

Character Sheet

THE LEGENDS OF SKYFALL Monsters of the Marsh

EXPERTISE Initial E
12

VITALITY Initial V
20

FORTUNE Initial F
(10+3H-T)

EQUIPMENT

MAGICAL

Potions of Healing 12 3

PROVISIONS

Food (Sufficient for days...) + 2

STANDARD

Sword
Dagger
Backpack
Rope (50ft)
Tinderbox
Torches 1 2 3 4 5
Waterskin

The planet of Skyfall is lush, beautiful - and untamed. The humans who have settled there only control small areas of this fabulous land. Vast tracts of forest, desert and mountain are inhabited by unknown tribes and fantastic creatures. Even within the borders of Delta, your own country on the shores of the Sea of Storms, there lives a race of intelligent and dangerous animals that capture and kill travellers in armed raids. Their home is in the huge swamps of the Deltan interior.

You are a young adventurer of Skyfall. Your father has vanished on a river trip through the dreaded marshes. You must set out on a journey to discover his fate, and confront the monsters that await you in the grim swamps.

In the *Skyfall* series of Advanced Fantasy gamebooks, you must immerse yourself in the exciting world of your character. If you *reason logically* from the information given to you at each turn of the plot, your chances of succeeding in your mission will be greater.

No dice-rolling is needed to play this book. Instead, a unique, quick and convenient game system using the heads and tails of coins has been introduced.

Are you ready for Skyfall and the monsters of the marsh!

Take up the challenge and prepare for adventure!

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To Norma
for Everything

Contents

Map of Delta	6
SKYFALL	7
The Skyfall Game System	10
Hints on Play	17
Monsters of the Marsh	21

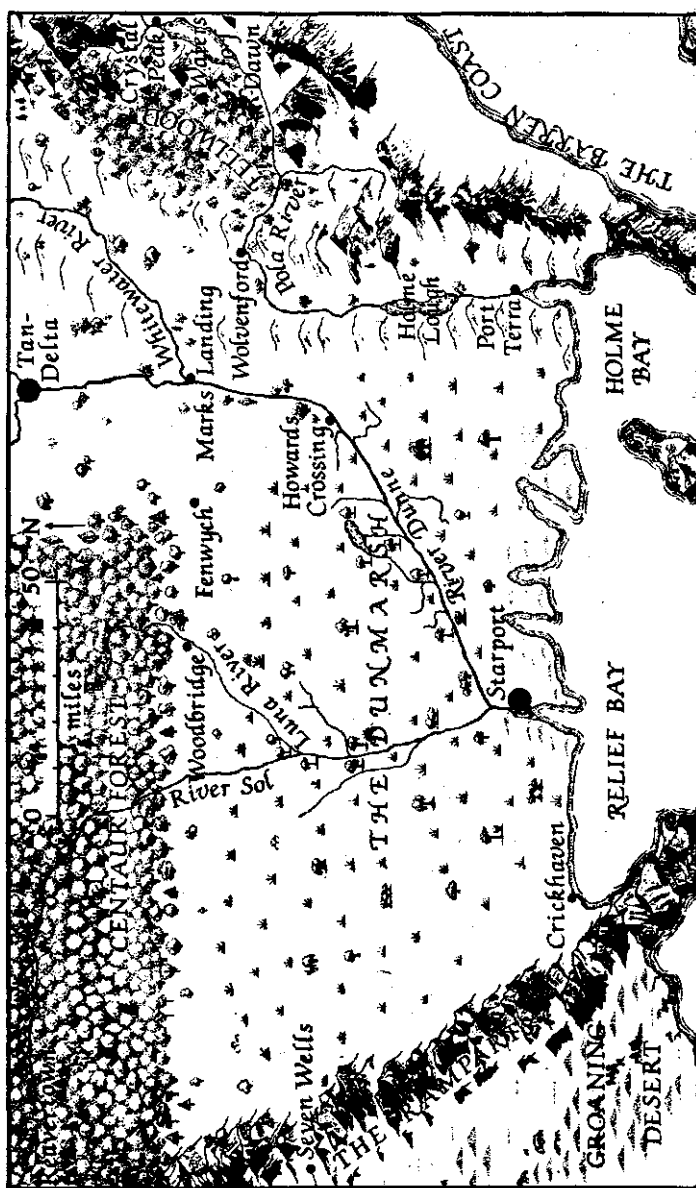
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Skyfall

The kingdom of Delta is the setting for all the adventures in this series. It lies in the northern hemisphere of a planet far from our own where refugees from an exhausted and ravaged Terra survived the crash-landing of their colony ship thousands of years ago. They named the planet Skyfall, but although some Terran names survive, no one now remembers their origins.

The humans are not alone on Skyfall, although they have multiplied until they now outnumber the other intelligent races. Some of these live in peace and harmony with men, while others are distinctly antagonistic. Almost all science has been lost over the centuries, but Magic has developed to take its place. And Magic, in Delta, is of three types.

Arcane magic, the most spectacular, is learned at great personal cost by Magicians, Sorcerors, Warlocks and Necromancers who undertake a life-long search for knowledge. Although many settle for a living by entertaining the public with simple illusions and harmless spells, a few survive the perils of meddling with the occult to master spells that make even Kings tremble at their power.

Clerical magic, mainly of the healing and supportive type, is practised by priests and bishops of the various religions flourishing amongst the human and non-human inhabitants. The village priest combines the duties of spiritual leader and doctor.

Druidical magic is quite rare and its proponents tend to live in the depths of the forests or similar lonely areas. The Druids have amazing powers over animals and all types of plants, including crops, and are fiercely protective of them.

Although the human colonists brought the flora and fauna of Terra with them, many species could not survive on Skyfall and are now extinct. In some cases, however, local plants and animals have been given Terran names due to some real or imagined similarity to the original. Of the forest trees, only the oak, ash and holly flourish on Skyfall, and are accorded considerable reverence by the Druids as a result.

One notable difference between Skyfall and Terra is the absence of a moon. Nights, as a result, are dark and fearsome times when wise folk stay indoors or close to a camp-fire. There are no tides, and winds and weather are stable and predictable.

In Delta, this has helped the development of the Doone River as the major commerce route of the country. Barges ply regularly between the main port of Starport and the capital at Tan-Delta, using the current for the downstream journey. Going upstream, the prevailing south-west wind enables them to sail through the Dunmarsh, and for the remainder of the journey they are horse-drawn.

Delta is a rich and fertile country, bordered by mountains to east and west, the Sea of Storms to the south and, a few hundred miles to the north, by the great icefields. Other settled regions lie mainly across the sea, but there are civilized countries beyond the lands of the Barbarians to the east and some hundreds of miles to the west, across the Great Void Desert. The area between Lake Fraki and the icefields is mainly

tundra, roamed by animals and non-human tribes of low intelligence.

Delta is self-sufficient in food, wool and timber, but must export the gems and precious metals from its mines to obtain the iron, copper and luxury items, like silks and scents, wines and spirits which it does not produce.

Life has been good for the Deltans, and Starport is a prosperous town, with none doing better than the barge-owners.

The Skyfall Game System

Welcome to this adventure book. It is no ordinary novel, for in it you are the leading character - a brave, seasoned adventurer, in a fantasy world. You will take the decisions; you will fight the evil adversaries which stand between you and your goal, and you - with skill and perhaps, a little good fortune - will eventually solve the mystery and reap your reward. You will create your own story, or rather stories, as you can work through this book many times. No two stories will be the same, as even if you make the same decisions each time, luck will play its part.

No special equipment is needed - just a pencil and a coin. Any type of coin will do so long as it has a 'head' and a 'tail'.

Use of the Coin

At numerous points throughout the book you will need a coin to help resolve the outcome of a particular situation. A simple formula will tell you what is to be done. Here are some examples:

2H means 'toss the coin *twice* and count the number of heads'. (0, 1 or 2)

3T means 'toss the coin *three* times and count the number of tails'. (0, 1, 2 or 3)

4H-T means 'toss the coin *four* times, count the number of heads and *deduct* the number of tails'. (The resulting number could be anything from +4 to -4)

Usually the result of coin-tossing will modify another score, for instance:

E+4H means 'toss the coin four times, count the number of heads and add that number to your Expertise score'.

10+4H-T means 'toss the coin four times; count the number of heads and add that number to 10, then subtract the number of tails for your answer' (the result here could be 6, 8, 10, 12 or 14).

A bit of practice will soon make you completely familiar with the system.

Some people are quite expert at tossing a coin and can frequently produce either heads or tails as required. The idea, of course, is to introduce a random element and, particularly when the coin needs to be tossed three or four times, you may find it better to shake the appropriate number of coins in your closed hand, then open your fingers to reveal the result. (This may also save losing the coin or attracting curious glances if you are reading the book in a public place!)

Character Sheet

The Character Sheet is used during the adventure to record changes in your three Characteristic Scores (see below), additional weapons and other items you may find, how much food and drink you are carrying and so forth. You may use the Character Sheet provided inside the front cover (in which case use a soft pencil so that the page can be used more than once), copy that sheet on to a separate piece of paper or photocopy the Character Sheet.

Your Character Sheet should, at a glance, tell you exactly what your Scores are at any given time, what

your character is carrying, what weapons, etc. you can use, how much food and drink you have left and how many potions are available. Make sure you keep it up to date.

You may also need a blank sheet of paper for mapping purposes (squared paper is even better). This will be especially helpful if you have a maze type of area to explore.

Characteristics

You start your adventure with three 'Characteristic Scores' and these scores, perhaps varied from time to time, stay with your character throughout your life.

EXPERTISE (E): this mainly represents your skill in fighting with a sword or another weapon, but can also represent your other 'skills of adventuring' - for instance, how well you climb walls or ropes.

Your initial E is always 12.

VITALITY (V): this mainly represents your physical fitness but can also be regarded as your stamina, determination or will-power. Points of Damage done by an attacker are deducted from the defender's V total.

Your initial V is always 20.

FORTUNE (F): this mainly represents how fortunate you are in situations where luck can play a part, but can also govern your ability to avoid or withstand magical spells and effects.

Your initial F is $10 + 3H - T$ (i.e. 7, 9, 11 or 13)

Note that your V score, though it may change during

your adventure, may never be greater than this initial value of 20. Your E and F scores may also change during the adventure, but in this case without limitation, dropping as low as 0 or rising well beyond 13. Your E can even drop below 0, but as F is normally used voluntarily, you may not 'overdraw' your Fortune by going below 0. Record all changes in your score, as soon as they occur, on your Character Sheet.

Combat

Inevitably, during your quest, you will have to fight evil creatures which oppose you or stand in your way. The combat procedure is very simple and runs in well-defined steps:

STEP 1: Is SURPRISE indicated in the text? If not, go straight to STEP 2. If so, 3T is subtracted from the defender's E score (the defender is the one being surprised!) for the first round of combat. Then go to STEP2.

STEP 2: Evaluate $E + 4H$ for yourself, then $E + 4H$ for your opponent. If your result is greater than your opponent's, go to STEP 3. If your opponent's result is greater than yours, go to STEP 4. If the two results are equal, ignore them and start STEP 2 again. (This procedure may occasionally be varied in the text if you are fighting a group of monsters.)

STEP 3: You have hit your opponent; you may either subtract your normal weapon damage from your opponent's V score, then go to STEP 5 or USE FORTUNE (see below) before going to STEP 5.

STEP 4: Your opponent has hit you; subtract the appropriate number of Damage Points (given in the text) from your V score and go to STEP 5 afterwards, though you may USE FORTUNE if you wish (see below).

STEP 5: If you or your opponent is dead, that is the end of the combat, otherwise return to STEP 2 and repeat the procedure. Each series of five steps represents one round of combat. As soon as your opponent's V score reaches 0, you have killed it and combat is over. If your V score reaches 0, your character is dead! Of course, you can always start again with a new one, and use the experience gained so far to make different decisions next time.

Weapon Damage

A dagger does 1 Point of Damage when it hits, and a sword 2 Points. Other weapons, and animals attacking with tooth and claw, will do damage as detailed in the text.

Using Fortune

At various points in the adventure you will be asked if you want to Use Fortune, perhaps to help you out of a nasty situation, and you may always (if you wish) Use Fortune every time STEP 3 or STEP 4 occurs in combat.

Other than in combat, Using Fortune requires you to subtract the stated number of points (perhaps modified by coin-tossing - see the individual instructions) from your current F score to achieve a particular result. In general, the easier the result you want, the smaller will be the loss in F points, whereas to bring about a really lucky turn of events will demand a large F point sacrifice. Specific cases will occur in the text — make your decision at the time.

Fortune in Combat: You can use Fortune every time combat reaches STEP 3 or STEP 4. In STEP 3 you can give up a Fortune point and add 1 to the damage you do, so that you can subtract an extra 1 point

from your opponent's V score. You may only add 1 point in any round of combat.

In STEP 4 you can give up FORTUNE points to reduce the wound you have suffered, so that you can subtract 1 less from your own V score than is otherwise indicated, for each Fortune point so sacrificed. You may reduce your own wound as much as you like in this way.

Note that using FORTUNE either in combat or otherwise, is normally optional; if you decide not to use FORTUNE, so be it. However, occasionally you may have to Use Fortune to survive Magical effects in a particular situation.

Your F score can be very important — don't waste F points simply to hasten the demise of a weak creature which probably won't harm you anyway, but try to preserve them and build them up for the big occasion! You can gain F points during the adventure — but you will only discover how to do so by playing the game.

Monster Combat Records

The boxes on the final page of the book are for you to keep a record of the monsters that you fight. Enter each monster's Expertise and the Damage it can do (which will not change), then its Vitality - which you hope will be a rapidly decreasing figure.

Equipment and Provisions

As noted on your Character Sheet, you always start an adventure with your Sword, a Dagger and a light leather backpack containing enough provisions (food and drink) for two days. You are also assumed to have certain mundane items in your possession - fifty feet of rope, some torches, flint, steel and tinderbox - and if any of these become of use to you, that use will be

mentioned in the text. You may find other useful items along your journey; when finding one, note it on your Character Sheet if you intend to keep it, otherwise you must assume you forgot to take it along. Similarly, cross off any item which you lose, use up or break. Sometimes you will be given the opportunity to buy or hire the means to carry more supplies and equipment: canoe, pack-mule, etc. Again you will need to note your Character Sheet accordingly.

You may eat and drink at any time when the text gives you this option. If you do so, reduce your Provisions total by 1 and add 4 points to your current V score. You are not allowed to eat two or more meals at the same time to boost a low V score! For simplicity of record keeping, you are assumed to eat one main meal a day which allows this recovery.

Sometimes you will be travelling extended distances, and the text will tell you how many hours you have taken to cover so many miles. If your journey lasts several days, you may only travel for fourteen hours in every twenty four and must spend the other ten hours resting, sleeping and attending to other personal needs which will include eating your one major meal with its consequent amendment to your Provisions and Vitality figures.

You also have three draughts of a Potion of Healing at the start of your adventure. One draught may be taken at any time (except during combat) and has the effect of adding 8 points to your current V score (though never increasing it to more than 20).

Hints on Play

This adventure book has been structured carefully to reward the thinking player and to penalise the careless. Each time you are presented with multiple choices, the choice you select should be a rational one, based on hints and clues you may have already obtained, common sense and your current V and F scores. If, for example, one choice permits you to divert from your path to fight a fearsome monster, you might be well advised to ignore this choice if your V and F score are currently low (on the other hand, if you are in good health and enjoy good fortune at the moment, the monster might have some rich treasure, including a useful magical item).

Preserve your Characteristic Scores carefully. If your current V score is low, try to find a resting place where you can safely eat and drink before you bump into an enemy. Use a draught of your Potion of Healing if you have to, but you start with only three draughts so they are very precious. Try to retain at least a reasonable F score at all times so that you have enough points to rescue you from an unexpected and dangerous situation. When thinking of using Fortune in Combat, don't forget that one F point is 'worth' much more than one V point; V points can be restored by food and drink or by potions, but restoring F points is not so easy. You may be lucky enough to obtain them during the adventure but will nevertheless have much less control over them than V points, so guard F carefully and use Fortune in Combat only in dire necessity.

This is a difficult and dangerous mission; you will be clever and fortunate indeed if you succeed on your first attempt. On your second (and maybe subsequent) attempt, use the experience and knowledge you gained earlier to help you. However, you may NOT use any equipment or items found on an earlier attempt as that will have been lost with your character. You start each adventure with just sword, dagger, backpack, provisions and three draughts of Potion.

If you are interrupted, or lose your place when tossing a coin or referring to your Character Sheet, you may find it pays either to use a bookmark or to keep a note of the paragraphs as you read them.

The description of Skyfall may give you some clues to assist your quest, and the map should also be helpful. Bear in mind, however, that you may be visiting places from which few have returned, so the map may not be accurate in details of little-known areas.

Monsters of the Marsh



Introduction

Your senses sound an alarm as soon as you land at the docks in Starport. Things have changed in the months of your absence from the city, and not for the better. The dock area has never been so quiet, with knots of men standing around conversing quietly instead of working on the river barges which lie largely empty and deserted at the quays.

When you left for a winter's adventuring in the wanner lands of Skyfall to the South, the docks wore the same bustling, hectic air you had known all your life, for your father's business is shipping goods to and from the interior of Delta on his small fleet of river barges. Now you have returned to spend the late summer with him, only to find this puzzling change.

Some of the idlers are well known to you, but when you move towards them they turn away to engage someone else in conversation, or pointedly avoid your glance. Eventually you spot a close friend who looks dismayed to see you, but reluctantly halts his hurried departure at your hail. A few questions soon reveal a sinister and tragic state of affairs.

Several barges, with their crews and cargoes, have disappeared without trace in the last two months, and all within the Dunmarsh area. They were making the journey down the great Doone River from trading posts in the northern territories. At first the losses were put

down to natural disasters, but a disturbing pattern soon emerged - barges carrying relatively mundane cargoes were being ignored, even if they were manned only by the bargees, but valuable cargoes have been disappearing regularly. Now anyone trying to gain safe passage for a barge carrying costly goods to or from Starport has to man it with so large a force of guards that virtually all the expected profit is exhausted by the increased wage bill.

Most of the missing barges were on the downstream run. One carried valuable timbers - ebony and sandalwood; one was loaded with hides and casks of salted meat; another carried almost the entire winter's output of the snowfox trappers' trading posts, and three more were loaded with ores of platinum, gold and gemstones. Only two barges on the inward route have been affected so far, but these, too, were valuable; one, the first barge to vanish, bore a consignment of new weapons for the Royal Armoury, while the second, manned with a dozen guards, bore in supposed secrecy twenty chests of newly-minted gold pieces for the Deltan Treasury! It is obvious that there is some form of intelligent organisation at the root of all this, but so far no-one has discovered a single clue.

There have been occasional skirmishes with the Marsh creatures in the past — small bands of Lizardmen or Frogmen have tried to board barges from time to time, but their lack of weapons and organisation has always prevented success. On or two proficient armed guards are considered sufficient protection, and the barge crews themselves are tough and able fighters.

Throughout this narrative you sense that your friend is in some way being evasive and holding back some information, but you cannot pin him down. Eventually he excuses himself and leaves you to stroll pensively along the quay and into the residential area of Starport.

You recall that all river traffic is controlled by the Guild of Bargemasters, of which your father Kadow is a respected and senior member. Quite apart from the sorrow caused by the loss of the crewmen and guards, these recent developments will be causing serious business problems for the Guild and local traders.

Anxious to learn how your father's business has fared, you go directly towards your home without stopping to pass further time of day with friends and acquaintances. When you get there, the house is shut! On enquiring at your neighbour's house you are horrified to learn that Kadow himself disappeared with one of his ore-barges ten days ago. The neighbours locked the house for safety and now give you the key.

Now you know what your friend was keeping from you - he could not bring himself to tell you of your father's disappearance. You thank your neighbours and return to the empty house.

Sadness and anger intermingle in your thoughts as you sit staring at the ashes in the hearth of your home. The Guild's troubles have suddenly become your own personal problem. As you eat a lonely and apparently tasteless meal, you resolve to do something about it.



1

Methodically you go through the motions of tidying up after your meal, all the time thinking hard about your future actions. You must go to the rescue of your father, of that you have no doubt, and it seems likely that the mystery of the barge disappearances can be solved if you are successful.

Evening is drawing in, and you decide to start your quest tomorrow, after what may well prove your last chance of a good night's rest in a proper bed for some time.

Your actions tomorrow will depend on a decision you will have to make during the night.

*If you intend to set out on a secret search of the Dunmarsh on your own, without informing anyone, turn to **230**.*

*If you decide to see if the Guild of Bargemasters can provide any information or assistance, turn to **361**.*

2

You try to clear away the surface of the dam to reveal the lower section of the nearest mast. The packed mud is not hard to dislodge, and soon you are scattering handfuls of twigs, grass and other vegetation. When you are about three feet down, water starts to seep in, but you have reached a black band painted around the mast. A few more inches and, if there is a gold one below you will know this is from one of your father's barges. Indeed, as only the 'Doom Duchess' is missing the proof should be conclusive.

Bracing yourself, you heave a stout branch out of the way and there indeed is the gold band. Unfortunately this has set off a potentially disastrous chain of events, as the branch had locked the lower end of the mast in

place and now the weight of the upper end, hanging unsupported over the muddy riverbed, makes the whole mast act as a form of lever to pry a large chunk of the dam loose.

Water floods in, under enormous pressure, and the dam starts to collapse.

*Turn to **371**.*

3

You wade carefully along the shallow stream which leaves the cavern by the tunnel in the South Western corner. The light quickly improves and after some twenty feet you find yourself in a narrow defile which, bends around a shoulder of rock until it leads due South.

By now it has widened enough for you to step out of the stream on to a grassy bank.

*Turn to **189**.*

4

The stream runs South West from the point where two others join, one (192) coming from the North West and the other (211) from the North East.

After two miles it curves to the South, but just before the bend you come across a rocky island in the middle of the stream, at a point where it narrows considerably. The island is about fifteen feet wide and the water on each side only some ten feet deep. On this islet sits a Giant with sludgy-green skin, a big mouth with stained, crooked teeth, filthy brown trousers made from the skins of some animal, and noticeable webs of skin between fingers and toes.

Although you stopped about a hundred feet away, the

current carries you on and you have to back-water with your paddle to avoid drifting too close. A wide grin appears on the Giant's face and he waves encouragingly, urging you closer. Considering his webbed feet, you decide he could probably move through the marsh much quicker than you, so by going closer you will probably not be appreciably more in danger than you are already.

If you approach to see what he has to say, turn to 98.

If you turn back to the last fork in the channel, you will have spent two hours on this section, and after reference above should turn to 192 or 211.

If you retreat until out of sight, and then land with the intention of trying a portage around this apparent obstacle, take a careful note of this paragraph number, then turn to 200.

If you decide to try to find some vegetation to camouflage the canoe, with the idea of floating past the Giant disguised as a fallen tree or some such, turn to 316.

5

The island is little more than a large mud bank, about three hundred feet from East to West and less than half that in width, it nowhere rises more than five feet above the level of the lake.

Two trees grow close together in the approximate centre of the island, and on the Western end close to the water is a heap of timbers in various colours.

If you wish to investigate further, turn to 160.

If, instead, you prefer to paddle on, turn to 113.



The Giant is hopeful

6

This passage is ten feet wide and roughly ten feet high, but the roof and walls are quite uneven. It looks as though a natural passage in the rock has merely been widened here and there. The floor has some dusty patches, but is much cleaner than the other two passages leading from the main cavern.

The passage is fifteen feet long: at the Eastern end is a large cavern, while the other end leads to a half open door. Peering cautiously around the door, you will see a room some twenty feet from East to West and perhaps thirty feet wide. There is a closed door in the centre of the opposite wall and there are some chairs and benches with equipment upon them.

There is no sound from the room: if you wish to enter turn to 67.

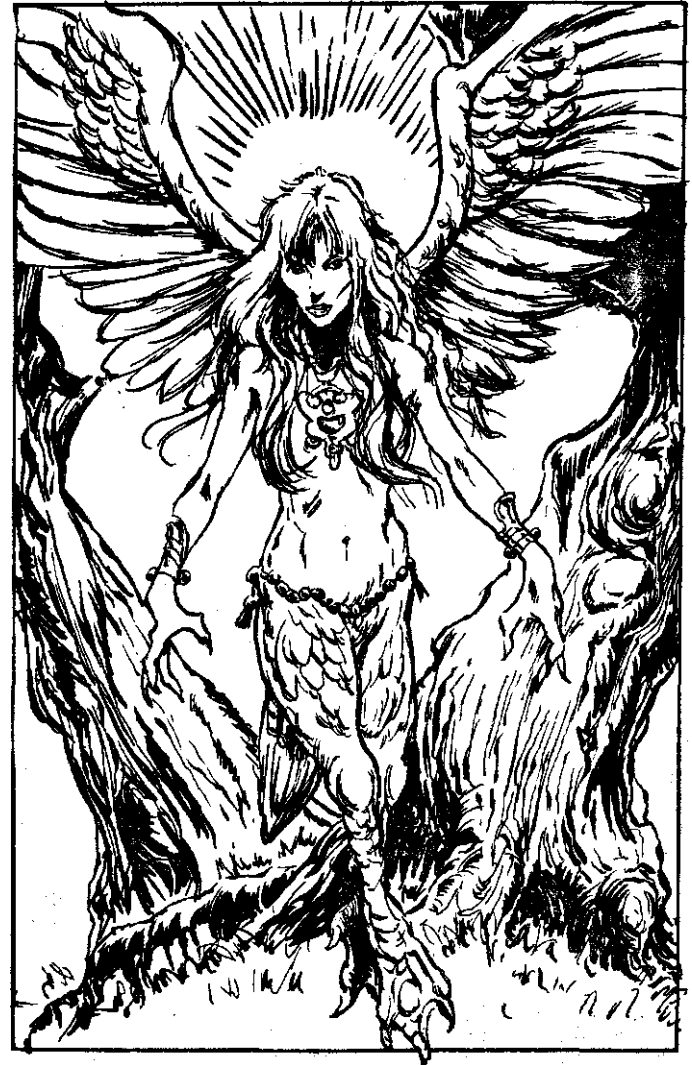
If you prefer to return to the main cavern, turn to 108.

7

A wondrous creature has risen from the treetop and is gliding towards you on snowy wings. Its head, arms and torso are those of a woman, exquisitely lovely, while the wings and legs are those of a mighty swan.

You sink to one knee as it lands before you and, ashamed of your warlike nature, surrender your sword. With a detached feeling of the justice of the situation, you watch calmly as it uses your sword to cut your throat and your life's blood gushes out over your chest.

Turn to 100.



A wondrous creature

8

With a thud which shakes the island, the Giant collapses, dead. Add 4 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet and increase your Expertise by 1 Point. You may take food and drink at this point - providing you have food of your own as a search of the island will not produce any. You will, however, find a sack in which the Giant kept a few souvenirs. None of these have any value except possibly a small copper ring on which a few runes are inscribed and a small potion bottle, marked 'Neutralise Poison'.

If you wish to try this ring on your finger, you should first take a note of this paragraph number, in case you need to come back to it. When you have done so, turn to 327.

Otherwise you enter the items on your Character Sheet and continue your adventure. Turn to 354.

9

The last of the guard of six Lizardmen lies dead, and you have succeeded in preventing them giving an alarm. Add 2 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet.

There is much quiet backslapping, and together you all move to the arms store. There you find that the weapons are all locked in chests and racks, which causes considerable alarm. Fortunately one of the prisoners finds the key on a guard's body, but you realize this could have caused a fatal delay in arming your men if the alarm had been given.

To guard against accidents, the alarm gong is cut down and slid into the waters of the pool. Those of the prisoners too weak to fight are helped aboard a barge and made comfortable with some of the furs from a hijacked cargo.

Then the fit prisoners split into two groups. One guards the tunnel to the North West which leads to the Frogmen's quarters, the other the Eastern one which is where the rest of the Lizardmen should be sleeping. They hope to be able to kill several more by surprise, when they eventually emerge, but are quietly confident of success in any event, when fighting on even terms.

To you, they leave the hardest job. A tunnel to the South is believed to lead to the quarters of the mysterious Leader. It is only dimly lit by an occasional taper set in wall sconces every twenty feet or so. Taking your choice of weapons and equipment, and consuming any Potions you wish, you move cautiously South.

Turn to 351.

10

This channel runs fairly straight from North East to South West and is four miles long, taking two hours to navigate.

At the North Eastern end it emerges from the North Western corner of a lake (164).

At the South Eastern end it forks and you may either follow a broad stream that runs away to the South (61) or investigate a tributary that flows in from the North West (102).

11

You test the liquid. It appears to have no effect on your finger, so you lick it gingerly. A tingle runs through your body, but you feel no different. Then you notice that you can make out a suggestion of the outline of

the bottle through your hand, which seems to have become transparent. Looking down at yourself you find the same effect wherever your skin is not covered by clothing or equipment.

This is obviously a Potion of Invisibility.

After a few moments the effect wears off, but you conclude that drinking the whole potion should make your body (though not your clothing, equipment or weapons) totally invisible for some little time.

In game terms this will give you the opportunity to 'reconnoitre' by reading the next four numbered sections ahead, wherever you decide to drink the potion, without having to fight any of the combats outlined therein. You will then return to the point where you drank the potion (having previously noted the number of that paragraph) and either proceed on the same route, forearmed by the knowledge of what is there, or take a different route, suitably warned.

Enter on your Character Sheet 'Potion of Invisibility **11**', so that you can refer back to this paragraph if you wish, and turn back to the last paragraph you noted.

12

The mighty Doone River is the main commerce route to and from the interior of Skyfall. From Howard's Crossing on the North Eastern edge of the Dunmarsh it flows wide and straight for nearly seventy miles South West until it joins the Sol and leaves the marsh some four miles from the sea, just North of Starport.

In that distance it is fed by seven tributary channels draining the marsh, two from the East and the other five from the other side.

Coming down stream the first of these (**272**) flows in from the West two miles from Howard's Crossing.

The next (**287**) joins from the East four miles later.

Fifteen miles further on, one joins from the North (**299**).

Another five miles and another channel from the East flows in (**89**).

Four more miles and there is one from the North (**51**).

Nine miles downstream and another channel (**39**) flows in from the North.

Finally the last comes from the North after a further eight miles (**61**).

Then there are no more tributaries joining in the last three miles down to the confluence with the Sol.

The journey from Howard's Crossing to the confluence with the Sol, or vice versa, will take you two days, with a break for the night at the halfway point, roughly between the two tributaries at 51 and 39 but on the opposite bank.

*If you are journeying to Howard's Crossing, turn to **106**.*

If you wish to investigate one of the tributary streams, turn to the appropriate number in brackets.

*If you travel South West down the Doone to its confluence with the Sol, turn to **392**.*

13

You push strongly against the door and, with a protesting screech from the hinges, it opens away from you into a rather larger room, perhaps twenty feet square.

14-15

Again there is a door opposite you, and this too is larger, being about six feet wide and twelve high.

There are bodies lying on either side of the door, in tattered rags of uniforms, looking like guards who stayed at their posts until they died. Each has a sword, clutched in skeletal fingers.

*If you enter the room and approach this second door, turn to **278**.*

*If you prefer to return the way you have come, turn to **240**.*

14

You paddle bravely onwards to face the multiple attacks from the Hydra heads.

Each head has Expertise 12 and Vitality 4. For combat against this monster you must first calculate $E + 4H$ for yourself, then $E + 4H$ for each surviving head, as all will attack you at once. As they all strike together and then withdraw, rather as a snake, you only have time to hit at one head in each round of combat. Thus you can hit at one head (providing your score is greater than at least one of the monster's scores) but each one that scores higher than you will do 2 Points of Damage. The body of the Hydra is effectively invulnerable, but the creature dies when all seven of its heads are killed.

As you kill each head, remember to reduce the calculations for those surviving to attack you.

*If the Hydra kills you, turn to **100**.*

*If you kill the Hydra, turn to **275**.*

15

Drawing a weapon you hack at the Centaur's leader.

16-17

Each of the Centaurs has Expertise 9 (with a dagger) and Vitality 14. If they manage to hit you their daggers will do the normal 1 Point of Damage. You have **SURPRISE** for the first round of combat.

As you are fighting four of them, it is suggested that you note them in four different Monster Combat boxes. In each round of combat you will have to evaluate $E + 4H$ for yourself, then each one of them in turn. You will hit each one of them that scores less than you, while any of them scoring more will hit you.

*If you are killed in the course of the combat, turn to **100**.*

*As soon as you have killed two of the Centaurs, turn to **217** unless, in that same combat round, you kill all of them, in which case turn to **353**.*

16

The Crocodile has Expertise 13, Vitality 12, and its powerful jaws do 3 Points of Damage. If it kills you turn to **100**.

*If you kill it, add 3 Fortune Points to your total. It seems to have been alone, and you may take the opportunity to eat and rest before continuing by turning to **113**.*

17

The Giant Beaver has a body somewhat larger than a horse, but such short legs that its head only reaches your chest. The paws are powerful, and with rather blunt claws that can do you little harm. The tail too, though large and muscular, is suited for building, not destruction. Its teeth, however, are a different matter. Long, broad and sharp, able to chop through a

18-19

substantial tree in a few bites, they can cause a lot of damage to flesh and bone.

Your opponent has Expertise 10 and Vitality 7, but if it manages to bite you it will do 4 Points of Damage.

If you kill the creature, turn to 390.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

18

This channel flows from the North East for seven miles to a point where it splits into two, one channel (284) proceeding South and the other (272) going due East.

At the far end it bends North, carries on for two miles and finally ceases to be navigable where it bubbles out from beneath a series of shingle banks.

Travelling to the source and back will take you nine hours.

19

You rise at dawn, ready to set out, then notice the map, still partially spread out as it was before the fight. Examining it more closely, you see that it does indeed show the course of the Doone through Dunmarsh. However, there are certain differences between this and the normal maps used by the Barge Masters, a copy of which hangs on the wall over your father's desk.

Your father's map shows the course of the Doone from its confluence with The Sol just North of Starport all the way to Howard's Crossing, on the far edge of the Dunmarsh. This part of the Doone is virtually straight, and at the halfway mark there is a fortuitously placed stretch of firm ground on the South Eastern bank which almost all barge crews use as a mooring

20-21

overnight. Below this halfway point, two streams join the Doone from the North West, while above it three more join from the North West and two from the South East.

There are a number of small crosses on the new map: three below the halfway point and six above. Pondering the significance of this, you eat breakfast.

Turn to 135.

20

The strange creature is quite close now, and you realize that there is, after all, nothing awkward about its flight - indeed, quite the reverse. It turns out to be partly human, with the lovely face of a woman. The legs and wings are those of a large snow-white swan and, now **you** look at it again, you realize that the nest is lined with white velvet.

All this time the beautiful creature has continued its song and, as it settles into the nest it bids you join it. You happily climb in, surrendering your sword as it would be churlish to bear arms into the home of one so beautiful.

Without alarm or rancour you watch as your host uses your sword to cut your throat and, as your life slips away, reflect that it was probably all for the best anyway.

Turn to 100.

