



TALES OF THE OUTER PLANES

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How to Use This Book

This book provides the referee with a series of pregenerated planar adventures to insert into any AD&D® game campaign. Each mini-module is a stand-alone scenario, suitable for incorporation into an on-going campaign or for one-time play as a unique adventure. Besides 11 adventures into other realms, there are 17 lair adventures, each focusing on a creature from another plane.

Most of the adventures start from the World Serpent Inn, an interdimensionally transtable (bigger on the inside than on the outside) tavern with a number of "convenient" exits to other planes. With its godlike barkeep Mitchifer, the inn is the center from which PCs can go out and journey to the other planes. Most adventures have other optional beginnings, for referees who choose not to use the World Serpent Inn.

Terms Used in *Tales of the Outer Planes*

There is a set of fairly standard terms used throughout the text of this work that are defined here. Every DM should be familiar with these terms.

AC: Armor class is a measure of how difficult it is to hit a creature. It reflects the type of protection worn or inherent protection a creature has due to its physical or magical nature or its speed.

Move (MV): Movement represents the usual speed a monster is able to maintain for lengths of time. Short bursts of greater speed are possible. If more than one speed is listed, the monster can travel via two or more different methods:

X" = ground speed
/X" = flying speed
//X" = swimming speed
(X") = burrowing speed
*X" = climbing in a web
@X" = climbing in trees

HD: Hit dice are used to calculate the number of hit points (hp) a monster has. This number also deter-

mines the THAC0 of the creature (see below) and saves of a creature.

#AT: Number of attacks shows the number of physical attacks the creature is able to make during a given melee round. The 3/2 listing means a creature can attack once on the odd melee rounds and twice on the even melee rounds.

Dmg: Damage per attack indicates the hit point range a creature can inflict after a successful strike.

THAC0: This is an acronym for "To Hit Armor Class 0 (zero)." This gives the number that needs to be rolled on 1d20 for that being to hit armor class 0. To determine whether the attack hits another armor class, subtract that armor class number from the THAC0 to see what number needs to be rolled for a hit. If a creature with a THAC0 of 15 attacks a PC with an armor class of 4, the creature needs to roll an 18 ($15 - [-3] = 15 + 3$).

This number eliminates the need to consult tables or keep charts for each character. One simple calculation tells you whether the attack hits. You will find that this calculation quickly becomes automatic.

SA: Special attacks detail such things as dragon breath, magic use, and the like special abilities of creatures.

SD: Special defenses detail things like defensive magic, camouflage abilities, and so on, that must be factored into a fight with that type of creature.

MR: Magic resistance is the percentage chance that a creature is able to ignore the effects of a spell cast at it.

AL: Alignment indicates the behavior of the monster, whether it is of good or evil intent.

gp: gold pieces
cp: copper pieces
sp: silver pieces
ep: electrum pieces
pp: platinum pieces

Ability Checks

In an effort to simplify life for both players and DMs, and to give a character's abilities the importance they deserve, recent TSR® products have made use of a mechanism for resolving actions called the *Ability check*.

When asked to make an Ability check (e.g., a Wisdom check, a Dexterity check, etc.), roll 1d20 against the character's appropriate ability score. A roll equal to or less than the appropriate score means the action succeeded, while a roll greater than the ability score indicates failure and the character suffers whatever dire consequences await. Sometimes an Ability check enables a character to avoid all or some of the damage from an attack. Some actions are especially easy or difficult and have bonuses or penalties to the ability score to reflect the level of difficulty.

The Ability check is a wonderful mechanism for resolving the results of almost any action. The DM needs to decide which ability applies to the situation, whether there should be any modifiers due to circumstances, and then roll away.

AD&D® Rulebooks

There is no way that *Tales of the Outer Planes* can include all of the information you'll need for every adventure without being 10 times its size. In particular, you'll need *The Manual of the Planes* (also referred to as *MoP*) to give you the detailed background on each plane and realm visited by the player characters. Survival, movement, and magic effects vary considerably from plane to plane. Before any adventure, you'll want to study up on this information.

For the most part, you should be able to play any adventure in this book without consulting any of the monster manuals or other reference books (except for spell effects and magical item effects, which could not be included due to space restrictions). You may want these books handy,

though, for some of the more arcane monsters, so your players can at least see what they look like.

Lair Format

The 17 lairs in the back of this book are organized in alphabetical order. Various difficulty levels are included, from those designed for lower-level parties to those for higher-level groups.

