do you want to see, then?'

'Take me to my brother,' you command.

'Which brother would that be?' he asks.

Surprised, you reply, 'Theseus, of course.'

'Oh, I just thought you might mean one of the others,' he replies cryptically.

'What do you mean?'

'Well, far be it from me to tell tales, but just have a word with your mother when you get back home. So Theseus it is.' He walks away.

'Wait, I didn't know anything about this,' you call after him.

He turns back. 'There are a lot of things you don't know. In fact, your parents probably never told you, but you're apocryphal yourself.'

Amazed at these godlike revelations, you hurry after your guide. The corridor of swirling mist branches seven ways.

'Well,' says your guide, 'we seem to have arrived at a symbolic moment of choice . . .'

'What do you mean, symbolic?'

'Oh, none of this is real. Didn't they tell you? Notions of a literal afterlife are very outdated. Anyway, this path leads to the corrupt court officials,' he says, pointing to the leftmost way. 'That's combined lechers and gluttons. The next one's monarchs and assorted hereditary rulers. Then there's natural disasters. This one's under construction; and you don't want to go down that one - it's Hell down there.'

'And what's this one?' you ask, pointing to the final exit.

Your guide fumbles in his pocket and withdraws a small green booklet with a picture of a fat white man on the front.

'Oh, um, it's Cretan princesses, who, deserted by their lovers, subsequently died in childbirth.'

'Are there many of those?'

'Just the one.'

'Who?' you ask. But as you speak, the answer comes to you, borne on a surge of guilt.

Will you visit the corrupt court officials (turn to 417), the lechers and gluttons (turn to 258), the rulers (turn to 248), natural disasters (turn to 573), or will you visit Ariadne (turn to 467)?

Your attempts to placate the men are in vain and you quickly realize that they do not mean well. Will you wait (turn to 299) or run (turn to 316)?



550

It is almost five years later now, and your service to the goddess still continues. It has not been a bad life, you muse; on the contrary, most pleasurable. You have performed the ceremonies exactly – the anointing with oil of the small conical object in which form Aphrodite is worshipped at Paphos, the processions through the streets of the city, and the mock battles with silken swords.

Today you are to be admitted to the first stage of priesthood, and invested with the ambrosial raiment of Aphrodite. The time has come and you are led by the priest of the goddess through the corridors of the temple, past the sacred chapels of Aphrodite to the central sanctum where the radiant one is worshipped.

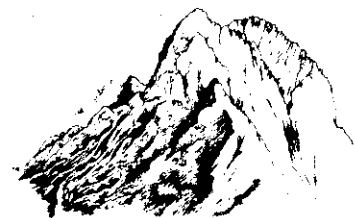
You are instructed to kneel down beside the sacred cone, and you comply readily.

Is Aphrodite your patron? If so, turn to 5. If not, turn to 129.

551

As you press northwards, it begins to snow, and you wrap yourself in your coat as tightly as you can. The twenty miles between you and the race of the Phytalidae begin to seem further and further as you push on into the foothills. The snowfall turns into a blizzard, and you stagger on blindly, feverishly, cursing that you have not yet found what you seek.

Then you collapse into a snowdrift, and lie there, as the wind whistles past your ears and the snow builds up around you, covering you in a comforting white shroud.



552

You have no money, and your command of Egyptian is virtually non-existent, so you find it impossible to gain a bed for the night. You are forced to rest in the street, but you do not sleep for fear that your throat may be slit as you lie defenceless. Lose 1 Honour point for this behaviour, not fitting for a king amongst civilized people.

In the morning you decide to find the temple, where the priest informs you that you must journey with him to the oracle at the Oasis Ammonium. The god Ammon, he maintains, has commanded it. Will you agree (turn to 232), or decline (turn to 317)?

553

You are soon in the shade of the trees and you rest awhile, since it has now become very hot. The place looks completely deserted: no birds or animals live on this sun-scorched plain. You scan the horizon for any signs of life and notice a thin column of smoke rising lazily from the beach you have just left. As you watch, the smoke becomes much thicker and billows up in dense clouds. Will you go back to the beach (turn to 350), or will you continue into the island (turn to 271)?