21

The ground is quite firm, although the general level of the land is only a foot or two above the surface of the water. You are able to moor the canoe to the trunk of a

dead tree, stranded on the bank after some past flood.

The Buffalo seem to have taken no notice of your arrival, and you manoeuvre to approach the lone one from behind. It is contentedly grazing in a patch of tall coarse grass which reaches halfway up your thigh. When you are only a few feet away, some slight sound — perhaps the swishing of the grass — alerts your prey which spins to face you and immediately charges.

You have no choice but to fight. It has Expertise 9 and Vitality 8, and can do 2 Damage Points with its horns.

If it kills you turn to 100.

If you kill the Buffalo, turn to 251.

22

By crawling around the far right-hand edge of the small cave, ignoring the muck on the floor, you will be able to avoid the beak and talons of the Eagle on the nest, and reach the first of the fissures. It leads further down into the rock, but is no more than six inches wide, and narrows perceptibly after a couple of feet. The only light comes through the entrance tunnel, so you cannot see much here at the back of the cave.

There seems to be something glinting where the fissure narrows, though.

If you reach in to see what it is, turn to 258.

If you ignore it and try the second fissure, turn to 177.

If you decide to investigate the nest, turn to 60.

If you leave the cave the same way you came in, turn to 140.

23

The altar stone is roughly nine feet long and four feet wide. There are holes near the four corners and in two of them are remains of leather thongs, obviously used to tether the wrists and ankles of the unfortunate victims.

The surface of the stone is slightly concave, with a shallow runnel leading towards the wall at the rear, and looking underneath you can see a rough earthenware bowl which you assume was used to catch the victims' blood.

If you wish to reach beneath the altar stone to retrieve the bowl, turn to 38.

Should you wish to examine the carved face more closely, you will have to climb on to the altar stone and must turn to 397.

To leave the altar, turn to 379.

24

This channel runs due West from the Southern corner of a lake, for six miles, then turns South for seven more. It then splits into a multitude of small streams and rivulets, none of them deep enough for a canoe, let alone a barge.

Investigating this waterway costs you thirteen hours before you get back to the lake 79.

25

The second pair of Skeletons lie strewn about this large, forty-foot-square room. Again there are no features of interest apart from the door.

You can take their swords if you really must, but there

26-27

is nothing to choose between these and the ones used by the last pair. If you do, add them to your equipment list.

You may also add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet for defeating this second pair of guardians.

If you now wish to try opening this enormous door, turn to 259.

Should you decide to return the way you came, turn to 68.

26

This channel comes from the East to a point where another arrives from the North (233). The resulting broad stream (142) flows South West.

Heading East against the current for two miles, you see a fearsome creature ahead, standing in the centre of the channel at a point where the water is about forty feet wide and six feet deep. From descriptions spread by the occasional traveller who has met such a monster and survived, you believe this is a Hydra.

Turn to 181.

27

The Lizardman in the water, having finally freed himself from his breastplate, starts calling for assistance, unaware of what has happened to his comrade.

Dragging the body back into the shadows, you wait with your companions as the rest of the guards come testily to see what is going on. Again you attack, this time reinforced by two more prisoners with the halberd and shortsword from the latest guard casualty.



You fight one of the Lizardmen

This time there are no reinforcements within ready earshot for the last three guards. If they can be disposed of within 4 rounds of Combat no alarm will be given. You will have SURPRISE for the first 2 rounds of Combat.

For simplicity, we shall say you fight one Lizardman while your companions take on the other two. Your opponent has Expertise 10 and Vitality 7 while his halberd can mete out 3 Points of Damage. If you kill him within 4 rounds your companions will have succeeded similarly, and you should turn to **9**.

*If you fail, the sustained noise of fighting will effectively muse the rest of the inhabitants. In this case turn to **331**.*

*If you yourself are killed, turn to **100**.*

28

You open the door wider and admit the newcomer. The cloak is so long it trails on the ground as she walks, so that she almost appears to glide into the room.

Approaching the table, she produces a rolled parchment from under the cloak. 'Spread this out and I think you will see something interesting,' she says. You move to obey using various items to hold down what appears to be a map of the lower reaches of the Doone, as it flows through the Dunmarsh. As you are so engaged her other hand emerges from beneath the cloak and strikes at you with a long curved dagger.

You are forced into combat. Your opponent has Expertise 10, Vitality 6 and her dagger does 2 Points of Damage. For the first round of combat she has Surprise and you have no weapon; thereafter you are able to

draw your own dagger and fight on even terms. (You do not wear your sword in the house!)

Her dagger, you notice, has a groove down the blade, smeared, with what looks like a brown, greasy substance.

*If your opponent succeeds in causing any Damage on you, turn to **237**.*

*If you succeed in killing her, turn to **47**.*

There is no alternative, as for some reason she will fight to the death.

29

The Northernmost of the barges moored along the Western wall still has some stacks of timber aboard. There is no illumination close by and ample hiding places aboard as a result. With a dozen prisoners you find concealment on the barge while the others return to the compound, taking the dead guard with them and disposing the cut cords around the gatepost so that all appears secure.

After some minutes another Lizardman leaves the Eastern corner of the cavern and calls curiously towards you. In slurred tones a prisoner calls back and there is an outburst of laughter from the guards. Peering cautiously over the barge rail you are delighted to see all five of them desert their posts and come eagerly around the edge of the pool to your barge.

As they approach the prisoner calls to them again, and they pay no attention to the gate of the compound as they pass.

Reaching the barge they all drop aboard and the trap is sprung.

You have shared out the available weapons and the other prisoners have improvised clubs from lengths of timber, so that the odds are on your side.

If you yourself can dispose of one Lizardman (who has Expertise 10 Vitality 7 and a halberd capable of 3 Points of Damage) within four rounds of Combat, your comrades can deal similarly with the rest and no alarm will be given. You have the benefit of SURPRISE.

If you succeed, turn to 9.

If the Lizardman kills you, turn to 100.

If you fail, and the Combat continues past the fourth round, turn to 331.

30

This stream is about fifty feet wide and flows quite swiftly. From a point where a channel from the North (123) forks, and the other arm (350) runs off to the South West, this stream flows South for two miles and then turns South East.

After four miles you see a large whirlpool ahead. Its spinning walls leave no room to pass, and the marshy verges do not look capable of sustaining your weight if you try to get around it. The stream continues to the South East on the other side of the vortex.

If you paddle straight on and take your chance in the maelstrom, turn to 260.

If you land and try to portage around this obstacle, turn to 200, but first keep a note of the number of this paragraph.

If you decide to try another route turn to either 123 or 350, as mentioned above. This section will have taken you six hours.

31

You head for the Crocodile, then swerve to the side and run almost to the waters' edge, before cutting back and kicking the mooring stake from the ground.

The canoe has gently grounded on the soft mud of the shore and, feet skidding, you start to push it clear.

There is a fierce snorting behind you and the squelch of heavy feet in the mud. The Crocodile is upon you and you have to turn to fight, hampered by the soft mud which sucks at your boot soles.

The Crocodile has Expertise 13 and Vitality 12, while your Expertise is temporarily reduced by 1 point due to the uncertain footing. The powerful jaws will do 3 Points of Damage.

If it defeats you, turn to 100.

If you kill the Crocodile, turn to 317.

32

You decide to climb the ledge towards the caves. It is quite narrow, never more than a foot wide but takes you safely to a point about twenty feet below the nearest cave mouth before petering out.

There seem to be adequate hand and foot holds on this last stretch, but as you reach up to begin, a shadow falls over you and there is a harsh, almost human scream, as a large Eagle stoops on you, attacking with beak and talons.

Its Expertise is 10 and its Vitality 4 and it does 2 Points

of Damage. In view of the precarious situation you are in, you will need to cross 1 Fortune Point off your Character Sheet every time (if any) you fail to hit the Eagle; in order not to plunge from your perch.

If you defeat the Eagle, turn to 72.

If the Eagle kills you, turn to 100.

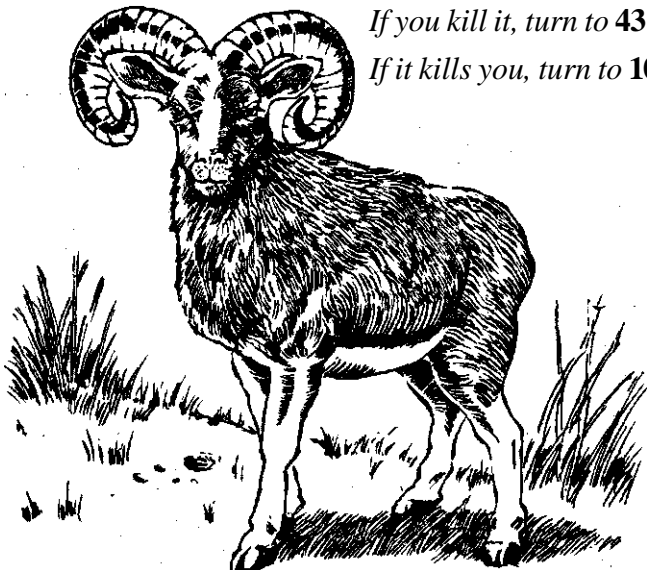
If you fall from your perch, you will tumble down to the water below, sustaining damage as you hit the cliff. Deduct 5 Vitality Points from your Character Sheet. If this kills you turn to 100. If you are still alive, turn to 116.

33

The Ram advances confidently to meet you. It has Expertise 12, Vitality 5 and can mete out 2 Points of Damage with a butt.

If you kill it, turn to 43.

If it kills you, turn to 100.



34

This channel winds its way from the South Eastern corner of a lake (79) for six miles due South, before bending South West for two more. It then turns South for a mile, South West for four more, and finally South for three miles, ending at a fork.

From there you had a choice of two directions: one channel continues South (39) and one comes in from the West (124).

Navigating this channel takes you eight hours.

35

Clouds of dust are stirred up as you cross the room to the ruined door. A hefty kick dislodges it from the remaining rusty hinge, and you move into the room beyond.

These were obviously the sleeping quarters for whatever group once lived here. Your original thought that they were Frogmen, based on the depth of the stair treads, now seems unlikely as there are remains of a dozen bunk beds, now mainly collapsed due to the rotting of the wood and the rusting of the iron. There are some foot lockers in here as well.

If you wish to search amongst these ancient remains, make a note of this paragraph number before turning to 270.

If you leave the room, turn to 367.

36

By the time the spate has subsided enough for you to have time to look around and do more than steer a hectic course downstream, you have been carried along

to a point about six miles below the remains of the dam.

You review what is known about the course of the River Sol, which is normally considered unnavigable by commercial craft, due to the shifting sandbars and occasional Giant Beaver dams precisely like the one you have just encountered. Wide and shallow, it meanders in a generally Southern direction from the Northern Ramparts, through the unknown depths of Centaur Forest, down amongst the bogs and fens of the Dunmarsh until it joins the Doone just North of Starport. Within the Dunmarsh, only three tributaries join it: One flows in from the North West (370) some sixteen miles North of the confluence of the Sol and the Doone.

You calculate that you must be some thirteen miles North of that, being four miles South of the point where a stream flows in from the East (368).

The dam was two miles North of that point, and about sixteen miles South of a major fork, where the Luna flows in from the North West, about fifteen miles within the Northern edge of the Dunmarsh. Above this point, both rivers are known to be navigable well into the reaches of the forest.

If you wish to return upstream past the site of the dam, turn to 204.

If you wish to try either of the lower tributaries, turn to 368 or 370 as above.

If you decide to investigate the Doone, it will take you sixteen hours to reach the confluence. Turn to 12.

You may, of course, return to Starport, but this will have the effect of abandoning the adventure, although you could obviously try again some other time.

Whichever course you take, you will have time for food and drink as you travel.

37

The Centaurs, although highly proficient with the bow, are not very experienced at close-quarter combat and only have daggers which do 1 Point of Damage if they hit. Their Expertise with these weapons is 9 and each has Vitality 14.

As the melee is fast and furious, and you are fighting all four at once, you should Evaluate E + 4H for yourself and each surviving opponent in turn each round. Any of them who exceed your score will hit you, but you will hit all those who score less.

They will fight to the death. If you kill them all, turn to 158.

If they kill you, turn to 100.

38

You pull the bowl out from beneath the altar stone. It is about six inches in diameter and four inches deep, and there is a dry, brown flaky substance in the bottom which looks very much like the stains on the altar.

Having read stories of evil cults practising horrific sacrificial rites in order to gain occult powers, it may occur to you to pour some water into the bowl and try drinking it. If so, turn to 173.

On the other hand, you may fling the bowl from you with a grimace of loathing, and turn back to 397.

39

This channel is only two miles long, taking just an hour to navigate.

To the South it joins the mighty Doone River (12).

To the North it forks, and you may either turn West (124) or continue North (34).

40

You dive into the penned-back waters of the Sol and start to swim North, hoping to be able to double back to your canoe when the Giant Beaver has gone. Unfortunately, the creature is too angry at your invasion of its domain to abandon the chase so easily. With scarcely a splash it slides into the water and, being an excellent swimmer is upon you almost immediately.

Fighting in the water is extremely difficult for you, as you can get no real power in your blows, and tend to sink if not using both arms to stay afloat. Your opponent is under no such handicap, and its powerful jaws are equipped with long, broad, sharp teeth quite capable of felling a mature tree in a few bites.

Its Expertise is 10 and Vitality 7, but if it manages to bit you it will do 4 Points of Damage.

Your own Expertise, on the other hand, is reduced by 4 for the extent of this combat.

If you defeat the Giant Beaver, turn to 71.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

41

Once again the Skeletons have Expertise 10 and Vitality 5 and their swords will do 2 Points of Damage

if they hit you. They are as slow as the others, and you can fight them one at a time.

If you kill both Skeletons, add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet and turn to 134.

If they kill you, turn to 100.

42

You stay perched in the lower branches for some hours, until dusk starts to fall. Then you see a number of other crocodiles start to emerge from the lake. Slowly and ponderously they lumber across the mud and eventually settle below the trees. Though not as large as the first one, they are still quite respectable opponents and there are seven of them.

Just before darkness comes, a large cumbersome form flaps slowly across the lake on powerful wings, and settles toward the top of your tree.

If you climb further up the tree to investigate, turn to 66.

If you try to, sneak down the other tree and escape, turn to 64.

If you stay where you are for the night, turn to 265.

43

None of the other sheep bother you. The herd starts moving away, followed by the other rams, who will no doubt shortly be electing a new leader by the traditional methods.

You can get seven days' more food from the body of the

Ram, and should alter your Character Sheet accordingly. If you camp here, you can get today's meal from the carcase and take the other six days' supply with you.

When ready to travel on, turn to 211.

44

The meadow is only a hundred yards wide here, between the sheer rock cliff of Dragon's Mount and the treacherous surface of the marsh to the South.

To the West the firm grass ends on the bank of the Luna, but to the East it extends for some way past the corner of the Mount.

There is no sign of life along this stretch but you can see a herd of Deer on the meadow past the Mount to the East.

If you go West, turn to 70.

If you go East, turn to 273.

45

You decide against either travelling aboard or keeping in sight the *Sultan's Favourite*. Giving the barge a good two hours' start, you set off in the canoe later in the day.

If you intend a general search of the Dunmarsh area, turn to 12.

If you head back to 'Halfway House', the stretch of firm ground where the river barges habitually anchor to spend the night in the marsh, turn to 96.

46

This waterway flows from the North West to join one from the East (227) to form a broader channel (123) flowing South.

Travelling upstream you head North West for three miles, then turn North East for two more to find the source oozing from a vast, evil-smelling morass.

Investigating this waterway will take five hours.



47

Your last blow has ended the fight and your opponent collapses on the floor of your home. Carefully you kick her obviously poisoned blade into a corner.

Pulling back the cloak reveals an unattractive female of indeterminate years, and probably non-human race. Her fingers are short, but with long strong nails and there is a noticeable web of skin between them. She has prominent jaws with large teeth, yellow eyes and almost no nose, so that her nostrils are nearly vertical slits in her face. Her skin is scaly, with a greenish tinge.



She pulls back the cloak.

You have never seen or heard of her type before, but she is certainly mammalian unlike the reptilian dwellers of the swamp. It is well known that the two are incapable of interbreeding, so she cannot be a hybrid either.

You wonder what to do now.

The combat was quite silent, and no alarm has been raised. If you decide to leave the body here, take your night's rest and leave early tomorrow without reporting the affair, turn to 263.

If you decide to go and report to one of the Guild forthwith, turn to 337.

If you prefer to spend the night somewhere else, in case of further attacks, turn to 295.

48

You find you are holding a small silver mirror, at such an angle that you can see the entrance tunnel reflected in it. Interested, you think to inspect your own features, to see what ravages the adventure has made of your normally fair countenance.

This may have an unfortunate effect! If you can cross off 3 Fortune Points from your Character Sheet, please do so and you will not be affected by the powerful magic of the mirror.

If you do not have 3 Fortune Points left, I regret that this is the end of this adventure for you. This is a Mirror of Mind Erasure and any thinking being gazing into the mirror is liable to become a mindless animal unless he is able to save against the magic. If you have failed, your mindless body will remain here until the Eagle decides to use you as a handy source of food.

If you survive, enter the Mirror on your Character Sheet, if you wish to take it along. It will only work on thinking creatures able to perceive a mirror reflection for what it is, and they also may be able to resist its effect. In order to overcome their resistance, and allow the Mirror to affect them, you will have to cross off one Fortune Point for every 6 Vitality Points they possess. (Thus it would take 2 Fortune Points to erase the mind of a thinking creature with 7 Vitality Points.)

Animals, such as an Eagle or a Hippogriff, would not be affected.

You may now either. ..

Investigate the second fissure, which would again call for blind groping (turn to 177).

Search the nest (turn to 60).

Or leave the cave by the way you came in (turn to 140).

49

You paddle up to the rocky edge of the Giant's island, where he squats before you, club ready beside him. He then regales you with the following:

My first is in me but never in you;
My second's in sausage but not in stew;
My last is in pudding but not in a pie;
My whole's all around us as you can descry.
What is it?

You scratch your head, playing for time and wondering if there is some way of outwitting him without having to give a definite answer.

'That's awfully good,' you comment. 'Did you make it up yourself?'

He frowns, managing to look even more menacing than before.

'Vex me not, O little man

If delay is now your plan.

Answer 'ere I count to three

Or 'tis death for you and lunch for me.'

He reaches for his club, and you realize you are left with but three options:

You can try to paddle away (271).

You can leap on to the island and fight the Giant (203).

You can stay in the canoe and try to answer the question. If you choose this alternative, first write down what you think is the answer on your Character Sheet. Then turn to 169.

50

You reach your canoe far enough in front of your pursuer to be able to kick the mooring stake free and, feet churning in the mud at the water's edge, push your craft far enough out to jump aboard and start paddling.

A few splashes alert you to the fact that the pursuit has not been abandoned and despite your exhaustion from the combat you paddle as you have never paddled before, until the sounds behind you fade away.

Finally, you can do no more, and the canoe drifts on across the surface of the lake. It is too dark to navigate properly and you have to sit out the night in your canoe, cold and damp from the night mists which leave

everything soaked in condensation. Fortunately you are not otherwise disturbed, but must Deduct 1 Vitality Point.

Eventually dawn comes, and the mists rapidly dissipate as the temperature rises.

Turn to 113.

51

This channel joins the Doone river (12) from the North along a channel eight miles long.

At the Northern end it bends North West for two more miles, where it issues from the middle of the South Eastern side of a lake (79).

52

Soon after lunch you board the *Pride of Starport* at the main quay, for the journey upstream to Howard's Crossing. You carry your normal equipment (see Introduction) and are interested to see that all the crewmen and passengers are also carrying arms. And not just the usual ornamental daggers. Swords and axes are much in evidence, and one cowed figure, probably a monk, carries a massive morningstar.

The other passengers are a portly, middle-aged merchant; his younger wife; a youth scarcely out of his teens, with a wispy beard and a small sickle strapped to his pack, probably indicating a druid; and two soldiers in the uniform of the Margrave of Syrania, whose lands lie to the South across the Sea of Storms. These latter two keep themselves apart from the rest of you during the journey.

Most barges would set off earlier in the day, wishing to make the halfway moorings by nightfall, but the *Pride*

of Starport is a new boat with larger sails and a clean bottom, and is quite the fastest barge on the river. Even so, darkness has descended on the Doone before you see the twinkle of cooking fires on the shore and the riding lights of the few moored barges up ahead.

Turn to 377.

53

As you start to climb further, the rocking of the branches disturbs the creature, which flaps heavily up into the air, screeching angrily in a raucous, oddly human-sounding voice. Then, as it apparently sights you in the upper branches, it starts to sing one of the most beautiful ballads you have ever heard. The voice is soft, gentle and utterly beguiling.

Turn to 304.

54

You try to question them, seeking information about other beings, especially marsh creatures in the area, but they pay no attention to your words.

'Begone whence you came or die!' orders the one who spoke before, levelling his bow.

If you try to land, turn to 374.

If you paddle on upstream, turn to 374.

If you turn back downstream, turn to 199.

55

The sand and gravel is quite firm underfoot, and crunches loudly as you step forward towards the chest.

Almost immediately you realize something is wrong:

you are not getting any nearer to the rock slab in the centre. Indeed, you have barely reached the Skeleton.

Puzzled, you look round, and find you have come about halfway from the rocky floor. You stride forward again, but the same thing happens. When you look down at your feet, you find that although your mind wills your legs to step forward, your feet persist in marking time on the same spot.

Trying to run or crawl makes no difference, neither does closing your eyes, and when you turn round, you find that you are unable to back towards the chest or indeed to move away from it back on to the surrounding rock floor.

Turn to 207.

56

You retreat as quietly as possible towards the cavemouth. It is dark outside, but the journey from the spot where you left your canoe was uncomplicated and you expect to make it before dawn. You can only hope the Centaurs won't come looking for you, now they have their fire.

Unfortunately, you never make it to the cavemouth! Other, smaller Spiders, less than half the size of the Giant ones at the rear of the cave, have emerged from clefts in the cave walls and ceiling and, before you have time to resist have trussed you in the familiar sticky strands and hauled you out of the cave into the pitch darkness of the maze of clefts and fissures surrounding it.

These spiders have the unpleasant habit of injecting their eggs into the living body of their prey, so that the young spiders have a ready source of food when they

hatch - which happens quite quickly due to the body warmth of their host.

You are quite unable to do anything about it, so as the next few days will be most unpleasant we will not dwell longer upon the subject.

Turn to 100.



57

This particular clump of water plants are actually Water-Kelpies, and they have cast a powerful charm upon you. In order to escape this spell, you will need to cross 3 Fortune Points off your Character Sheet. When you have done this, turn to 291.

If you have too few Fortune Points left to escape the ensorcelment, turn to 364.

58

As soon as your foot crosses the design on the floor, a tremor runs through the Sphinx. Its chest heaves as it



A tremor runs through the Sphinx

takes a deep breath, and it turns its baleful countenance towards you. The mighty jaws begin to open.

*If you wish to strike the first blow now, you can have **SURPRISE** for the first two rounds of Combat, as it shakes off the effect of the years it has been standing here. If so, turn to **94**.*

*If you prefer to wait to see what it does, turn to **165**.*

59

Not being too keen on the idea of tombs, you make your way back up the stairs. Eventually, rather winded, you arrive back in the Hippogriffs' cave. Passing through to the ledge outside, you may have a rest, take a Potion if you wish, and even eat today's meal if you have food with you and have not previously eaten.

*When ready to descend the cliff turn to **336**.*

60

Warily, you approach the nest, weapon held at the ready. The roof of the cave is too low to allow you to stand, and the best you can manage is to edge forward on your knees.

Not surprisingly the Eagle attacks as you reach the nest. It has Expertise 10 and Vitality 4 and does 3 Points of Damage with beak and claws as the defence of its young lends it added strength.

You, on the other hand, must temporarily fight at 1 less than your normal Expertise owing to the cramped surroundings.

*If the Eagle kills you, turn to **100**.*

*If you kill the Eagle; turn to **73**.*

61

This winding channel flows South from a point where two other channels join. One (10) comes from the North East and the other (102) from the North West. It flows South for eight miles, then turns East for four more, then goes South again and joins the Doone River (12) after three more.

It will take you seven and a half hours to navigate this distance.

62

Landing from your canoe, you are able to moor it to a stunted bush. The grazing animals are several hundred yards away and as you cautiously approach you see they are wild sheep. There are several dozen ewes, many with young lambs, in a loose herd guarded by one very large Ram, with magnificent curved horns. Several more small rams can be seen, all at some little distance from the herd, having presumably been driven off by the biggest one.

If you decide to kill the biggest Ram, turn to 33.

If you try for one of the smaller rams, turn to 219.

If you decide on a ewe or a lamb from the herd, turn to 195.

If you return to your canoe, turn to 211.

63

Holding a torch in front of you, you crawl inside the mouth of the carved face. Looking backwards and up as you crawl towards the 'throat', you see quite clearly a large block of stone surrounded by a rectangle of deep cracks, just behind the upper row of jagged teeth. The

suspicion strikes you that, in certain circumstances, that might descend upon the unwary.

Hastily, you crawl on down the slope to the point where it bends. Looking round the bend to your left, you see the narrow tunnel opens into a large chamber some ten feet away.

If you wish to crawl on into the chamber, turn to 147.

If you decide to return to the cave behind you, you will be able to clamber out backwards, and should turn to 379.

64

You manage to clamber into the other tree, and start to descend on the far side from the first and largest Crocodile.

As you reach the lowest branch, which is some eight feet above ground level, you are just able to make out that the ground below you is occupied by several reptilian forms, and the last glimmers of daylight are reflected from large yellow eyes and almost equally large teeth.

If you decide to stay up the tree for the night, turn to 265.

If, instead, you decide to drop to the ground and take your chances on fighting your way to the canoe, turn to 369.

65

Your canoe has not been disturbed. If you wish you can drag it back to the river, launch it and scramble aboard

as its impetus takes it out into the general current. In this case turn to **247**.

Should you prefer to leave the canoe here, turn to **301**.

66

You climb quite easily through the branches despite the failing light, and eventually are able to make out the bulk of a large nest in an upper fork. There is a most unpleasant smell up here. The creature itself is perched on a higher branch and appears to be dozing as you pull yourself level with the nest.

*If you wish to enter the nest, turn to **340**.*

*If you climb up to the creature, turn to **53**.*

*If you go back down the tree, turn to **265**.*

67

You enter the room and look around by the light of your torch.

Both North and South walls have work benches standing against them, and both benches are covered with an untidy array of equipment. Papers are scattered around both benches and the floor, some bottles and retorts have been smashed, and a wooden stool lies overturned in a corner. On either side of the door in the East wall through which you entered are what must once have been comfortable, upholstered couches. Both have been ripped to shreds, and you now notice that chunks have been gouged from the edge of the open door.

Looking closer, you see that the Western door is actually made of metal, and dogged shut by heavy clips. That one appears to be undamaged.

You have a look at the papers, but the symbols and writings on them mean nothing to you. Similarly, the purpose of the equipment is a mystery, although it seems various liquids and powders have been mixed and heated in a large jar. Oddly enough, although the contents of most of the surviving bottles seem to have degenerated into a gooey paste over the years, a few appear to have been introduced more recently.

In particular, a ceramic bowl, which has been placed to collect liquid condensing from an oddly-shaped glass, is still half full of a clear mauve liquid.

*If you wish to taste this liquid, turn to **300**.*

*If you prefer to smash all the equipment, turn to **143**.*

*If you do neither, turn to **212**.*

68

As you make your way back into the previous room, where you defeated the first pair of Skeletons, you are astonished to find that everything has increased in size. The room is now as big as the one you had just reached and the remains of the Skeletons are now twice human size. You rush on into the room at the foot of the stairs. This is also larger than before, and as you reach the stairs themselves, you find that each is now knee-high to you. Climbing back up three hundred of them is going to take quite an effort.

It dawns upon you that you are now only about eighteen inches tall.

Truly mighty was Mawghain the Magician. He had cast a spell upon each doorway into his final resting

place so that any intruders were reduced by half in size each time they passed through them.

Turn to 356.

69

As you near the canoe you hear sounds of movement in the top of the tree, and recall the clumsy-looking creature which landed up there just before darkness fell. Looking back, you see a winged shape emerging from the upper branches, but are then surprised to hear a beautiful voice start to sing a wonderful, soothing melody.

A fleeting thought crosses your mind. You have heard travellers' tales of creatures called Harpies, half vulture and half woman, which are supposed to have the power to charm Humans with their voices while possessing other rather undesirable traits. If this is a Harpy you had better sacrifice 2 Fortune Points in order to save against the magical effect of its song.

If you are prepared to take your chances, or for one reason or another will not cross 2 Fortune Points off your Character Sheet, turn to 151.

If you do delete the 2 Fortune Points, turn to 191.

70

By the South Western corner of the Mount you can see a route up the Western cliff. There is a ledge running diagonally up it which looks reasonably easy to climb and seems to reach nearly all the way.

If you decide to climb, turn to 32.

As an alternative, you could move Eastwards around the Southern wall of the Mount. If you wish to try this, turn to 44.

If you left your canoe in the grove of trees just South of this point, and wish to return there, turn to 257.

71

The body of the Giant Beaver sinks beneath the surface. Add 2 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet. You swim back to the dam and climb out.

Turn to 390.

72

There is a faint splash from below as the body of the eagle plunges into the water. You breathe deeply and may pause to drink a Potion if you wish. Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet. Then you clamber carefully upwards until you are able to get an arm over the lip of the cave mouth and pull yourself over to comparative safety.

Crouching in the cave entrance, you are conscious of a strong animal scent wafting out. You pause dubiously - the Eagle you just killed was your first experience with such creatures - nonetheless this scent seems stronger than you would have expected from an eagle's eyrie. Indeed it smells more like a stable than anything else.

If you are going inside, turn to 201.

If you decide to go back down, turn to 308.

If you decide to climb up to the next cave above, turn to 380.

73

With the Eagle dead, you are able to look into the nest and find three young chicks there. As they have no

74-75

parent left to feed them, you feel it will be a kindness to kill them too, and they are despatched without difficulty. You spend the next ten minutes or so ripping the nest to pieces and strewing the debris around the cave, and are delighted to find a small bottle marked 'Neutralise Poison' in a leather bag. You enter this on your Character Sheet. The fissures at the rear of the cave seem to be the only openings in the rock other than the entrance.

If you wish to investigate the fissures, turn to 22.

If you prefer to leave the cave, turn to 140, but ignore any future reference to the Eagles.

74

The water quickly rises to your knees, then your thighs. As you bend to plunge forward, you notice a flicker of movement as a shoal of small fish rises from the depths towards you.

If you carry on to swim across the pool, turn to 213.

If you decide to leave the pool, turn to 279.

75

Unseen by the Centaurs, other smaller Spiders have emerged from clefts in the cave walls and two of these attack you. One swings from a strand, attached to the ceiling, but the heated air rising above the fire deflects its course, and instead of hitting you it swings into the fire, dying almost immediately.

The other scuttles across the floor towards you on its loathsome hairy legs. Its body is perhaps three feet across and the long legs carry it at about head height. There is a small mouth, flanked by pincer-like claws already working furiously in anticipation of forcing chunks of your person into its mouth.



You notice a flicker of movement

Its Expertise is 10 and its Vitality 5. If it bites you it will do 2 Points of Damage. However, its bite is poisonous, and you will have to cross off 1 Fortune Point every time it succeeds with an attack or will otherwise succumb to the poison. If you do not have the necessary Fortune Points you die quite quickly, though by no means painlessly.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill it, turn to 162.

76

As you enter the passage from the disordered work room, you notice that there are similar securing clips on the other side of the door, which can obviously thus be closed and fastened from either side.

If you secure the door behind you before advancing along the passage, turn to 324.

Otherwise you carry on, leaving the door open behind you. In this case turn to 145.

77

Exhausted by your efforts, you sag against the tree and wait for dawn and the lifting of the mist to find your canoe. Add 3 Fortune Points and 1 Point of Expertise to your Character Sheet, and consume food or drink if you wish. Eventually you are able to make out your canoe.

If you return to it and resume your journey, turn to 113.

If you decide to climb the tree to investigate the flying monster, turn to 242.

78

With you in the van, the released prisoners charge towards the Eastern corner of the cavern. Before you are halfway there you are spotted, and one guard starts beating a large gong while his fellows line up before the nearby shelter where the weapons are stored, halberds at the ready.

Turn to 331.

79

This rectangular lake is six miles long from North East to South West and three miles wide.

Two streams, one (30) from the North West and the other (309) from the North East join at the point where they flow into the Northern corner of the lake.

Another (92) flows from the North East into the Eastern corner of the lake.

The North Eastern shore of the lake between these streams is one of the rare areas of firm ground in the Dunmarsh. Mainly meadow, there are one or two quite high outcrops of rock and an occasional stand of trees.

From the centre of the South Eastern shore of the lake, a stream (51) flows out.

Two other streams leave the Southern corner of the lake. One (24) flows West and the other (34) South.

Investigating the lake will take three hours and while near the North Eastern shore you will be surprised to see a group of four Centaurs far from their normal home in the forests to the North. They hail you.

Turn to 136.

80

Steadfastly you stand, sword ready to face the hideous Harpy as it rises from its nest, trying to ignore the enchanting music it makes.

With a final disturbance of the upper branches, it launches itself into the air towards you but, to your amazement, it is nothing like any of the confused tales you have heard of these fearsome creatures.

Turn to 7.

81

You draw a weapon ready to fight, then consider. Will it be best to fight in here amongst the Skeletons, or outside in the living quarters amongst the remains of the furnishings?

If you prefer to fight it in here, turn to 149.

If you decide to fight it in the other room, turn to 186.

82

As you near the pool, you notice two places where there are isolated prints of booted feet. At the edge of the pool you gaze down into its depths. The water is clear and your vision only slightly impaired by the ripples spreading from the small cascades feeding into the far side of the pool. It seems to be deep as you see the sides rapidly descend beyond view. Just at the limit of vision you make out what seems to be a skeletal hand. A few small fish flick quickly into view nearby and as quickly swim back into the depths. You have

time to note that, although only about four inches long, wicked-looking jaws take up almost half their length.

The far wall shows a number of ledges above the pool, which should make for easy climbing, in contrast to the rest of the cavern walls which are much smoother. The small cascades emerge from four separate points where holes about a foot in diameter can be seen.

If you decide to swim across the pool, turn to 213.

Otherwise turn back to 302.

83

You display the amulet. The Centaurs mutter amongst themselves, then lower their bows and the leader beckons you to approach. He asks how you came by the amulet, and you explain. Satisfied, he asks how his group may help you.

You may tell him as little or as much as you wish, about your quest and the events which have happened so far. However, he is only prepared to help with information, such simple food as they have (nuts and berries sufficient for a meal) plus a guard, if you wish a night's rest.

You may take a meal here and a night's rest if you wish, amending your Character Sheet as necessary. The only information of use to you is that they have never seen a Lizardman, Frogman or, indeed, any other marsh-dwelling creature within the confines of Centaur Forest, either on the river or off it.

When ready to leave, turn to 199.

You produce your flint, steel and tinderbox, and explain the method of producing fire to the Centaurs.