Each creature encounter is itself a series of encounters that can be used all at once or in part during a game. The referee can easily use these encounters without much preparation during the middle of a game or can use them to start off an adventure.

The creature featured in each adventure is listed at the top of the first page of the adventure. Next to the creature name is a number in parentheses. This is the total number of these creatures that might be encountered in the adventure. At the top of the first column of text is a box that contains general information pertinent to the adventure. This lists the terrain, total party levels, total magic X.P., total g.p. X.P., and three degrees of monster X.P.

The *terrain* of the encounter is given at the top of the box. This gives the type of area the PCs must be in to encounter this particular monster.

The listing for *Total Party Levels* is an aid to the referee to determine the power of the group the adventure was designed for. If a party is larger or smaller than the total party levels listed, adjustments should be made. Adjustments can be made in several areas. To adjust the encounter downward for a weaker party, several things can be done. Reducing creature hit

point totals for a weaker party is one answer. Halving the damage done by traps is another solution. In the case where the encounter must be made tougher, a simple increase in the number of creatures can bring the encounter level up to where it should be. In both of these changes a modification to the *Monster X.P.* number should be made.

The (avg.) listing for the Total Party Levels is a calculation that should be made at the beginning of the adventure by the DM. This is an indication of the power and type of creatures a party should be facing. If the party average falls below or above the listing for the encounter by more than one, changes should be made in the encounter.

Experience points appear under three different listings for each encounter: *Total Magic X.P.*, *Total g.p. X.P.*, and *Monster X.P.*

The *Total Magic X.P.* listing deals with the magical treasure of the encounter. All of the treasures have been added into this figure and appropriate subtractions should be made if the party does not find all the treasure.

The *Monster X.P.* entry is computed from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* listings and a subjective addition has been made for the tricks and traps of any given encounter. Three listings are provided under the monster experience points. These listings are used by the DM as the situation merits. The *Kill* listing is used when the characters have killed all the creatures in the encounter. The *Defeat* entry is used in the event the party drives off some of the creatures or otherwise meets and wins out over the creatures without causing the death of all the monsters. The *Retreat* listing is used if the party

made an effort to defeat the creatures in the adventure, but was forced to retreat. This last entry enables the DM to recognize that the party learned from the encounter, but just could not quite finish it off.

Every encounter has from one to three *Set Up* features. These are bits of information on situations to help the referee get the party into the adventure. They can also be used to get the party back on track if the group has taken an unplanned tangent and not gone the way the Dungeon Master thought they would.

This section may also contain information pertinent to all of the ways the PCs could get into the adventure (i.e., there may be three different people or situations that introduce the PCs to the adventure, but all three would enable them to gain certain basic information).

Following the *Set Up* is the *Lair* section. This is the main body of the adventure and includes a detailed description of the lair as well as the monster's tactics and several separate encounters within the adventure. The encounters eventually lead to the climactic battle in which all is won or lost.

The beginning of this section gives a little bit of background on the creature(s) and why this encounter is where it is. Then there is a short description of the encounter area and what is there and easily observable. The rest of the information is the series of encounters the party will meet when dealing with the creature listed. Sometimes the end of the encounter has a brief listing that can lead the party to other encounters in the lairs in *Tales of the Outer Planes*.

A Simple Deed, Well Rewarded

by David & Martha Ladyman

DM's Information

A Simple Deed is designed to introduce 1st- and 2nd-level characters to the World Serpent Inn, in Arabel (and elsewhere!), and to its potential for adventuring in the planes. Not much emphasis is placed on details of specific planes, or on difficulties of getting from one to another. Rather, it gives players a taste of planar unearthliness, and demonstrates the usefulness of the Inn in reaching these realms. At no point in this adventure are characters given the opportunity to pick a portal at random—if they do at some later time, the results are up to the DM!

Having found the Inn, parties should have no trouble continuing with the other adventures in this book, or into Planar realms of your own devising.

Also, note that the Inn, and its barkeep, Mitchifer, are different from time to time and from place to place. It rarely presents exactly the same aspect twice—at times its appearance will be radically changed! As DM, feel free to alter it as much or as little as you please.

This scenario also demonstrates a few things about the Powers which inhabit the various planes.

