

LAMENTATIONS
of the
FLAME PRINCESS
ADVENTURES

THE
GOD
THAT CRAWLS



Sample file

THE GOD THAT CRAWLS

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LAMENTATIONS
of the
FLAME PRINCESS
WEIRD FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING

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The God that Crawls

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CONTENTS

Author's Notes.....	4
– <i>Part the First</i>	4
– <i>Part the Second</i>	5
The Setup.....	6
– <i>The Story of Augustine</i>	6
– <i>The God that Crawls</i>	7
– <i>The Reverend Elroy Bacon</i>	8
– <i>The Children</i>	11
– <i>Villagers</i>	11
– <i>The Chase</i>	12
Map Keys.....	14
– <i>The Church</i>	14
– <i>Dungeon Levels</i>	20
Treasure Caches.....	40
The Book.....	42
Sponsorships.....	48

AUTHOR'S NOTES

PART THE FIRST

Have you ever noticed that players pretty much expect their characters to enter a dungeon and explore it more or less at their leisure? Ever notice that because they expect to explore at their leisure, they always assume mapping will be easily done? That they'll load up on an excessive amount of equipment? That they'll expect to be able to leave the dungeon if they get into trouble?

Have you ever noticed that the standard dungeon crawl has the adventurers walking around and being proactive in attacking the monsters? That if there's a monster that they can't immediately tackle, defeating it is generally considered just a matter of preparation and healing?

If those things annoy you, boy oh boy is this the adventure for you!

The God that Crawls will trap your player characters. It will chase them! And it'll kill them quick if they expect to carry out their dungeoneering business as usual.

If any of this sounds unfair, remember that "Adventurer" is defined as "one who looks for trouble," and "Adventure" is defined as "The trouble an adventurer finds."

Seriously, if your adventures aren't about

making the player characters sweat, what the hell are they about?

Essentially, it is a stick and carrot thing. "If you want the carrot, you also get the stick." Why not stay home and be a cobbler or a stableboy? For players, that's boring, and for characters, that's boring and there's no money in it. Why not join the army? It's not boring, but who wants to be told what to do and who to fight and when? And military discipline? agghhhh...

So the game is about undisciplined adrenaline freaks who want to get rich without doing an honest day's labor. By presenting an adventure hook in such a game, a Referee means two things: "There is a carrot here!" and "By chasing after this treasure, you are giving me permission to screw around with you so bad and do my best to beat you to death with this stick!" And the players will take it and they will like it (if both the stick and the carrot are interesting enough!), because what else could they possibly expect playing characters that crawl into dark holes, armed to the teeth, preparing to slaughter and loot?

Sure, some people don't like that. Some might say it's **gasp** railroading! Yeah, like *Silver Streak*, *Horror Express*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, and *Under Siege 2*.

Choo-choo! All aboard!

Oh, one other thing about this... one of a Referee's great advantages is being able to sit back and listen to the player characters take their time and plan, imagining far worse and complicated scenarios for their capers than the situation actually warrants. Watching them stew in their own paranoia is awesome. But this adventure, once it gets going, won't allow for much of that. It should be fast-paced, and will require not only fast playing but also equally fast and involved Refereeing due to the nature of the map and the for-once proactive nature of the monster.

Sometimes the Referee should sweat as well.

PART THE SECOND

So that first rant explains the idea behind how the adventure will play if everything goes right (which is not a given – be prepared to roll with the punches because turning scenarios on their asses is what players *do*). But the thing that makes RPGs awesome is that there is not just the game play element, but there is also the fictional element, the world and context in which all of the game play happens. The idea is that all of the action is taking place within a world which is just as real to the characters as the actual world is to us.

Following a narrative and exploring characterization and building a cooperative story or a setting without the game part of RPGs is pure wankery at worst, and better suited to fiction writing at best. Yet at the same time just the game part without all that other stuff to tie it together is nothing more than drudgery.

So the “game” part of the concept of *The God that Crawls* was taken care of, and the “cult worshipping a muck god” general concept

for the opposition was dropped in soon after, but what would make the whole thing pop? Because I have to tell you, “there’s an evil cult which worships a gross and evil god” is just about as worn out as “there’s a humanoid tribe which is menacing the Realms of Man!” as a plot hook. Sure, in play such a generic setup may not be boring, but what Referee is going to give his every effort to bring it to life? More importantly on the publishing end here, what makes this “evil cult which worships a gross and evil god” adventure different from every other such thing, or different from what any Referee could throw together without any outside help?

The given backstory which details the cult and who the God that Crawls actually is, tie the scenario to the real world, give the entire scenario far more weight, and makes it much more interesting than it would have been than if it was just left unexplained, if it just recycled literary sources, or was just some brand new made up thing.

Most of this information is entirely information for the Referee and not likely to be communicated to the players. Some may see this as “fluff” and irrelevant to the adventure, but I disagree. Such detail helps to get the Referee into the mindset of the adventure, can be an important factor in the Referee being attracted to the adventure enough to run it in the first place, and will influence how the Referee plays the cult. This is a very big deal. It is the sort of thing that brings a game to life and makes the players remember them forever. And that is the measure—the only one—of a good adventure.

As always, I'd like to know what happens in your game when you run this adventure. lotfp@lotfp.com.

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