It then occurs to you that you still have two alternatives: you can leave now without your fire-making equipment, or you can wait here and ask them to return it when finished with.

If you leave now, turn to the appropriate paragraph below, and ignore any further reference to Centaurs in the Dunmarsh. The flint, steel and tinderbox must be deleted from your Character Sheet. Certain sections of this adventure will now be barred to you — if the text calls for you to light a torch you will be unable to do so and will not be able to complete that paragraph. Also, your food supplies have been calculated on the assumption that some meals would need to be cooked.

Any meat gained by hunting in Dunmarsh must now be discarded and all food brought in from outside must be halved. Please amend your Equipment List accordingly.

If you landed from the lake, turn to 79.

If you landed from the winding stream to the West and North West, turn to 309.

If you landed from the wide channel to the South East, turn to 92.

If you advise them that you are only loaning them the equipment they will nod curtly, and gallop away. You camp on the edge of the meadow. Turn to 365.

Cautiously, you advance across the vast room, ready to bolt at a sign of movement from the skeletal Giant and hoping you can get far enough through the diminishing series of rooms to escape, should he prove as active as his guardians.

Nothing happens, and you reach the bony hand. The sheet of paper is about fifteen feet long and half that in width, and you have considerable difficulty in spelling out the words, standing to one side. They say: '*So, wretched one, you have dared to intrude upon the last sleep of Mawghain the Mighty. Know then that my body is no more than normal size for a human, and reflect upon the folly you have wrought upon yourself.*'

Aghast, you rush back into the last room, noting as you go how much bigger the doorway seems. The skeletal remains confirm your fear, they are twice the size they were before. On you rush through the other rooms; all are now the same enormous size as the Mawghain's room. Eventually you reach the stairs and find that the bottom one is about level with your chin. You are just over four inches tall!

You realize just how mighty was the late Mawghain. Every doorway you passed through had a magical spell cast upon it to shrink intruders to half their previous size, along with all their equipment.

Turn to 356.

The Hippogriff dives on you and slashes with beak and foreclaws as it banks past. Its Expertise is 13, its



The Hippogriff dives on you

Vitality 11 and it does 4 Points of Damage with beak and claws.

If you kill it, turn to 190.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

87

The rest of the cavern proves to be empty, with no way out other than the narrow tunnel you crawled through to get here. The ceiling curves up out of sight above the rock walls, and the whole space is roughly square and some hundred feet across.

Although the cavern as a whole appears to be of natural formation, you are sure the sand and gravel has not accumulated there naturally. It looks much the same as that in the cave with the pool and the altar, and you feel it has been carried in here, probably over a considerable period, to mark a certain area.

If you feel it would be better to try to get the chest without crossing the circular area of sand and gravel, turn to 262.

If you feel there cannot be anything dangerous under what seems to be a thin layer, and cross to examine the chest, turn to 55.

Should you decide to leave the chest alone and return to the other cave, turn to 335.

88

Once below the surface, you are amazed to see a number of stout creepers, apparently growing from the bottom of the canoe, which descend into the darker depths of the river.

Before you have time to wonder at the significance of

this discovery a number of forms propel themselves up towards you by tugs on the creepers and you find yourself attacked by four Frogmen.

Each has Expertise 10 and Vitality 5, and uses a short spear which will do 2 Points of Damage if it hits you. However, fighting below the surface of the water like this puts you at a considerable disadvantage.

Firstly, your Expertise is reduced by 3 Points.

Secondly you can only use a Dagger which will do 1 Point of Damage unless you use Fortune.

Finally, you will be fighting these opponents one at a time. After every three rounds of combat you will need to surface to breathe: that will constitute a fourth round when you can do nothing, but all your surviving opponents *WILL* hit you for 2 Points of Damage each.

If you are killed during this fight, turn to 100.

If you manage to kill all four Frogmen, turn to 168.

89

This channel joins the Doone from an Easterly direction. After two miles it bends South, and after two more, South West. Another mile and it turns South again, then South East for two more. You then reach the source, an area of sand and small puddles, quite unnavigable for your craft, let alone a barge.

You return to the Doone - nine more miles away.

*Investigating this channel has taken nine hours.
Turn to 12.*

90

Parting the bushes, which grow close to the steep rocky wall of the Mount on the left-hand entrance to

the defile, you detect a narrow ledge which will enable you to reach the firmer ground further in without going through the glutinous mud at the entrance. If you move along it turn to 172.

If, instead, you move on around the South Eastern corner of the Mount, turn to 44.

If you prefer to head North, along the Eastern side of the Mount, turn to 120.

91

Hacked apart by the force of your blows, the corpse falls to the floor. There is no blood either on its wounds or your weapon. To your horror, the separated remains seem to have life of their own. With scarcely a pause, they inch across the floor to reunite in one whole again.

If you make further efforts to separate them, turn to 156.

If you wait to see what happens, turn to 234.

92

This wide, straight channel leads South West for seven miles from a point where a stream from the North (284) forks, the other arm (299) flowing away to the South East.

For the last six miles, on the right-hand side if you are travelling downstream, the channel runs beside one of the rare areas of firm ground within the Dunmarsh. Mainly meadow, this area does have one or two quite high outcrops of rock and an occasional stand of trees. At the end of its course, the channel flows into the Eastern corner of a lake (79). It will take you three and a half hours to paddle along this channel.

At about the halfway point you are surprised to see a group of Centaurs galloping towards you. Although not normally encountered outside their home forests in the North, they are fierce defenders of their territory, and you prudently direct your canoe to the far side of the wide channel, where you will be out of bowshot. They hail you.

Turn to 136.

93

While mooring your canoe to a boulder you look out over the meadow, which was above eye-level when you were on the water. There seems to have been some sort of activity there recently. The vegetation has been beaten flat and in some places worn away as if by many feet. Here and there you spot broken weapons — half a sword blade and a couple of broken shafts from staves or pole-arms. You wonder if a battle has taken place recently — if so there is no sign of bodies.

If you decide this is not a suitable mooring after all, you cast off, climb aboard, and turn to 179.

If you are satisfied and ready for your swim, you remove all but your dagger and an undergarment and plunge into the river. Swimming easily, you head for the Eastern bank.

Turn to 116.

94

The Sphinx has Expertise 15 and Vitality 16. After evaluating $E + 4H$ for yourself, you must do so twice for your opponent, each representing an attempt to hit

you with a clawed forepaw. The forepaws each do 2 Points of Damage, but if he hits you with both, you will be held while he automatically rakes you with the hindpaws as well, for 4 more Points of Damage. Thus if he only scores one hit you lose 2 Vitality Points, but if you suffer two hits you lose 8!

Remember you have SURPRISE for the first two rounds of combat. Once the fight starts you will be unable to surrender, or break off to retreat.

If you kill the Sphinx, turn to 130.

If he kills, you, turn to 100.

95

You just manage to board your canoe and free the mooring rope when, with a roar, the centre of the dam gives way completely and the pent-up waters start surging through. Carried along on the flood, it will take a great deal of skill to keep your canoe upright and avoid the trees and other debris swirled along with you.

Evaluate $E + 4H$ for yourself: if this score reaches 17, you will succeed in staying afloat. If the score falls short, you may still succeed by using Fortune. Take the difference between your score and 17, and deduct that number of Fortune Points from your Character Sheet.

If you still cannot succeed in staying afloat, you will drown.

Turn to 100.

If you do succeed, turn to 36.

96

Despite your late start, you make good time downstream. The river seems full and fast today, and

you suspect there may have been some heavy rain further to the North East.

Some while before dusk you reach 'Halfway House', the stretch of firm ground where barge crews are wont to anchor for the night, to find only one barge there. They have seen no sign of the '*Sultan's Favourite*'.

You realize, with a sinking heart, that another barge has been lost, almost under your nose, and your canoe must have been sabotaged in some way to prevent your being a witness. The mystery is, your canoe had been no more than fifty yards away all the time you were seeing the barge off on its last trip, and you are sure you would have noticed anyone acting suspiciously near it.

Sadly, you spend the night with the barge crew, and set off to search alone the next day.

Turn to 12.

97

You scramble down the reverse slope of the dam to the muddy riverbed of the Sol, several feet ahead of the Giant Beaver.

Stepping out on the mud, you immediately start to sink. The mud is quickly up to your knees, and there seems to be no bottom. There is no way that you can plough on through it, and even dragging yourself back on to the dam will not be easy.

For the moment, indeed, it will not be possible, as the enraged Giant Beaver is there, and attacks you with its powerful jaws. The teeth are long, broad and sharp; quite capable of felling a sturdy tree in a few bites and therefore even more effective against flesh and bone.

Your opponent has Expertise 10, Vitality 7, and does 4



The enraged Giant Beaver is there

Damage Points on any successful bite. Your own Expertise, because of the impudence of the mud, is reduced by 2 for this combat, and you are sinking into the mud throughout its course. Therefore you should keep a note of how long it takes as after the sixth round you will have sunk completely.

If you kill the Giant Beaver before the end of the sixth round, turn to 323.

If you are killed by the creature, or the combat lasts past the sixth round and you sink below the surface, turn to 100.

98

You approach to within about forty feet of the rocky isle. The Giant watches you, eyes gleaming and mouth drooling slightly. You have seen more attractive sights.

He speaks: 'Ho, a human I espie,
As I sit here warm and dry.
Do you wish to be my meal
Or past me to try to steal?

Passing me's no easy task
But there's a riddle I would ask.
Answer and I'll let you by;
Fail and you will fill my pie!"

At appropriate points in this childish ode he warms his hands at the fire, indicates the stream on either side and displays for your edification a large pie dish, with a rather dilapidated crust and nothing inside. The whole performance seems well rehearsed and you feel he may have been trying to find a suitable filling for his pie for some little time.

Indeed, you can almost count the ribs in his gaunt chest.

'What is this riddle?' you ask.

He indicates that you must approach the island first, obviously wanting you well within his reach before he poses it. You notice there is a large stone club beside him.

If you approach the Giant and try to answer the riddle, turn to 49.

If hot, turn back to 399 if you approached from the downstream side, or 4 if you arrived from upstream.

99

You plunge into the muddy valley of the stream and are immediately ankle deep in soft mud. You try to plough on up to the rising ground in the defile, where you can see firmer footing.

Turn to 315.



100

You may have reached this section by a variety of means, but in each case the end result is the same. Your character is dead, and this adventure is at an end.

Of course you, the reader, can now start again with a new character and see if a further attempt will prove successful. Forearmed with the knowledge of what happened last time you may be able to make different decisions which will lead to a happier conclusion.

May good fortune attend you.

101

As the light begins to fade from the sky, you observe other crocodiles emerging from the waters of the lake. You cannot see much of the island, only the two farthest shores to East and West, as the dense foliage below blocks your view. However, you have the uneasy feeling that the ground at the foot of the trees may be their regular night-time meeting place.

Movement across the lake distracts you from this unpleasant thought. An ungainly creature is flapping towards you on powerful wings. As it gets closer you hear it screech once in a raucous, oddly human-sounding voice then, as it apparently sights you in the top of the tree, it starts to sing one of the most beautiful ballads you have ever heard. The voice is soft, gentle and utterly beguiling.

Turn to 304.

102

This stream flows South East for five miles to a point where it forks: one channel (10) comes in from the North East, and the other (61) goes South. At the North Western end it becomes so obstructed by the twisted roots of stunted marsh trees as to become impassable by any craft.

Investigating this channel takes five hours.

103

You manage to kill the first Lizardman before reinforcements arrive. Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet.

Unfortunately the alarm has now been raised, and all secrecy has gone. Lights are appearing here and there, a squad of Frogmen armed with tridents has emerged from a passage to the North West, and five more Lizardmen are scurrying towards you from the South, all armed with halberds.

There are also sounds of activity from the South East and a steady clanking from the South West. The approaching Lizardmen have obviously seen you, so there is no chance to hide.

If you surrender, turn to 328.

If you dive into the pool and attempt to escape, turn to 325.

If you stand and fight, turn to 274, section (c).

104

You display the amulet. The Centaurs mutter amongst themselves, then lower their bows, and the leader beckons you to approach. He asks how you came by the amulet, and you explain. Satisfied, he asks how his group may help you.

You may tell him as little or as much as you wish, about your quest and the events which have happened so far. However, he is only prepared to help with information, such simple food as they have (nuts and berries sufficient for a meal), plus a guard if you wish a night's rest.



The leader beckons

You may take a meal here and a night's rest if you wish, amending your Character Sheet as necessary. The only information of use to you is that they have never seen a Lizardman, Frogman or, indeed, any other marsh-dwelling creature within the confines of Centaur Forest, either on the river or off it.

When ready to leave, turn to 141.

105

Hitting one of these skittish animals with a spear from fifty feet is fairly difficult. Evaluate E — 4T: if your score is 9 or worse you miss — you need 10 or better to hit. The spear will do 3 Points of Damage.

These smaller Rams have Expertise 10 and Vitality 4. If you score a hit but do not kill it, your target will run off, with your spear stuck in it, and your spear will be lost. (You will, therefore, appreciate the need to use 1 Fortune Point to raise the Damage to 4!)

If you miss, your spear will strike an exposed rock and shatter, unless you expend 1 Fortune Point to prevent this happening. If you do this, you can try again.

If you kill one of these smaller Rams, turn to 183.

If you give up, turn to 62.

106

Howard's Crossing seems to have grown every time you see it. As well as a regular night-time stopping point for the river barges, it is quite a riverport in its own right. There are stockyards up river where the herds driven overland from the Pola River Valley are held before being processed through the slaughterhouse, and two timber yards where timber is delivered

107-108

after a long haul around the Dunmarsh from Centaur Forest. The town boasts several inns and a particularly prosperous-looking (and stoutly built) bank.

There are several boat yards with a variety of craft for hire. If you wish to acquire and provision a canoe for a solitary investigation of the marsh you can do so, drawing the necessary funds from the bank which is a branch of the one you patronize in Starport. If you do so, and set out on the Doone, turn to **12**.

*If you await the arrival of the Sultan's Favourite, due later today, turn to **246**.*

107

You successfully edge along this narrow path and find yourself out on the grassland by the South Eastern corner of the Mount,

*Turn to **273**.*

108

Scrambling down the slope of loose rock, you start a tour of the dark cave below and some minutes later you have the position clear in your mind.

The inner cave is about one hundred and twenty feet long from East to West and some ten feet less from North to South. At the Eastern end it narrows to about fifty feet and the scree which blocks the entrance has spread out to almost cover the floor of this narrow part.

Near the North Wall lies an enormous skeleton, seventy feet long from nose to tail. From the scales scattered near it you are sure it must have been a Green Dragon and you guess this must have been how Dragon's Mount got its name, centuries ago. It was



Near the North Wall lies an enormous skeleton

probably imprisoned by the rockfall and starved to death.

You have also discovered three passages leading out of the main cave. All are ten feet high and wide. One leads North from the North West corner. Another leads West from the centre of the West wall. The other leads South, sloping downwards, and is about fifty feet along the Southern wall from the South West corner.

The North and South passages and the area near the walls in the large cavern have a thick layer of dust on the floor. However, there seem to have been more recent comings and goings across the centre of the main cavern and into the Western passage. You cannot identify any specific tracks.

You have four choices:

If you go North, turn to 314.

If you go West, turn to 6.

If you go South, turn to 367.

If you go East, back along the tunnel, turn to 349.

109

The long, cold, damp wait does your health no good at all. You must delete 2 Vitality Points from your Character Sheet.

With the dawn the temperature gradually starts to rise and with much noise and confusion the reptiles below start waddling towards the water to look for breakfast. The largest of them, of course, knows that breakfast dangles only a few feet above him in the shape of a shivering adventurer, but if you are lucky he may forget.

If you cross 2 Fortune Points off your Character

Sheet he will indeed forget, and take to the water himself; leaving the ground to you. If you do this, you can leave the tree and make your way to the canoe, turning to 69.

Should you prefer a fight, and leap down to have it out with the monster responsible for your uncomfortable night, turn to 216.

If you do not particularly wish for a fight, but have insufficient Fortune Points to bring about the necessary reptilian forgetfulness, hunger will force you from the tree anyway, so turn to 216.

110

The slap of feet sounds close now, and you realize reinforcements are almost upon you. If you feel you can take on several more Lizardmen after failing to dispose of one in six rounds, turn to 376.

If, on the other hand, you decide to try to get away, your only hope lies in diving into the pool. If you turn away from your opponent he will be able to hit you for an unopposed 3 Points of Damage.

If this kills you, turn to 100.

*Otherwise you **are** able to reach the edge of the dock and dive into the water. Turn to 325.*

111

The black Panther has Expertise 11 and Vitality 7, and seems determined to make you an hors d'oeuvre before its main meal of raw buffalo. It does 3 Points of Damage if it hits you.

If you kill it, turn to 339.

If the black Panther kills you, turn to 100.

112

You enter the room, and are not at all surprised when the Skeletons laboriously rise and totter forward in defence of their home. Combat with these is the same as before: they have Expertise 10 and Vitality 5, their Swords do 2 Points of Damage and you can fight them one at a time.

If they manage to kill you, turn to 100.

If you kill them, turn to 25.

113

This lake is roughly square in shape, some four miles across. One stream (148) flows into the North East corner and two channels flow out. One goes West from the middle of the Western side (174) while the other flows South East (192) from that corner.

Navigating the lake will take two hours. There is an island in the centre. If you wish to check that over, turn to 5.

114

Despite your efforts, the song becomes louder as the creature descends, and you decide there is little point in trying to avoid so wonderful an experience. You look up, the better to determine the source of the melody.

Turn to 20.

115

Hacked apart by the force of your blows, the corpse falls to the floor. There is no blood, and you can only wonder what gave it the power of movement.

Looking down at the remains, you see with a sick horror that they are still moving. The various parts are trying to reunite into a whole being again.

'Pull yourself together!' you mutter hysterically, and hack afresh at the remains, separating arms, head and torso. Stubbornly, the parts start inching towards each other across the floor.

If you stand aside in the living quarters to see what happens when they do reunite, turn to 224.

If you escape back up the stairs' and leave the remains where they are, the reunited body will eventually follow. Turn to 306.

If you are still in the inner room with the Skeletons, and wish to retreat to the living quarters and bolt the door, turn to 248.

116

Visibility under the surface is about twenty feet; the river bottom is quite clear about twelve feet down and the Western side by the Mount runs down almost sheer to the bottom. In contrast the other bank shelves at about forty-five degrees. There are thickets of underwater plants in the centre of the river bottom.

Coming up for air every thirty feet or so you swim powerfully along a few feet out from the Mount-side so that you can keep both the bank and the underwater plants in view.

Something about the plants ahead makes you pause. They seem to be moving unnaturally. Indeed, now you look carefully, they don't actually seem to be plants: they look more like human beings, and very attractive humans at that. You feel the urge to swim over to them as they beckon gaily to you.

Turn to 57.

117

The Giant hurls his club to the ground in fury and dismay.

'Yet one more correct reply
Woe am I and like to die.'

He holds his pie-dish out to you hopefully.

'Spare some food for poor old Sidney;
Perhaps some steak or even a kidney.'

About to paddle on past the island, you pause. 'Why sit here waiting for unlucky travellers to put in your pie?' you ask, intrigued. 'Why not seek your own food elsewhere in the marsh?'

Hoping for sympathy, the grotesque creature explains.

'Ensercelled by a Mage was I;
Bound to this island 'til I die.
Allowed to roam but fifty feet
With naught but a magic pie to eat.
The crust returns ever and still
The filling I must beg or kill.'

If you consider this no concern of yours, turn to 354.

If, however, you feel prepared to spare him some of your own food, perhaps in the hope of not having to answer another riddle if you pass this way again, turn to 388.

118

The remains of the Skeletons lie spread around the floor of this twenty-foot-square room. You may help yourself to either or both of their swords, amending your equipment list appropriately, and may also take any Potion you wish. A search of the rags still draped around the Skeletons reveals nothing.

The door has no visible means of securing it, like the other, and if you wish to try pushing it, turn to 305.

If you decide, instead, to return the way you came, turn to 240.

119

Taking a deep breath, you kick yourself away from the cliff and dive toward the river far below. In order to survive you will need to miss hitting the rockface on the way down, enter the water cleanly enough not to break any limbs, and avoid crashing straight into the river bottom. All this calls for considerable skill.

Evaluate E — 3T: you need a score of 14 to succeed, but may add 1 Point to your score for every Fortune Point you are prepared to cross off your Character Sheet.

If you cannot achieve this score, the fall kills you - turn to 100.

If you succeed, amend your Character Sheet and turn to 116.

120

The meadow extends for a considerable distance to North and East, but past Dragon's Mount to the South there is only a stretch of some hundred yards before the trackless bogs of the Dunmarsh recommence.

Where you are now, a thin screen of trees and bushes separates the meadow from a narrow, muddy valley which has been carved some three or four feet below the level of the meadow by a small stream which issues from a cleft in the Mount by its South East corner.

If you move South to this corner, turn to 273.

If you go North to the point where this small stream flows into the Luna, the next paragraph depends on where you have left your canoe.

If it was moored by the mouth of this small stream, turn to 65.

If you left your canoe in the grove of trees to the South of the Mount, turn to 301, but ignore the last two paragraphs.

121

The *Sultan's Favourite* drifts easily down the Doone, which seems particularly full and swiftly flowing today. The master tells you that all the signs indicated a storm was due further upriver yesterday, and that probably explains the state of the river today.

You are soon floating between the familiar muddy banks of the Dunmarsh, with the dreary fens extending as far as you can see beyond. Tributary streams are passed to right and left and shortly after midday you are approaching another on the right, when several of the fighting-men aboard start fidgeting.

Exclamations of annoyance give way to cries of alarm, and soon they are struggling with the buckles and straps of their armour. As you and the other unaffected people aboard go to their assistance you notice that all those in trouble are wearing chain mail hauberks. These are getting hotter by the minute, hot enough to blister skin and cause cloth and leather in contact to start smouldering.

One unfortunate has a sheet-metal plastron beneath his hauberk and, maddened by the pain, he tears

himself free and plunges overboard, disappearing immediately beneath the surface leaving only a wisp of steam to mark his passing.

As you debate whether to dive to his assistance or continue aiding those aboard, you become aware that some of your own equipment, notably your leather belt and sword and dagger scabbards, are also beginning to smoulder.

Turn to 229.

122

The last Lizardman falls and you lower your weapon, temporarily exhausted. You may add 4 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet.

Unfortunately the alarm was raised, there are now lights everywhere, and you find yourself almost completely ringed by Frogmen holding tridents poised for throwing. There must be nearly a score of them, and a trident will do 2 Points of Damage if it hits you.

A harsh voice calls out for you to surrender. If you obey, turn to 328.

If you refuse, they will all hurl their weapons; turn to 100.

There is a small chance you may be able to reach the pool, as none of the Frogmen are directly between you and the nearest edge of the dock. If you try, there is a chance they may miss a moving target, and for every Fortune Point you sacrifice, 2 Frogmen will miss. (There are actually 18 of them.)

If you reach the water alive, turn to 325.

If you are killed in the attempt, turn to 100.

123

This channel is only two miles long from North to South, taking just one hour to navigate. It forks at both ends. From the Southern end, one channel (350) leads South West, and the other (161) South. At the Northern end, one fork (227) comes from the East, and the other (46) from the North West.

124

This channel runs mostly West-East. At the Eastern end it forks and you may turn North (34) or South (39). At the Western end, ten miles away, it leads North for two miles, issuing from the South Western corner of a lake (164).

It will take six hours to go from one end of this channel to the other.

125

You kick the mooring stake free and push your canoe back on to the water. A volley of arrows strikes you in the back and you take 8 Points of Damage (Deduct 8 Vitality Points).

Hurling yourself aboard you seize your paddle as four more arrows hit for another 8 Points of Damage. If you are not dead yet, you soon will be as the Centaurs will hit you several more times before you can escape from bowshot.

Turn to 100.

126

Shortly after you have finished your meal, there is a soft knock at your door. When you answer it, you find a slim, slight figure standing at the door wearing a long cloak with a raised hood.

'I too seek the downfall of those who make the marsh a place of peril.' Your visitor's voice sounds feminine, but oddly accented, with sibilants particularly drawn out. You assume she must be foreign.

As if to overcome your hesitation, the figure takes a half pace forward. 'I am a Druidess,' she declares, 'and the Guild feel our chances will be enhanced if we join forces'.

If you invite her in, turn to 28.

Should you be determined to undertake the quest alone, you advise her brusquely of your intentions and close the door. In this case, turn to 135.

127

Exhausted by your herculean efforts, you lean on your sword in the darkness and light mist which have descended during the battle. You may add 5 Fortune Points to your total and take food and drink if you have them on you or wish to return to your canoe. Now that you have 'exterminated the crocodiles, this seems a reasonably safe place to spend the night, and you settle down on the shore to await the dawn.

Somewhat refreshed by morning, you pack up your gear. If you now leave the island, turn to 113.

If, instead, you decide to climb higher into the tree to discover more about the flying monster you saw at dusk, turn to 242.

128

Early on the next day you breakfast and make your farewells to Pindar and his family before collecting your canoe from its moorings near your home. Before

the sun has become warm enough to dissolve the morning mists you are paddling North over the broad reaches of the Sol. This early in the day there would be little river traffic about in normal times, and in these days of reduced commerce there are no other craft to be seen.

Somehow your progress seems slower than you would have thought, even allowing for the weight of equipment and provisions aboard. You stop paddling and peer into the muddy waters but can see nothing untoward. Nonetheless, at this pace you will never reach the halfway point through the Dunmarsh by nightfall.

If you return to Starport, turn to 208.

If you remove your outerclothing and plunge overboard, to examine the bottom of the canoe, turn to 88.

129

You swim over to the Eastern side of the pool, where you find a rope ladder hanging down from the dock edge eight feet above, just beside one of the barges which is moored to the South side of the centre of the three quays. Cautiously you climb up, only to find yourself within a few feet of two Lizardmen, obviously guards, armed with halberds and belted shortwords.

Others are visible not far beyond them by the illuminated entrance to a tunnel leading to the East, and you realize you cannot hope to leave the pool here without being spotted. Indeed, unless you can sacrifice 2 Fortune Points you will be unable to return to the water unseen.

If you cannot cross 2 Fortune Points from your

Character Sheet, you return to the water with shouts of alarm ringing in your ears, and should turn to 325.

If you have deleted 2 Fortune Points, you return safely to the water and swim to the barges opposite. Turn to 210.

130

After a tremendous fight, you manage to kill the Sphinx. Add 5 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet and amend your equipment list if you wish to take any Potions, or eat a meal here (assuming you have food with you and have not previously taken today's meal). The Sphinx has nothing on its body and the room holds no other points of interest.

If you wish to leave by the passage to the West, turn to 326.

If you wish to leave by the passage to the South, turn to 314.

131

You land on the dam, which seems quite firm beneath your feet, and tie the canoe to a conveniently protruding branch. The top of the dam is about two feet above the surface of the water on the upstream side; on the downstream side it slopes gently down to the muddy bed of the Sol. Countless small cascades of water run down this slope, from various small leaks, and form a narrow stream which winds its way South down the riverbed.

The top is quite level, of firmly packed mud, and you **are** easily able to reach the timbers which interested you. Closer examination reveals that they are masts -

two of them have trucks and short frayed lengths of halyard hanging down over the mud - the others look as though they may have been incorporated in the dam upside-down.

It is the normal practice of barge owners to have identifying colour bands near the top of their masts - the two you can see have such bands, but you do not recognize the markings. Perhaps one of the others, buried deep in the dam, may bear the gold and black markings of your father.

You tentatively give one of the masts a shake, but it seems firmly embedded. However, as if disturbed by your actions, the head of a Giant Beaver breaks the surface of the water close by and, barking indignantly, the creature scrambles to attack you.

There is no chance to reach your canoe to escape, and nowhere to go if you manage to reach the end of the dam. However, you could plunge into the dammed waters and try to swim away (if you try this turn to 40J or slide down the downstream slope of the dam and try to escape across the soft mud of the riverbed, in which case turn to 97.

If you fight the Giant Beaver, turn to 17.

132

Swinging from your perch on the bending branch you contrive to drop into the nest. This rocks alarmingly and, thrown off balance, you fall on to the eggs. The combined effluvia from broken eggs, droppings and decaying vegetable and organic matter is too much for you, and you collapse unconscious. Deduct 1 Vitality Point from your Character Sheet.

Some time later you regain your senses to find twilight has fallen. Noises from below indicate that your

reptilian friend has company, and you guess some more have emerged from the lake.

As you look around, you observe a large, cumbersome form flapping slowly across the water on powerful wings. It seems to be heading straight for you, and you can hear it scream harshly as it sights an intruder in the nest. Soon it descends to attack, screeching in fury, and you recognize it as a Harpy.

These hideous creatures have the torso, head and arms of a human female, though hideously ugly, together with the wings, tail and legs of a vulture. They are rumoured to be wonderful singers, able to charm humans into non-resistance with their beguiling songs, but this is obviously too infuriated at the destruction of her eggs to do other than fight.

From somewhere about its person the Harpy has produced a hand-axe, and you fight on reasonably even terms, she balanced on a nearby branch and you, feet braced wide apart, in the nest.

The Harpy has Expertise 12 and Vitality 10, and does 2 Points of Damage.

If you kill her, turn to 290.

If she kills you, turn to 100.

133

The Stag has Expertise 8 and Vitality 6, and can do 2 Points of Damage with its antlers.

If you kill it, turn to 332.

If it kills you, turn to 100.



The Harpy has produced a hand-axe

134

The remains of the Skeletons lie motionless on the floor. You really cannot manage to carry their swords in addition to those of the others, but may pause here to take a Potion if you wish (amend your Character Sheet if you do).

The latest door now towers above you. It must be sixty feet high and, pacing it out, you find it to be twenty-four feet wide.

If you wish to try to open it, turn to 153.

If you now decide to return whence you came, turn to 198.

135

After breakfast the next morning you set out, belting on your weapons, and board your canoe. All appears in order, and you quietly paddle out of the dock basin on to the broad waters of the Sol. Within an hour you have reached the point where the Sol and the Doone meet, with Fort Star occupying its commanding position on a low bluff between them.

Turn to 392.

136

Centaurs are fierce creatures with the bodies and legs of horses but with the head, arms and upper torso of a human where one would normally expect to see the head and neck of the horse. They are renowned as expert archers, and each of these four has a bow and quiver of arrows slung over his shoulders.

They explain that one of their comrades is in deadly danger and they need a fire to rescue him. Being creatures of nature they normally have no use for fire,

regarding it as just one more of the works of mankind which they try to avoid. Now they need it they have no way to produce it, but hope you can do so for them.

If you are prepared to land and assist, perhaps in return for information or other reward, turn to 185.

If you deny them and continue your journey, turn back to the appropriate section as indicated below. You may meet other groups of Centaurs elsewhere in this area, repeating the request, and need not turn to this section again if you persist in denying them.

If you were on the lake when accosted, turn to 79.

If you were travelling along the wide channel to the South East of the meadows, turn to 92.

If you were paddling along the winding stream to the West and North West of the firm ground, turn to 309.

137

Coil after coil of the Snake emerges from the long grass on the bank as it winds around your head and shoulders. As it starts to squeeze you realize it must have fastened its tail around a tree to obtain the necessary purchase, and may eventually pull you from the mire in order to consume your corpse.

Unfortunately its coils prevent your gaining a weapon and you have no way to combat it. Your senses mercifully desert you as your bones creak under the strain.

Turn to 100.

138

As you swim in, the light is quickly left behind, and

after several feet you can see no further in front of you. Cautiously you surface and wait while your eyes accustom themselves to the gloom.

You quickly realize you are in a very large cavern — the rock wall between cavern and river can only be a few feet thick, as you are already aware of a considerable height above you. All is quiet but for the continual drip of water from the ceiling above. Some light is visible under the water from the open air beyond, but there seem to be sources of illumination from further within the Mount. As quietly as you can, you swim on.

Gradually you are able to discern more of your surroundings, and it is almost as if you were back in one of the Starport dock basins. The water widens into a roughly oval shape, perhaps one hundred yards long North East-South West and half as wide. The cavern itself is much larger.

All around the water the dock walls rise sheer and smooth for eight feet. By the Western side, where the rock walls of the cavern are only a few feet beyond the edge of the dock, there are four barges moored.

Opposite, three wooden quays jut out into the pool, each with a barge moored to the South side. The surface of the quays is only about four feet above the water, and you can see irregularly shaped mounds on them, probably cargoes in the process of being loaded or unloaded. Short flights of steps lead up from the jetties to the dock walls.

You reflect that most marsh creatures are known to be nocturnal, and if this is their abode they are likely to be at rest. Treading water quietly in the centre of the pool, you decide...

(a) *to see how much more you can discover while all is still: turn to 146.*

(b) *to leave and wait until darkness to see what goes on: turn to 223.*

139

Your attack carries complete SURPRISE, and you should refer to the 'Game System' for its effect. Thereafter you will be fighting a creature with Expertise 12 and Vitality 16 which is able to do 2 Points of Damage with its jaws. So long as you continue successfully to hit it, you will keep SURPRISE.

If you keep the element of SURPRISE until the creature is dead, turn to 384.

If you lose SURPRISE (whether the creature hits you or not), a startling change comes over your opponent. Its form seems to waver as if you were watching through a heat-haze. Before your eyes the creature becomes a tall man, of late middle-age, with a long dark beard streaked with grey.

He waves his hands and utters a few words in a strange language. You realize he is casting a spell and lash out with your weapon. Concentrating on his spell lowers his Expertise to 10 and, if you can hit and kill him with one blow his spell will not be completed. If you achieve this, turn to 384.

If you fail, the surface of the ramp shifts violently beneath your feet, throwing you on your back in the pool. You sink about three feet to the bottom, where a wave of sand and shingle flows over your head and, though you flail desperately with arms and legs, you

cannot free yourself. Soon you can hold your breath no longer and the choking warm water floods into your lungs.

Turn to 100.

140

You may drink a Potion if you wish, but this is no place to prepare or consume a meal.

You hear sounds of movement, including the flutter of wings and scratching of claws, from within the cave, and there is an aggrieved squawking. If you crawl in, turn to 373.

There is nothing else up here of interest, so the only alternative is to descend to the cave below. If you do this, turn to 154.

141

Above the point where the Luna flows in from the North East, the Sol is deeper but much narrower, and there are no further navigable tributaries joining it. Paddling upstream you travel a further twelve miles before you emerge from the Dunmarsh, then four more miles through pleasant grassy meadows until you reach the edge of Centaur Forest. (This journey takes eight hours but you can stop in the meadow for a meal, or indeed camp there safely for the night if you wish.)

The forest trees are mostly mature ones of considerable size, and you can see spacious glades and rides, extending away on both banks. The river is about two hundred feet wide and rather gloomy, as the trees on the banks stop almost all the sunlight reaching the water. The Centaurs who live here are renowned as fierce defenders of their territory, and few travellers

142-144

have been permitted passage through the forest, even by water.

If you paddle on into the forest, turn to 175.

If you turn and paddle back to the confluence with the Luna, turn to 188.

142

This stream runs South West from a point where streams from the North (233) and East (221) combine.