554

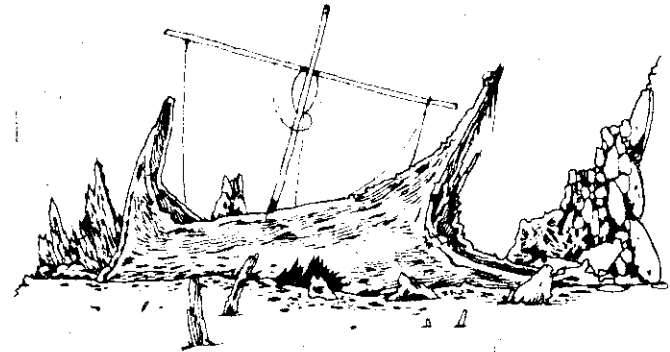
After another long silence the voice returns: 'I cannot help you down in Hades, but remember that anyone who eats there will never leave. Now, be on your way.' Go to 197.

555

You throw yourself down to the ground in submission and the fishermen accept your surrender. They strip you of your clothing and hurl you into the sea. Have 1 Shame point. You struggle out of the surf and hastily wrap round you the cloth they offer. They all seem greatly amused by the whole episode, but you are not. Go to 314.

556

You hold up your hand in what you consider to be a gesture of conciliation, but the tribesmen are at once angered. You are seized and led roughly back to the surface, the sound of furious chatter ringing in your ears. As you run back to your craft, a spear whistles past your ear. You quickly run the raft back into the water. Have 1 Shame point for your lack of observance. Ruefully you decide to name this isle after yourself, Althenesos. Go to 214.



557

The supreme god takes pity on your sorry plight, and snatches you away from the island of Pharos. He heals you and tells you that you must go to the underworld and seek out your brother Theseus, who will tell you how to purge your blood-guilt. He sets you down once again on the island and you marvel at the sight of a newly built raft. You offer prayers to Poseidon, and slide the makeshift raft into the water. Go to 254.

558

The water-monster seems to dissolve back into the liquid of the lake. All that remains of the thing is a small wooden plaque floating on the surface. You stretch to pick it up, but as you do you begin to sink. You panic, but manage to grab the plaque. Your head is submerged beneath the waters, and you begin to suffocate. Yet when you feel that you can last no longer and your life's spirit will seep into the sea, you are back at Scione, the plaque, with wavy lines engraved upon it, representing water, still in your hand.

Restore your Honour points to their level before the combat. If this is the third creature you have fought and defeated, turn to 346. Otherwise, you must deal next with the corn (turn to 44) or the fire (turn to 107).

559

The berries taste good and seem to bring renewed energy to your tired limbs. You take two large handfuls for provisions at sea, and return to the beach to begin the building of the raft. Go to 230.

560

You push to the front of the throng and open the door, ignoring the stifled cries behind you. The interior is lit and there, in front of you, stands a black-robed woman, who seems strangely familiar. Beside her is a low table, one leg of which is badly scarred, and on it lies an urn of water, a bowl of corn-seed, and a small brazier in which a blue-white flame is burning. A small trickle of water leaks from a crack in the urn.

'I am Arissia, priestess of Demeter in Scione. Are you a worshipper of the earth-mother?'

Do you reply that you are (turn to 42), or do you deny any connections with the corn-cult (turn to 108)?

561

The path disappears into the fog once more and you walk slowly, hoping that you may discover the route to Theseus or lordly Aeacus, the judge of the dead, but instead a terrible scene is revealed among the clouds and mist.