Most importantly, characters in the habit of hacking now and asking questions later are asking only for trouble. Therefore, statistics aren't given for any of the Demi-Powers or Powers in this adventure. Statistics in *Legends and Lore* and elsewhere describe a being's attributes and hit points while on the Prime Material plane, not while at home. Assume that anyone below 25th or 30th level foolish enough to take arms against a Power or Demi-Power on its home plane gets just what he or she deserves, as quickly (or as prolonged!) as the Power desires. Who needs to know hit points in cases like that?

Synopsis

By some means or other, the party has heard of the World Serpent Inn and how to reach it. In this adventure, the Inn is set in Arabel, in Cormyr of the Forgotten Realms, but you can move it to any city on any world you wish. The Inn is there, as well!

Dropping in for drinks, the PCs find themselves tricked by a jester into an unexpected commitment: to perform a service for Hecate, the Greek goddess of magic. She wants a hound from the Wild Hunt (of Celtic renown) to crossbreed with her own hellhounds.

(The jester becomes their guide through the planes, so detailed knowledge of where they're going or how to get there isn't necessary for this introductory adventure.)

Drawn into a chase with the Wild Hunt, the PCs help dispatch a clutch of grave-robbers, then place their request before the Master of the Hunt. Not turning them down flatly, he says that he will give them some of his hounds if the party recovers his missing spear and hunting horn; a raven is responsible for their disappearance.

Upon further investigation, the party discovers that the trickster Raven lives on the plane of elemental Air. Proceeding to his lodge, they find the spear and horn. The theft seems successfully concluded, when they emerge, not home, but on the Happy Hunting Grounds, where Raven is visiting his Beastlord friends. Recovering his stolen belongings from the PCs, Raven promises to return the spear and horn if the party can acquire a piece of art from the suddenly reclusive Sumerian god of artistry, Enki, on Nirvana.

Arriving on Nirvana, the players find that Enki's withdrawal is caused by unrequited love for the goddess Lliira. This is very uncharacteristic of her, as is the report that she is working at the Zannibar pleasure palace, operated by Tazy and Soshi (Tlazolteotl and Xochipilli, Central American gods of vice, gambling and chance).

Traveling to a different Prime Material plane, a world of jungles, they work their way, with difficulty, to Lliira. She reveals that she was tricked into a realm where she was powerless, then cursed by Hecate so that she could return no man's love, not even that of Enki, her beloved. Hecate, it seems, had briefly been enamored of Enki herself and what Hecate wants, Hecate gets. The infatuation over, Hecate has neglected to remove the curse, leaving Lliira stranded in Zannibar.

Having come full circle, the party is finally able to fulfill their task—Hecate is happy to remove the curse in exchange for the hounds; Lliira's return lifts Enki's spirits, for which he rewards the party with the artistry Raven desires; Raven returns the spear and horn, and the Master passes one of his hounds to Hecate. The party passes on to a well-deserved rest.

Experience Earned

It's hard to quantify the experience points each PC earns in this adventure. The recommended approach at the first or second level is to award each PC enough to gain one level if he has done well, less otherwise.

Of course, this adventure could be used for characters five or six levels higher, and they would still be powerless to do anything but negotiate with the beings they encounter. They should receive no more than 2,000 to 3,000 points, as well, unless one or more distinguishes himself above and beyond the call of the adventure.

The Adventure

The World Serpent Inn

It is just past sunset, and the party can see the vague outline of the moon in the deepening sky as they walk the streets of Arabel. Around them tired merchants are closing their booths and counting their profits for the day. Meat pie vendors anxiously try to sell one last pie before day's end; they call to the PCs as they pass by. The day-

A Simple Deed, Well Rewarded

time folks are going home to supper and bed, and the night people are just now hitting the streets. A group of not-really-ladies are clustered on a street corner; they whistle and call out to the party as they pass by. The party should wander through back streets until they reach a small tavern near the eastern wall of the city—hardly the most fashionable part of town. The outside is grimy with age. A sign proclaiming it to be “The Wild Goose” hangs crookedly above the door, flapping in the breeze. In reality, this is the World Serpent Inn, a multidimensional tavern that exists in every plane, but is open only to those who know the secret: knocking in the air on an imaginary door, then invoking the name of any Power or Demi-Power. Those who do not follow this ritual enter an ordinary tavern. This secret can be given to player characters as a tip for a well-performed service; as gossip overheard in the market place, thieves’ hall, or alleyway; as a message “accidentally” read while being carried from one NPC to another; or by any other means the DM desires.