After eight miles (taking four hours to paddle) another tributary (360) comes in from the North, and the growing stream (368) continues South West.

143

In an orgy of destruction, you smash all the remaining breakable equipment, scattering liquids, powders and vile-smelling substances around floor, walls and furniture.

This produces no apparent result.

Turn to 212.

144

About a mile downstream you find a fallen tree has grounded in the soft mud of the low bank. There is quite a mass of foliage above the surface, and you are sure this will be suitable for your purpose.

With some use of your sword, you soon have the canoe hidden from sight where the twigs and leaves are at their densest, and are confident that you are almost impossible to detect. Indeed, you can barely see out.

Paddling is impossible in the confined space, but you manage to force the tree, with canoe attached, out of

145-146

the mud and back into the current. Seated snug and secure in the canoe, you realize that you are drifting downstream, and the Giant's island is upstream!

Crestfallen, you cut the canoe free again and turn to 399. All this has taken you an hour.

145

Leaving the door open behind you, you set off along the narrow passage. It leads straight West for eighty feet, and ends at another similar door, again secured by clips. Condensation seems to be forming on the surface of the door, and there is a small puddle on the floor. Gingerly touching the door you find it noticeably cold.

Should you decide to open this door, you will find the clips even more difficult to move. Evaluate E + 4H again but this time you will need to score 15 or better. If you manage this, turn to 294.

If you score less than 15, or prefer not to open the door you will find nothing further of interest and return to the main cavern. Turn to 108.

146

Your eyes have become accustomed to the gloom now, and you realize there are a number of torches illuminating a limited area in the Eastern corner of the cavern, plus a rather larger fire in the North corner, which seems to be on the other side of some sort of fence.

The water in the pool is notably colder than the river outside and you are beginning to feel thoroughly chilled. You also realize that leaving the water may not be easy. The barges are smooth-sided and, even though the gunwhales are low, the rails are still three feet

147-149

above the water. The wooden quays are somewhat higher, and the actual verges of the pool are eight feet high rock walls.

If you will investigate the quays, turn to 129.

If you decide to try the barges opposite, turn to 210.

147

After crawling the last ten feet you emerge into a large, apparently natural cavern in the rock.

Most of the floor is natural rock and rather uneven, but just in front of you is a circular area, some twenty feet across, where the surface is sand and gravel. In the centre of this area is a stone slab bearing a small wooden chest about eighteen inches long and six high. Halfway between the chest and the point where you have emerged into the cavern, lies a human skeleton.

If you cross the expanse of sand to reach the chest, turn to 55.

However, if it occurs to you that anything of value might be protected in some way, and you prefer to circle the sandy area to investigate first, turn to 87.

148

This stream flows into the North Eastern corner of the lake (113). Travelling upstream, the channel leads North East for two miles, then East for five to a point where the stream rises from several springs in a shingly area set amidst the surrounding bogs.

Investigating this stream takes seven hours.

149

The Zombie lurches unsteadily towards you, as you stand just inside the doorway with your weapon held

150-151

ready. It has an Expertise of only 6, and a Vitality of 8. If it hits you, or if you throw 4T when evaluating your own score, it will seize you around the throat with its clawlike fingers, and force you back several steps into the other room while inflicting 1 Point of Damage.

If you are using anything other than a weapon with a cutting edge, your blows will have no effect upon the Zombie.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill it, turn to 115.

If you break off combat and retreat, you will have to go all the way back up the stairs. Turn to 306.

150

One of the Stags with the herd of deer has apparently decided you are some sort of threat. As you turn to face him, he attacks.

You must either face him - in which case turn to 133.

Or jump back and try to escape through the mud into the cleft in the Mount: in this case turn to 99.

If you try to flee in any other direction his excellent set of antlers will take you in the back.

151

You head purposefully towards your canoe, across the mudbank to the water's edge. Your canoe looks small and shabby, and somehow the idea of setting out again into the dismal swamp has lost its attraction. Indeed, for the moment you cannot quite remember what you are doing here.

Turning, you behold an amazing sight.

Turn to 7.

152

You descend the stairs, brushing the cobwebs aside with your arm. Dust puffs up from beneath your feet, causing you to cough from time to time, although you try to proceed as quietly as possible. The web appears to have been spun by normal spiders and you see one or two scuttle away in the dust.

The stairs gradually curve to your left as you go down, and are about four inches high. You count up to three hundred steps, then emerge into a room about ten feet square. You calculate you must be somewhere to the North of the Hippogriffs' cave, and some hundred feet lower. The room is empty, and has but two features of interest.

One is an iron-bound door, six feet high and three feet wide, directly opposite the foot of the steps. It has no latch, handle or keyhole so far as you can see. Carved in the stone wall above it is this inscription: 'The final resting place of Mawghain the Mighty. Let not lesser men disturb.'

The other is a key hanging from a richly decorated metal plate set into the right-hand wall. The key is nearly a foot long and appears to be made of gold. The plate is circular and made of some black metal, but there are small golden letters set around the edge. Peering closely, you read, 'I can open the door to the secrets of the tomb.'

If you try to push the door open, turn to 13.

If you take the key, turn to 245.

If you decide to go back up the steps, turn to 59.

153

Setting your shoulder against the door, you heave with all your strength and force it open, inch by inch, with much noise from the protesting hinges.

You are not altogether surprised to find that the room beyond again has dimensions twice the size of the previous one, but at least this one looks like journey's end, as there is no door facing you. Instead, there are furnishings of some opulence, but of a colossal size. Surely this room was intended for a King of Giants.

Against the right hand wall is a bed which must be all of fifty feet long. You cannot see the top which is way above your head, but can only assume there is a dead Giant on it, as an enormous arm in coarse brown cloth hangs over the side, with huge bony fingers just brushing the floor. The fingers are as long as your body!

The wall in front of you has two bookshelves set into the stone, and the shelves are crammed with books and papers. The books must be twenty feet high. In front of this is a tattered armchair of a size to match the rest of the room.

A desk, or perhaps work bench stands against the third wall. Again there is a Giant-size chair and you can see apparatus which you would normally associate with a magician or alchemist. But you have never heard of a Giant owning a laboratory. You wonder how he managed to get himself and his furniture down the stairs and through the smaller rooms.

Eventually you notice that a large sheet of paper has fallen from the hand of the long-dead Giant and lies on the floor near it. If you go to investigate, turn to 85.

If instead you return whence you came, turn to 225.

154

Your only route down seems to be to descend the same way you came up. The last fifty feet from the cave below was by no means easy, and you must face the fact that, if one Hippogriff came out of the cave, there could be another in there. It therefore seems a good idea to use your rope, if you still have it. This will not only safeguard your descent, but will also reduce the noise you make as you 'walk' down the cliff face, and will give you a rather more secure position if attacked.

If you use your rope, cross it off your equipment list and turn to 228.

If you descend without the use of a rope, turn to 329.

155

It has become apparent during the fight that the Snake has wound its tail around a nearby tree, to obtain the necessary purchase to squeeze you to what it hoped would be your death. Before its grip relaxes you hasten to pull yourself free from the quagmire as if the body were a particularly thick rope.

Your Expertise is restored to normal, and as you were extremely fortunate to escape by this means you do not expect any increase in Fortune from this combat. Cleaning the worst of the mud from your tired body, you climb the low bank on to the meadow.

Turn to 120.

156

Revolted, you hack frenziedly at the corpse on the floor, until it is sundered into several pieces. You will eventually find that, wherever you hurl the separate parts they will always endeavour to crawl back

together. The only way to prevent this would seem to be to destroy all the pieces, and for that you need a large fire or some acid - neither of which appear to be conveniently at hand. Eventually you give up, and numbly watch the reunited corpse gather itself together and lurch to its feet.

Turn to 234.

157

Slowly you move away to the North West, leaving the pile of timbers between you and your canoe. The Crocodile waddles eagerly after you, apparently encouraged by your seeming flight, and you back along the Northern shore pursued by your ponderous admirer.

You soon reach the halfway mark, level with the two trees, with the Crocodile about fifteen feet away. Deciding this is far enough, you cut across the centre of the island to the Southern shore and head back to the canoe at your best speed.

A baffled bellow reaches you and, looking back as you unhitch your craft, you see that your erstwhile follower has given up the chase and paused under the trees to express his indignation.

Several other crocodiles can now be seen at varying distances from the island, lying almost awash in the waters of the lake, and you decide not to stay longer. The canoe has drifted aground in the soft mud of the water's edge, and, it takes a considerable effort to relaunch it, with your feet skidding beneath you.

Paddling out on to the lake, you avoid the other crocodiles without difficulty.

Turn to 113.

158

Eventually the combat is over, and the bodies of the four Centaurs are strewn around the ruin of your campsite. Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet.

It would not seem a very good idea to wait for the first group to return, in all the circumstances, and you decide to depart. You would like to have been able to salvage all their weapons, but the bows were damaged beyond repair in the fight. If you take their four daggers you may add them to your equipment list.

Unfortunately your pack has been trampled on in the melee, and any Potions on your Character Sheet, including the Healing Potions with which you started the adventure, are lost. Delete them now.

You will also have to delete your flint, steel and tinderbox. Certain sections of this adventure will now be barred to you - if the text calls for you to light a torch you will be unable to do so and will not be able to complete that paragraph.

Also, your food supplies have been calculated on the assumption that some meals would need to be cooked. Any meat gained by hunting in the Dunmarsh must now be discarded, and all food brought in from outside must be halved. Amend your equipment list appropriately.

You now paddle your canoe away from the meadow, and should ignore any future references to Centaurs in the Dunmarsh.

If you landed from the lake turn to 79.

If you landed from the winding stream to the West and North West, turn to 309.

If you landed from the wide channel to the South East, turn to 92.

159

You try to ask them questions, seeking information about other beings, particularly marsh creatures, but they ignore your words.

Tour kind are not welcome here,' declares one. 'Leave our forest now or take the consequences.'

They all level their bows, arrows nocked, and it is obvious what the consequences will be.

If you paddle upstream, turn to 374.

If you paddle downstream, turn to 141.



160

You land on the Western edge of the island, push a stake into the muddy shore to moor the canoe, and approach the painted timbers. Although the edge of the shore is muddy it is firmer than the usual water

margins in the Marsh, and once you are a few feet from the water's edge the ground is quite solid.

You quickly notice a large number of tracks between the water and the timbers, as of the coming and going of many feet. Some appear to be webbed and some have three clawed toes. You think you recognize the tracks of Frogmen and Lizardmen amongst them.

Reaching the heap of timbers you observe that they have been painted in various colours. Some look like door and window frames, and after further sorting amongst them you come across a nameboard, *Marsh Hairier*, which you recognize as the name of one of the missing barges.

These timbers look as though they could once have formed the deck-houses of several river barges - quite possibly all the missing ones. There are, however, no signs of the masts, deck-planks or more massive hull-timbers, so you are left with a puzzle: why remove the deck-houses?

As you ponder, a loud hissing disturbs you. Looking up you see that a particularly large Crocodile has emerged from the lake and is waddling up the gently sloping shore towards you. Your choices appear to be three:

Fight this monster - if so, turn to 16.

Run to one of the trees and climb it, in which case turn to 209.

Try to reach your canoe and escape by water. If you try this, turn to 389.

161

This stream flows from the North West to a point where it joins another from the North **309** and both

flow into the Northern corner of a rectangular lake **79**.

Heading upstream you travel against a fairly swift current for four miles until your way is blocked by a whirlpool, which spans the entire width of the stream - some fifty feet. It is impossible to avoid it by water, and the marshy verges do not look capable of sustaining your weight.

If you decide to try another route, you paddle back to the junction mentioned above, having taken four hours for the round trip.

Turn to either 309 or 79 as above.

If you land and try a portage around the obstacle, turn to 200, but note first the number of this paragraph.

If you paddle straight on and take your chance in the maelstrom, turn to 260.

162

You kill the Spider that attacked you, and the Centaurs have killed or driven off the rest. You add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet and this proves to be the last attack; the Centaurs go back to their efforts to cut through to their friend and some time before midnight he is freed.

You all move to the mouth of the cave to spend the rest of the night, and your companions are now prepared for you to have your own small fire for warmth, illumination and possible protection. You sleep the rest of the night and may take a meal if you did not do so earlier. You may also take any Potion you wish. Amend your Character Sheet and equipment list appropriately.

In the morning your companions are disposed to be friendly and forget any past differences. In answer to your questions they will admit to having been here for some weeks, having made their way South through the Dunmarsh by a secret trail. Both the trail and their purpose here must remain a secret, but they deny any involvement or concern in the barge disappearances. They have, however, seen barges on several occasions being pulled past the meadows by Giant Turtles. These creatures had never, to their knowledge, been seen in the Dunmarsh before, but were obviously being used as beasts of burden. A number of Frogmen were riding on their backs each time, and several Lizardmen were to be seen on the barges.

On two occasions these parties were heading down the wide channel which marks the South West border of these meadows, while at other times they must have come into the lake via another waterway. Each time, however, they had left the lake at its Northern corner by the stream which flows in from the North West.

The Giant Turtles appeared to have to wade in the streams, and were only able to swim in the lake. It would seem they need a depth of over ten feet to be able to submerge.

Turn to 184.

163

You wait in the shadows until the Lizardman tires of his sport and tramps back towards the better-lit area to the South East. Then you move carefully along the wall, passing a dark tunnel-mouth on the way, until you reach the point where the Western end of the fence meets the rock.

Actually, now you are close enough, you discover that it is not really a fence, but an artfully grown thorn hedge. Halfway along is a small gate, some twenty feet from the most Northerly point of the pool. Crawling up to this, you whisper urgently through the opening. In no time you attract an alert audience and among them you are overjoyed to find your father; but now is not the time for a noisy celebration.

You learn that the present guard consists of six Lizardmen but there are a further dozen of their fellows elsewhere in the caves and tunnels radiating from the dock cavern, plus around a score of Frogmen and a sinister 'Leader'.

The leader is a mysterious figure who seems able to change his shape and is possessed of various other magical powers; he is believed to have a subordinate who maintains a standing patrol somewhere along the Doone and who normally leads the attacks on the barges.

If the prisoners can be freed and armed, they believe they can take care of the rank and file, if you will go after the leader. The initial problem is to get at the weapons, which are kept under shelter in the better-lit area where the guards are.

If you decide to free the prisoners and lead a charge against the guards, turn to 78.

If you prefer to wait a while, in the hope of surprising the next guard to approach, turn to 363.

164

You find this lake to be four miles long from West to East and two miles North to South.

165-167

A stream from the North (193) runs into the North Eastern corner.

From the South Western corner another flows due South (124).

Another waterway leaves the North Western corner in a South Westerly direction (10).

Investigating the lake itself takes an hour.

165

Fixing you with its awful gaze, the creature speaks:

'You have freed me from the captivity of a hundred years, mortal, and I am in your debt.

If you have food upon you, show it to me.'

*This seems **an** odd request, but if you are prepared to show him what you have, turn to 261.*

If you either have no food upon you, or are not prepared to produce it in the presence of a large creature which hasn't eaten for the last century, turn to 202.

166

Oddly enough, although it was your intention to climb down the tree, you seem to have gone up instead. Actually, you don't really mind too much, as the song is so beautiful.

Turn to 20.

167

The holly leaves are unexpectedly sharp, causing some uncomfortable gashes on hands and wrists as you try to part the branches.

You decide that the safest way would probably be to

168-169

get down and crawl below the thickest of the damaging foliage. If you take this course, turn to 267.

If you decide it is beneath your pride to crawl, and prefer to take the worst the leaves can do, turn to 187.

If you decide to forget the cave and continue up the defile, turn to 218.

168

You manage to kill all four Frogmen, a considerable achievement in their own environment. Taking the time to cut free all the creepers trailing below the canoe, you notice a strange sign has been traced on the bottom of your craft, in some paint-like substance which glows faintly in the dim light.

Scrambling back aboard, you take a few moments rest, add 2 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet, and may drink a Potion if you wish. While so doing you have to decide whether to go on or, if badly wounded, whether you might do better to try again after a period of recuperation. If you salvage the spears, add them to your Character Sheet.

If you decide to press on, you are able to paddle, at a more normal speed upstream to the point where the Doone flows into the Sol. Turn to 392.

Should you prefer to abandon the quest for now, turn to 321.

169

The correct answer is 'Mud'. If you have written this down, add 4 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet and turn to 117.

If you have written down anything else (or have not written down anything at all) the Giant raises his club and with a happy chortle of 'I'm the winner; now for dinner', whacks you over the head with it, as you sit in your canoe virtually defenceless.

The Giant's club does a massive 6 Points of Damage, and seated as you are in the canoe you are unable to reply. Obviously expecting that this blow will have killed you, the Giant reaches for the large pie dish in which he has been hoping you will fill an important role. If, indeed, you are dead, you should turn to 100.

If, however, you have survived, you have the chance to leap ashore and engage him in combat, if not on very even terms at least in a situation where you can hit back. If you do so, turn to 203.

Should you decide to try to paddle away in your canoe, turn to 271.

170

With the few prisoners you are able to arm, you find concealment in shadowed areas around the North end of the dock pool, while the others remain within the compound, draping the cut cords around the gate post again, so that all looks normal. Then the dead Lizardman is pushed in the pool as a prisoner mimics a cry for help.

You hear an excited chatter from the rest of the guards, then two of them hurry towards you. As they approach the compound they obviously spy their companion's body in the pool, as one starts removing his weapons and armour. At this point you attack, and the would-be

rescuer is immediately knocked into the pool, just as he is struggling to remove his breastplate.

To prevent the other giving an alarm, you must kill him in the first round of Combat. Evaluate E + 4H for yourself and each of your comrades you were able to arm, taking their Expertise as 11. Your opponent has Expertise 10 and Vitality 7 but will not be able to hit back in this first round. Compare your scores with his and each of you who exceed his score will do Damage appropriate to the weapon used (plus any bonuses you may be able to gain). You have SURPRISE also.

If you succeed in killing him immediately, turn to 27.

If you fail, turn to 331.

171

Strengthened by Fortune, your will is sufficient to withstand the enchantment. Furious, the Harpy clambers on to the rim of the nest, producing a hand-axe.

It has the torso, head and arms of a hideously ugly human female, plus the wings, legs and tail of a vulture. The whole appearance is indescribably filthy and it is difficult to believe that so beautiful a voice can issue from so ugly a creature. Swinging the hand-axe, which can do 2 Points of Damage, the Harpy clambers to attack. It has Expertise 12 and Vitality 10, and, if it kills you, you should turn to 100.

If you kill the Harpy, it will tumble down through the branches to the ground below. You may add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet and climb down after it.

Turn to 385.

172

A short scramble along the ledge and you are past the worst of the mud. The defile is only about twenty feet wide and the stream hurries down a pebbly course along its right-hand side.

Along the left, the ground is covered with grassy hummocks. The footing is firm but you have to weave from side to side to find a way forward. There are no real trees here, but a few holly bushes have established themselves. About seventy-five feet up the defile, you notice that one bush appears to have a small cave beyond it.

Turn to 285.

173

Yeuk! You don't have to try everything you read about in storybooks; you must be sick. In fact... yes ... you are sick. Your stomach rebels and you find yourself on your knees, gagging helplessly.

Delete two Vitality Points from your Character Sheet (and if this kills you, turn to **100**). Your Expertise score is also reduced by 1 point for the rest of the day, or until you are able to take several hours' rest, and you find you are unable to eat any food or drink any Potions today.

Turn back to 23.

174

This channel flows from the Western side of a lake (**113**) quite straight for nine miles until it joins the Luna (**199**) about eleven miles from its confluence with the Sol. Travelling its length takes some four and a half hours. For most of this journey you can see a tall, solitary crag towering above the flat marshland. This is Dragon's Mount, which you know to lie on a bend in the Luna some few miles to the North East.



175

Before you have paddled more than a few hundred yards, you see a group of six Centaurs galloping towards you. They have the bodies, legs and tails of horses, but the torso of a human, complete with head and arms, grows from the point where you would expect to see the horse's neck and head. They all carry bows and arrows and look ready to use them. Indeed, Centaurs are famed for their excellent archery.

Angrily they order you from the forest.

If you ignore them and paddle on, turn to 374.

If you try to question them about the movement of other creatures, turn to 159.

If you have an amulet, given to you by other Centaurs within the Dunmarsh, and now display it, turn to 104.

If you paddle back downstream, turn to 141.

176

The dam is quite an imposing affair, as you paddle up the greatly diminished waterway below it. The once considerable volume of the River Sol has been reduced by now to a stream about ten feet wide and a few inches deep} barely sufficient to float your canoe.

The top of the dam is some twelve feet above you but the waterway your side is fed by innumerable small cascades leaking through. It seems to have been constructed mainly of trees and larger branches with twigs, grass and mud used to fill the gaps. Had it not been so purposeless, one would have supposed human hands had built it, as it stretches some hundreds of feet and is quite straight and regular. As it is, you can only



You assume it is the work of the Giant Beavers

assume it is the work of the Giant Beavers which are quite common hereabouts. If so, it is considerably grander than any dam they have been known to build before.

Some fifty feet to your left, roughly at the centre of the dam, your eye is caught by a few pieces of timber which protrude at an angle from the top of the dam, out over the downstream side. At least two of them appear to have something dangling from their end which makes them oddly familiar.

If you decide to land on the dam to investigate further, turn to 131.

If you prefer to get as far away as possible, in case it collapses from the pressure of water behind, turn back to 249 and choose again.

If you wish to try to carry the canoe across the muddy river bottom and through the marsh around this obstacle, turn to 200.

177

The second fissure is in the left-hand corner of the rear wall of the cave, and calls for you to lie down on your chest, head twisted at an angle, in order to stretch your arm in as far as you can. You take the precaution of peering in first. It is only a few inches wide, and narrows as it descends. There is a suggestion of movement, and the sound of something scuttling about.

If you thrust your hand down to investigate, turn to 293.

If you decide to search the nest instead, turn to 60.

If you wish to leave the cave now, by the way you came in, turn to 140.

If you have not already searched the other fissure, and now wish to do so, turn to 258.

178

You climb on, rocking the nest still more, and there is an indignant squawk from within. A human face, under a matted tangle of hair, appears over the edge of the nest and glares at you. The mouth opens, but to your astonishment the stranger commences a song so beautiful that you cease your climbing and hang there, drinking in the wonderful melody.

A stray thought intrudes that this could be one of the notorious Harpies, who are said to be able to charm mankind with their songs. If so, you would need to sacrifice 2 Fortune Points to withstand the enchantment.

If you cross 2 Fortune Points from your Character Sheet, turn to 171.

If you do not, turn to 277.

179

There are a number of potential sites where you could moor your canoe, depending upon which part of the Mount you intend to search.

The small stream which flows North into the Luna by the North Eastern corner of the Mount has a number of bushes and trees along its course and several at its mouth. This could be a suitable place to hide the canoe if you are heading for the cleft or intending to take a swim. In the latter case you would have to strip down to an undergarment and take only a dagger with you, leaving all your other equipment in the canoe.

The caves you saw were towards the Southern end of

the West cliff. The best way to reach those would seem to be from the South West corner of the Mount, where it looks as if there may be a narrow ledge running up the cliff face. About a hundred yards to the South is a small grove of trees marking the Southern extent of the firm ground surrounding the Mount. You should be able to hide your canoe there and carry whatever equipment was needed back to the Mount. You could also use such a base for a swimming investigation - although further away it would have the advantage of being downstream on the return leg.

Two other possibilities are suitable only for a swimmer. There is a fringe of reeds growing precariously along the water's edge right around the North and West sides of the Mount. It might be possible to moor the canoe to them and use the canoe itself as a base for your swimming trips. Otherwise, there is the bank of the Luna opposite the Mount. The meadow continues for a few hundred yards on the other side of the Luna, which has carved its channel some four or five feet below the general level of the land. This bank slopes quite steeply, but there are a number of exposed boulders which would supply both a mooring and some shelter.

If you choose the mouth of the small stream, turn to 301.

If you choose the bank opposite the Mount, turn to 93.

If you try the reeds lining the Mount, turn to 362.

If you go to the grove South of the Mount, turn to 257.

180

Your surprise assault has enabled you to kill the Lizardman guard before he raises the alarm. Although you are sure there are other guards to the South East, they seem to have noticed nothing.

Not so the prisoners beyond the fence a few feet away. Several of them are on their feet watching, with more joining every moment. Collecting the dead guard's weapons, you approach the fence and are overjoyed to find your father among the spectators. Quickly you slash away the stout cords binding shut a small gate in what proves to be not so much a fence as an artfully trained thorn hedge.

There are nearly thirty prisoners in all, although only twenty are fit enough to fight. They tell you there is a weapon store in the South East corner of the cavern, and some are eager to make straight for it before reinforcements come on the scene. Others are in favour of more stealthy means, suggesting that the more guards that can be killed first, the more prisoners can be armed to fight the rest, thus reducing casualties.

They look to you, their rescuer, for a lead. If you agree to the immediate rush, turn to 78.

Should you prefer trying the second course, turn to 236.

181

The body of the Hydra is greyish-yellow, mottled with brown splotches, about thirty feet long and held just clear of the water's surface by four massive legs. There is a long, powerful tail, but the main danger comes from the other end. From the front of the body spring seven sinuous necks, each ending in a reptilian head



The seven-headed Hydra

with wide, fiercely-toothed jaws and small red eyes. Each head is hissing angrily at you.

The edges of the channel seem too soft and muddy for a safe landing, so the only way to fight such a monster seems to be from the canoe. You are sure this would severely hamper your blows, while making it impossible to dodge the multiple attacks of the Hydra. Of course, you could always turn back, unless you believe the monster may be some sort of illusion.

If you paddle on to the attack, turn to 14.

If you retreat, turn back to 221 if you arrived from upstream, or 26 if you paddled East against the current to get here.

182

Impatiently, you seize a burning branch from the fire and apply it to the nearest edge of the mass of webs. The effect is spectacular - fire races through the webs and within seconds the whole mass is blazing. You retreat hastily and escape damage although the Centaurs hacking at the webs are not so lucky and each takes 3 Points of Damage. The trapped one in the centre is in an even worse position, and his screams ring in your ears as he is consumed by the fire.

The flames are too fierce **and** the webs too insubstantial for the blaze to last very long. Within a minute the mass of webs has completely disappeared; leaving a vast blackened area with a pathetic inchoate mound in the centre.

The Centaurs are seething with the desire for revenge. Some start towards you with their daggers, but on a command from their leader they pause, and all ready bows and arrows. You look vainly for cover, then

fourteen arrows plunge deep into your body, causing a loss of 28 Vitality Points - more than enough to kill you instantly.

Turn to 100.

183

None of the other sheep interfere with your pursuit of the unfortunate Ram. Indeed, the herd has gradually removed itself from the immediate scene. You can get five more days' food from your prey, and should alter your Character Sheet accordingly. If you wish, you can camp and eat here, thus taking four days' extra food with you when you leave.

When you are ready to do this, turn to 211 and choose afresh.

184

Grateful to the Centaurs for their information, you ask if they can now convey you back to your canoe, to continue your journey. They agree, but before parting give you a small bag of leaves with magical properties. If you ever need to go without food, you can boil these in water for one hour, and drink the infusion when cool. You can now live without food or water for up to ten days, but will lose 1 Vitality Point for every day you go without a meal. Enter 'Centaurs' Leaves 184' on your Character Sheet so that you can refer back to this paragraph to check the details if you need to use them.

They also present you with a small wooden amulet on a thong to hang around your neck. They tell you this is a sign that you have rendered a signal service to Centaurs: any other Centaur to whom you display it will be willing to assist and befriend you.

Your canoe is re-launched and you paddle away, waving to your new-found friends.

If you landed from the lake, turn to 79.

If you landed from the wide channel to the South East, turn to 92.

If you landed from the winding stream to the West and North West, turn to 309.

185

You beach your canoe on the gently sloping bank and drive in a stake to moor it. The Centaurs will leave a guard on it, if you wish. They explain that they had been exploring a large cave at the base of one of the rocky crags you had seen. A number of Giant Spiders had attacked and although some had been killed, and the rest driven off, one of the Centaurs had become enmeshed in a mass of strong, sticky webs. Their daggers had proved useless at cutting the strands, which merely wrapped themselves around the blades, and they were afraid more of them could become trapped in the webs if they persisted.

As if the situation were not bad enough, they had to face a further problem with the light. Even during the day, the depths of the cave were but dimly lit. Come night-time, unless they had some illumination, they would be quite unable to see the Giant Spiders which could be expected to return for the trapped Centaur. They faced having to abandon their comrade or risk losing more of their number.

Their leader was sure that a fire would be the answer to their problems, as it would provide both illumination and the means to heat blades which should then be able to sever the web-strands without becoming fouled

themselves in the sticky mass. Unfortunately, as they normally have no use for fire, they carry no means of creating it. They hope you will accompany them to the cave to free their comrade, and will reward you in any way within their power.

You ask them if they have seen any unusual movements within the Dunmarsh, or seen any river barges locally.

They advise you that they have information they think will assist.

If you decide to accompany them and try to free their comrade, turn to 238.

If you decline to face Giant Spider's Webs, with or without the presence of Spiders themselves, turn to 352.

186

Retreating to the foot of the stairs, you stand ready to fight. The Zombie lurches from its ancient prison and plods sightlessly across the living quarters towards you, hands apparently reaching for your throat. If you try to hit the Zombie with anything other than a weapon with a cutting edge, you will fail to do any damage to it.

The Zombie has Expertise 6 and Vitality 8. If it hits you, or if you throw 4T when evaluating your own score, it will seize you around the throat with its clawlike fingers and force you back up several steps, while inflicting 1 Point of Damage.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill it, turn to 115.

If you break off combat and retreat, turn to 384 but ignore the first sentence.

187

Eventually you force your way through and into the mouth of the cave. However, the tears and scratches have had an effect: reduce your Vitality by 1 point and turn to 267.

188

Two sizeable rivers meet at this point in the Dunmarsh.

The Luna flows in from the North East (199).

The upper part of the Sol comes from the North East (141).

The much wider Sol flows on to the South. If you follow it, turn to 204.

189

As you descend the defile you find the footing good, although you have to pick your way amongst the large, grassy hummocks. By the time you reach the stream valley, the defile is about forty feet wide.

The valley is somewhat narrower, and has obviously been carved from the soft soil of the surrounding meadow by the action of the stream water, as it lies a few feet below normal ground level. There is a thin screen of bushes and trees on the far bank, which also bears the thick lush grass which makes the meadow such good grazing land. In fact, a herd of deer are not far off to your left.

The area in front of you, where the stream emerges

190-191

from the defile and enters the valley, looks particularly muddy, as if churned up by grazing animals. There seems no way round it on the Northern side of the defile, where the rock is quite sheer and the Southern side is masked by bushes.

If you wish to search behind the bushes for a way past the mud, turn to 366.

If you decide to plough through the mud, turn to 315.

190

As your last blow lands, the Hippogriff falls, bouncing twice against the cliff, to land with a mighty splash in the water below. Add 2 Fortune Points and 1 Expertise Point to your Character Sheet.

Turn to 140.

191

You cross the 2 Fortune Points off your Character Sheet and thus strengthened, your will is sufficient to withstand the enchantment. Seeing its failure, the Harpy screeches foul abuse at you and flaps clumsily from the tree to the attack.

You stand to defend yourself with the weapon of your choice (if you have more than one). As it lands, the Harpy produces a hand-axe and battle is joined. The Harpy has Expertise 12 and Vitality 10, and does 2 Points of Damage with the axe.

If the Harpy succeeds in killing you, turn to 100.

If you manage to kill it, turn to 385.

192-194

192

This channel flows from the South Eastern corner of a lake (113) quite straight for five miles in a South Easterly direction to a point where one stream flows in from the North East (211) and the two combine to flow South West (399). It takes two and a half hours to navigate.

193

This channel runs North-South for six miles. At the Northern end it originates where several small streams trickle from a stretch of peat bog. At the Southern end it enters the North East corner of a lake (164). It will take six hours to investigate this channel.

194

You are sure that it would be risking detection to try to take your canoe into the underground dock area, which means you will have to swim again. This in turn places a limit on what you can carry.

You have a choice: you can either take your dagger and a bundle of all your clothing, or you can take all your weapons and no clothing. Your pack and food will have to be left behind, but you can take small items such as potions either in a pocket of your clothes or in a small pouch on your belt.

As you make this decision you become aware of movement opposite the concealed entrance to the underground docks. A number of forms are climbing the bank on to the meadow, having obviously swum the river. You watch as they form into small groups, and see them commence practising with a variety of weapons. The starlight is sufficient for you to be able

to identify them as Frogmen, and there seem to be about a dozen of them.

If you decide to stay where you are until they have finished, turn to 286.

If you consider this to be a good time to re-enter the dock pool, on the assumption that most of the guards are otherwise engaged, turn to 341.

195

Moving carefully in an attempt to avoid panicking the herd, you gradually approach the animals. The lambs stick close to their mothers, and are mostly quite small and thin. It does not look as though you could expect more than one day's food from any of them. The Ewes themselves seem a better proposition. Not as large as the biggest Ram, but big enough to be good for four or five days' rations.

You pick out a particularly plump-looking specimen that has no lamb with her, and move in. The herd has become nervous at your approach and is starting to split up into small groups of animals skittering to and fro. The big Ram is dashing about rather like a sheepdog trying to round them up, but the other Rams are not helping by seizing the rare opportunity to fraternize.

You get close enough to attack the Ewe, which has Expertise 6 and Vitality 3. It can do no damage, but in the unlikely event that it scores a hit upon you, this will mean it has managed to escape.

If the Ewe escapes, turn to 307.

If you kill the Ewe, turn to 357.



They commence practising

196

The Snake recoils a little, but your violent actions hasten your descent beneath the surface. Before its interested gaze you sink out of sight, and as the liquid mud fills ears and nostrils, your final thought is that at least you have baulked it of its prey.

Turn to 100.

197

Your feet start to sink further, and you nearly lose one of your boots. A large herd of some sort of grazing beasts has churned a stretch of the valley into mud almost the consistency of soup. You come across a dead goat which seems to have become mired and then trampled by a larger creature.

If you keep along the stream bed, turn to 264.

If you decide to try the meadow instead, turn to 120.

198

As you make your way back into the previous room, where you defeated the second pair of Skeletons, you are astonished to find that everything has increased in size. The room is now as big as the one you had just reached, and the remains of the Skeletons are now twice human size.

You rush on into the room with the first pair of Skeletons. The room is the same size as the others, but the Skeletons are enormous — the skulls are over two feet across.

With a sick feeling in your stomach you pass into **the** last room, at the foot of the stairs. This is half the size of the others, but the stairs come up to your waist.

Climbing three hundred of them will be a tremendous task.

You realize that you are now only about nine inches tall.

Truly mighty was Mawghain the Magician. He had cast a spell upon each doorway into his final resting place, so that any intruders were reduced by half in size each time they passed through.

Turn to 356.

199

The Luna is a fairly deep, narrow river which flows out of the Eastern part of Centaur Forest by the small village of Woodbridge. From there it flows South West for four miles through pleasant rolling meadows before entering the Dunmarsh. After another two miles it skirts a high, upthrust crag, known as Dragon's Mount, and a mile further on is joined by a small stream from the East. Then it continues South West for twelve miles to join The Sol.