Tantalus, who dared to chop up his own son and serve him to the gods as food, stands in a pool of pure water, his reflection glistening off the perfect surface. Above him a miraculous tree, bearing from the same branch apples, oranges, pears, grapes and every other fruit that grows, hangs low by his head. Yet every time he reaches up to appease his raging hunger, the fruit rises up. Always he thinks he can reach it, always it slips away from his fingers. When he stoops to quench his thirst the waters flow away as if some hole were made in the bottom of the pool. But when he straightens once again the waters flow back up to renew his torment. You gaze at poor Tantalus and then hurry past, unable to bear the wretched scene any longer. Will you go by him to the left (turn to 447) or to the right (turn to 328)?





562

At the crucial moment, the wind drops and the current takes you on to the jagged spikes. There is a moment of expectant silence as the crew freezes in horror, and then the sound of splintering wood rings out, shattering the calm of the silent air like the gong that heralds the coming of the enemy, the clashing of the warriors and that many women will be widows by evening. Even the Trojans on the shore hear the noise and you turn away, ashamed at your performance. Have 3 Shame points.

Suddenly the boat lists and you are all flung into the water to struggle in a confusion of limbs, sails and spars.

If you are in Disfavour with Poseidon, go to 360. If not, you manage to swim ashore and find your cousin (turn to 320).

563

Before the men can see you, you dart into an empty hut and crouch down out of sight. You hear the fishermen returning, laughing and joking as they carry their catch back to the village. You cannot understand what they are saying. You think at first it is because they are too far away, but then you realize that this is a foreign tongue. They stand close to the hut and chat for some while before eventually moving away to their own huts. You breathe a sigh of relief when you realize that none of them are going to enter your hut. It grows cooler as the afternoon merges into evening and you begin to feel very hungry. Your fear of being noticed gradually recedes and you venture out of the hut. Will you try to take some food unnoticed (turn to 452), or will you ask someone for food (turn to 594)?



564

Your coming upon a captain who speaks Greek is not as unlikely as it sounds, as relations between the high-king of Achaia and the Hittites and Egyptians are well attested from various ancient tablets and archives. What is actually of interest is that the captain does not recognize the son of so great a dignitary, but this could perhaps be explained by the fact that you have been storm-tossed and desert-scorched for the best part of seven years. It is doubtful that even your mother Aethra would recognize you after this, much as she loves you. Have 1 Shame point for not looking after your appearance. Return to 544.

565

With one final twist, you break the lion's neck and it slumps to the floor of the cage (have 4 Honour points). You turn back to the Nubians and shout defiantly. Then you thrust open the door of the cage and walk out to face the king, who steps back a pace, but is not intimidated. Behind him the tribesmen move forward as if to show you that you face not just the king but the whole tribe. He raises his hand, and then speaks; although you do not know his language, the meaning of his message is obvious. Go to 330.

566

The champion's spear passes through your right thigh and you fall to the ground, apparently dead. But Zeus does not mean to let you die so easily and he rekindles the fire in your chest. You try to spring to your feet, but the wound is too serious, and you cannot stand. Nevertheless, you pluck the spear out and cast it back at your opponent. It clatters harmlessly at his feet, but all the Nubians are awestruck. Supported between two warriors, you are led back to a hut. Go to 190.

567

The turning to the left is flat and not at all slippery. Walking is therefore much easier than before and you are soon hurrying along. After some time, you see ahead that this branch-tunnel finishes in some stone steps leading up out of sight. When you reach the bottom of these, you glance up and find that they stretch as far as you can see. They are quite steep and it will take a great effort to climb them. Will you return to the slippery sloping tunnel (turn to 433), or will you climb the steps (turn to 471)?



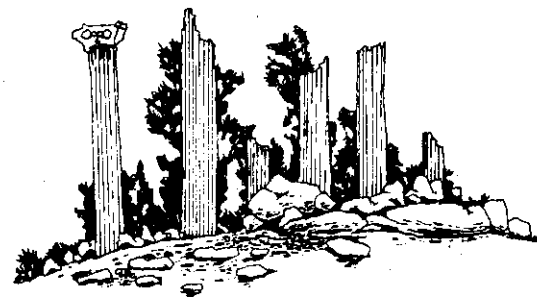
You swiftly distance yourself from the three fishermen, and you are thankful that you decided to run, since many more have emerged from their huts, all armed with knives. These are not civilized folk who welcome strangers as Zeus has decreed, but brutal barbarians who shun all others. You decide that you must return to your boat and leave this wretched island at once.