One player should make a knocking gesture, saying “By the name of X (saying an appropriate name), I will enter.” If any PC glances back at the sign, he sees it changed to “World Serpent Inn.”

The party goes down a passageway into the main room. It is smoky and strangely lit; they can see the bar, situated in the middle, but the distant walls seem unclear. It is very smoky, as thick as fog. The decor is definitely unusual; this should be the oddest place they’ve ever seen. For one thing, the place seems much larger than it appeared on the outside. For another, it must have countless meeting rooms and private areas. What else could account for all those doors? Every couple of feet there is another door. If they try to count the doors, they should lose track before finishing. In fact, some of the doorways seem to be shifting about, vanishing and reappearing!

This is the place to see and be seen. It is packed with folks all talking and

laughing, seated at tables and booths scattered throughout the room. Those that couldn’t get seats have made room on the floor, and PCs have to watch their step to keep from tripping over them.

A PC might stumble over three men dicing in a corner. If this happens, one of the dicers will snarl at him. This particular man happens to have ram’s horns growing out of his head. Over near the far wall is a green woman talking to a pig. A coat with six armholes is slung over a chair. The PCs hear snatches of conversation, but much of it is in an unfamiliar language. That which they do understand still seems gibberish—it concerns places and people they’ve never heard of before.

The Inn is an unbelievable place. Not only are its inhabitants from other planes, but some are actually Powers in disguise, relaxing safely in the protection of the Inn’s powerful magic.

The bar is situated in the middle of the room, with a light shining directly above it. The barkeeper is a fat man, with a long white beard, red cheeks, and a big booming laugh. The PCs should have an impulse to laugh when they see him, in spite of themselves. He beams at them and calls them by name. “It’s good to see you; first time here, I say. Well, don’t be shy! What’ll you have? Venetian mountain brew? Sigma flytrapper? Sterozium? Elysium Elixir? I make the best in the universe—fresh otters! Mitchifer is the name, gentlebeings,” he shouts. “Name your poison.” Whatever they order, he instantly slaps down in front of them. There is nothing they order that he does not have.

Behind Mitchifer, the PCs can see various bottles filled with strange liquids: some fizzing, some smoking, some with flashing lights. Surrounding him are his helpers, wearing white aprons and carrying trays filled with strange and exotic drinks. The PCs don’t recognize the contents of any glass. The helpers are all short—not a one over three feet six—with pointed ears and red noses. They chatter to each other in shrill voices as they race

around serving the different tables, sometimes running through the aisle, sometimes ducking under tables or running on top of the bar, but never spilling a drop.

At the bar is a man drinking what appears to be a pink cloud of smoke; further down is a purple fizz that reeks. If a PC looks closely at the clothing of his neighbor, he will see that it is not made of cotton or wool like an honest man’s clothing, but something light, and strangely colored, and shining—fairy cloth perhaps? He’s wearing an orangish-yellow jewel of a totally unfamiliar material.

In fact, looking around the room, they should see few, if any, people dressed as they are. Most are wearing different colors, different fabrics, different styles than they’ve ever seen before. Some aren’t wearing any clothes at all.

Eerie music filters through the room as it darkens, and a spotlight focuses on the same green woman the party saw before. She is dancing a strange dance, whirling and twirling in a sea of multicolored scarves. As she dances, her porcine companion nods and bangs his hooves on the table, in evident enjoyment of the entertainment. She finishes, bows deeply (the better to scoop up the coins and jewelry being thrown her way), and runs off.

Party Tricks and a Party Tricked

Sooner or later the party should spy an open table, or have a helper guide them to one. They will be closely followed by another helper with a full tray of fresh drinks. A jester, dressed in top hat and tails, approaches. (The jester flirts with the male or female in the party who has the highest Charisma or Comeliness, so should be the opposite sex of that character.) She (or he) bows deeply, saying,

“Friend, it would do you well to clean your ears now and then. One never knows what one will find.” She then removes a coin from a PC’s ear, and hands it to him.

“The same holds true for your

helm." She takes another PC's cap, shakes it twice, and a dove flies out. She takes a PC's drink, sips, sputters and coughs, and suddenly flowers are blooming in the glass.

All this attracts the interest of those at tables near the PCs, and they too start applauding and smiling. One of the PCs discovers a rabbit in his shirt; another finds a coin at the bottom of his drink; yet another gets his ears "cleaned" and finds scarves, toads, and more coins. In fact, everyone at the table ends up with a coin. The jester does not perform for the other tables; all of her attention is centered on the PC's table.