If you turn East along the small stream, turn to 174.

If you stop to investigate Dragon's Mount, turn to 247.

If you paddle as far as Woodbridge, turn to 387.

If you return to the confluence with the Sol, turn to 188.

200

The mud at the Water's edge supports your weight very unsteadily, and it is difficult to remain upright on the quaking surface. You essay a step, the surface parts,

one foot plunges through and immediately you are sinking fast.

You will need to cross 2 Fortune Points off your Character Sheet to be able to regain your craft. If you can do this, turn back to the last paragraph, the number of which you were asked to note.

If you do not have 2 Fortune Points left, you sink helplessly into the clinging mud, and must turn to 100.

201

The cave mouth is about twelve feet wide at the bottom, curving up to perhaps ten feet high in the centre. You are able to see about twenty feet in, but after that the cave bends round to your right. It seems unlikely that the daylight will reach very far around the bend, and if you have a torch and the means to light it, you do so now. Then you edge warily up to the bend and peer around.

A few feet further, the cave opens out into a chamber some twenty feet across and fifteen feet high. This is the home of a pair of Hippogriffs, and there is a large, rather comfortable nest with three eggs in it.

If you have already met and killed one Hippogriff outside, there will only be one in here, and it will promptly attack you in defence of the eggs. If you have not already killed one, they will both be in here (which is unfortunate): the male will attack you first, followed by the female if you kill her mate. A Hippogriff has the body and hindlegs of a horse, with the head, forelimbs and wings of a large, fierce bird. Each of them has Expertise 13, Vitality 11 and does 4 Points of Damage with beak and claws.

There will be no time to take a Potion during combat, of course, and if you have to face both there will be no pause between the death of one and the commencement of hostilities by the second. However, you may add 3 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet immediately if you kill each one.

Should you be killed, turn to 100.

If there are no live Hippogriffs left, turn to 346.

202

'I regret I have no food upon me,' you reply, perhaps a trifle nervously if this is not actually the truth.

The Sphinx frowns, 'A pity,' he booms, 'for my magic works best if the enchantment is taken orally. Nevertheless, I would grant you a boon. Kiss my paw!'

You are a little taken aback as a large, viciously clawed paw is extended to you.

If you kiss it, turn to 396.

If you refuse, turn to 355.

203

You join combat with the Giant. He was Expertise 14 and Vitality 20, and his club does so much damage that it causes you to lose 6 Vitality points every time it hits.

If he kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill the Giant, turn to 8.

204

As you paddle down this stretch of the Sol, you notice that the water grows progressively wider and deeper, and there is no noticeable current. It seems there is probably a dam ahead blocking the river. (This can happen occasionally, and is but one of several reasons why the Sol is not used commercially. There are many reefs and sandbars near the surface of what is normally a shallow and sluggish river. These often strand large trees floating down from Centaur Forest, and further debris can build up to block the river completely.)

About sixteen miles below the point where the Luna joins the Sol, you reach just such a dam. The land on either side seems much too boggy to risk a portage.

If you decide to investigate the dam itself, turn to 254.

If you paddle back to the confluence of the two rivers, turn to 199 if you go up the Luna, or 141 if you choose the upper reaches of the Sol.

205

Torch held high, you search the lair of the dead Hippogriffs. The nest, though well made and even comfortable looking, holds nothing but the three large eggs. You may rest here and have a meal (if you brought food with you - the Hippogriffs' flesh is too tough and has a vile taste) and take any Potion you wish. Remember to amend your Character Sheet if you do.

A careful examination of the cave itself reveals an opening behind a concealing shoulder of rock. About four feet high and two feet wide, it leads West for a few paces, then swings South and becomes a staircase

winding down into the rock. It widens to nearly four feet, and there is ample headroom. Judging by the dust and cobwebs, it cannot have been used for many years, perhaps centuries.

If you decide to go down, turn to 152.

If you decide that disused stairways are unlikely to be of help in your quest, you leave the cave and, extinguishing your torch, should turn to 336.

206

The process of clearing the webs continues slowly throughout the day. The Centaurs keep working, leaving you to tend the fire. You may take food and/or a Potion if you wish, amending your Character Sheet and equipment list appropriately.

Progress is halted for a while when part of the mass, undercut below, subsides from above, temporarily trapping another Centaur. From then on they work to cut sections free completely, then drag the sticky piles clear with branches and pile them on the fire. Dusk falls outside with, you reckon, about another three hours' work needed to free the captive.

It is now that the Giant Spiders, perhaps fearing that their prey is about to be snatched away, make their reappearance. Some of them are as much as fifteen feet high on legs inches thick, and have bodies six feet across.

A shout from the rear of the cave alerts everyone, and work on the webs has to be suspended. The Centaurs form a line across the floor between the webs and the rear of the cave, and ready their bows and arrows. They are paying no attention to you.



The Giant Spiders re-appear

If you draw a weapon of your own, in case of need, and remain by the fixe, turn to 75.

If you take this chance to leave the cave and head back in the direction of your canoe, turn to 56.

207

I regret to say that you have fallen foul of a particularly powerful spell which has been placed on the sandy area. Effectively, to anyone standing on the sand and gravel, both the rock slab in the centre and the rocky floor all around are an infinite distance away, and can never be reached. One other adventurer had tried it, and his skeleton lies beside you now.

Your only chance of escape lies in your intelligence and resistance to magic, which is partially represented in your Fortune score. If you can sacrifice 3 Fortune Points, you will be able to throw off the effects of the spell long enough to reach the rocky floor around the expanse of sand and gravel. (You will **not** be able to reach the centre and get the chest first.)

If you are able to delete 3 Fortune Points from your Character Sheet, do so and turn to 87.

Otherwise, you will eventually come to resemble your unfortunate predecessor, and should turn to 100.

208

Progress at this speed would handicap your quest unbearably - indeed you would be unable to carry enough food to make any prolonged journey through the inhospitable Dunmarsh. You turn the canoe about and start paddling back to Starport, intending to find out what is wrong with the canoe and perhaps seek a replacement or a berth on a barge instead.

209-210

Before you can take more than a few strokes, the canoe is jerked to a dead stop in the water, then starts rocking from side to side, despite the calm surface. You have no alternative but to investigate below the water, otherwise your canoe will surely be upset.

Seizing your dagger you plunge in.

Turn to 88.

209

You reach the trees well in front of the beast, which is much slower on the land than in the water.

The trees are quite substantial and, although the lowest branches are some eight feet above the ground, an agile leap gives you a handhold and you swiftly swarm some ten feet higher and watch as your pursuer arrives below. The Crocodile peers hungrily up through the foliage and then, to your dismay, settles down, apparently to await your eventual descent.

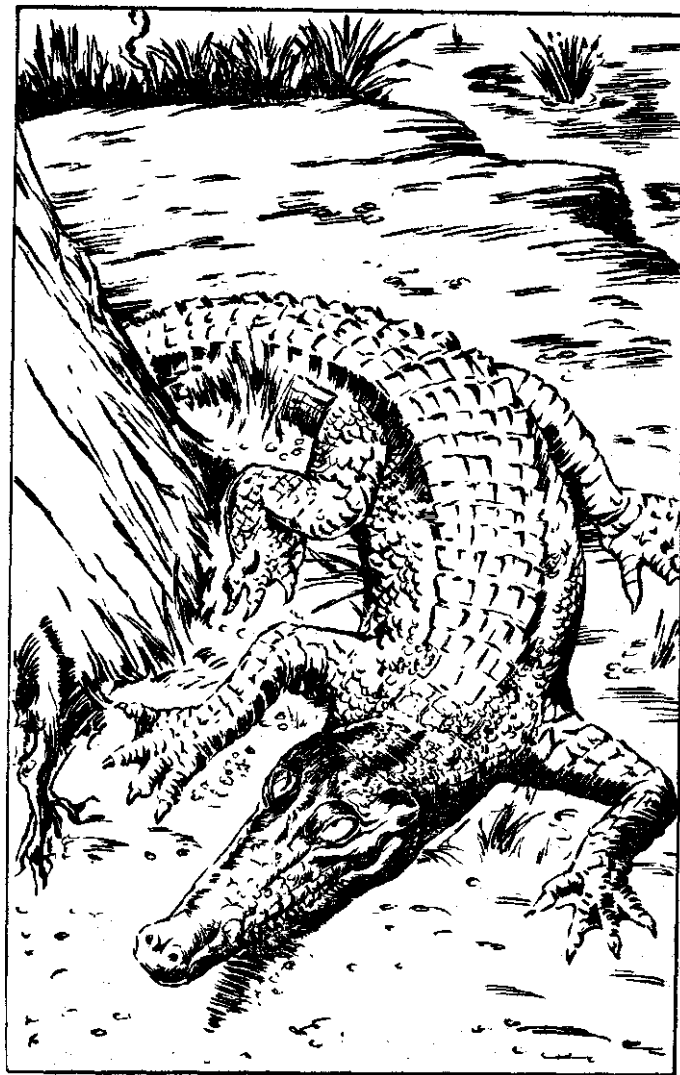
If you decide to wait for dark, in the hope of sneaking past the Crocodile, perhaps by crossing to and descending the other tree, turn to 42.

If you decide to descend and fight it out now, before you get too stiff, turn to 16.

If you decide to climb further into the thick foliage, turn to 253.

210

Between the second and third barges you discover a rope ladder with wide wooden steps hanging down to the water. It is partially shielded from the lights, and you quickly swarm up and stretch out on the bare rock.



The Crocodile peers hungrily upwards

You find yourself on a ledge about twelve feet wide, narrowing to the South and widening to the North East. You can look down into the two barges and observe them to be empty. They look like normal river barges but without the flimsy deck-houses which shelter the crews from inclement weather.

You cautiously move on around the North Western edge of the pool, passing another barge below, empty but for some stacks of timber, and the Northernmost one of the four. You can now see that the fire in the Northern corner of the cavern is on the other side of a high, irregular-looking fence, some twenty feet in front of you.

Suddenly you hear voices and the clatter of equipment from the lighted area to the East, and crouch in the shadows at the foot of the cavern wall. Across the pool you see a man-like figure with a shuffling gait heading in your general direction carrying some sort of pole arm over its shoulder.

If you decide to wait where you are and hope to escape notice, turn to 239.

If you are impatient and determined to attack the approaching figure immediately, turn to 274.

If you decide to make a break for the outside by diving into the pool, turn to 325.

Your decision may be governed to some extent by the clothing and equipment you have with you. If you have no clothing the chance of being hit by an opponent's weapon is slightly increased, so your own Expertise is reduced by 1 Point.

211

This meandering channel comes from the North East

to join another (192) from the North West to feed a waterway continuing South West (399).

Heading upstream, the channel goes North East for two miles, North for one, North East for two more, then North for one mile again. After that it leads North East for two more, then bends East and, after four more miles, the source drains out of a vast shallow tarn, encrusted with yellow algae which gives off an offensive odour. There is no way through.

The middle section of the twelve miles of this channel has cut through one of the rare stretches of firm ground in the Dunmarsh. This meadow extends for at least two miles on either side, and you can see some grazing animals in the distance to the North.

If you land to hunt or investigate, turn to 62.

If you do not wish to land, the journey up and down this channel will still have taken you twelve hours.

212

There is nothing further of interest in the room.

If you wish to leave by the half-open door in the Eastern wall, turn to 6.

If you wish to undo the clips holding the Western door shut, turn to 280.

213

You plunge forward, gasping from the freezing cold of the water, and strike out for the wall at the back of the pool. Before you complete your second stroke you are assailed by countless small pairs of razor-sharp jaws.

There is no way to escape the agonizing assault as your

214-215

flesh is ripped away in chunks. In a few thrashing seconds pain overcomes you and you lose consciousness.

Turn to 100.

214

Your rapid slide beneath the surface continues. Soon you are up to your waist, then your chest. At this point you hear a rustling from the grass on the stream bank and the head of a giant constricting Snake comes into view only six feet away. It sees you immediately and the head comes straight for you across the surface of the quagmire.

The hilt of your sword is below the surface: if you wish to draw it, turn to 289.

If you shout and wave your arms to try to frighten off the Snake, turn to 196.

If you do neither, turn to 137.

215

This room is twenty feet square and twelve feet high, carved from the solid rock. The floor bears a thick layer of dust. A passage ten feet high and ten feet wide leads West from the centre of the Western wall. A similar passage leads South from this room in the centre of the Southern wall.

Of particular interest, however, is the creature in the North Eastern part of the room. It has the body, legs and tail of a large lion, but the head, although surrounded by the typical mane of a male lion, has the face of a bearded man with a fierce, set expression. From mane to tail the creature is some ten feet long and the head is as high as your own.

216-217

It stands completely motionless, facing towards the Western passage and pays you no attention whatsoever. Looking carefully you can see no sign that it is breathing.

Then you notice that a design has been painted on the level rock floor around it. It seems to be a five-pointed star, and the creature occupies the five-sided space in the centre. This is presumably a pentagram, which you have heard is often employed by magicians.

The creature reminds you of a gigantic statue you have seen in one of the lands across the Great Void Desert. The natives of that country called it a Sphinx, but you have always supposed it to be a mythical beast.

If you cross the design on the floor to approach the creature, turn to 58.

If you leave the room by the Western passage, turn to 108.

If you go back through the Southern passage to the cave with the Dragon Skeleton, turn to 108, ignoring the first paragraph.

216

You drop from the lower branches to remove the last obstacle between you and the canoe. The Crocodile has Expertise 13, Vitality 12 and its powerful jaws do 3 Points of Damage.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill the Crocodile you may add 2 Fortune Points, then head for your canoe which you can see resting undisturbed on the shore of the island. Turn to 69.

217

The surviving Centaur(s) break off the hand-to-hand

combat and gallop off for about a hundred yards. They then turn and ready their bows. Their Expertise with these weapons is 14, and you have no way to reply. Each has 15 arrows in his quiver and each arrow will do 2 Points of Damage if it hits. If your score from E + 4H equals or is greater than theirs, they miss; otherwise they will hit.

If they kill you, turn to 100.

If you are still alive when all their arrows are exhausted, they will break off the combat and gallop off, leaving you to escape.

You will be able to collect the daggers from the dead Centaurs, but will find their bows too damaged to be usable. You may add the daggers to your equipment list, and paddle away in your canoe. Ignore all future reference to Centaurs within the boundaries of Dunmarsh.

If you landed from the lake, turn to 79.

If you landed from the wide, straight channel to the South East turn to 92.

If you landed from the winding stream to the West and North West, turn to 309.

218

The defile bends gradually round to the North, then to the North East, getting narrower all the way until your shoulders almost brush the sheer rock-faces on both sides.

In order to continue you will have to walk up the stream bed itself, but it only looks a few inches deep.

If you go on, turn to 296.

If you go back, turn to 189.

219

Unfortunately the smaller rams are too used to being chased, and will not let you close enough to attack with a hand weapon.

If you have a spear, however, you could try to bring one down at a distance: so far they are not aware of such a danger, and only scamper away when you get within fifty feet.

Should you have such a weapon and wish to try this, turn to 105.

Otherwise, turn to 62.

220

The odour is enough to decide you against further investigation of the nest above, and you clamber stiffly back down, dropping with a wince to the ground below.

As you make your way back to your canoe, you glance back and observe that something seems to be disturbing the upper branches in the vicinity of the nest, which you can just make out through the foliage, now you know where to look. Pausing, you are astonished to hear a beautifully melodious voice start the refrain of a wonderfully moving song. The sound clearly comes from the nest.

A warning voice sounds in your brain: could this be one of the notorious Harpies, said to charm humans with their magical voices for a variety of nefarious purposes, uniformly fatal to the recipient?

If so, only the expenditure of Fortune Points will enable you to withstand the magical effect.

If you are prepared to cross 2 Fortune Points off your Character Sheet, turn to **191**.

If you prefer to flee to your canoe, turn to **151**.

If you are not frightened of a mere songbird, you draw your sword, and stand your ground prepared to face whatever may come. Turn to **80**.

221

This channel leads West, fed by a stream (**399**) from the North which forks, the other arm flowing South (**382**).

After two miles you see a fearsome creature ahead, standing in the centre of the channel, at a point where the water is some forty feet wide and about six feet deep. You recognize it from the descriptions of the occasional travellers who have met such a monster and survived, as a Hydra.

Turn to **181**.

222

You crawl between the lips and teeth carved so crudely from the stone wall, and edge down the gently sloping cleft on your elbows. As you ease your hips over the teeth, raising first one leg, then the other, the trap is sprung!

(To make it operate, one must first place something in the stone fists to weigh them down, then place another weight on the altar stone. When this last weight is removed a massive block of stone descends from the roof of the 'mouth' on to whatever may be within.)

I regret to say your character is swiftly crushed to death, so turn to **100**.

223

You decide to return to the open air, seek your canoe, and wait and rest until nightfall.

Your swim back to the point where you moored your canoe is uneventful, unless you moored it to the rushes screening the foot of the Mount, in which case you will find it has broken free and is even now drifting downstream some two or three hundred yards away. After a long chase you will be able to catch it, but exhaustion will cause you to lose 2 Vitality Points.

Whether you have had to chase the canoe, or left it moored to the boulder on the opposite bank, you decide the grove of trees to the South of the Mount will be the best hiding place and paddle your canoe there. Of course, if that is where you left it in the first place, you will proceed there anyway.

If you left the canoe at the mouth of the small stream by the North East corner of the Mount, you return there. All is undisturbed, but you realize it is impossible to observe the concealed entrance from here, as well as giving you a much longer distance to swim. You therefore paddle down to the small grove.

The rest of the day you can spend resting, and may take food or Potions as you wish. In due course the light starts to fade from the sky and you prepare for your night's action.

Turn to **194**.

224

Your curiosity overcomes your unease in the face of these weird events, and you stand back, though with your weapon cautiously ready.

In a few minutes the dismembered Zombie is whole

225-226

once more and clambering to its feet. Eyes staring blankly and arms again held before it, the figure ignores you and shambles across the living quarters to the stairs. Laboriously it begins to climb them.

There seems little to do but follow it. One behind the other you slowly climb the stairs, then pass along the passage into the main cavern.

Turn to 234.

225

As you go back into the room where you defeated the last pair of Skeletons, you are astonished to find it has doubled in size. It now has the same dimensions as the Giant's room — even the remains of the Skeletons are now twice normal size.

You begin to have an awful idea of your plight, and dash through this room to the next. It is, as you fear, a similar sized room, with Skeletons four times normal size.

Back you go, through the last room with truly enormous Skeletons and into the room at the bottom of the stairs. This room is only half the size of the others, but the stairs now present a tremendous barrier: each one comes up to your chin and you have to pull yourself up three hundred of them. You are now just over four inches tall.

Truly, Mawghain had been a mighty Magician. Each doorway had a magical spell cast upon it, which reduced any intruders to half their previous size, including all their equipment.

Turn to 356.

226

The Mask has no effect, other than reducing your field of vision, and should be discarded.

227-228

The gauntlets are another matter. These are Gauntlets of Fighting, and you will discover they have a number of magical effects. When worn in combat they will add to the skill and strength of your blows, which translates in game terms to adding 1 Expertise Point to your Character Sheet E figure when wearing them and adding 2 Points of Damage to your Weapon Damage if you score a Hit.

However, they also increase your courage to the point of recklessness where you will be unable to flee or surrender when wearing them and must disregard such options when offered in the text.

Enter 'Gauntlets of Fighting 226' on your Character Sheet, so that you can refer here again if necessary. Now return to the last paragraph.

227

This channel is only two miles long from East to West, taking just an hour to navigate.

At its Eastern end it leaves the South Western corner of a small lake (320).

At the other end it forks. One channel (46) comes from North West, and the other (123) flows South.

228

Aided by the rope, you quickly descend to the cave below.

Again you notice the strong horse-like smell. If you decide to enter the cave, turn to 201.

If you prefer to continue to the bottom of the Mount, turn to 336.



229

Wincing from the pain of scorched fingers, you throw off your belt and weapons. Before you can turn back to the assistance of your less fortunate colleagues, you are engulfed in a swarm of stinging insects which appears from nowhere to cover the barge and its occupants.

Blinded and scarcely able to breathe, you blunder towards the deck house, but quickly become aware that the barge has been boarded. Large forms loom out of the swirling cloud of insects around you, and you are beaten to the deck. In short order your arms and legs are bound and, as quickly as it appeared, the swarm of insects vanishes again.

You are able to crane your neck enough to see that most of your companions are similarly bound,

although a few, including both magic users, appear to be dead.

This, I regret to say, forms the end of the adventure for you this time. Captured by the marsh creatures you will endure an unpleasant voyage, a short, hard life of slavery and an early death. Salvation can only come from the efforts of another adventurer.

Of course, whenever you care to start again, that could be you!

230

You have no idea who or what may be behind the disappearances of the barges and their crews, including your father, but there is always the possibility that someone in town may be involved. If no one knows of your intentions, the odds against their success may be improved in your favour.

Before going to bed you prepare equipment and provisions. You know of an old but sturdy canoe in Kadow's boat-shed which will be ideal for a venture in the Dunmarsh: it will carry all you need, including a week's food, and will be at least as fast as the river barges, even with only one paddler.

After an early breakfast the next morning, you are out on the broad reaches of the Sol while the morning mists still obscure the banks. A few miles upstream you come to the confluence of the Sol and the Doone.

Turn to 392.

231

Holding on with your hands, you use your feet to kick and push at the nest. Soon chunks of it are falling free and, bouncing from branch to branch, disintegrate still

232-233

further on their way to the ground. The stench is truly appalling, making you feel quite ill, and you must cross 1 Vitality Point off your Character Sheet.

Soon the eggs fall from sight, and the wave of effluvium as they smash open below even reaches your perch high in the tree. There is a flurry of activity amongst the reptiles and, as you push free the last remnants of the noisome tangle, you recall that crocodiles are supposed to have a keen sense of smell.

Peering through the branches you can see them retreating hurriedly into the lake and, when you descend the tree, you find they have all gone. Add 3 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet. You are able to return to your canoe and paddle out into the lake without opposition.

*Please turn to **113**, but you may pause first for food and drink if you wish.*

232

One end of this stream starts at a point where other waterways from North (**382**) and East (**391**) meet. It runs South West for eight miles, then soaks into a stretch of quicksands which prevent further progress by foot or boat.' Checking this stream will take you eight hours.

233

This stream flows down from the North to join one from the East (**221**) to form a broader channel (**142**) running South West.

Travelling upstream, you head North for two miles, then West for six, North for two more and finally North West for three to a point where the stream

234-236

drains an impassable area of brackish, weed-choked ponds. Investigating this stream will take you thirteen hours.

234

It becomes apparent that the Zombie is not interested in you at all, but is intent on some mission of its own: quite conceivably revenge on the person or creature responsible for its imprisonment and death.

It will only attack you if you seek to interfere with it, and when you leave it alone it stolidly leaves the cavern by the shored-up passage out to the defile, thence out on to the plain and off to the North.

*You remain in the main cavern for now, so turn to **108**.*

235

A large holly bush bars the way out of the cave. The leaves are particularly sharp and leave nasty gashes when you try to part them with your hands. The best way to avoid further damage seems to be to crawl beneath the thickest of the foliage on hands and knees.

*If you take this course, turn to **285**.*

*If you decide that crawling is beneath your dignity, and are prepared to take the worst the leaves can do, turn to **252**.*

236

You wonder whether other guards may come singly to check the prisoners' compound, but are advised that only one ever comes at a time. Indeed the failure of this one to return may soon cause an alarm to be raised, unless others are first sent to investigate.

237-238

There are a number of alternatives suggested:

(a) A number of the longer-serving prisoners have learned to speak a few words of the Lizardmen's tongue. One suggests you push the body into the pool while he calls for help. This may also bring the other guards, isolating them from the alarm gong which hangs in the South East corner of the cavern.

(b) Another suggests hiding the body while he, pretending to be the missing guard, claims to have found a missing store of wine (to which the Lizardmen are partial) on one of the barges by the West dock. This could attract the rest of the guards with less chance of raising a general alarm.

(c) There is also a strong lobby pressing the all-out charge solution.

If you choose (a) turn to 170.

If you prefer (b) turn to 29.

If you settle for (c) turn to 78.

237

This is one of the times when you should have used Fortune to prevent your opponent's hit damaging you. The curved dagger was smeared with a virulent poison.

Your muscles contract agonizingly and you are no longer able to protect yourself. With a hissing chuckle she draws the dagger across your throat, and you sink into the final darkness.

Turn to 100.

238

The leader invites you astride his back and, leaving one of their number to guard your canoe and equipment,

the other three lope inland with you, trying to keep up a good speed without risking your falling off.

In about an hour they reach the foot of a rocky crag, where you can see a wide cave mouth. Half a dozen other Centaurs are here and after dismounting you are led down the gently sloping cave floor into the depths beneath the crag.

The light grows dim, but about two hundred feet from the entrance you can make out a silvery mass of webs taking up nearly half the width of the cavern. The glistening strands festoon the walls and floor, hanging from stalactites on the ceiling and fastened to stalagmites and loose boulders on the floor. Barely visible in the centre is a Centaur, still on his feet and able to talk, but quite unable to move his limbs.

Some of the other Centaurs bring in armfuls of dead twigs and branches, piling them nearby.

Turn to 282.

239

You soon realize that the shuffling figure is not heading straight for you, but for the centre of the fence. As it comes into the firelight you realize that it is a Lizardman, but not like any of the furtive creatures you have occasionally seen in the past on the banks of the Doone River. This one swaggers, as well as its splayed, three-toed feet will allow. Not only that, but it wears a metal helmet and leather breastplate, has a belted sword and carries a gleaming halberd over one shoulder.

You watch as he brings the halberd to the ready and carefully pokes it through the fence. There is a sharp

cry from within and the Lizardman jerks his halberd back with a hissing chuckle. Movement within the fence quickly subsides, but not before you realize that what you had previously thought was an area of uneven rock is in fact occupied by a number of recumbent human forms, one of which the Lizardman has been tormenting.

As the Lizardman turns away you consider:

- (a) *Should you attack him, try to silence him before he can raise the alarm, and free the prisoners? (If so turn to 342) or*
- (b) *Would it be better to stay where you are until the coast is clear? (In which case turn to 163.)*

240

As you pass back into the previous room, you are amazed to find it is now twice the size it was before. Somehow it has increased to twenty feet square and the stairs are now twice as high as before. Even the metal plate on the wall has doubled in size, and you eventually realize the truth — it is you who have shrunk!

In fact, Mawghain has cast a spell upon each of the doorways into his final resting place, and each one reduces the size of any intruder by half. You are now only about three feet tall, and all your equipment has been similarly reduced in size.

Turn to 356.

241

Whichever of the two giant stone hands you decide to reach for, you find to be slightly unsteady. A mere pound or two of pressure seems to make it descend a

couple of inches, then it gently swings back up again when released.

If you place a torch (or indeed anything else of similar or greater weight) in both the grasping fists, turn to 319.

On the other hand, if you decide this might not be a good idea, turn back to 379.

242

Wincing from the aches and pains of your recent combat, you clamber through the soaking wet leaves of the tree, until you can make out a large, untidy nest near the top. When you approach to within ten feet, your climbing causes sufficient movement amongst the branches to set the nest rocking, and you detect a most unpleasant odour.

If you wish to continue close enough to look into the nest, which is some five or six feet across and almost as high, turn to 178.

If, instead, you decide to descend and return to your canoe, turn to 220.

243

Back in the lower branches of the tree, you are concerned to see that several more crocodiles have joined the one which chased you up here. You now count eight, and they seem to have decided to spend the night under the branches of the two trees.

As you regard your neighbours, full darkness falls. It seems you must either stay here for the night [in which case turn to 265) or descend and fight it out in the darkness with eight large crocodiles. If you prefer this latter course and drop from the tree, weapon at the ready, turn to 398.

244

This lake is roughly square, being four miles in each direction. One stream (350) flows into the North Eastern corner from the North, and one flows out to the South West from the South Western corner (386).

Navigating the lake takes two hours.

245

As you take the key from the small hook set in the plate, a spring is released, and a number of poison-tipped darts are fired. Calculate $6 + 3H - T$; the resulting figure is the number of darts that hit you. Each will do 1 Point of Damage, and you will need to sacrifice 3 Fortune Points to avoid being affected by the poison. (Only one 'save' is required, regardless of the number of darts that hit you.)

If the Damage is enough to kill you, or you are unable to survive the Poison, turn to 100.

If still alive, please amend your Character Sheet and, reflecting that you are obviously not ready for the secrets of the tomb just yet, add 'Golden Key' to your equipment list.

If you now wish to return up the steps, turn to 59.

If you decide to try to push the door open, turn to 13.

You can, if you wish, use any Potions here, rest and have a meal (if you have not already eaten today and have food with you) or even have a sleep without being disturbed.

246

You decide to have your evening meal early, and are at the waterside to meet the *Sultan's Favourite* as she arrives shortly before dusk. Several armed men are on deck and they regard you with some suspicion.



You are regarded with suspicion

When a gang-plank is produced and you move to board, swords are swiftly drawn and a call brings others from the deck house, among them an elderly but fit looking Elf with a wand held ready ... obviously a magic user of some kind.

You produce your letter of introduction and the bargemaster comes forward to examine it and confirm your credentials. Most of those on the barge relax, though one or two still look doubtful, probably wondering what special talents you have to make your presence worthwhile.

The present guards and crew intend to stay aboard tonight, and they plan to cast off for the first part of the downstream journey through the Dunmarsh soon after first light tomorrow.

Whether you spend the night aboard or at an inn in the town is immaterial. However, you need to decide definitely:- if you will travel aboard, in which case turn to 121.

If you will trail the barge in a canoe, in which case turn to 256.

Or if you will travel by canoe separately. In this case turn to 45.

247

The Luna flows around the North and West sides of Dragon's Mount, an upthrust crag of black rock which towers several hundred feet above the surrounding Dunmarsh. You have never passed this way before, but have heard ancient legends that it was once the lair of a mighty Green Dragon which roamed the skies above the marsh.

If there were any truth in the old tales, it would indicate that there are probably some fair-sized caverns in or beneath the Mount, and you wonder if they might have been taken over by the barge-pirates.

You paddle up and down looking up at the heights above. The sides bordered by the Luna climb almost sheer to the peak, but you can see the mouths of some caves up there. They look rather small for a dragon, and pretty inconvenient for storing cargo, but you suppose some form of hoist might be rigged.

A small unnavigable stream runs into the Luna by the North Eastern corner of the Mount, and apparently emerges from a cleft leading back into the far side of the Mount near the Southern End of the Eastern side. It has carved itself a narrow valley, lined with trees and bushes, along the Eastern side of the Mount, and stretching East and North from there is a large meadow. This small valley looks very muddy, perhaps churned up by the feet of beings carrying heavy loads? Even if not, the cleft might provide a route to an interior.

The waters of the river are deep here. You wonder if there might be an underwater route into the Mount, which amphibious marsh-dwellers might use. It would seem an awkward way to unload cargo, but you are a strong swimmer and should be able to manage an underwater reconnaissance. You have **not** noticed any particularly dangerous water creatures in the Luna so far.

If you decide to continue up or down the Luna, turn to 199.

If you wish to stay to investigate Dragon's Mount more closely, turn to 179.

248

You feel the skin crawl on the back of your neck as you hastily retreat from the room, pulling the door shut behind you. With nervous haste you force the bolts home, and breathe a sigh of relief.

There is a thud on the other side of the door, repeated again and again, but the door is too sound, despite its age, to do more than quiver. You picture the animated corpse on the other side, stolidly beating its fists against the barrier and wonder how long it will continue its fruitless efforts. Had it already gone through all this before, all those years ago? You decide not to linger down here to find out, and climb back up the steps to the cave above.

Turn to 108, ignoring the first paragraph.

249

The Sol is normally considered unnavigable by commercial craft. Wide and shallow it meanders in a generally Southern direction from the Northern Ramparts through the unknown depths of Centaur Forest, then down between the bogs and fens of the Dunmarsh until it joins the Doone just North of Starport.

As the upper reaches have no commercial or strategic significance, no attempts have been made to dredge it, and the numerous sandbars often strand large trees floating down from the forest, building up natural dams which can prevent passage by any craft too heavy for the portage around.

Within the marsh, only three tributaries join it:

One flows in from the North West some sixteen miles North of the confluence of Sol and Doone rivers (370).

Seventeen miles further North a tributary flows in from the East (368). It seems likely that one of the dams must have formed not far above this point as, looking North, the bed of the Sol shows a wide stretch of mud, with only small trickles of water far too shallow to float a barge, though just about navigable by smaller craft like your own.

If you wish to paddle up this stretch to investigate the virtual disappearance of the river, turn to 176.

You are aware that, eighteen miles to the North of this second tributary, there is a major fork where the Luna joins the Sol some fifteen miles within the Northern edge of the Dunmarsh. Above that point both rivers are known to be navigable well into the reaches of Centaur Forest.

*If you wish to go South to Starport you **are** effectively abandoning the adventure but may, of course, try again some time.*

If you decide to investigate the Doone River instead, turn to 12.

250

Turning your back on such a fierce creature is not a good idea. In two bounds it is upon you and you will have to turn to 111 for the combat after all.

However, as the Panther has the advantage of attacking you from behind, and is very fast and agile, it will have the benefit of SURPRISE for the first *two* rounds of combat. (See Step 1 of the rules of Combat in the Game System description.)

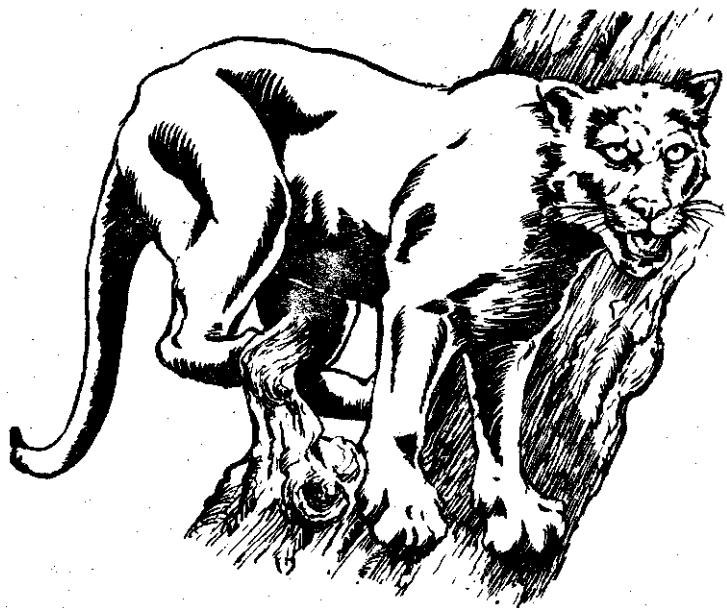
251

The Buffalo sags to the ground on a bed of grass, crushed and tangled by the combat. Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet.

You are about to start butchering the beast so as to take the choicest cuts back to the canoe, when there is a fierce snarl close at hand. A black Panther had also been stalking the lone Buffalo, and is now challenging you for the spoils.