You struggle up the slope back into the centre of the island and hurry back across the plain. Thick smoke billows from beneath the cliffs, just as when a forest fire rages in a summer drought. Go to 350.



You study the gold ring carefully, but can see no special markings, so you slip it on to the third finger of your left hand. To your horror, you feel your strength ebbing away, and you realize that the ring is cursed. You rip it from your finger, and fling it far into the sea. It has, however, already taken its toll; you must reduce your Might and Protection by 1 for the remainder of this book.

You walk away from the merchant, and gaze over the side of the boat at the strangely calm waters. For a moment you are alone, but then you hear Markos approach. Go to 239.



Zeus sends down a divine inspiration winging its way from high Olympus, and suddenly you realize the true nature of the operation you are about to undergo. You seize the sacred cone and plunge it into the chest of the high priest. The eunuch cries out in high-piercing pain, and then his life pours out through the stab-wound. Taking your opportunity, you dash through the twisting tunnels of the temple, out into the air, a free man once more. You turn around to see that you are being followed by a number of sacred slaves, but as they close on you, the realization dawns that these men, too, have escaped, and look upon you as their leader. Go to 84.

You feel yourself being shaken, and roll over, irritated at not being allowed to die in peace. There are two men in plain cloaks standing over you.

'You are Altheus,' says one. 'We have been waiting for you.' The other lifts you on to his shoulders. You start to pass out. 'And we,' says the other man, 'are men of the Phytalidae.' Go to 172.



572

Finally he returns to his original form and speaks.

'Tell me now, Altheus, which of the gods has helped you and advised you in capturing me. And for what reason?'

'Old man,' you answer. 'This is mere prevarication. Answer my questions, and only then shall I release you.'

'Very well, but do not delay, for it ails me to be held captive thus.'

Will you ask the old man of the sea how you may return home (turn to 294), how you may purge your blood-guilt (turn to 483), or how you may find food on this barren island (turn to 599)?

573

'I thought you said this way led to victims of natural disasters,' you ask, puzzled.

'No, they *are* natural disasters,' replies Dean, pointing to the shades who pass on your left and right. 'This one, for example.' He indicates with his hand a man who seems to be on the point of drowning in a vast lake. 'He sought to seduce a queen by deluding her with claims that he could influence the gods to favour her. Now, why the queen should have believed that a mortal could influence the gods is difficult to comprehend, but she was desperate to gain immortality and would believe anything that claimed to gain her this. When she saw what she'd done, she was appalled.

'This man now smells so sweet the fairest nymphs could not restrain themselves, but all to no avail, for he drowns in the very perfume that enhances him.'

'That seems a little harsh,' you say, when Dean has finished.

'You must remember, Altheus,' he replies, 'it's all a metaphor.'

Worried by this declaration, you hurry past. Go to 279.

574

You struggle away from the crocodile which is restrained by almighty Zeus, and the captain pulls you back aboard. You are only too glad to be back on dry land at Hermopolis within the hour. The priest, too, looks more content away from the boat and he becomes quite talkative on the second stage of your journey, by camel, from the river to the oasis. Go to 369.

575

Insubstantial shadows flit past as you walk amongst the dead who wish to cross the Styx. You notice that some have obol coins in their mouths, but the vast majority do not and you remember that the coin-carriers are those who have been buried and may cross. You recognize a face in the multitude and make your way across to him. It is Dipthis, the cynic from Crete and sadly you note that he has no coin.

'Dipthis, Dipthis,' you cry and watch as he turns to face you.