If any PC examines his coin, he will note that it doesn't look like any coin he's ever seen. It appears to be platinum with a dragon engraved on one side and the head of an unknown ruler on the other. There is an inscription, *Not all things in hell are evil; not all things in the Inn are good.*

The jester seats herself at the table, and calls for more drinks. She politely presses drinks on the entire party. Should they refuse, she will continue urging them. After most of the party drinks, those at the surrounding tables shake their heads (or similar appendage). The PCs hear snatches of conversation.

"Did it again."

"Like shooting fish in a barrel."

"Smooth as silk, how does she do that?"

"Did you hear what happened to the last group?" as they conspiratorially put their heads together and whisper.

"Gentlepersons," the jester says silkily, smiling. "Having accepted both wage and sustenance, you have committed yourselves to service, albeit brief, in the employ of Hecate." The whisperers at the next table hoot in laughter and proceed to place bets on how long the party will last.

"Now, think not that you can avoid this service; you need merely ask X or Y", naming two of the party's deities. "But fear not that this," she continues, picking up one of the coins, "is your sole reward. There are twenty more for each of you upon completion of our

simple task." She sits back and smiles.

Anyone in the tavern, and any of the PC's higher priests, can confirm that they have indeed bound themselves to one task in Hecate's service, and that it would not go well for them if they refused or avoided it. Should anyone refuse, he will have a run of bad luck the next week. Like his house burns down. His girlfriend marries his best friend. His sword breaks in two. His mother runs off with a fish peddler. The Princess accuses him of acting in an ungentlemanly manner toward her, and demands the guillotine. It shouldn't be hard to convince the character that it is in his best interest to take the jester on her word.

When the party is ready to go (either now or later, after having been convinced), they will be escorted by the jester through one of the doors in the tavern.

Hecate, the Dark Queen of Magic

Upon passing through the door, the party finds itself on Phlegethos, the fourth of the Nine Hells.

The immediate feeling is one of severe heat. Streams of sweat roll down the PCs' bodies; their first reaction may be to shed any furs or excess clothing. They are standing in the midst of blackened, charred terrain, next to a river of fire— not magma, not lava, but fire! If anyone is so foolish as to dip a finger in the river, he'll find it burns like fire, too. Volcanoes surround the party and extend to the horizon as far as the eye can see. The jester takes them to the nearest volcano.

There, in the crater, sits a stunning woman on a throne of obsidian, studded with fire opal. She has jet black hair, milk white skin, and red eyes that glow like embers. She is dressed in deep red robes, and her nails are scarlet. She is incredibly beautiful, and incredibly frightening. This is the goddess Hecate.

The jester leads the party to her.

She gives them one contemptuous glance, raises an eyebrow, and sighs. "Is this the best you could do, jester?" Behind her, a volcano explodes to mirror her dissatisfaction. "Trust me, Lady," assures the jester, "these men and women are highly capable couriers who will be able to do Your Lady's bidding in a satisfactory manner. Trust me." A trickle of sweat runs down the jester's brow. Hecate sighs, and a nearby flame flares up twenty feet high. She leans forward.

"Hear me, then, mortals. I desire a simple deed, easily done, and well rewarded. All you must do is secure some breeding stock for me. Nothing difficult; just a dog to mate with my hellhounds. In particular, a black dog, large, with a tongue of green flame and green fire in his eyes. It must be a male. I don't anticipate this being something that will take long, so I will require him in about two weeks—no longer." She leans back, then forward again. "Should you succeed, your reward will be great. If you fail . . . well, it's been a long time since I've burned anyone alive. It might be fun." She leans back again. "You are dismissed."

The volcano in the background booms out another eruption, and the jester, bowing as she backs away from Hecate's presence, leads you again through the doorway into the tavern.

Let the PCs work on the problem of where to find a dog to fit Hecate's description. If they haven't solved it in a week, the jester will figure it out and tell them. The party must go on a Wild Hunt, as detailed in *Legends and Lore*.

A Wild Hunt

Two nights after deducing exactly what Hecate desires, the jester bursts into the tavern and, rushing over to the party, shouts, "Hurry, the Hunt is on!" He leads them through a new portal. As the party arrives, they discover themselves on a moor. The time is late evening. The ground is damp, and there is a smell of decaying plantlife. It is cold and foggy. A foreboding sense of danger and excitement is in the air.