If you wish to fight, turn to 111.

If you prefer to let it have your kill, and run back to the canoe, turn to 250.



252

Badly lacerated on hands and wrists, you break through. The leaves have taken their toll - deduct 1 point from your Vitality and turn to 285.

253

The upper branches of the tree are quite substantial, and close enough to provide an easy route for one as agile as you. The thick foliage soon obscures your view of the ground directly below, but looking upwards you see there is a large nest near the top.

As you approach within ten feet of it, your climbing causes sufficient movement amongst the branches to set the nest rocking, and you become aware of a most unpleasant odour.

The nest is about five or six feet across, and almost as high. If you wish to climb high enough to look into it, turn to 395.

If, instead, you prefer to avoid whatever may inhabit the nest, you climb back down to the larger, lower branches where you can see the ground, but not the nest above. Please turn back to 209, ignoring the first two sentences.

254

The dam is some hundreds of feet long and, if it were not so purposeless, you would have imagined it had been built by human hands to a particular plan. You cannot tell how deep is the water against it, but from the way the river has spread out across the surrounding marsh you are sure the surface level must be way above normal. As it is, the top of the dam is only two to three feet above the water, and you imagine the pressure against it must be tremendous. It cannot be too long

before either the dam bursts, the water pours over the top, or the river cuts itself a new channel around.

The dam seems to be built mainly of tree trunks and larger branches, with twigs, grass and mud used to fill the gaps. Giant beavers are quite common hereabouts, but this is a most impressive edifice for them.

Something about the centre of the dam catches your attention. Several long, straight pieces of timber stick out of the dam at an angle, overhanging the downstream side. They look too regularly shaped to be tree trunks, and at least two seem to have something hanging from them. If you are to examine them more closely, you will have to climb onto the dam itself. Glancing at the top you see that this should present no particular problem, as the surface has been well plastered with mud and seems to have been trodden down firmly.

If you wish to climb onto the dam to investigate further, turn to 131.

If you decide to get well away as quickly as possible, in case the dam goes when you are on it, turn back to 204 and refer to the last sentence only.

255

You succeed in killing the first Lizardman guard before he can raise the alarm. Taking his halberd and the shortsword he wore in his belt, you return to the gate in the hedge around the compound. A few slashes of your blade and the prisoners are free.

There seems a chance you may be able to dispose of more of the guards without raising the alarm, and if you wish to try this, turn to 236.

If, instead, you decide to lead a rush by the prisoners (who are happy to follow your lead) in the hope that the guards can be overcome and the prisoners armed before reinforcements come on the scene, turn to 78.

256

You tell the master of the *Sultan's Favourite* that you intend to trail his craft by canoe. Visibility is good apart from the occasional mists in morning and evening, and the relatively straight course of the Doone will enable you to keep the barge in sight from almost a mile astern. The master suggests he hoists a particularly colourful sail, normally reserved for festivals, which seems a good idea.

After a night's undisturbed rest, you wave the barge away early the next day and watch it proceed downriver while you finish a hasty breakfast. When it is about three-quarters of a mile away you can still pick out the red and yellow sail quite easily, and board your canoe to follow.

Scarcely have you pulled out into midstream when a chill dampness around your lower body alerts you to the fact that your canoe is leaking, and leaking badly. Indeed you barely make it back to the side before the craft subsides below the surface. Fortunately there is sufficient air trapped in your stowed equipment to prevent the canoe sinking to the bottom, and you are able to pull it to a point where it can be beached.

With your equipment unloaded and spread to dry, you are able to examine the canoe. The wood is hopelessly warped, causing several seams to gape open. You cannot understand this at all as you checked it before the barge set off, and all was in order then.

You will be able to hire another canoe, but by the time you set out again the Sultan's Favourite will be some miles downstream. Turn to 96.

257

You paddle downstream to the grove of trees, some of which overhang the water. There is thick undergrowth between the trees and no sign of local inhabitants. You pull the canoe up on the bank and conceal it.

If you are intent upon a swimming investigation, you remove all but an undergarment and a dagger before plunging into the water. Turn to 116.

If instead you head along the river bank to the South Western corner of the Mount, turn to 70.

If you relaunch the canoe and paddle out on to the Luna, turn to 247.

258

You reach in, groping for whatever object it was that caught your attention.

You have to stretch out on your face on the filthy floor of the cave in order to force your hand far enough into the fissure. Eventually you touch a smooth surface, and manage to grasp a flat, circular object. At this point you feel a stinging pain in your hand, and snatch it out with a gasp.

Evaluate E — 3T, If you score less than 12 you drop whatever you grasped, but on a score of 12 or better, you manage to retain your hold and bring the object out.

Your hand has a nasty wound. If you have a Neutralize Poison Potion this would be a good time

to take it. If you do not, you will need to cross off 3 Fortune Points to survive the venomous sting of the Scorpion. If you can do neither, death comes within a minute - turn to 100.

If you survive the poisonous effect of the sting, you will lose 1 Vitality Point for the wound, and if this kills you, then again, turn to 100.

If you are still alive, your next action depends on whether or not you kept your grip on the object.

If you did, turn to 48.

If the pain forced you to drop it, turn back to 22.

259

Bracing your arms against the door, you push sturdily, and creaking and groaning the door is reluctantly pushed open enough for you to gain entrance.

The room beyond again appears to be twice the size of the previous room, some eighty feet in each direction and with a huge door in the far wall. Once more this is flanked by Skeleton Guards, who start to rise to their feet.

If you retreat, turn to 198.

If you advance and fight, turn to 41.

260

The whirlpool turns out to be an illusion. A very realistic one, which gives you a queasy feeling as you float safely over the spinning vortex, but an illusion nonetheless. You realize it must have been cast by a very powerful magic-user.

Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet and .

If heading upstream, turn to 161.

If heading downstream, turn to 30.

261

You produce the rations you have on you. Amongst the variety of food is a large, hard biscuit. 'Take the biscuit and break it into four equal pieces', he says, 'then hold them separately before me.'

As you do so, he mutters several words in a language you do not understand over each. 'Guard those carefully,' continues the Sphinx. 'If you eat one piece before any combat my magic will grant you great strength. Now I must be gone to see what has become of the world since I was lured here and entrapped. Fare you well!'

And he disappears.

You wonder what has become of the magician who was powerful enough to hold a creature like the Sphinx. If still alive, he can probably expect an unwelcome visitor soon.

Enter '4 Tablets of Strength 261' on your Character Sheet. If you take one before any combat, it will have the effect of increasing your Expertise by 1 and the Damage you cause by 2 Points every time you hit. The effect will wear off as soon as that combat is over. By noting this section number you will be able to refer back here for clarification if necessary.

There is nothing further of interest in this room.

If you wish to leave by the passage to the South, turn to 314.

If you wish to take the passage West, turn to 326.

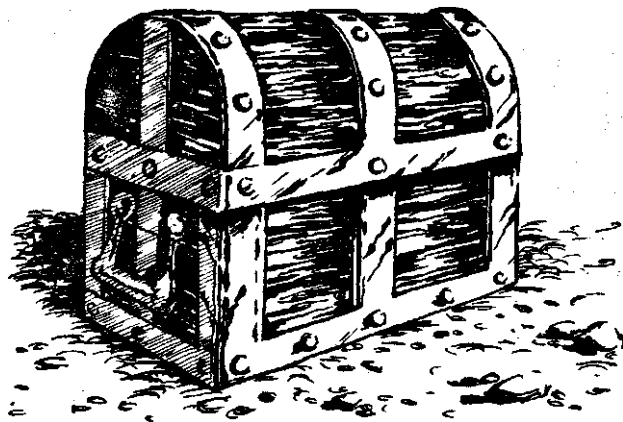
262

If you have a rope with you, it will be a simple matter to weight one end, with loose pieces of rock.

Taking the other end, you can then walk around the sandy area until your rope passes across the rock slab in the centre and comes up against the chest. You then complete the circuit until you have both ends of the rope with the chest in the middle, and carefully pull the chest towards you across the sand.

Soon you can reach the handles on the sides of the chest and lift it clear on to the rock floor. It proves not to be too heavy, and you realize it cannot therefore be full of gold and silver, as you may have hoped.

The lid does not appear to be fastened in any way. If you lift the lid to examine the contents turn to 276.



*If you are wary of traps and cast the chest away from you on to the rocky floor, hoping the lid will come open on impact, a certain amount of luck will be needed. If you cross 1 Fortune Point from your Character Sheet you should turn to **288**. Should you have no Fortune Points left, or be unwilling to sacrifice one, you must either raise the lid (turning to **276**) or leave the chest here and return to the other cave (turning to **335**).*

263

You decide there has been enough interest in your quest already. You search out an old length of chain, fasten it around your victim's waist and, checking that no one is around, carry her across the road and commit her body to the deep waters of the dock basin.

Your slumbers are rather disturbed that night, and you will be glad to get on with your quest tomorrow.

*Turn to **19**.*

264

Once through the last section the way becomes easier and you start to make better progress. The rock wall on your right starts to bend round towards the South East, and soon you see the other side of a narrow defile leading into the Mount.

*Turn to **315**.*

265

The night seems to last an eternity. A light mist rises from the waters of the lake soon after darkness falls and, though not substantial enough to provide effective concealment, it covers everything with a thick dew of

condensation and you are soon soaked and shivering in the rapidly dropping temperature.

You wedge yourself into the fork of a substantial branch and eventually manage a fitful doze, broken frequently by noises from below, where a variety of confrontations arise amongst your unwelcome co-tenants of the island.

An occasional sound like nothing so much as snoring comes from above to remind you of the other occupant of your temporary dwelling.

Eventually you can sleep no more. It is still full dark but you feel it cannot be long before dawn. The mist is thicker and the monsters below are silent.

*If you decide to make your getaway now, turn to **333**.*

*If you decide to wait for dawn, turn to **109**.*

266

With a mighty effort you manage, after much rocking to and fro, to pull a mast clear. As it starts to come free, the weight of the unsupported length, protruding over the mud, takes over and the whole mast acts as a lever to pry a chunk out of the dam.

You are excited to see the well-known black and gold bands near the base of the mast, but then become aware of what is happening to the dam.

*Turn to **371**.*

267

The cave is about five feet high and only a little wider. You may have to move in a half-crouch to proceed. It is also quite dark within, so you must light a torch.

When you have done so, turn to 303.

If you have no torch you realize it will be too dangerous to go in. Turn to 235.

268

Your final blow is sufficient to kill your fearsome assailant, and the lifeless body cartwheels down the cliff to land in the river below with a tremendous splash. You may add 2 Points to your Fortune Score and also 1 Point to your Expertise on your Character Sheet.

Trembling and exhausted you complete the rest of your descent along the narrow track, and arrive at the foot of the Mount at its South West corner.

You return to your canoe.

If you left it in the small grove to the South, turn to 257.

If you left it at the mouth of the small stream by the North East corner of the Mount, turn to 301.

269

You clamber on to the altar stone and regard the carved face at close range. The work is crude but effective - the face has an air of malevolence and madness about it, enhanced by the dancing light of your torch.

Bending, you peer into the mouth. Behind the thick lips and jagged, irregularly spaced teeth is an opening two feet high and four feet wide which angles gently downwards and then bends to your left after a few feet.

If you wish to crawl into the 'mouth' to investigate further, turn to 222.

Otherwise, you clamber down from the altar and should turn to 302.

270

Most of the lockers hold nothing more than shreds of cloth, the remains of boots and personal items, plus a few coins. You find a gold piece minted nearly two hundred years ago and pocket it as a keepsake. There are a number of papers, but none have writing in a language you can read.

One, however, has been rolled in a leather tube. It starts to fall to pieces as you try to unroll it, but you manage to spread the pieces out on the floor. It is fairly obviously the working plan for the excavations here, which do not seem to have been very extensive.

According to the plan there are three rooms down here and one along the Northern passage upstairs before it turns West. The passage leading West from the main cavern looks the most interesting, as it first passes through a room and then ends at a large 'X'.

The rooms down here, the stairs, and the rooms to the West above have all apparently been developed from existing natural caverns, passages and fissures in the rock. Only the other passage, which leads North before turning West, appears to have been entirely artificial,



You try to unroll it

and it looks as though the passage to the West had been intended to extend further than it has reached, judging by the dotted line extensions on the plan.

Turn back to 35.

271

You try to spin the canoe about and paddle away. With a whoop, the Giant leaps to the edge of his island and, grabbing your canoe at either end in his enormous webbed hands, lifts it bodily from the water. Holding it high above the island he shakes it vigorously, and you and your equipment cascade to the rocks below. You land with a sickening crunch and are knocked unconscious.

When you come to your senses you find you have been trussed up and placed in a few inches of water, in the pie-dish. The Giant is just placing a very dilapidated pie-crust over you, after which he places the whole thing over a fire, burning in a hollow.

As the ensuing several minutes are going to be very painful we will draw a veil over them — turn to 100.

272

This channel runs more or less straight from West to East and is thirteen miles long (thus taking six and a half hours to navigate).

At its Eastern end it joins the Doone River (12), and at the other it forks, one channel going South (284) and the other coming in from the North East (18).

273

From the South Eastern corner of Dragon's Mount you can see in several directions.

To the West there is one arm of the grassy meadow

running between the marsh and the South Cliff up to the bank of the Luna.

In front of you a cleft runs back into the Mount for about a hundred yards in a North Westerly direction before bending round to the North out of sight. A small stream runs down the cleft, then around the Eastern edge of the Mount heading North.

The stream has carved a narrow muddy valley a few feet below the surface of the meadow, and a screen of bushes and trees grows along its bank as far as the point where it flows into the Luna by the North East corner of the Mount.

The entrance to the cleft looks particularly boggy, as if it had been churned up by drinking animals. There is a dense clump of bushes growing to the left of the entrance and it is possible there may be a way around the mud by going through them.

Before you decide which direction to take, there is a loud snort behind you. Turn to 150.

274

Leaving cover, you charge towards the approaching figure which halts, and brings to the ready what you now see to be a halberd. You quickly close the fifty feet between you, but not before your quarry starts shouting a warning over his shoulder.

Your opponent is a Lizardman, with Expertise 10 and Vitality 7. His halberd will do 3 Points of Damage if he hits you, and excited shouts approaching from the South indicate that he will soon be joined by reinforcements.

The clamour of a large gong now awakens the echoes, and you have obviously lost all chance of secrecy.

(a) *If you can kill your first opponent in two rounds of Combat, you will have a chance to dive into the pool and attempt to escape. If you manage this, add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet and turn to 325.*

(b) *If combat continues past the second round of Combat, five more Lizardmen join the fray. Turn to 376.*

(c) *Of course, having disposed of the first Lizardman, you could seize his halberd and stay to fight the other five on even terms. If you do this, you will have to evaluate $E + 4H$ for yourself and each opponent every round. You will hit all who score less than you, while any who exceed your score will hit you.*

If the combat results in your death turn to 100.

If you manage to kill all the Lizardmen, turn to 122.

If you throw down your weapon and surrender, turn to 328.

275

As the last head is killed, the legs buckle beneath the weight of the vast body and it subsides into the water until the bulk is barely awash; the necks trailing in the stream like thick tendrils of weed.

Add 4 Fortune Points and 1 Point of Expertise to your Character Sheet.

If travelling upstream to the East, turn to 221.

If travelling West with the current, turn to 26.

In either case, ignore any future reference to the Hydra.

276

As you raise the lid, a dagger springs out and plunges

277-278

into your flesh, causing 2 Points of Damage, and if this kills you, turn to **100**.

Even if you survive, your troubles are not yet over, as you realize the blade was poisoned. If you have a means of curing poison (not disease) you can take it quickly and the effects will be negated.

Otherwise, your survival will be a matter of luck and skill. If the wound is in a suitable position (and you will need to sacrifice 2 Fortune Points to ensure that it is) you can try to suck the poison from it.

To do this you must calculate $E + 4H$ and will need to achieve a score of 20 to succeed. You may sacrifice further Fortune Points to modify your score.

*If you survive, turn to **288**.*

*Otherwise, turn to **100**.*

277

As the creature climbs gracefully on to the rim of the nest, it smoothes its long tresses back from its attractive face. Its head, arms and torso are those of a beautiful woman, while the wings and legs are those of a mighty Swan.

The charming words of its' song soothe all warlike thoughts from your mind, and as it swings lithely across you surrender your weapon with an apologetic smile.

You offer no objection as it plunges the blade into your heart, and as your life ebbs away your only regret is that you will not hear the song to its end.

*Turn to **100**.*

278

As you cross the room, the two Skeletons rise



The Skeletons attack

unsteadily to their feet and, swinging their swords, attack you from both sides.

They are slow and awkward, and you can easily escape from the room before they reach you, if you wish.

In this case, you make your way back to the stairs. Turn to 240.

If you prefer to fight them, turn to 322.

279

Turning about, you manage to keep your footing on the steeply sloping bottom, and lunge back towards the shore. You are speeded on your way by a sharp pain behind your left knee as one of the fish bites.

Gaining the shore, you see a fish about four inches long has bitten through your stout leggings and still hangs there. You knock it free and manage to kick it back into the pool. At least half the fish seems to consist of jaws, with sharp teeth showing the red trace of your blood. As it lands in the pool the surface is lashed to a foam as its fellows turn upon it, and you realize you could never have made it across.

As it is, you must cross off 1 Vitality Point, but add 1 Fortune Point.

Turn back to 302.

280

The clips are slightly rusted, and need a considerable effort to move. Evaluate E + 4H. If you score less than 13 you are unable to move them. In this case you leave the room (and may not come back and have another go' - turn to 6.

If you score 13 or more you manage to undo the door

and open it. It is quite hard to move, and there is a rush of cold air when you eventually swing it towards you.

Beyond is a narrow, obviously artificial passage carved from the rock. It is just over six feet high and four feet wide and leads West as far as you can see in the light of your torch.

If you enter this passage, turn to 76.

If you prefer to leave by other passage and return to the main cavern, turn to 6.

281

Getting the rope from your pack without losing your balance proves a difficult feat and you must cross 1 Fortune Point off your Character Sheet. If you have no Fortune Points left, then you will not manage it. In such a case, you fall prone in the mud. Turn to 100.

By the time the rope is in your hands, the mud has risen to your waist, not only making casting awkward but cutting down the time left before you sink too far.

There seem to be two possibilities:

If you hold the rope in both hands with a loop between, you may be able to cast the loop over a bush some fifteen feet away. If you try this, turn to 347.

If you try a running noose you may be able to lasso the branch of a nearby tree. Most of the branches have too much foliage to allow this, but there is one bare one jutting out towards you some twenty feet up. If you try this, turn to 298.

282

In your experienced hands the flint and steel soon produce a spark to ignite the tinder and within a few minutes the bonfire is blazing merrily, banishing the gloom from the cave.

A dagger is heated red in the flames and ignoring the pain from an almost equally hot handle, a Centaur slices quickly through dozens of strands of the web. The blade soon gives up its heat, however, and when this happens the dagger is quickly festooned with a mass of sticky strands which tangle around it and foul the cutting edge.

He brings the dagger back to the fire and as he passes the blade through the flames the strands of web flare up and are almost instantly consumed. They are obviously highly inflammable.

Several more Centaurs have arrived, and there are now fourteen with you in the cave, not counting the one in the centre of the webs. Three of them are posted at strategic points in the cave, bows and arrows ready in case the Giant Spiders return. The rest all work on the webs, constantly returning to the fire to reheat the blades of their daggers. All are suffering from blistered hands, but continue without complaint. Progress is slow.

If you decide to hasten matters by setting the whole mass of webs alight, turn to 182.

If you continue with the present slow process, turn to 206.

283

Drawing back the bolts is no easy task. Although the metal fittings on this door have lasted better than any

of the tools you have found, the bolts are still partly rusted and difficult to shift.

Eventually you manage to open the door and peer in. The door had been a good fit, keeping this room fairly airtight. As you opened it you caught the scent of decay, and now you can see why - there are a dozen bodies in here.

Most are skeletons, with only the shreds of rags draped around their bones, but one seems in some way preserved, as if only dead a few months. Then, to your horror, you realize it is moving - unsteadily it rises to its feet and takes a step towards where you are standing in the doorway.

It holds its arms stiffly extended in front of its body and, although the eyes are wide and staring you feel it is looking through, rather than at you. You are reminded of the stories of Zombies - undead creatures animated sometimes by magic and other times by memories or unfulfilled desires from beyond the grave.

If you run back up the stairs, turn to 306.

If you retreat to the living quarters and try to close and bolt the door to this room, turn to 248.

If you draw a weapon to fight it, turn to 81.

284

This short stretch of water runs four miles North-South, splitting into two at both ends.

To the North one stream (18) flows in from the North East while another channel flows off to the East (272).

At the Southern end it forks again, one arm (92) goes South West and the other (299) South East.

285

You are in a narrow defile. To your left it runs South East down to a narrow, muddy valley which leads away to the North East around a shoulder of the Mount. A large meadow stretches away on the other side of the valley. To your right it curves around to the North, narrowing as it climbs higher into the Mount.

In front of you is a large holly bush, partially concealing the mouth of a small cave.

Behind you a small rivulet tumbles along the Eastern side of the defile to form a stream in the valley.

If you go right, turn to 218.

If you move to your left, turn to 189.

If you wish to investigate the cave, turn to 167.

286

You decide to wait in your place of concealment until all activity outside the entrance to the dock pool has ceased.

Unfortunately the marsh forces take it in turn to drill throughout the night. First there are a dozen Frogmen, then the same number of Lizardmen, and later a combined force of about ten of each, practising some complicated manoeuvre which seems to consist of the Lizardmen advancing with pole-arms while Frogmen leap over their heads jabbing with tridents.

When the meadow and river are again empty, dawn is lightening the sky and you are exhausted, damp and cold. Deduct 2 Vitality Points from your Character Sheet. As this is a fresh day, and you seem unlikely to be disturbed here, you can take food or Potions, again adjusting your Character Sheet accordingly.

If you decide, later in the day, to swim back to the' underground dock, turn to 138.

If you wish to rest throughout the day and wait here for nightfall, turn to 194.

If you prefer to have a look around the area, you leave the grove and move to the South East corner of the Mount. Turn to 70.

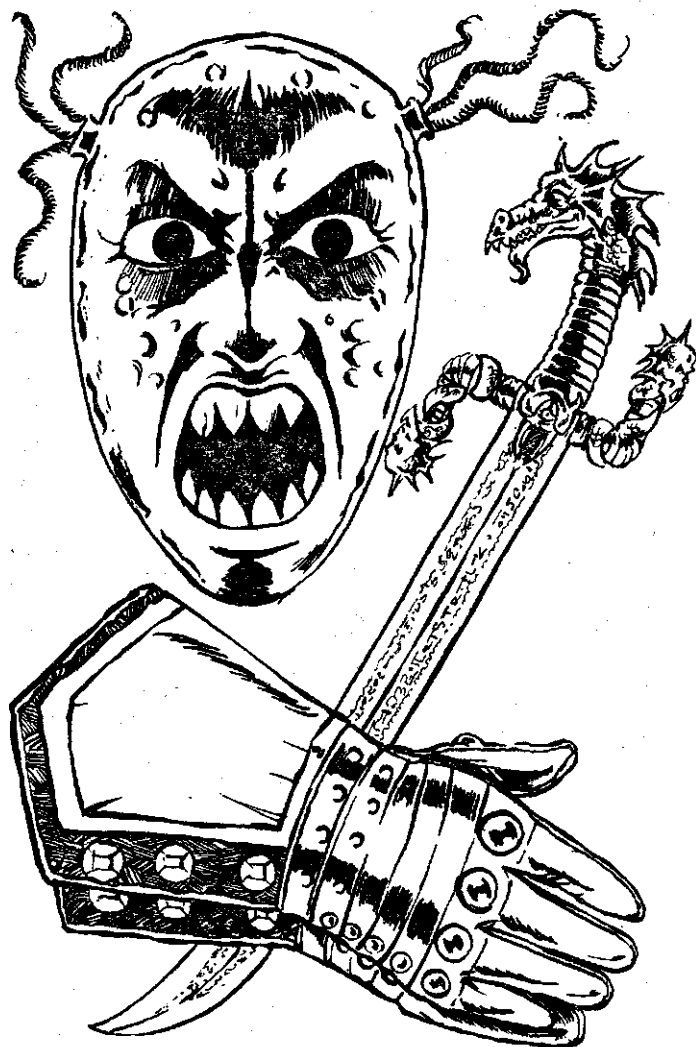
287

This channel flows into the Doone from the East. After a mile it turns South, then East, then South, then East again, each time for about a mile in each direction. It then turns North East for three miles, East for two more and ends in a stretch of bog with no navigable waterways.

You return to the Doone - ten more miles away.

Investigating this channel has taken ten hours. Turn to 12.





You remove the contents

288

The lid of the chest has fallen open, and you can see a dagger, with an obviously poisoned blade, compressed on a spring inside. Carefully avoiding this, you are able to remove the rest of the contents.

There is a very large and ornate dagger, which you can imagine was probably used for the sacrifice rituals.

You also find a hideous mask, resembling the face carved on the wall of the other cave, and you suppose this may well have had a similar purpose.

Lastly, you come to a stout pair of gloves or gauntlets. These seem to be made of leather, reinforced by metal studs, and a number of gems or precious stones have been set into the cuffs.

The dagger is too awkward and unbalanced for use in combat, and has no apparent value.

If you wish to try wearing either of the other items (mask or gauntlets) make a note of this section number, then turn to 226.

If you do not wish to risk putting them on, they should be discarded, and as there is nothing else of interest in this cavern you should leave by turning to 335.

289

Reaching the sword hilt is difficult, and drawing the sword from its scabbard a major exertion. The Snake is almost upon you when, with a great heave, you bring the blade to the surface for an automatic hit below its open mouth.

The Snake has Expertise 11 and Vitality 3 after this hit.



Soon you are up to your waist.

Your own Expertise is temporarily reduced by 3 in this situation.

If the Snake kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill the Snake, turn to 155.

290

The body of the dead Harpy is draped over a branch just within reach. Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet.

You can see that your late opponent had a small pouch hanging from a leather thong about her neck and you manage to pull it free. Inside is what first appears to be a necklace of filthy beads, but on closer examination you think there could be quite nice pearls under the grime.

Also wrapped in some old leaves you find a small glass bottle of the type used by magicians for their potions. It has a blue, oily liquid inside, but no clue to the powers, if any, it may have.

Make a note of this paragraph number, and refer back to the section on Potions in the Introduction. If you decide not to test this liquid, then you throw it away and ignore the next sentence. If you *do* decide to test it, turn to **11**, remembering to keep a note of this paragraph number as, if all goes well, you will need to return to it.

You place the necklace in your own pouch and should enter 'Harpy Necklace' on your Character Sheet. You then climb down the tree to a point where you can see the ground below, and ignore all future references to this Harpy.

Turn to 243.

291

You shoot to the surface and tread water, shaking your head to try to clear your wits. You remember tales of Water-Kelpies; sentient plants which cast an illusion to lure the unwary to swim down amongst them. Once there, the swimmers are easily entangled and drowned and the plants feed upon their remains.

Plunging below the surface again, you keep your concentration on the side below the Mount. You carry on working your way upstream as before and after some two hundred feet your efforts are rewarded as the bank below the surface disappears, and you realize that there is a wide cave leading into the Mount.

If you decide to swim in, turn to 138.

If you decide to surface, turn to 313.

292

The village seems surprisingly quiet, as you moor your canoe to one of the posts set in the water's edge for just that purpose. You have not been here before, but would have expected to see one or two locals around the bridge, perhaps fishing or attending to a boat. In fact, come to think of it, there are no boats, although you can see open boat-houses, empty moorings and unused trestles which would normally be occupied by craft under repair.

You climb the steps, which have been cut into one bank and reinforced with timber. From the top you can see the whole village, which basically consists of a single street crossing the bridge, with a small square at each end, one in front of the inn and the other in front of the church. At least, the building concerned must have been a church once, judging by the stone tower at one end - the rest is now a charred ruin.

Horried, you search the village, and find you are the only living person there. It is apparent that a sizeable force has attacked, perhaps a week or ten days ago, and all the inhabitants have been killed or taken away. The buildings have been looted but there has been no attempt to bury the dead.

At first you wonder if the Centaurs could have done this, but none of the bodies you find show signs of arrow wounds, and bows are the normal Centaur weapons.

Then, in the cellar below the inn, you find the body of a Lizardman, a dagger still protruding from the back of his neck, behind a row of broached barrels. The Marsh creatures must have been the attackers and, although they have taken their other casualties with them, this one was apparently overlooked.

Their strength and confidence are obviously growing. Woodbidge must have been able to muster several dozen men and women capable of bearing arms in its defence yet the attack obviously succeeded.

You feel sure the attackers would have arrived via the river, and return to your canoe.

If you head on into Centaur Forest, turn to 343.

If you travel back downstream, turn to 199.

293

Your hand closes around something hard, small and wriggly, which responds by stabbing you in the wrist. The pain is agonizing and causes the muscles in your hand to convulse so that you are unable to relax your grip. Gasping with pain you drag your hand forth to find yourself holding a Rock Scorpion, which is

indignantly plunging its barbed tail again and again into your flesh.

Eventually it manages to struggle free and escape back into the fissure, leaving you in a bad way. You lose 3 Vitality Points from the wounds, which are bleeding freely, but so much venom has got into your system that no sacrifice of Fortune Points alone can save you.

If you have both a Neutralize Poison Potion (or have taken one already in this cave) and can sacrifice 3 Fortune Points, you will survive. In that case . . .

If you decide to leave the cave the way you came in, turn to 140.

If you have not investigated the first fissure, and wish to do so now, turn to 258.

If you are prepared to face the Eagle in order to check the nest, turn to 60.

If you do not have a Neutralize Poison Potion, or have one but cannot cross off 3 Fortune Points, you will quickly succumb to the Poison. Turn to 100.

294

Undogging the clips on this second door takes all your strength and opening it proves to be a mistake.

Excavations in this direction had led to a sink in the middle of the Mount. Water collects there from several springs and all those working on the tunnel had beer drowned when they first penetrated the rock wall over a century ago. The rest of the miners had installed the metal door after the first catastrophic draining of the sink, with a back-up protective door at the other end of the passage in case the first one failed.

Now you have released the pent-up waters again.

If you had closed the other door behind you, death would have been certain. As it is, the waters can escape, and you are carried along in the flood. There is a chance that your skull may be smashed on the rocky walls along the way, but if you can cross 3 Fortune Points from your Character Sheet, you will escape this fate.

If you do not have 3 Fortune Points left, turn to 100.

Otherwise you are carried back into the main cavern by the flood. The waters spread out here before starting to drain away, with ever increasing force, down the passage to the South.

Evaluate E + 4H. If you score 14 or more you are able to gain your feet in the cavern and resist the pull of the waters. In this case turn to 381.

If your score 13 or less, you are carried helplessly into the Southern passage and after a few feet whirled down into the water-filled depths and drowned. In this case, turn to 100.

295

It seems someone intends to end your quest before you can begin it, and where there has been one attempt on your life there may be another. You leave the body where it lies, take the weapons and clothing you had intended to wear on the next day, and lock the house behind you.

Boarding the canoe, you paddle to a different part of the dock and are soon knocking on the door of one of your childhood friends, now married with a young family. they willingly put you up for the night, and you leave them a signed account of the night's events, together

296-298

with the key to your father's house, so that the authorities may be informed.

Turn to 135.

296

Just around a shoulder of rock, the defile pinches out. The stream itself issues from a narrow tunnel, some four feet wide but at least ten feet high. If you wish to go in, you will need a torch as it is pitch-black within.

If you light a torch and enter, turn to 302.

Otherwise you head South down the defile. Turn to 189.

297

The Zombie has Expertise 6 and Vitality 8. For the first three rounds of combat you will have SURPRISE (see the Combat section of the Introduction). If you attack the Zombie with any weapon which does *not* have a cutting edge, you will fail to do any Damage.

If the Zombie manages to hit you, or if you throw 4T when evaluating your own score, it will seize you around the throat with its clawlike fingers, inflicting 1 Point of Damage.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill it, turn to 91.

298

You succeed in casting your noose over the bare branch and pull the rope taut. You commence pulling yourself free, but as your legs start to emerge and your body is inclined over the mud surface, the branch breaks and you plunge full length face down.

299-301

As the liquid mud fills your ears and nostrils you realize that the absence of foliage on the branch should have made you realize it was dead and likely to be brittle.

Turn to 100.

299

At the Southern end this channel flows into the Doone River (12). From there it leads due North for seven miles, then turns North West for two more to a point where one channel joins from the North (284) and another (92) flows away to the South West. It takes four and a half hours to navigate this channel.

300

You take a cautious sip of the mauve liquid. The effect is stimulating, as if your very blood has turned to sparkling wine, and a wave of warmth seems to flow through your body, leaving beads of sweat here and there on your skin. This is obviously some form of Magical Potion, and although this one sip has left you feeling fitter and stronger you feel a larger draught is called for to identify it.

If you take a good drink, turn to 358.

If you decide not to tempt providence, you may add 1 Vitality Point to your Character Sheet, pour the rest of the mauve liquid away, and turn to 212, ignoring all future reference to this liquid.

301

A small stream flows North along the Eastern edge of

the Mount and has carved itself a narrow, rather boggy valley a few feet below the level of the grassy meadow which stretches away for several miles towards the North and East. A fringe of trees screens this valley and there are many tracks as evidence that the local wildlife comes here to drink. It is probably easier for them to get to this stream as the banks of the Luna are quite steep and crumbly.

In fact, you can see a herd of deer approaching slowly from the East.

If you are going to move along the stream bed itself, turn to 393.

If, instead, you prefer the open but firm ground of the meadow, turn to 120.

In either case, you can pull the canoe a few feet up the boggy valley and fasten the mooring rope to a tree.

However, if you wish to set off in the canoe once more, turn to 65.

302

You are in a large, dark, underground cavern, apparently carved out by the water over many centuries. The floor is firm and sandy and in the Northern corner you can just make out a pool which feeds a trickle of water winding across the cavern and out through a tunnel in the South Western corner. Several cascades of water tumble into the pool from various points in the rock wall above.

*The Eastern part of the **cavern** seems to extend for some distance into the darkness beyond the range of*

your torchlight. If you wish to investigate this dark area, turn to 379.

If you advance to the pool along the left bank of the stream, turn to 82.

If you advance to the pool along the right bank of the stream, turn to 345.

You may step across the stream, if necessary, by turning to 82 or 345 as appropriate.

Should you decide to leave this cavern by the tunnel to the South West, turn to 3.



303

In the light of your torch you are able to see that this is not really a cave at all; someone has tunnelled into the mountain, and timber props have been placed to support both roof and walls. You realize that there, has been a considerable rockslide here at some time in the past - what you had previously thought of as the steep side of the defile is actually the foot of the scree, and someone has made a way through to whatever the rockslide had covered.



Someone has tunnelled into the mountain

The floor of the tunnel slopes gently upwards, but you cannot see anything of interest within the thirty odd feet illuminated by your torch.

If you go in, turn to 318.

If you decide to leave, turn to 235.