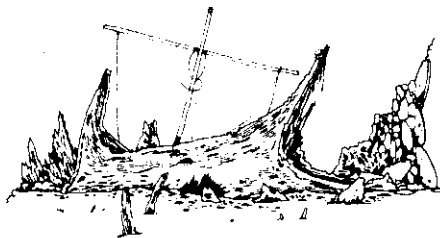
'Ah, Altheus, they got you, too, did they?' He pauses, but before you can ask who 'they' are, he speaks again. 'Well, why didn't you get an obol, then?'

'Actually, I'm not dead.'

'Now that I look, I suppose you are a bit on the substantial side.'

'I've come to rescue my brother Theseus,' you tell him, sensing the question on his lips.

Will you ask Dipthis what fate has befallen him (turn to 503), or will you press on towards the ferry (turn to 442)?



576

You wake to find your boat alight, ignited by your own small fire. Frantically, you gather water from the sea, and splash it on the flames, in a feeble effort to extinguish the raging blaze. Soon the boat is reduced to ashes, and you weep bitterly since it seems the gods will never let you see your mother in Troezen again. Each time you make one step forward, closer to home, you seem to be thrown back two by some misfortune or the anger of some god. Now it seems you have been finally defeated, still five hundred miles from Troezen and Athens. Go to 256.

577

You kill the bushman, and drive off the rest with the help of the Nubians. On the way back to the camp, you are all more wary and you keep a good look out for ambushes. The warriors give you praise, and, after two more expeditions, you are almost fully accepted by the tribe, who teach you their fighting skills. For this you may increase your Might and Protection by 1.

You are one of the better warriors in the tribe and soon you are leading hunting-trips and raiding-parties on other groups. You take one of the king's daughters as a wife and you forget about Athens and Troezen. The months go by, until you have been with the Nubians for about a year. Go to 313.

578

Just as it seems that your life will flow away at the hands of two village farmers, you are swept away to high Olympus by Zeus. Now Healthy, you are transported back to the fight, where there are many more villagers, all looking down on your inert form. As you stir, four men move forward. Go to 299.

579

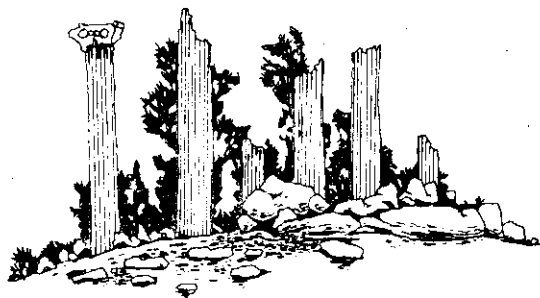
Over the next two weeks, you see a lot of Egypt, as the boat makes its way north along the Nile. While the captain sells his skins, you have a chance to slip ashore for a couple of hours at each stop. You marvel at the city of Thebes, sacred to Ammon, with its hundred gates, but soon you are at Coptos, where gums, spices and precious stones arrive from Arabia, and jade and ivory are brought in from far-off India. The captain sells two skins for a bag full of jade, and lets you keep a piece for yourself.

From Coptos down to Memphis, the boat does not stop anywhere at all, and the captain allows you to try your hand at steering, and even setting the sails, on the long stretches of uninteresting river. The week of sailing through uncultivated, sparsely populated land, is terminated in the splendour of the pyramids and the arrival at Memphis. You scarcely have time to take in the grandeur of the great pyramid of Cheops, before you are docking at the port of the second city of Egypt.

'This is as far as we go,' declares the captain, 'but you've been a good crew, and I'd like you to have one of these.' He holds up a lionskin and a leopardskin. Will you take the lionskin (turn to 492), or the leopardskin (turn to 393)?

580

The soldier hesitates for a moment, looking uncertainly over his shoulder, but then makes a signal to you. He clearly wants you to follow him. Will you go with him (turn to 160), or decline to do so (turn to 362)?



581

Your sails fill majestically, and you ease past the other boat, your crew laughing at the rowers straining at the oars. They are spurred on by your taunts and put in one last effort, but they cannot prevent you crossing the line first. Have 5 Honour points for your victory.

You jump down from the bow of your boat, and raise your hands to the crowd. The Trojans cheer wildly and place a laurel wreath upon your brow. After a few minutes the acclamation dies away and you seek out your cousin Agnostes. Turn to 320.

582

The river-bank affords no easy place to cross, and no other boats are visible on either side of the water. It seems you must either swim, or return to Markos and deal with him. If you choose to swim, go to 253. If you wish to agree to Markos' deal now, lose 1 Honour point and go to 493.

583

The two men see you unsheathe your sword and at once they run towards you with throaty cries. They have Might 6, Protection 12, and their swords are Might 1. Remember the bonus for the first man.

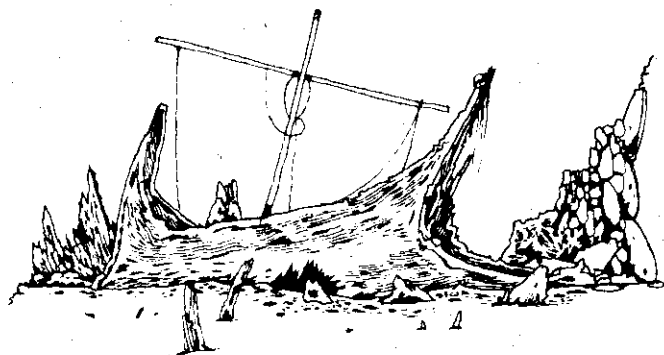
If you Seriously Wound both of them, go to 499. If you surrender, go to 299. If you retreat, go to 397. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 578.

584

The Phoenician smiles, and raises his right hand very slowly. Underneath there is nothing, and as he laughs, he shows you that both ring and jade were under the other hand. He slides the ring back on to his finger and puts the jade away in a pouch on his belt. You walk angrily away to the side of the vessel, and stare into the calm blue waters. It is not long before the merchant joins you. Go to 239.

585

Before he speaks, the king signals to one of his warriors, who moves away out of sight towards the cage. In a moment he returns with the lionskin and it is clear that this is your prize. Go to 330.



586

One large wave picks up your raft and carries it high above the other seas until, with a crash, it flings it down to the bottom of a trough so that you are surrounded by towering walls of water. The next wave trips up the feeble platform and sends you flying into the foaming sea. You struggle to regain your raft, but to no avail. Poseidon always punishes those who fail to appease him before risking themselves on the open seas.

587

You are aware, although you are squatting with your back to the entrance, of a drop of water as it trickles down an icicle that is hanging from the cave mouth, and falls to the ground. You blink, and unleash a series of images, each lasting for only a fraction of a second: A cloud . . . The vast waters of Ocean . . . Yourself in the womb . . . A field of corn . . . A flower . . . A bird, circling round the mountains . . . An eye opening and closing . . . A man and a woman, leaning on a wall overlooking the sea, talking . . . A body being laid into the grave . . . An old woman sitting by the fireside . . . A range of mountains, their peaks lost in cloud . . . A coral reef stretching to the horizon.

You realize how everything is connected. The water rises from the ocean into the sky, forms clouds, drops as rain in the high mountains, flows through the land to nourish the crops, and descends to the sea again. As with the circle of worshippers, the ring of hands around this high cave, so too for the whole world. In every ending is a beginning, in every death a moment of rebirth.

You feel yourself falling through a tunnel of light. There is a moment of terror, but you put it behind you and smile, accepting the falling and making it part of you. You still feel your hands gripped and open your eyes once more to see the circle of the Phytalidae.

'It is over. I am whole again, friends. The grave has released me. And I thank you.' Go to 432.



The goddess Athena stands before you and offers wise counsel.

'Altheus, your boat is smouldering ashes on the beach; you have no food and the natives of the island are most hostile. Heed my advice and you may yet return to Twoezen. This island is Phawos, home of the renowned seer Pwoteus. Seek him out and put your queries to him, for he will answer truly. But you must set a trap and hold him firm, though he may strain and struggle with all kinds of transformations . . .'