304

You wonder, in an oddly detached way, if this is one of the infamous Harpies, rumoured to devour those they charm.

If you staunchly stand your ground, ready to defend yourself if attacked, turn to 20.

If you retreat to a point where you can stuff moss into your ears and watch the creature's approach, turn to 378.

305

You push this second door and it opens away from you with a screech from the hinges. Rather more effort is needed this time which is not surprising in view of the door's considerable mass.

Beyond the door is a large room, which you calculate must be forty feet square. In the centre of the far wall is an immense door — it must be over twenty feet wide. Again there is no sign of handles or other means of opening it but you wonder if you have sufficient strength to push it open, as it seems to have been made for giants rather than humans.

This door is also flanked by dead guards (unfortunately your own size) and if you go in you ready yourself for another fight before turning to 112.



It lurches towards you.

If you have had enough down here, and wish to retreat, turn to 68.

306

Breathing hard, you get back to the main cavern with the ancient Dragon bones. Pressing yourself against the wall to one side of the passage in the South Wall, you prepare a weapon.

The Zombie is much slower than you, but eventually you hear it shuffling up the last few steps, and along the sloping passage. It emerges into the cavern, arms held out in front as before - eyes staring sightlessly before it.

If you attack it from behind, turn to 297.

If you wait to see what it does, turn to 234.

307

The Ewe manages somehow to evade your attack and escapes at a much faster pace than you can manage. The entire herd, including all the Rams, are now thoroughly frightened, and you are unable to get within one hundred feet of them for the rest of the day.

If you give up and resume your journey, turn to 211.

If you wish, you can camp here tonight, having a meal from your supplies if you still have food left, and try again for some mutton tomorrow. If you do this, amend your Character Sheet accordingly and turn to 62, ignoring the first sentence.

308

Going down, oddly enough, is more difficult than the ascent. As the ledge slopes at some forty-five degrees it difficult to see where you are placing your feet. Long

before the halfway point you have slipped several times, dislodging small showers of dirt and pebbles and only saving yourself by clinging to the cliff-face by your fingers, which are becoming raw and losing then feeling.

A roar from above startles you, and you almost fall again. A fearsome creature has emerged from the cave above, and you quickly realize it has spied you on your precarious perch. It resembles a large horse, but with the head, wings and forelegs of an eagle. You saw one in captivity once and recognize it as a Hippogriff.

As it launches itself into the air you make a great effort to defend yourself, placing your back against the cliff your feet firm on the ledge, weapon in one hand and the fingers of the other forced into a small crevice. Achieving all this costs you 1 Fortune Point, and with your sore fingers and awkward position your Expertise is reduced by 2 for this combat.

The Hippogriff attacks by diving at you and slashing with beak and claws as it passes. Your only escape is to kill it or dive one hundred feet to the river below. Its Expertise is 13 and its Vitality 11, while it can do 4 Points of Damage with its beak and claws.

If you decide to take a dive, turn to 119.

If you fight and win, turn to 268.

If you are killed, turn to 100.

309

This winding stream flows into the Northern corner of a lake (79) at the same point where another stream (30) comes in from the North West.

Heading upstream from the lake, you paddle two mile

due North before turning North East for five more. Along this seven mile stretch you have the usual featureless bog on your left-hand side, but on the right is one of the rare areas of firm ground in the Dunmarsh. This is mostly meadow, but you can see one or two quite high outcrops of rock, and several stands of trees.

When you are about halfway along, four mounted figures emerge from behind a small wood perhaps half a mile inland, and come galloping towards you. As they approach you see that they are, in fact, Centaurs with bows and arrows across their shoulders. The situation seems dangerous, as they are renowned as fierce fighters intent on keeping mankind well away from their preserves. If they attack there is little you can do to defend yourself in the canoe, and no way to escape on the other bank.

To your surprise they hail you with a plea for assistance. If you are prepared to listen, turn to 136.

If you prefer to paddle on as fast as possible, they will not shoot at you, and after a while are left behind. Eventually the firm ground merges with the usual dreary expanse of bog and marsh and the stream-bed turns North. After another mile it turns North East again and two miles further on you reach the source where a number of springs well up from the soggy ground.

You have no choice but to retrace your journey and should choose again from the various alternatives above. (Including listening to the Centaurs, who will hail you again as you pass.)

Travelling up and down this stream will take ten hours in all.

310

Strengthened by Fortune, your will is sufficient to throw off the effect of the Harpy's song, and you climb to meet it, sword at the ready. Screeching in fury it descends to the attack. It has Expertise 12 and Vitality 10, and does 2 Damage Points with a hand-axe it has ready.

If you kill it, turn to 290.

If it kills you, turn to 100.

311

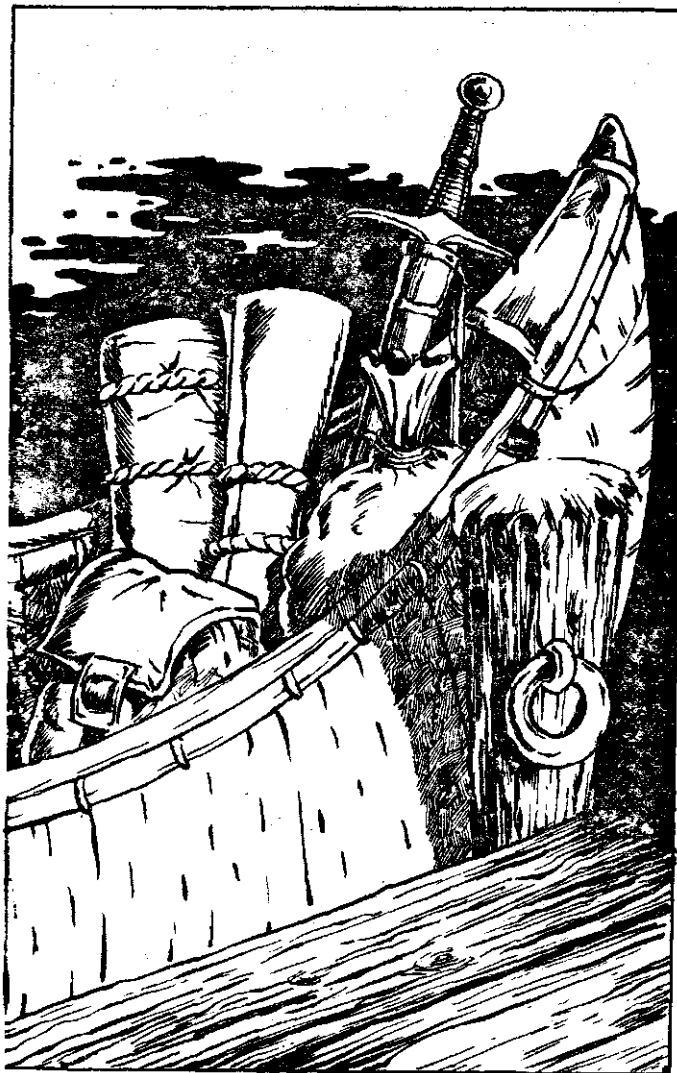
The canoe provided is a large one, with shallow draft but ample carrying capacity for an extended stay in the Marsh. Even with only one paddler it can easily maintain the four-miles-per-hour speed of the normal river barge. An added bonus is that you have grown up using such craft for outings and races with your friends, and are thoroughly familiar with them.

There is room for seven days' provision on board, plus the two days' supplies normally carried in your pack and you will also be able to take a bedroll, small canvas tent, change of clothing and, of course, your weapons.

By the end of the day all is assembled and stowed to your satisfaction. If you leave at dawn the next day you should be able to make the rendezvous at Howard's Crossing, so you are able to have one more night at home.

Your father's house stands facing his dock, on the other side of the road used by much of the dock traffic. This road runs along the edge of the quays, and you moor your loaded craft at the foot of a handy flight of step almost opposite your door.

Turn to 126.



All is assembled and stowed

312

Carefully holding the Mirror of Mind Erasure in front of you, you approach the sleeping creature. Then, holding it before the closed eyes, you prod the creature with the weapon in your other hand.

Startled awake, it rears to its hind legs, bracing itself in the waist-deep water with its tail, but its gaze is caught and held by the Mirror. If you can now cross off 3 Fortune Points the Mirror's magic will take effect.

If you do not have 3 Fortune Points left the creature will shake off the effect of the Mirror. However, you will still have the benefit of SURPRISE and can attack with your normal weapon.

Turn to 139 and read no further in this paragraph.

If you are able to sacrifice 3 Fortune Points, you will see a startling change come over the creature. Its body seems to waver and blur, altering its features and shape, and you are shortly faced by a lean man of late middle age with a long dark beard streaked with grey. His gaze is still held by the Mirror and a tremulous moan escapes his lips. His eyes glaze over and his mouth gapes open as he starts to drool, then he pitches forward on to his face.

Taking no chances, you administer the coup de grace with your weapon. Turn to 384.

313

You come up for air close to the bank of reeds, which seem rather wilted along this stretch. Looking closer you discover they are planted in a number of troughs which themselves are attached to the very face of the cliff. In fact, now you part them and stare through, you realize that it is not solid rock, but a wooden screen cunningly painted and fitting flush with the rock.

You realize that the underwater cave in fact extends some four feet above the surface of the water. You decide to swim under this barrier.

Turn to 138.

314

This passage is ten feet wide and ten feet high. Fifty feet long, it runs North-South. The floor is thick with dust.

At the Southern end it enters a large cavern in the North Western corner.

At the Northern end it leads into a twenty-foot-square room through the centre of the South wall.

If you go North, turn to 215.

If you go South, turn to 108.

315

Without warning your feet lose all semblance of support and you sink rapidly as the surface of the quagmire reaches your knees, then your thighs, and there is no bush or tree within reach to help you pull yourself free.

The mud moves past your thighs and there is little time for decisions. If you keep still and hope to find firmer footing before the mud reaches too high, turn to 214.

If you still have a rope in your pack and wish to try to lasso a tree branch, turn to 281.

If you lie back to try to spread your weight horizontally over the quagmire, turn to 330.

316

About a mile upstream you are delighted to see a fallen tree, with plentiful branches and leaves above the surface, floating down towards you with the current. You feel you can secure your canoe to the tree, in amongst the branches, with a good chance of escaping the Giant's notice as you float past his islet.

*If you want to try, turn to **338**.*

*If you decide against it, then you will paddle on upstream to the first fork a mile further on. You have spent two hours on this section. If you wish to head North West at the fork, turn to **192**, otherwise you will have to turn to **211** and go North East.*

*Of course, you could go back to the Giant again, in which case you should turn to **4**.*

317

Pausing for breath, you clean your weapon as best you can on the monster's tough skin, wishing you had the time and space to take it back to Howard's Crossing, where a good price would be paid by one of the local tanners.

You may add 2 Fortune Points for this success and pause here for food and drink. However a number of other crocodiles can now be observed at varying distances from the island, lying awash in the lake waters probably contemplating a meal of their dead comrade, and this suggests that a longer stay would be unwise.

You board the canoe and paddle out on to the lake waters, avoiding the now incoming crocodiles.

*Turn to **113**.*

318

The tunnel leads inwards and upwards, almost due East for a hundred feet. Then it emerges into a very large space, too large for your torch to reveal much in the way of detail. Indeed, you cannot even see the roof. You can see a level floor some ten feet below the inward end of the tunnel, down a slope of loose rock. To either side are rock walls a little over twenty feet away. It seems that there used to be a large cave here, narrowing to an entrance fifty feet wide which has been blocked by the ancient rockfall.

There is no sound of movement beyond the light of your torch.

*If you wish to investigate further, turn to **108**.*

*If you prefer to leave by the tunnel, turn to **349**.*

319

With torches (or other items) weighting both stone fists, you wait expectantly, but nothing happens.

*If you now wish to clamber on to the altar stone to investigate the carved face at closer quarters, turn to **269**.*

*Otherwise there is nothing else to see in this area, so turn back to **302**.*

*Should you first retrieve the torches etc. from the stone fists, you should turn to **379**, ignoring the first paragraph.*

320

This small lake is roughly rectangular, four miles long from East to West and half that in width. Two channels run in or out of it: one joins from the North East (**375**)

321-322

in that corner, and the other flows West from the South Western corner (227).

Investigating the lake takes an hour.

321

You are able to return safely to Starport where you can rest and recuperate. If you wished you could make different travelling arrangements as well. Effectively, you will be beginning your quest again, though with some advance notice of at least the initial dangers.

By the time you are ready to set out again, you will be fully fit, so, with your Character Sheet duly amended, turn to 1.

322

The two Skeletons each have Expertise 10 and Vitality 5: their swords will do 2 Points of Damage if they hit you. As they are so slow, you can move around so as to fight only one at a time.

(Vitality may sound an odd word to use in connection with a Skeleton, and of course, you cannot 'kill' them. However, if you can do 5 or more Points of Damage to one it will be sufficiently dismembered so as to no longer be capable of movement.)

If you kill both Skeletons, add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet and turn to 118.

If they kill you, turn to 100.

323-324

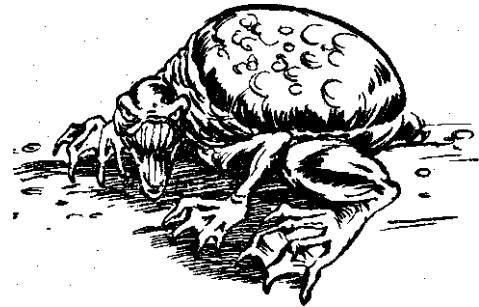
323

You manage to kill the Giant Beaver, which collapses at the foot of the reverse slope of the dam. Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet.

Unfortunately you are stuck fast in the mud, and will need a considerable effort to pull yourself free and regain the relative safety of the dam. The effort is so taxing that it will cost you 1 Vitality Point.

If this reduces your Vitality total to 0, turn to 100.

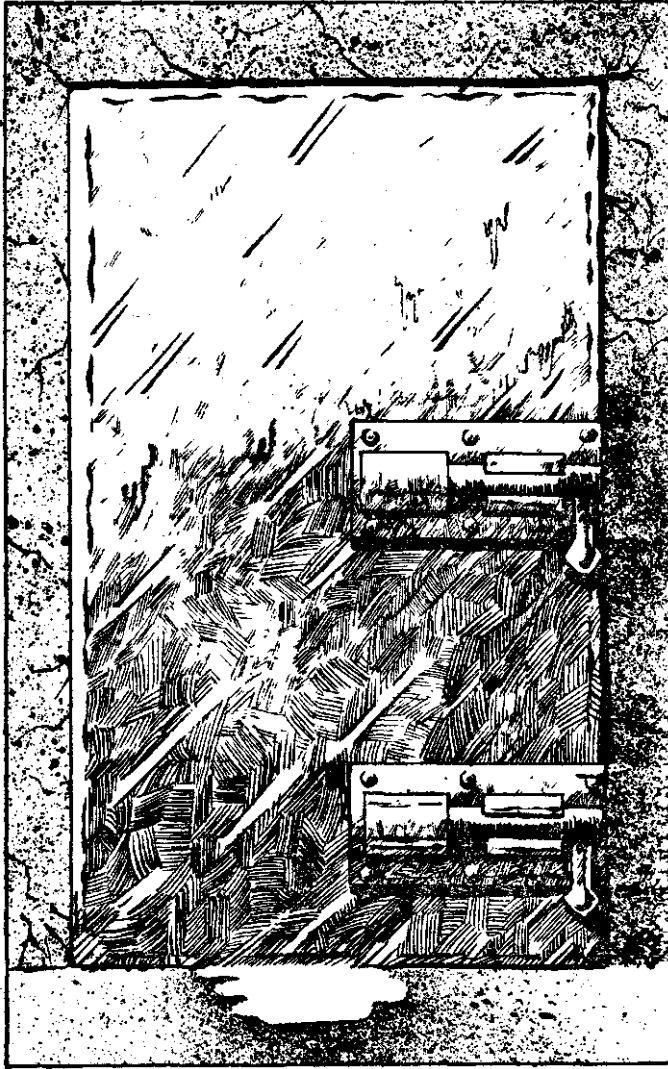
Otherwise you haul yourself back on to the dam, and should turn to 390.



324

Closing and dogging the door behind you, you set off along the narrow passage. It leads straight West for eighty feet, and ends at another similar door, again secured by clips. Condensation appears to be forming on the surface of the door which is cold and clammy to the touch. There is a small puddle on the floor before

should you decide to open this door, you will find the



There is a small puddle by the door

clips even more difficult to move. Evaluate $E + 4H$ again, but this time you will need to score 15 or better to succeed.

If you do, turn to 372.

If you score less than 15, or prefer not to open the door, you will find nothing further of interest along here and return to the main cavern. Turn to 108.

325

Plunging beneath the surface of the dock pool, you swim as far as you can towards the concealed entrance before coming up for air. There is a confusion of shouts around you, and a curious clanking sound, from in front, by the entrance.

Again you swim on underwater, but when you resurface excited cries indicate you have been spotted. There are a number of splashes from the sides of the pool, and you realize you are in danger of being intercepted.

Indeed, you will shortly find yourself surrounded by Frogmen carrying nets and tridents. They can see better than you in the dim light, can fight better in the water, are well armed and in considerable numbers. Even if you manage to reach the entrance you will find a stout metal grille has been lowered to close it.

You must either surrender (turning to 328);

Or fight to the death, in which case, turn to 100.

326

This passage, like the room you have just left and the passage to it from the main cavern, seems to have been sewn from the living rock and the floor is carpeted

with thick dust. The marks on the walls indicate that simple picks and mattocks were used and you wonder what the miners had been seeking all those years ago. Not only that, but where did they put all the excavated rock?

Not having taken any particular note of the distance, you arrive at the end of the passage after somewhat less than two hundred feet. And the end of the passage is all it is. Digging seems to have stopped for no apparent reason one day, leaving an uneven wall at the end of the passage and a litter of rocks waiting to be cleared away.

You investigate the end wall, tapping and listening, but are left no wiser. Retracing your steps to the room with the Sphinx, you calculate this passage to be one hundred and seventy-five feet long.

Turn to 215.

327

The ring fits closely around your left index finger: this is, in fact, a Ring of Fortune — enter it as such on your Character Sheet. Its effect is that whenever you are told to ADD Fortune Points to your Character Sheet in future, such as after a successful combat, you may DOUBLE the number of Fortune Points quoted in the text.

Now turn back to the last paragraph of 388.

328

Surrender to the denizens of these caves effectively ends the adventure for you, although it will bring a reunion with your father.

Along with the other captured crews and passengers



The ring fits

from the river barges you will be worked hard, ill-treated and occasionally tortured by your sadistic guards, who are not averse even to a meal of human flesh on festive occasions. Eventually, when their obscure purposes are completed, you will be put to death.

The prisoners are kept well away from arms, and are bound together on almost all occasions when out of their stockade. Your only chance of escape would depend on the efforts of another adventurer.

Of course, if you care to start again, that could be you!

329

Climbing down the almost sheer cliff is a difficult task, and doing so noiselessly is quite impossible. Nonetheless, to your relief there are no further attacks.

Your main danger, without the benefit of a rope, is falling off. Hand and foot holds are scarce and none too secure. Indeed most of the descent is accomplished in a semi-controlled slither, amongst showers of dirt, pebbles and loose rock.

With a sickening crunch your chest lands on the lip of the cave below, costing you 3 Vitality Points. Desperately you grab for a handhold to stop from plunging all the way to the river below. (Unless, of course, that blow to your chest exhausted your Vitality altogether, in which case turn to **100**.)

You manage to save yourself, but the damage to your hands has been severe, and your Expertise score is reduced by 1 Point. Amend your Character Sheet accordingly.

*If you continue your descent to the foot of the Mount, turn to **336**.*

*The strong, horse-like odour still issues from the cave: if you go in to investigate, turn to **201**.*

330

Unfortunately the weight of your pack immediately pulls you below the surface, and as the liquid mud rushes into ears and nostrils, you reflect that those adventurers who recommend the 'spread your weight' solution have probably never tried it.

*Turn to **100**.*

331

Once the alarm is raised, events quickly start going against you and the released prisoners. Although the six Lizardmen on guard duty may be killed, when you reach the weapons store you find they are stored in locked chests and racks, and the key is concealed on the body of one of the dead guards.

What is more, the store only holds the weapons of the Lizardmen: the Frogmen have their own in their quarters. The Lizardmen, it turns out, can fight almost as effectively at close quarters with fang and claw as they can with weapons.

Finally, you realize magic is being employed against you. Objects move of their own volition to trip you, ropes coil around your legs, the wooden shafts of polearms warp without warning, and the metal hilts of swords become too hot to hold.

With half your number killed, your attackers call on you to surrender, otherwise they will slaughter those of the prisoners who had to be left in the compound as being too weak to fight. You realize you will have to surrender.

*Turn to **328**.*

332

The Stag lies dead at your feet. Although the rest of the herd is watching, none of them approach any closer. You can cut enough meat from the stag's haunches to add three days' meals to your supply, although you will need to cook it before eating.

From here you have a choice of directions but may wish to refer back to **273** to check on the alternatives.

*If you go North, turn to **120**.*

*If you go West, turn to **44**.*

If you wish to enter the cleft in Dragon's Mount, you have a further choice:

*If you investigate the bushes, turn to **90**.*

*If you prefer to plough through the mud, turn to **99**.*

333

Slowly and carefully you lower yourself from the tree feeling gingerly for every toe and finger hold. Reaching the lowest branch you hang by your hands for a moment then, holding your breath, let go.

You land on something hard and uneven, which heaves beneath you, throwing you heavily on to your back. There is a hissing roar, and you realize you have landed squarely on top of one of the monsters.

*Turn to **398**.*

334

This stream is fed by a channel from the North East (**391**) which forks, the other arm flowing West (**386**) For two miles it runs South West, then bends South for a further four miles before losing itself in a wide, flat

water-covered lea where the high grasses bar further progress.

Investigating this section will take six hours.

335

You have no difficulty in crawling back along the tunnel, through the mouth and out between the rows of carved teeth.

*Climbing down from the altar you should turn to **379**, ignoring the first paragraph.*

336

You manage to reach the narrow track which angles up the face of the Mount, and after that the going is much easier. There are no further encounters and you reach the foot of the Mount safely, at its South Western corner, then return to the point where you left your canoe.

*If this was in the small grove to the South, turn to **257**.*

*If you left it at the mouth of the stream by the North East corner of the Mount, turn to **301**.*

337

You decide to see what the Guild of Bargemasters has to say about this attempt on your life. You can only suppose it was intended to prevent you setting out on your mission, and your late opponent must have heard about it from your meeting with the Guild, as you have spoken to no one else on the matter.

Old Pindar, a long-time friend of your father's and a fellow Guild member, lives a few hundred yards away and you hurry round to acquaint him with the facts.



The Guild soon assembles

Horrified at your news, he sends his sons to rouse the other members of the Guild, and those in town are soon assembled.

All deny having let slip anything which could have led to the attack, although one or two feel that someone could have drawn conclusions from the preparation of the canoe. This you feel is unlikely, as there is nothing particularly unusual about a proposed canoe trip, but there is a general feeling that you may be in danger of further attacks and should, perhaps, abandon your mission.

One of Pindar's sons then comes in with surprising news. He had reported the killing to the Watch after summoning the Guild members, and went with the Constables to your home, only to find the body gone and no sign of a struggle. The map, which your opponent had produced, was also missing.

Eventually the other members of the Guild leave, shaking their heads, and you accept Pindar's offer of a bed for the night, determined to set out in the morning as previously planned.

Turn to 128.

With your sword you slice several branches from the tree to drape artistically about the canoe, which you tether against the trunk where the branches are thickest. As you can barely see out through the mass of twigs and leaves, you are confident that no one could spot your hiding place. You float gently downstream with the current.

Some time later you are horrified to feel the tree, along with the canoe, plucked from the water by a mighty

hand which just misses crushing you. The tree is banged sickeningly on the hard rock, and you fall to the ground along with most of your equipment.

There is a smug chuckle from the Giant. 'Ugly I may be, but not stupid, do you see?' he booms, deftly trussing you up as you lie there stunned.

He has a nice fire going in a small hollow and he now pops you in a large pie dish, adds a few inches of water, places a rather dilapidated pastry crust over the top and carries the dish over to the fire. This is not, perhaps, one of the pleasantest ways in which to finish your adventure, so we shall draw a veil over the next half-hour or so.

Turn to 100.

339

The Panther' finally succumbs and falls beside the carcass of the Buffalo it coveted. Add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet.

The two fights have driven the rest of the herd well away, and the area is now quite peaceful. You will be able to use the Buffalo meat for seven more days' (slightly monotonous) food, and should alter your Character Sheet appropriately. You may also rest and take food and drink before moving on without deducting such from your Character Sheet.

When ready to do so, turn to 386 and refer to the first sentence for your future direction.

340

You manage to swing your legs over the side of the nest and slide in. It is about four feet across and three deep inside, and you land with a loud cracking of dead twigs

on two large, pale eggs which smash beneath you. The stench 'so far was as nothing compared to the overpowering assault which your nostrils now suffer.

Senses reeling, you hear a screech from the creature above which has risen into the air. Then, as it descends to the attack, you get your first good look at it. The wings and legs are those of some large feathered bird such as an eagle or, more likely, vulture. The head, torso and arms, however, are those of a dirty, hideously ugly female human, and you recognize one of the notorious Harpies.

Normally a Harpy would seek to beguile you with her enchanting song, but this one is so angry at the destruction of her eggs that she can only attack, using a hand-axe which she has produced from somewhere about her person, and which does 2 Damage Points.

The Harpy has Expertise 12 and Vitality 10.

If you kill her, turn to 290.

If she kills you, turn to 100.

341

You swim North to the entrance to the underground dock, keeping close to the East bank and trying not to attract attention by unnecessary splashing. The creatures practising weapon drill on the other side of the river are too intent to look in your direction, and you gain the entrance successfully.

Inside there is much more light than when you entered before. Flaring cressets stand at the landward end of the three jetties, and torches are being carried in various points of the large cavern. There is considerable activity, with groups of men, apparently roped together

in lines of four or five, carrying loads to and from the barges. A constant noise of hammering suggests something is being constructed to the South, but you cannot see over the edge of the rock walls to tell what.

Lizardmen guards are visible wherever you look, and you realize that there would be no chance to achieve anything by night when all the denizens are alert and awake. You will have to return to your hiding place in the grove and wait for morning.

However, to escape notice on your journeys in and out of the concealed entrance, you will need luck on your side. Cross 2 Fortune Points from your Character Sheet and all will be well - you can turn to 286, but ignore the loss of Vitality Points mentioned there.

If you cannot (or will not) sacrifice 2 Fortune Points, you will be spotted and the alarm raised. Turn to 325.

342

You get close enough to strike with your weapon before the Lizardman hears you. He has Expertise 10 and Vitality 7, and can do 3 Damage Points with his halberd. For the first two rounds you have SURPRISE (see Game System) and if you kill him within the first two rounds of combat he will not be able to raise the alarm. However, your lack of clothing slightly increases his chance of hitting you, so Expertise is reduced by 1 Point while you are so inconvenienced.

If you are able to kill him within this period, turn to 180.

If you were unable to kill him by the end of the

second combat round, do not continue the combat resolution, but turn to 359 instead.

343

Above Woodbridge the Luna narrows as it enters Centaur Forest, until it is only about a hundred feet wide. The tall trees grow right up to the bank, cutting out almost all the rays of the sun. Although there are many open spaces between them the leafy crowns meet overhead and the occasional sunbeams breaking through give the area a pleasant, but dignified air, rather like the interior of the cathedral in Tan-Delta, which you have occasionally visited with your father.

You have not gone far when you see a group of Centaurs galloping towards you. They unsling bows and arrows as they come, and call on you to halt. Centaurs have the body, legs and tail of a horse, but where you would normally expect to see the horse's neck, instead there is the torso of a human, with human arms and head. They are renowned as strong, fierce creatures who bar mankind from their territory, and back their commands with deadly archery.)

This forest is barred to your kind!' cries one who appears to lead them. 'Return whence you came.'

There are six Centaurs in the group, and all now have their bows and arrows ready.

If you ignore them and paddle on, turn to 374.

If you ask them about movements of other creatures in the area, turn to 54.

If you paddle back downstream, turn to 199.

If you have the amulet given to you by other Centaurs in the Dunmarsh, and display this, turn to 83.

344

Clinging to the mast, you feel the dam collapse around you and are carried downstream on a wall of water.

The mast has a pronounced tendency to roll over beneath your weight, and you have to discard your pack and belt, along with your weapons, in order to have any chance of survival. Indeed, you will need an Expertise score of 15 to manage to both retain your grasp and remain above the surface. Evaluate $E + 4H$ for yourself: if you score less than 15, turn to **100**.

If you manage to score 15 you will survive the spate, but your canoe and all your supplies and equipment are lost. When you are again able to look around and get your bearings, you find you are several miles downstream.

All you can now do is float down to Starport. You can reasonably expect to be rescued from your insecure perch once past the confluence with the Doone, but you will have to return to Starport to begin the adventure again, should you be so inclined.

For you, this adventure is over, but at least you are alive and, hopefully, have learned something which will help you next time. Of course, by then another dam may have appeared!

345

The pool is about twenty feet across and forms a semi-circle against the end of the cave. The water is deep and clear, but you cannot see the bottom. Ripples spread out across it from the water running down the rock.

These miniature cascades emerge from several separate spots in the rockface, where there are a number of holes about one foot in diameter. The rockface has numerous ledges and looks easily climbable on the other side of the pool, though too smooth to scale elsewhere.

If you wish to cross the pool to climb the rockface, you will have to swim. Should this be your decision, turn to 74.

If you prefer to leave the pool to investigate the dark area to your right, turn to 379.

Otherwise, you must turn back to 302.

346

With the disposal of the Hippogriffs, you are free to examine their lair, provided you have a source of illumination. If you do not, all you can make out in the faint light from the entrance (some thirty feet away around a corner up a passage in black rock) is the bulk of the nest, with three large, pale eggs inside it. Although you can feel around the nest you will find nothing else. You may recall having heard that Hippogriff eggs fetch very high prices, as the young



hatchlings can sometimes be tamed and used as steeds when full-grown. You may take the eggs with you but will only be able to get one in your pack at a time.

There are obviously problems, both in getting them back to your canoe and then keeping them warm enough to hatch - which could happen minutes or months from now.

If you decide to take any of them, enter them on your Character Sheet. If you have no illumination you should now leave the cave and turn to 336.

If you have a light, you may search a little further by turning to 205.

347

Trying to loop your rope over the bush is no easy task, deep in the morass as you are. Evaluate E + 4H. If you score 14 or less you will fail, and your exertions hasten your downward progress. You may have one last attempt but this time will need to score 16 or more to succeed.

If you fail again, you sink below the surface, with mud seeping into your eyes, ears and nostrils. Turn to 100.

If you succeed in either your first or second attempt you will be able to pull yourself on to firm ground, and drag your mud-stained body up the low bank on to the meadow.

You retrieve your rope and clean off the worst of the mud. Turn to 120.

348

You head for your canoe as fast as you can, along the

top of the disintegrating dam. However, before you even reach the point above where you moored it, the entire centre section of the dam is carried away as a wall of water bursts through. Buried beneath an avalanche of water, mud and churning tree trunks, your end is mercifully quick.

Turn to 100.

349

You climb the loose rock to the mouth of the tunnel which has been bored through the scree covering the entrance to the large cavern, and make your way down the gentle slope. The roof is only five feet high, so you have to stoop. When you reach the open air, you find the exit blocked by a large holly bush.

Turn to 235.

350

At its Southern end, this channel flows into the North Eastern corner of a lake (244). From there it leads North for two miles, then turns North East for two more, before splitting in two. From the North (123) one stream flows in, while the other fork (161) flows South.

Navigating this channel will take you two hours.

351

The tunnel leads due South for about sixty feet, then gradually bends round to your left. Apart from some working of the stone walls to provide holders for the turning tapers, it seems to have occurred naturally, and varies in width and height. After some two hundred feet you reach a stout door. You can hear nothing on the other side and, turning the handle, ease the door open. Warm air wafts past you and you enter a

large, dimly lit room which consists of two quite distinct areas.

Immediately in front of you a ramp leads down to a shallow pool, about twenty feet across. A similar ramp leads up from the pool on the far side to a pleasantly furnished area with a table, soft chairs, desk and workbench, but no bed. Two large chests stand against a wall, one with its lid open, and the light from a lantern on the workbench is reflected in multiple coloured gleams from the pile of gems within.

The only occupant is a large reptile, lying with its body in the water and its head on a cushion at the bottom of the ramp nearest you. Its eyes are closed and it does not move.

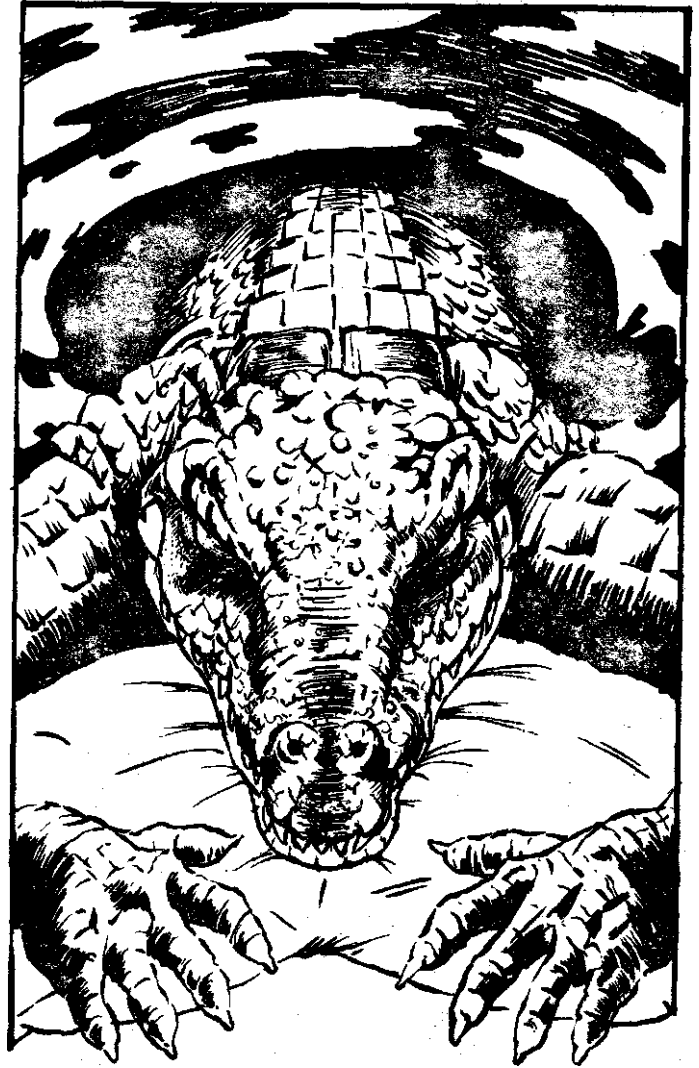
Surprised at the incongruous sight, you pause. At first glance you had taken the creature for a crocodile, but now you note the shorter than usual snout, the front legs which end in almost human-looking hands, and the particularly short tail. You recall that some of the prisoners had believed the mysterious leader could change its shape, and wonder whether this is the leader himself, or a guardian monster.