The goddess explains how at noon the old man of the sea emerges from the ocean and makes for his sleeping-place in the shelter of a cave. Flipped seals heave themselves around him, and before he rests, Proteus counts his herd. Athena continues the description of her trap, and then is gone.

Soon you are lying on the beach, covered in a sealskin, as she has directed, and the old man emerges, counts his flock, including you, then lies down. Immediately you spring up and hold down his arms.

The old seer is not so easily captured and he turns into a mighty lion, and now into a wriggling snake, but you are forewarned, and hold him tight. Panther, wild boar and running water are his next three transformations to throw you off, but all are in vain. Go to 572.



The dhow moves off from the bank without you, and the captain gives you a friendly wave, calling out good luck. You wait at the landing-station, a few rough boards nailed together to make a platform, and watch for the next boat. Hours pass and the sun now slants its rays down obliquely. Eventually, a boat draws in and the captain, who speaks good Greek, offers you a lift. He is going up-river first, and will not be coming back this way for two days. Will you go with him (turn to 473), or will you wait in the hope that there may be a boat going downstream before then (turn to 274)?



The lion knocks you unconscious with a blow from its paw, and you lose all sensation in your limbs. Your mind blanks out; when you come to, it is daylight. The sun is well above the horizon and the lion has gone. You prepare yourself once more to descend to the underworld. Go to 530.



591

You have been with the Nubians for almost a year when you learn that there is a festival held annually at which all the Nubian tribes for miles around come to pay homage to the king. The ceremony takes place tonight. Throughout the day you are detailed to perform arduous tasks in preparation for the event; you have to drag two great stone blocks into a ring in the centre of the camp to make a platform, and dig a trench outside the circle of huts. By evening you are completely exhausted, and you welcome a rest and a good meal; for the king has declared that, for this occasion, slaves shall be treated as free men. Thus you are allowed to watch the warriors marching through the camp, each bearing a torch. They form into a ring and the king mounts the stone platform. Behind him, in a strong wicker cage, a mountain lion prowls back and forth, just as does a man awaiting an audience with a king.

Suddenly the lion throws its weight against the bars and breaks out of the cage. It rushes at the crowd, savages an effete tribal chieftain, and then is away, running sleekly across the wide plains. In the confusion you sense your opportunity for freedom and you slip quietly away into the grasslands. Go to 191.



592

To look to the gods for advice as to what question you should put to the old man of the sea is unheroic indeed; the gods can answer many problems which beset mortal men toiling in their fields, or fighting on the bloody battlefield, but to do so would be to remove the barrier between human and divine, and the peasants would invade the inner chambers of high Olympus. It would be better, therefore, for you to think for yourself and not to seek to mount an assault on the order of things as decreed by Zeus and his godly brethren. Lose 1 Honour point, and be warned. Go to 572.



593

You drop your arm and bring the spear harmlessly down to your side. The Nubian looks unhappy and ungrateful at this action. Four tribesmen step forward to drag the wounded man into the crowd, and though he screams wildly and wrestles to break free, they hold him firmly. As they pull him through the spectators, you follow them and now see the reason for the man's panic. Ahead stands a massive wicker cage, containing a strutting mountain lion. The four men bundle the wounded man inside, and slam the wicker bars behind him. He no longer screams or struggles, but instead is gripped in silent, frozen terror. You realize that the man wanted you to kill him, and not spare him. Have 1 Shame point for this, but 4 Honour points for defeating him.

You turn away, before the lion strikes out at the helpless man. Go to 152.

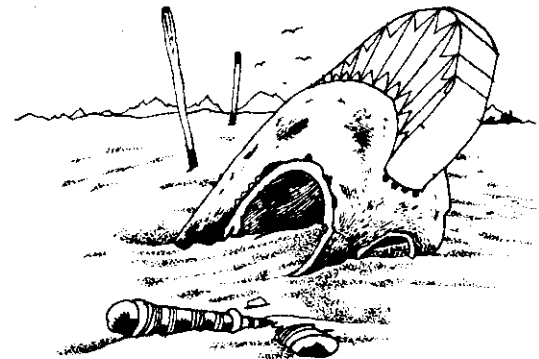
594

You approach the nearest hut and glance inside: three men are gathered around a cooking-pot on a fire, stirring a mixture of fish and red berries. The food has a powerful aroma, and you gesture at it, hoping to convey to the fishermen your hunger. They understand, but only move the pot further away from you. One of them draws a small knife from his belt, and waves it at you in clear indication that you are not welcome here. They edge towards you, and you notice as you back out of the hut that they all have knives.

Will you attack them (turn to 213), or will you leave (turn to 525)?

595

With a swift word of prayer to the gods, you leap into the foaming waters beneath the waterfall. The undercurrents suck you down, and you gasp in water instead of air. The crew of the Egyptian vessel dive into the water to save you, but they dare not swim into the strong eddies which now send you back behind the waterfall. You must pray to your patron (spend 4 Honour points) or be drowned. If you pray, or you are saved by Zeus, go to 288.



596

As you strike at the seal, the waters part near the beach, and Poseidon, master of the ocean, rises up. In his hand he bears his sharp-pronged trident, and seaweed covers his salt-stained body. Without speaking he plunges the trident into your chest. Zeus will not save those who offend against his brother.

597

You step behind the boulder and begin to push with Sisyphus, but he assumes you are taking over and stands aside.

'Many thanks, friend,' he says. 'I could do with a rest.' The boulder becomes heavier and heavier, or maybe you become weaker and weaker: you cannot tell which. 'I'll be back shortly,' the man adds, and he walks away into the fog, ignoring your protests. Slowly you feel yourself losing your grip on the rock, and it slips away down the hill. You feel compelled to run after it and push it back to the spot where you took over, so that Sisyphus will not feel cheated when he returns. But he never returns.



598

As you reach the gates, two thieves appear as if from nowhere, and stride towards you menacingly. You fumble for a knife, and realize that you have left it in the birdman's costume by the roadside. One of the thieves brings a club round to swing at your head, and when you block it with a forearm, the other hits you on the back with a length of wood, and you fall. They search your pockets and, finding nothing, club you into unconsciousness and leave you to die, which you do.

599

'A wise question,' replies Proteus. 'For what use is knowing how to purge yourself, if you die here on Pharos of starvation. You must go into the heart of the island, and there you will find a bush with red berries and also with white berries. Carefully pick only the red ones, and take these with you across the sea. They are all you need to keep your body from wasting away.' The old man speaks and then he commands his seals away. They all slide back into the sea and you are left alone.

You find the berries; though their taste is sour, they sustain you. Go to 230.

When you reach the top of the hill, you can see that the smoke is from fires, and you run anxiously into the town.

It has been destroyed. The streets are deserted, save for the bodies of a few unarmed old men, lying in doorways. Many buildings have been set alight, and now lie smouldering in the increasingly heavy rain. In the streets there are broken weapons of intricate foreign design. A few rats rummage by the sides of the roads; there is rubble everywhere.

In the ruins of the temple, you find Passes the priest. He has been left for dead, but is still just breathing. He looks up at you without recognition.

'I am Altheus, priest.'

He laughs, and begins to cough blood. 'So, the hero is back. Too late to save your city . . .' His voice trails off.

'What has happened here?'

'Only one people could have done this . . . the Trojans.' His eyes begin to glaze over. 'My gods! Where are you now?'

'My mother, priest! Where is she?'

But the man has died.

A storm begins in earnest. You strip and stand amidst the ruins, breast bared to the rain.

'The Wanderer has returned! What word have you for me now, immortals?'

But the gods have fallen silent, and will speak no more. You look around the ruined city and the rain continues to fall, and a darkness seizes you. You have come home.

And half a thousand miles away in the east, your daughter waits her time, and sharpens her sickle.

THE END