If you attack the creature with your weapon, turn to 139.

If you managed to acquire a Magical Mirror in your travels, and decide to use it now, turn to 312.

352

The Centaurs do not take kindly to your refusal. Their spokesman frowns and tells you to hand over your fire-making apparatus, and explain its use, if you wish to leave with your life. The others reach awkwardly for the daggers you see strapped to the quivers on their backs.



Eyes closed and head on a cushion

You realize that they are probably much less expert with dagger than bow. If you must fight them then it would be better here with hand-weapons. If you were able to board your canoe you would be most unlikely to escape their arrows. Handing over your flint, steel and tinderbox might enable you to leave, but you would have no source of heat or illumination and would have to face cold food and the full dark of night for the rest of your adventure.

If you fight where you axe, turn to 15.

If you try to escape by canoe, turn to 125.

If your hand over what they want, turn to 84.

353

You finally manage to kill all four Centaurs, and may add 4 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet. You may take all four daggers, if you wish, but will find that all the bows have been so damaged as to be useless. When you have added all this to your equipment list, exhausted though you are, you decide this is no place to linger in case any more Centaurs turn up and seek revenge.

You relaunch the canoe and paddle away.

If you landed from the lake, turn to 79.

If you landed from the wide straight channel to the South East of the meadows, turn to 92.

If you landed from the winding stream to the West and North West, turn to 309.

In any case ignore future references to meeting Centaurs within the boundaries of Dunmarsh.

354

If you first approached from the North East, you now continue paddling past the island, around the bend towards the South, and after two more miles arrive at a fork. One arm flows West (221) and the other (382) South.

If you came upon the island after paddling upstream around the bend from the South, you now continue past the island North East for two miles until you reach a point where two streams combine to form this channel. One comes from the North East (211) and the other (192) from the North West.

355

The Sphinx lifts his eyebrows in surprise, then frowns heavily. 'Very well,' he booms, and promptly vanishes. There is a soft rush of air which lifts the dust on the floor in the area where he was standing.

There is nothing further of interest in this room. If you wish to return to the main cavern, turn to 314.

If you prefer to take the passage to the West, turn to 326.

356

Although still alive, this is the end of the adventure for your character this time. There may be a way to reverse the spell among Mawghain's books and equipment, but if you go back to that room you will be so reduced in size as to be unable to reach or move them. As you are, even if you can scale the stairs and descend the cliff outside, you must then face the problem of returning to civilization in a canoe you are too small to paddle.

Completing your quest is impossible, and survival itself unlikely. And if you managed to return home,

against all the odds, what does the future hold for you? A circus exhibit will be about the only occupation open. However, forearmed with the knowledge gained on this adventure, you can always start again with a new character next time.

May fortune be with you.

357

Mouth watering at the thought of a meal of succulent mutton, you stand over the body of your prey. There is a sudden patter of small hooves behind you, and the big Ram attacks, infuriated at the slaughter of one of his wives.

The Ram has Expertise 12 and Vitality 6, and does 2 Points of Damage if he butts you. For the first round of combat the Ram has the benefit of SURPRISE (see 'Combat' in the Introduction). If this enables him to hit you, he will have SURPRISE again for the next round of combat, and so long as he keeps hitting you he will keep the benefit of SURPRISE. (Effectively he is knocking you off your feet, and butting you again before you can get up.) Once you manage to hit the Ram, there will be no more SURPRISE in this combat.

If the Ram kills you, turn to 100.

If you kill the Ram, add 1 Fortune Point to your Character Sheet, and four days' food to your supplies for the dead Ewe. Then turn to 43.

358

You take a good, long drink of mauve liquid, setting the bowl down carefully. It seems to set your body alight from within, and your limbs feel infused with tingling, invigorating liquid energy. You have an urge to demonstrate your strength, preferably by smashing



Sudden fury grips the Werewolf

something to pieces. Certain that your Strength and Vitality must be enormously increased, you flex your powerful muscles, noting with interest the thick growth of hair which is sprouting all over your skin.

A wave of hunger breaks over you - food is what you need to fuel your powerful body - preferably freshly killed food. Casually you rip your pack to pieces, without finding what you want, and hurl the shreds aside. In sudden fury you sweep away the contents of the bench to smash against the wall.

Then, remembering the herd of deer on the meadow to the East of the Mount, you start heading in that direction. It seems quite natural to drop to all fours as you make better time that way.

And there, I am afraid, this adventure ends for your present character. A new Werewolf has been created to roam around the Dunmarsh but there is no room for it in this story. Although your character has not died, a Werewolf really does not share the family loyalty or concern for the public well-being which motivated your character originally, and cannot be expected to care what is happening to the barges.

359

After the first two combat rounds have failed to kill the Lizardman he continues the combat, at the same time crying out loudly in his sibilant tongue. Answer comes from the lighted area, and the alarm is raised. You proceed with the combat in the hope that you can finish this one before his comrades reach you.

If you can achieve this within four more rounds of combat, add 1 to your Fortune Points and turn to 103.

If you are still joined in combat after four rounds, turn to 110.

If the Lizardman kills you, turn to 100.

360

This stream flows in from the North as a tributary to a channel (142) from the North East which continues (368), much enlarged, towards the South West. When investigated, it leads four miles due North then bends North West for three more miles, where it drains an impassable area of marsh dotted with countless small ponds. Travelling this stream in both directions will take a total of seven hours.

361

You are aware that those members of the Guild in town usually meet in their Hall shortly before lunch on working days, so you rise late the next morning, breakfast leisurely and, looking your smartest, present yourself to the half-dozen Bargemasters present at the meeting.

They duly sympathize over your loss and are interested to learn of your proposed quest. They urge caution as (you learn) a well-armed group of experienced fighting men accompanied by a Magician had already been hired for a similar mission. Since they set off into the Dunmarsh in a swift-oared craft over two weeks ago nothing more has been heard from them.

As they know you well they are prepared to give you one further piece of information. The next barge-load

of valuable ores is about to start downriver from the capital, Tan-Delta, on board the *Sultan's Favourite* with a heavily armed escort and two Magicians. If you leave soon you would be able to meet it at Howard's Crossing on the other side of the Dunmarsh, and either follow it or join the guards.

If you decide you will join the guards on board they will give you a letter of authority and arrange passage to Howard's Crossing on another barge, which is due to set off upriver this afternoon. Should this course suit you, turn to 52.

If you prefer to play a lone hand, they will provide and equip a sturdy canoe for your use, so turn to 311.

362

Tying the canoe to the rushes proves quite difficult as they keep breaking, but if you persist you will eventually achieve a fragile mooring. If this is acceptable, you dive in and turn to 116.

If you wish to reconsider the alternative moorings, turn back to 179.

363

Fortunately the guards are in the habit of checking the gate frequently, in case the prisoners have found a way to open it. Some twenty minutes later another Lizardman swaggers North towards the prisoners' compound.

You can conceal yourself in the shadows until he is

nearly at the gate, then leap to attack him. You will have SURPRISE for the first two rounds of combat, and if you can kill him within that time, he will not raise the alarm. He has Expertise 10 and Vitality 7, while the halberd he carries can do 3 Points of Damage.

If you do this, and succeed in killing him within two rounds of combat, turn to 255.

If he kills you, turn to 100.

If the second round ends with your opponent still alive, stop the combat there and turn to 359.

If you decide that you are not equipped to dispose of the guard with your present weapons, you will have to leave the cavern and attempt to improve your fighting power. You stay where you are until the guard leaves then, with a whispered word of encouragement to the prisoners, return to the water via the ladder.

You realize that night cannot be far off, but when you reach the concealed entrance there is still daylight outside. Turn to 223.





One of them is your father

364

They are humans, you realize. In fact, one of them is your father. You swim closer and take a deep breath . . . This is unfortunate as you are several feet below the surface when you fill your lungs with water. As your vision fades in a flood of scarlet your last sight is your father reaching out long wavering green fingers to grasp your arms.

Turn to 100.

365

Having lit a fire for yourself, by way of demonstrating the use of the equipment, you have quite a comfortable campsite. You can prepare a meal (please alter your Character Sheet appropriately) and settle down for a well-earned rest. You may also take any Potion you wish.

Some while later you are wakened from a light doze by the sound of hoofbeats, and see the four Centaurs returning. However, as they come up you wonder if, after all, these are the same ones. One Centaur looks pretty much like another, but you think you detect some small differences in lengths of beard and colouring of body.

When they ask you to assist them by coming to build a fire in a cave where one of their companions is trapped in a Giant Spider's web, your suspicions are confirmed. This is obviously a different group bent on the same mission.

You try to explain that you have already donated today, but they refuse to believe you. Citing your campfire as evidence of your ability to produce fire, they demand you come with them to do the same in the cave. Your

claim to have no equipment fails to influence them - indeed they say that if you can produce fire without any equipment, so much the better. Your suggestion that they take flaming brands from the fire is gratefully acknowledged by their leader. He says they will keep that method in reserve in case you die resisting!

There seem to be two choices:

*If you go with them unresisting, turn to **394**.*

*If you fight, turn to **37**.*

366

You find that there is a narrow ledge along the rockface, behind the bushes.

*If you wish to try to negotiate this, turn-to **107**.*

*If, instead, you prefer to plough through the mud turn to **315**.*

367

The passage is ten feet high and wide. The walls have obviously been roughly smoothed with tools, and here and there are niches which probably held torches at some time in the past, as the walls and ceiling above are much blackened. The floor, which is thickly covered with dust, slopes down away from the cave for about thirty feet, then narrows to a flight of steps about four feet wide, winding downwards. The steps are four inches high and the treads about two feet deep.

After you have descended nearly a hundred feet, the steps lead out into a room some twenty feet square. The dust lies thick and undisturbed upon what seems to have been a living area for several workmen or possibly guards. There are tables and stools, hooks on one wall and the remains of some cupboards against

another. In one corner a small cascade of water runs down the wall to splash into a pool, which must presumably have a hidden outlet, otherwise the cave would be flooded. Another corner is filled with a pile of old rusty tools - picks, mattocks, shovels, crowbars, sledgehammers, etc. All are now quite useless.

There are two doorways leading from the room. One is in the left-hand wall and is closed by a very solid-looking door, which is bound with much metal which looks surprisingly little rusted. It appears to be fastened by two massive bolts shot home into the solid rock wall. The other is in the opposite wall, and is only partly blocked by a door which hangs crazily from one hinge.

*If you wish to unbolt the solid door, turn to **283**.*

*If you decide to push past the dilapidated door, turn to **35**.*

*If you prefer to go back up to the main cave, turn to **108**.*

368

This broad stream flows into the River Sol (**249**) from the East. Paddling upstream from the confluence, one goes East two miles, North two more, then North East for five. The stream then bends North for two miles, and finally back to the North East for three more to a point where two waterways join.

One (**360**) comes from the North, and the other (**142**) from the North East.

Paddling up or down this broad stream will take seven hours.

369

There is barely enough light to see, which handicaps you but not your reptilian opponents, who attack you en masse. There are eight of them, all with Expertise 13, and although only the largest one has Vitality 12, all the others have 10, and each does 3 Damage Points with powerful jaws. You find there is no chance to fight your way through unless you manage to kill at least seven of them.

You can, however, manage to clamber back into the tree by using 3 Fortune Points, but while you do this each of the surviving crocodiles will get a 'free' bite at you for 3 Damage. (Thus you will lose 24 Vitality Points if you try to escape up the tree while all eight are still alive.)

If the crocodiles kill you, turn to 100.

If you kill all of them, turn to 127.

If you manage to escape up into the tree, turn to 265.

If you kill seven of them and escape to your canoe, turn to 50.

370

This quite substantial river joins the Sol 249 from the North West and meanders far more than the smaller streams within the Marsh.

Travelling upstream, the general direction is North West for the first three miles, then North for twelve more, then North West eighteen miles. In this distance the waterway gradually dwindles as it is only fed by very small streams from either side, none of them navigable even by your small craft.

Eventually you reach the source, where several springs

bubble out from beneath an exposed rocky ridge a few feet above the general level of the Marsh.

Investigating this stream will take three days.

Please turn back to 249.

371

Weakened by the section levered loose, the dam is starting to disintegrate in the centre. The whole thing is likely to go in seconds, releasing the pent-up water to flood down the bed of the Sol.

If you approached the dam from upstream you should just be able to reach your canoe before the final collapse. Turn to 95.

If you arrived from downstream, your canoe is some fifty feet away at the bottom of the reverse slope, and you would be fortunate to reach it. If you wish to try, turn to 348.

Otherwise you may as well cling to a mast and hope for the best. Turn to 344.

372

Undogging the clips on this second door takes all your strength, and opening it proves to be a mistake.

Excavations in this direction had led to a sink in the middle of the Mount. Water collects there from several springs and all those working on the tunnel had been drowned when they first penetrated the rock wall over a century ago. The rest of the miners had installed the metal door after the first catastrophic draining of the sink, with a back-up protective door at the other end of the passage in case the first one failed. Now you have released the pent-up waters again.

If you had left the other door open, there is a chance

373-374

you might have survived the rushing waters, but now death by drowning is certain.

Turn to 100.

373

The cave turns out to be a short tunnel leading into the rock, high enough for you to crawl on hands and knees but much too small to admit so large a creature as a Hippogriff.

After about ten feet the tunnel widens into a small cave about five feet in width, ten feet long but only four feet high. By the left-hand wall there is a large, untidy nest with another Eagle which you guess is probably the female. She screams fiercely at you, but does not leave the nest. From the fainter squeaks beneath her you gather she has young chicks to protect.

There are one or two small fissures in the rock at the far side of the cave, which look too small to provide a route onwards. Those apart, there is nothing else of interest in here unless it is in (or under) the nest.

You will obviously have to fight the Eagle to investigate the nest. If you do this, turn to 60.

If you try to edge past the nest to examine the fissures, turn to 22.

If you decide to leave the cave by the tunnel through which you entered, you will have no difficulty, and will find no opposition when you reach the ledge outside. Turn to 140.

374

Before you take a second stroke with your paddle, you hear a thrumming chorus of bowstrings, and six arrows

375-376

sprout from your body. You suffer 12 Points of Damage.

There is nothing you can do. Before you can paddle out of range, land, or even overturn the canoe to seek shelter beneath it, another volley will kill you. Centaurs are not ones to argue or reason with.

Turn to 100.

375

This waterway flows into the North Eastern corner of a lake 320. Heading North East, it runs fairly straight for five miles from an impassable area of brackish, algae-covered pools only an inch or two deep. Investigating it will take you five hours.

Please turn to 320.

376

Bravely (or perhaps recklessly) you fight the squad of Lizardmen, each of whom is armed with a halberd, capable of dealing 3 Points of Damage. Each Lizardman has Expertise 10 and Vitality 7, but as they are employing weapons with a much longer reach than your own, the combat resolution is somewhat different.

Evaluate E + 4H for yourself and a SINGLE opponent in the usual way for each combat round, marking Damage appropriately. All the other opponents will have an opportunity to hit you for 3 Points of Damage, unless you are 'lucky'. If you sacrifice 2 Fortune Points in each round they will fail, otherwise they will score hits.

If the combat results in your death, turn to 100.

If you manage to kill all the Lizardmen, turn to 122.

If you throw down your weapon in surrender, turn to 328.

377

The halfway point on the journey along the Doone between Howard's Crossing and Starport is fortunately marked by one of the few stretches of firm ground within the Dunmarsh. Even in peaceful times few Bargemasters care to travel at night in the marsh, if only for fear of running aground. This stretch, commonly referred to simply as 'Halfway House' has, therefore, become the customary overnight stopping point for craft on both their up and downstream journeys.

Tonight there are only four barges before your arrival. Two of those are coming down the river, and you find an opportunity to talk to their masters during the next hour. There have been no new developments of interest, and it is now nearly three weeks since the last barge was lost. One or two voices suggest hopefully that the danger may be past.

The night passes without incident and the next day the journey is resumed. Again the barge makes good time, soon leaving behind the other two heading upstream, and you reach Howard's Crossing in the late afternoon.

Turn to 106.

378

You manage to stuff some moss into your ears, muffling the enchanting song somewhat. However, the ungainly creature is overhead now and you are becoming more convinced it must be a Harpy.

You will need luck on your side if you are not to fall under the spell of the song. If you use Fortune, cross off 2 Fortune Points on your Character Sheet, and turn to 310.

If you retreat further down the tree, turn to 166.

If you stay where you are and try to stuff the moss further into your ears, turn to 114.

379

As you move away from the water into the depths of the cave, your torch gradually illuminates more of your surroundings.

The cave extends some sixty feet from the pool and stream in this direction, and shows signs of having been used by intelligent creatures. Against the wall is what seems to be a rude altar, formed by a large rock slab laid upon two smaller upended ones. On either side the rocky wall has been carved away to leave outcrops, fashioned in the rough shape of humanoid hands, perhaps three or four times life-size. On the wall immediately above the altar has been carved an enormous face, with staring pupil-less eyes and jagged teeth.

Venturing closer, you see that the hands are shaped as if to hold torches, and the wall above them is soot-blackened. The altar bears all-too-familiar stains.

If you wish to examine the revolting-looking altar, turn to 23.

The carved hands are rather above head height, but if you would like to investigate by touch, turn to 241.

Behind the carved mouth of the gigantic face, with its irregular stone fangs, there seems to be a cleft leading back into the rock. If you wish to look



It seems to be a rude altar

closer, you will have to climb on to the altar stone, and should turn to 397.

Should you prefer to leave the whole unpleasant edifice, turn back to 302.

380

You successfully clamber another fifty feet to the next cave. Twice you almost slip and send cascades of dirt and pebbles down the cliff face. As you reach the cave you see it is much smaller — you will have to enter on hands and knees.

There is a roar from below and, twisting about, you stare down at a fearsome creature which has emerged from the cave below. It resembles a large horse, but with the head, wings and forelegs of an eagle. You remember having seen a small one in captivity once - it was called a Hippogriff. Now it launches itself from the cave, beating its wings strongly, and circles up towards you.

You can stand and fight it here, with reasonable footing, in which case turn to 86.

Alternatively you can retreat ignominiously into the cave, on all fours, in which case turn to 373.

381

Releasing the flood has materially altered the nature of the small complex of caves and passages. You are now back in the main cavern, from which the water will drain quite rapidly.

The passage sloping down to the South will now be underwater after the first few feet, and quite impassable. The passage sloping up to the North from the North West corner of the cavern will not be affected after the first few feet. The passage and room

382-384

to the West will now be a mess of ruined equipment plus the remains of furniture.

The bones in the main cavern will be little disturbed, although the dust will have been quite effectively cleared away.

With these alterations in mind, turn to 108.

382

This waterway runs from North to South, quite straight for six miles, and takes three hours to travel.

At its Northern end, one waterway (399) flows down from the North, and another (221) runs off to the West.

At the Southern end it splits again, one channel (391) comes in from the East and another (232) flows away to the South West.

383

You run back to the stairs and, turning, see the figure emerge into the living quarters with a slow, slightly unsteady tread. You retreat up the stairs, pausing from time to time, to hear its slow footfalls always following. You reach the large cave above.

If you lie in wait for it, to one side of the mouth of the passage, turn to 306.

If you head for the passage in the North West corner, turn to 314.

If you head for the passage in the West wall, turn to 6.

If you head for the tunnel through the scree, turn to 318.

384

Once your opponent is dead, a series of convulsions racks the body. In rapid succession it changes from



It changes in rapid succession

crocodile to man and back again, each time through the intermediate stage in which you first saw it when you entered the room. It is to this stage it finally reverts and, after making sure it is quite lifeless, you return to the main cavern with the news.

Turn to 400.

385

The Harpy lies dead at your feet. There is a small pouch hanging from a leather thong about its neck and, holding your breath against the rancid odour of its body, you manage to pull it free and retreat a few feet to examine your booty.

Inside you find what at first appears to be a necklace of filthy beads but, on looking closer you feel there may be quite nice pearls beneath the grime. Also, wrapped in some old leaves is a small glass bottle containing a blue, oily liquid. It seems possible that this is a Magical Potion.

If you decide not to test this liquid, then you throw it away, and ignore the next sentence. If you do decide to test it, turn to 11, remembering to keep a note of this paragraph number as you may be coming back to it.

You place the necklace in your own pouch and should enter 'Harpy's Necklace' on your Character Sheet. You then return to your canoe and paddle out on to the waters of the lake.

Turn to 113.

386

This waterway drains a lake (244) about four miles

across, roughly square in shape, and leaves from its South Western corner, running South West for some three miles to a point where it forks. One arm (391) runs West and the other (334) continues South West.

For most of its length it cuts through one of the rare stretches of firm land in the marsh, and you are surprised to see a sizeable herd of water-buffalo not too far off to the North. Although they can be dangerous, this could be a chance to replenish your food supply, as there is one lone animal quite close to you, separated from the herd.

If you decide to land, turn to 21.

If you head downstream, turn to 334 or 391 as above.

If you head upstream, turn to 244.

387

Woodbridge is a small village on the Luna, close to the point where it emerges from Centaur Forest. The surrounding meadows provide excellent pastures for herds of cattle and there is a saw-mill for a very small lumber industry. Although normally fiercely protective of their preserves, the Centaurs have formed a good relationship with the villagers and allow a little tree-cutting on the edges of the forest, in return for certain goods the village store and inn can provide.

The village buildings stand on a slightly rising stretch of land through which the Luna has cut its way, leaving steep banks some fifteen feet high on each side. The bridge itself is only wide enough for one cart to cross at a time but is sturdily built.

If you land by the bridge, turn to 292.

If you carry on into Centaur Forest, turn to 343.

388

In order to make any decent sort of a meal for such a creature, you will have to sacrifice three days' food. If you have insufficient to spare, turn to **354**.

If you are prepared to donate so much, amend your Character Sheet accordingly.

The Giant is pathetically grateful and, rummaging through a large sack produces a small copper ring, which he hands to you with a beaming grin, spoiled only by the awful teeth and increased drooling. You examine the ring, which is about the right size for your index finger and bears certain runes carved around the outer rim.

If you have no intention of trying it on, you nonetheless feel it would not be wise to antagonize one who now seems friendly, and wait until you are out of sight before throwing it overboard.

If, however, you are prepared to see if it has any magical effect, make a note of this paragraph number, in case you need to come back to it, then turn to **327**.

*Paddling on past the island, you resume your journey. Turn to **354**.*

389

The Crocodile is slow, but it is between you and your canoe. Even if you manage to dodge around it, you feel it would catch up before you could untie your canoe and climb aboard. As an alternative, you could try to lure it around the island until it was far enough away from the canoe for you to make a dash for it.

*If you go straight for the canoe and chance a fight turn to **31**.*

*If you try to lure it away along the shore of the island, turn to **157**.*

390

You return to your contemplation of the mast. Although proficient as both engineers and lumberjacks, the Giant Beavers would not be capable of carrying heavy timbers around. Apart from the occasional tree at the water's edge, they normally depend for their building materials on whatever floats down the river. It would, therefore, seem that these masts have floated from somewhere upriver. You wish you could tell if any are from your father's *Doone Duchess*.

In order to see the lower section of the masts, it seems you must either pull them free (if you try this, turn to 266) or try to clear sufficient mud, twigs and branches away from them to be able to see the section you want. If you try this, turn to 2.

If you decide not to bother, return to your canoe. You will not be bothered further by the Giant Beavers, and can, with some effort, drag your canoe over the dam and relaunch it on the other side if necessary.

*If you wish to head North, turn to **204**.*

*If you wish to head South, turn to **249**.*

391

This waterway runs East-West for four miles, taking two hours to navigate.

At its Eastern end it forks, one arm flowing in from the North East (**386**) and the other (**334**) going off to the South West.

At the Western end, one stream (382) comes in from the North, and another flows to the South West (232).

392

The Sol flows from the North West, and the Doone from the North East, each emerging from the Dunmarsh about a mile upstream from the point where they meet. The resulting wide river flows South past Starport into the Sea of Storms.

On a low bluff between the two tributaries stands Fort Star, still garrisoned by Ducal troops against the remote possibility of water-borne invasion. No craft can pass up- or downstream without being inspected, albeit casually, by picket boat, and at night log and chain booms are drawn across both rivers.

If you wish to go North West up the Sol, turn to 249.

If you prefer to go North East up the Doone, turn to 12.

Should you wish to go South, back to Starport, this means you are abandoning the adventure, although you can always try again by starting from the beginning.

393

Progress is quite slow as the boggy ground sucks at your feet, which sink in to their ankles at each step.

If you keep along the stream, turn to 197.

If you move up on to the firmer ground of the grassy meadow, turn to 120.

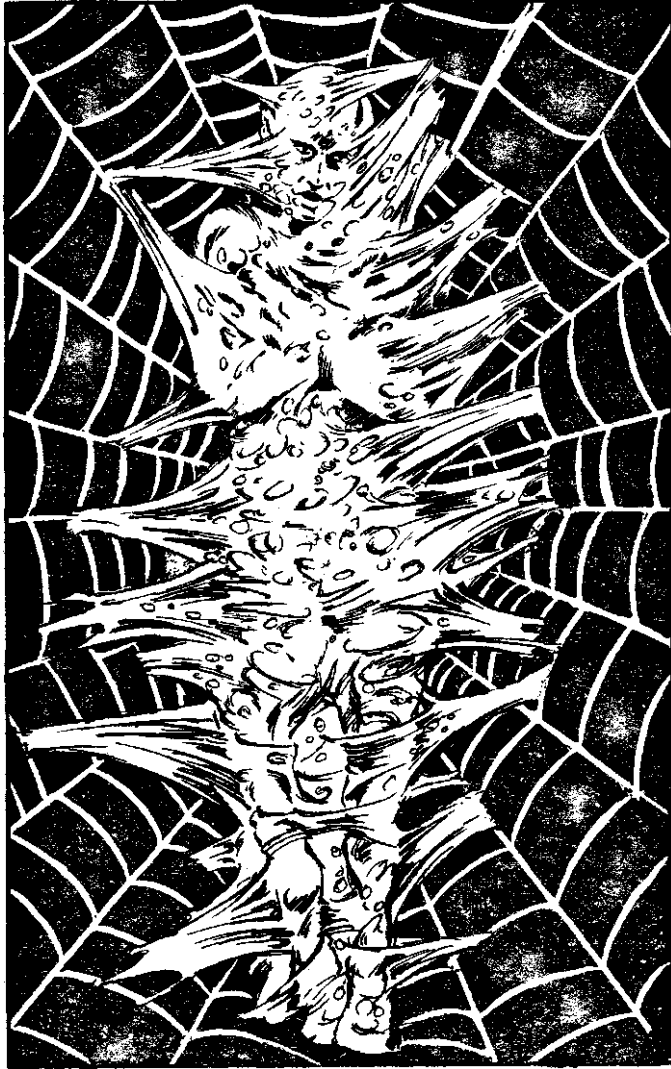
394

The strong arms of one of the Centaurs hoist you on to the back of the largest one, who orders you curtly to hold on tight. They gallop away inland with your mount in the centre of a tight group. Evaluate E - 3T; if you score 10 or less you will fall off and lose 2 Vitality Points. If this happens you are unceremoniously remounted. Your journey takes less than an hour, but you must make this test to keep your seat three more times before you arrive, losing a further 2 Vitality Points every time you fall off.

Your escort will not allow you to eat food or drink Potions on the journey, and it is possible that your poor horsemanship could kill you. If that happens, turn to 100.

If you survive the trip you are hauled off the Centaur's back at the mouth of a large cave leading down and into the foot of a tall rocky crag. Your escort hustle you down the sloping floor for about two hundred feet until you come upon a further half-dozen Centaurs grouped around a large pile of dead twigs and branches. The first group you met are there, with your fire-making equipment, but they have been unable to ignite their bonfire with it.

The light is indeed dim in here, but you cannot miss the silvery mass of webs nearby, as it takes up nearly half the width of the cavern. The glistening strands festoon the walls and floor, hanging from stalactites on the ceiling and fastened to stalagmites and loose boulders on the floor. Barely visible in the centre is a Centaur, still on his feet and able to talk, but quite unable to move his limbs.



Barely visible is a Centaur

With a sigh you take back the flint and steel from its inexperienced holder, and prepare to do what they want.

Turn to 282.

395

You climb closer to the nest, trying to hold your breath as much as possible against the stench. Eventually, perched on a branch which bends rather alarmingly under your weight, you are able to peer in.

The nest is roughly bowl-shaped, about three feet deep and four across. It is made of small branches and a few pieces of painted wood, probably from the pile on the island, and is lined with twigs, rushes and marsh grass. The whole nest is filthy with grease, droppings and soiled feathers, and there are a number of bones with shreds of skin and flesh still adhering, some lying on the floor of the nest and others stuck haphazardly into the walls. Amongst the litter are two eggs, filthy but whole, each about fifteen inches long.

If you decide to climb back down the tree to the lower branches, where you can see the ground but not the nest, turn to 209, but ignore the first two sentences.

If you decide to enter the nest, turn to 132.

If you wait where you are until dusk, turn to 101.

If you try to destroy the whole filthy contraption, considering it an offence against nature, turn to 231.

396

You brush your lips over the heavily furred paw, inhaling a surprisingly pleasant musty odour.

'May good fortune attend you,' remarks the Sphinx

loftily, and vanishes. There is a soft rush of air, which lifts the dust on the floor in the immediate area. You may add 4 Fortune Points to your Character Sheet.

There is nothing further of interest in this room.

If you wish to leave by the passage to the West, turn to 326.

If you wish to take the passage to the South, turn to 314.

397

You clamber on to the altar stone and regard the carved face at close range. The work is crude but effective - the face has an air of malevolence and madness about it, enhanced by the dancing light of your torch.

Bending, you peer into the mouth. Behind the thick lips and jagged, irregularly spaced teeth is an opening two feet high and four feet wide which angles gently downwards and then bends to your left after a few feet.

If you wish to crawl into the 'mouth' to investigate further, turn to 63.

Otherwise, you clamber down from the altar and should turn to 379, ignoring the first paragraph.

398

Quickly coming awake, the whole group attack you. There are eight of them, all with Expertise 13; although only one of them has Vitality 12 the others all have 10, and each can do 3 Damage with its powerful jaws. Your Expertise on the other hand is reduced by 2 as you are fighting in the dark and are continually being knocked off your feet. There is no chance to get away as, not only can you not tell where the canoe is in

the darkness, you cannot even pick out a branch to leap for.

Your only choice is to fight, and in the likely event of your death, turn to 100.

If, incredibly, you survive to kill all eight Crocodiles, turn to 77.

399

This channel flows from the North to a point where it splits in two, one part flowing on down to the South (382) while the other (221) turns off to the West. After two miles, heading upstream, the channel turns North East and just around the bend you come across an unnerving sight.

The channel narrows and passes on either side of a rocky outcrop about fifteen feet wide. The water on either side is not much more than ten feet wide and the banks are, as usual, soft mud with occasional beds of reeds or marsh grass. On the rocky island a Giant is sitting before a small fire.

The Giant has sludgy-green skin, a big mouth with crooked, stained teeth, filthy brown trousers made from the skin of some animal, and noticeable webs of skin between both his fingers and his bare toes.

His island was about one hundred feet away when you saw him, and as you stopped paddling you start to drift backwards. A big grin has come to the Giant's features (well, you wouldn't have noticed a small one at that distance) and he waves you closer. You decide that, if he wanted to catch you, his webbed feet would probably enable him to travel much faster than you through the Marsh, so that by approaching closer you

will probably not be in appreciably more danger than you are already.

If you approach closer, turn to 98.

If you turn back to the last fork in the channel you will have spent two hours on this section and, after reference above, can turn to 382 or 221.

If you retreat out of sight and then land, with the intention of trying a portage around this apparent obstacle, turn to 200, having first taken a note of the number of this section.

If you decide to try to find some camouflage for the canoe, so that you can attempt to float past the Giant's island, turn to 144.

400

As you make your way back along the tunnel to the dock cavern, you hear the sounds of combat and hurry your pace, but by the time you reach your friends it is all over and the rest of the marsh creatures have been defeated. One or two wounded Lizardmen have survived to be questioned, and those who speak their language are able to gather the rest of the story.

The leader had been a powerful Druid, who, while experimenting with some ancient potion recipes in a nearby cave, had accidentally infected himself with a form of lycanthropy, becoming in effect a Were-Crocodile. He had managed to moderate the disease, both to control it and develop a mid-state in which he could cast his spells in or under the water, and had passed on some of his powers to renegade humans in various strategic positions.

These would mark craft suitable for attack by tracing a

design on the bottom of the hull, where it could readily be seen by standing patrols of Frogmen at either end of the Doone's course through the Dunmarsh, and the leader's chief henchman, who had been taught one or two minor spells like heating metal and controlling insects, would lead an attack.

The marsh creatures believed that their leader would make them masters of a new kingdom, but you and your friends wonder whether his aims had been more selfish, noting how the recent tendency had been to go for more portable, valuable cargoes and employ the prisoners to extract the gems from the captured ores. However, you will never know now.

Preparations are made to move enough barges out on to the Luna to transport the surviving ex-prisoners and the more valuable cargoes back to Starport. An expedition can return in due course to collect the **rest**. The remaining Frogmen and the Druid's henchman have still to be accounted for but your father has a plan for that. He intends to float one of the recaptured barges downriver as a decoy after first hiring a Magician to cast certain runes of entrapment upon it, to paralyse anyone boarding

While agreeing with the basic idea, you suggest that the designs on the barges to be used for your return should have *their* underwater markings removed!

With that, you set off for the Hero's Welcome, and possibly more substantial rewards, that await you.

Your postponed holiday will be all the more enjoyable now, but you feel that somewhere not quite so damp and muddy might be preferable for your next adventure.

The next book in this series is "The Black Pyramid".

Skyfall Game System

MONSTER COMBAT RECORDS

Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:	Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:
Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:	Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:
Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:	Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:
Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:	Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:
Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:	Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:
Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:	Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:
Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:	Monster: Expertise: Damage: Vitality:

CHARACTERISTICS

EXPERTISE (E): Initial E is always 12. No limits to the level to which E score can rise or fall.

VITALITY (V): Initial V is always 20. May not rise beyond this and Death occurs if it falls to zero.

FORTUNE (F): Initial F is $10 + 3H - T$.

Combat Resolution

Examples:

2H Toss 2 coins, count the heads

3T Toss 3 coins, count the tails

4H - T Toss 4 coins, count heads and deduct tails

E+4H Toss 4 coins, count heads and add that number to your E score

10+4H - T Toss 4 coins, count heads and add that number to 10. Deduct number of tails for your answer.

Combat Modifiers

* If SURPRISE is involved, subtract 3T from the defender's E score.

* Toss E + 4H for yourself, and E + 4H for your opponent. Winner subtracts appropriate Damage points from opponent's V score. You may use FORTUNE.

* Combat continues until one character's V score reaches 0.

* FORTUNE: In combat, you may give up to 1F point to add 1 point to the Damage you inflict. Or you may use 1 F point to reduce Damage suffered.

Provisions

Food: Eat one meal per day to add 4 to your V score.

Healing: 3 draughts. Each adds 8 to your V score. (Cannot be used during combat.)